

Fresenius Medical Care (FMS)

\$37.52 (As of 04/08/21)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$32.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

Zacks Recommendation: Underperform
(Since: 03/12/21)

Prior Recommendation: Neutral

Short Term: 1-3 Months

Zacks Rank: (1-5) **3-Hold**

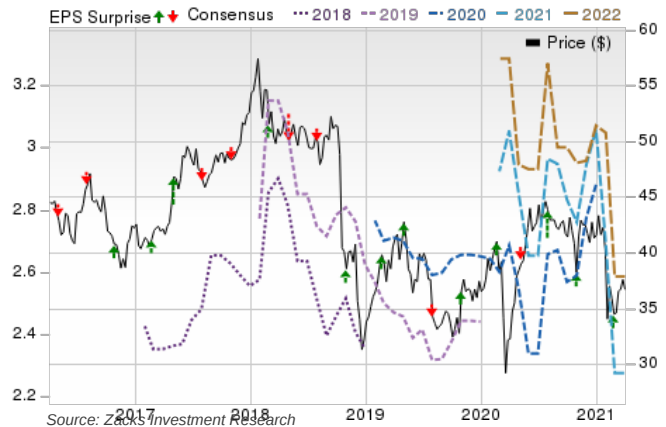
Zacks Style Scores: VGM:B

Value: A | Growth: B | Momentum: F

Summary

Fresenius Medical exited the fourth quarter on a mixed note. The company faces intense competition in the field of health care services and sale of dialysis products, which remains a concern. The company underperformed the industry in a year's time. Nonetheless, Fresenius Medical continues to gain from Health Care Products unit, which witnessed revenue growth in the quarter under review on constant currency basis. Revenues in the EMEA and Asia Pacific regions witnessed noticeable improvement in the fourth quarter. Notably, it will introduce a new program in order to provide support to its 2025 strategy, which will further boost profitability and compensate for the negative earnings impact of the pandemic. A wide range of dialysis products and services instill optimism in the stock.

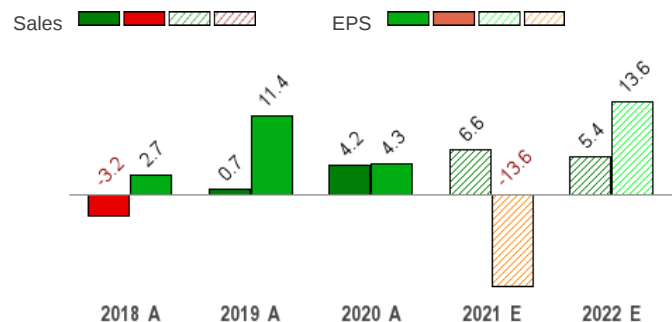
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	\$46.55 - \$33.84
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	332,748
Market Cap	\$21.8 B
Year-To-Date Price Change	-10.6%
Beta	1.28
Dividend / Dividend Yield	\$0.50 / 1.3%
Industry	Medical - Instruments
Zacks Industry Rank	Bottom 31% (175 out of 253)

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	8.6%
Last Sales Surprise	-8.9%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	0.0%
Expected Report Date	05/05/2021
Earnings ESP	0.0%
P/E TTM	14.0
P/E F1	16.5
PEG F1	2.8
P/S TTM	1.1

Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022					22,914 E
2021	5,290 E	5,464 E	5,574 E	5,717 E	21,741 E
2020	4,950 A	5,017 A	5,159 A	5,248 A	20,399 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022					\$2.59 E
2021	\$0.45 E	\$0.53 E	\$0.58 E	\$0.63 E	\$2.28 E
2020	\$0.52 A	\$0.66 A	\$0.71 A	\$0.76 A	\$2.64 A

*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and sales estimates, is as of 04/08/2021. The report's text and the analyst-provided price target are as of 04/09/2021.

Overview

Based in Bad Homburg, Germany, Fresenius Medical Care AG & Co. KGaA (FMS) is one of the largest integrated providers of products and services for individuals undergoing dialysis following chronic kidney failure.

Formed in 1996 following the merger of the dialysis business of Fresenius AG and the U. S. dialysis service provider, National Medical Care, Fresenius Medical provides products and services across the entire dialysis value chain throughout the World.

Through its network of over 3,600 dialysis clinics across the world, the company offers dialysis services and products in more than 120 countries and employs over 109,000 staffs in more than 50 countries.

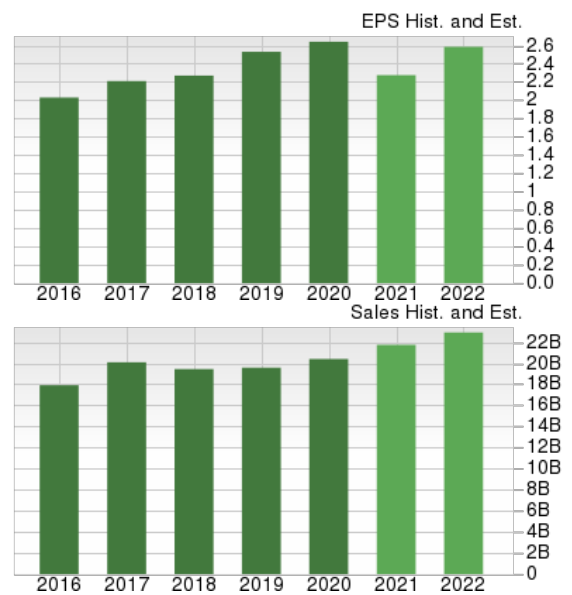
Fresenius Medical manufactures a variety of durable medical devices used in the treatment of End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). Devices like Hemodialysis Machines, Peritoneal Dialysis Machines, Granuflo Concentrate Mixing Tanks and monitoring devices like the Crit-line platform are included in the company's product pipeline.

The company primarily operates in two revenue segments.

The Health Care Services segment: This segment consists of the company's Dialysis Services and the Care-Coordination (non-dialysis laboratory services), which accounted 79% of net revenues in full year 2020.

The Health Care Products segment: This segment comprises of the company's Dialysis machines, dialyzers, dialysis solutions, hemodialysis concentrates, bloodline systems, water treatment systems, dialysis drugs and other medical products. The segment accounted for 21% of net revenues in full year 2020.

Fresenius Medical derives its revenues majorly from four geographical locations - North America, EMEA, Asia-Pacific and Latin America.



Reasons To Sell:

▼ **Price Performance:** Shares of Fresenius Medical gained 8% compared with the industry's rally of 29.9% in a year's time. Intense competition in the field of health care services and sale of dialysis products remains a concern. Also, Fresenius Medical witnessed decline in revenues in the North America and Latin America regions in the fourth quarter. Moreover, tough regulatory environment continues to weigh on the stock.

▼ **Tough Regulatory Environment:** Fresenius Medical faces a highly regulated environment in almost every country in which it operates. Furthermore, the company has to fulfill specific legal requirements everywhere that includes the tough antitrust regulations. Violating healthcare or other regulations under public law can result in extensive legal repercussions. These include the dismissal of important federal certifications, penalties, fines, recalls, increased costs (for fulfilling regulatory requirements), exclusion from reimbursement programs of the respective government health care system, or even a total or partial ban on business operations.

Adding to the concerns, changes in the law (especially relating to reimbursement) in such a difficult regulatory environment can also impact the company's fundamental business model and the implementation of strategy. Because of the company's significant international exposure, Fresenius Medical is likely to face difficulties while enforcing and collecting trade receivables in foreign legal paradigms. In fact, the inability of certain countries to service their national debt might hamper the company's interests. Notably, concerns associated with the regulatory environment present a low risk to the company in the short-term, and in the mid-term, they present a medium risk to the company.

▼ **Cutthroat Market Competition:** Fresenius Medical has numerous competitors in the field of health care services as well as the sale of dialysis products. Tough competition in the niche markets is likely to impede the company's sales opportunities and lose market share. However, per management, concerns that arise due to competition represent low risk for the company in the short-term, as well as in the mid-term. The company faces aggressive rivalry from HCA Holdings, DaVita HealthCare and Baxter International.

The problem of competitors copying patents of Fresenius Medical is an added concern, which might arise from inadequate protection for technologies and products developed by the company. This might affect the company's bottom line in the long term.

Unfavorable price performance, tough regulatory environment, difficulties in collecting trade receivables in foreign legal-paradigms & competition in the niche markets are the headwinds

Risks

- **Wide Range of Dialysis Products & Services:** The company provides a wide range of Dialysis products in its own dialysis clinics and to third-party clinics. These include modular machine components, dialyzers, bloodline systems, HD (hemodialysis) solutions, concentrates and water treatment systems.

Fresenius Medical offers a wide array of Hemodialysis, Peritoneal dialysis and Acute Dialysis products. The year 2020 witnessed favorable growth with regard to home dialysis. The company reached 14% of treatments in the United States in a home setting. This reflects an increase of 13% with respect to the number of home treatments compared to 2019, with home hemodialysis growing around of 37% and peritoneal dialysis contributing a solid 7% growth in the United States. Fresenius Medical is on track to achieve its 2022 target of having 15% plus of dialysis treatments in the United States in a home setting.

In September 2019, the company achieved another milestone in China, with the introduction of the 4,008A dialysis machine. This is a significant step in the market with the largest dialysis patient population in the world. At year-end 2019, home dialysis accounted for 13% of all treatments in the United States. By 2022, the company aims to perform more than 15% of all dialysis treatment in the United States in a home setting and is on track to achieve this target.

In the United States, the company is collaborating with other dialysis providers to create isolation clinics and dedicated shifts for COVID positive patients. The primary aim of this collaboration is to keep dialysis patients out of the hospital whenever it is possible. During fourth-quarter 2020, despite the challenging pandemic-induced environment, the company delivered life-sustaining dialysis treatments to nearly 347,000 patients and was able to maintain operations in more than 4,000 of its dialysis clinics worldwide without substantial interruption, while minimizing the impact of the pandemic on its staff and patients. Use of telehealth solutions was the primary reason behind this uninterrupted operational performance.

- **Favorable Tiding on the Regulatory Front:** Fresenius Medical recently announced the FDA device approval for its computer-assisted ultrafiltration control software, which aims to improve fluid management during hemodialysis (HD). This further fortifies Fresenius Medical's foothold in the global renal medical devices and services space.

The ultrafiltration control software is designed to work with its newer HD machines and provide computer-assisted diagnosis. Notably, effective fluid management is critical about creating the best HD treatment.

- **2025 Strategy:** In October 2020, Fresenius Medical unveiled its 2025 strategy at its Capital Markets Day. This strategy is an appropriate one as it prioritizes patients' needs and the quality of care is in line with key drivers and developments for its industry. This, in turn, positions Fresenius Medical's business well to deliver sustainable growth over the medium term and further.

The first leg and core of the strategy represents commitment toward the renal care continuum. The company's objective is to have the ability to offer holistic care to patients throughout their complete treatment path or the Renal Care Continuum (as called by the company).

The second leg of the strategy is Critical Care solutions, wherein the company seeks to further expand its critical care portfolio to other extracorporeal intensive care therapy fields, like treatment of heart, lungs and multi-organ failure. And the third and final leg of the strategy is complementary assets, where the company intends to continue broadening its network of complementary assets via partnerships, investments and acquisitions. These assets will enable Fresenius Medical to coordinate patients efficiently, for instance, and resultantly, add value in two dimensions with respect to creation of medical value and management of patient-related costs.

- **Strong Global Foothold:** Fresenius Medical has a solid market hold in the regions of North America, Europe (EMEA), Asia Pacific and Latin America. To strengthen its market position, the company is resorting to various approaches like enhancing its organic growth and making strategic and suitable acquisitions. The company also aims at aligning its business activities through public-private partnerships in the dialysis business for tapping into new markets in the coming quarters.

In recent past, the company entered the dialysis services market in Israel. Fresenius Medical also expanded its dialysis services business in India by acquiring an 85% stake in Sandor Nephro Services, a dialysis group, offering dialysis treatment and other associated services such as laboratory tests to 308,471 patients in 3,624 dialysis clinics worldwide.

In fourth-quarter 2020, the company witnessed revenue growth across Asia Pacific and EMEA. The company achieved an overall organic growth of 1%, with strong contributions of 8%, 5% and 9% from Asia Pacific, EMEA, and Latin America respectively. Each of the three regions contributed positively to the company's organic growth in the fourth quarter. Robust organic growth developments outside North America driven by the product business, resulted in positive organic growth for the company's overall business.

- **Strategic Acquisitions & Partnerships:** Acquisitions have been a key catalyst for the company. In an initiative to boost its long-term strategy or the 'Growth-Strategy 2020', Fresenius Medical already acquired all outstanding shares of NxStage Medical for \$30 a share. Fresenius Medical expects the acquisition to prove accretive to earnings within three years from deal closure. Furthermore, the deal is expected to provide annual pre-tax cost savings of \$80 million to \$100 million over the next three to five years. Fresenius Medical also expects integration costs of about \$150 million over the next three years from the time of announcement last year.

- **Balance Sheet View:** Fresenius Medical exited fourth-quarter 2020 with cash and cash equivalents amounting to \$1.24 billion, down from \$1.87 billion sequentially. Meanwhile, the company's long-term debt totaled \$7.77 billion in the fourth quarter, down from \$8.16 billion sequentially. We can see that the quarter's long-term debt was much higher than the corresponding cash and cash equivalent level. However, the current debt level of \$1.24 billion in the quarter, down from the preceding quarter's \$1.68 billion, is in-line with the company's short-term cash level. This is good news in terms of the company's solvency level as, at least during the year of economic downturn, the company has sufficient cash for debt repayment.

Last Earnings Report

Fresenius Medical Q4 Earnings Beat, Revenues Miss

Fresenius Medical Care AG & Co. KGaA reported fourth-quarter adjusted earnings per share of 76 cents, which beat the Zacks Consensus Estimate of 70 cents by 8.6%. However, the bottom line declined 2.7% year over year.

Revenues increased 3.4% year over year to \$5.25 billion. However, the top line missed the Zacks Consensus Estimate by 8.9%.

Quarter Ending 12/2020

Report Date	Feb 23, 2021
Sales Surprise	-8.85%
EPS Surprise	8.57%
Quarterly EPS	0.76
Annual EPS (TTM)	2.65

Segmental Details

In the fourth quarter, Fresenius Medical reported through two segments — Health Care Services and Health Care Products.

Health Care Services revenues fell 6% on a year-over-year basis but grew 2% at constant currency (cc). Favorable development in the Products business partially offset the downside.

Health Care Products revenues rose 2% year over year and 5% at cc driven by solid organic growth.

Geographical Growth

North America

Revenues in the region declined 6% on a year-over-year basis, while growing 2% at cc. On organic basis, sales in the region fell 1%.

EMEA

Revenues in this region rose 1% on a year-over-year basis and grew 7% cc in the quarter. On organic basis, sales in the region increased 5%.

Asia-Pacific

Revenues in this region grew 4% year over year and 7% at cc in the reported quarter. On an organic basis, sales in the region climbed 8%.

Latin America

Revenues in Latin America fell 9% year over year but rose 16% at cc. Organic growth in region was 9%.

Guidance

Fresenius Medical anticipates substantial COVID-19 impact in 2021. Due to impact of the pandemic, excess mortality of dialysis patients is continuing into 2021 and is projected to impact treatment volumes and additional costs associated to COVID-19.

Given this environment, the company estimates revenue to improve at a low-to-mid-single digit percentage rate. Net income is expected to decline at a high-teens to mid-twenties percentage rate against the better-than-expected 2020 base.

Valuation

Fresenius' shares are down 9.7% in the year-to-date period while up 8% in the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry are down 4% in the year-to-date period while that in the Zacks Medical Market are down 3.8%. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry and sector are up 29.9% and 8.8%, respectively.

The S&P 500 index is up 9.2% the year-to-date period and 49.3% the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 15.9X trailing 12-months earnings, which compares to 35.6X for the Zacks sub-industry, 21.9X for the Zacks sector and 22.9X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 22.6X and as low as 10.6X, with a 5-year median of 17.3X.

Our Underperform recommendation indicates that the stock will perform below the market. Our \$32 price target reflects 13.3X forward 12-months earnings.

The table below shows summary valuation data for FMS.

Valuation Multiples - FMS					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	15.9	35.57	21.88	22.89
	5-Year High	22.64	41.63	22.85	23.83
	5-Year Low	10.57	22.85	15.88	15.3
	5-Year Median	17.3	30.15	19.24	18
P/S F12M	Current	1	4.51	2.62	4.71
	5-Year High	1.58	4.77	3.18	4.71
	5-Year Low	0.84	2.58	2.27	3.21
	5-Year Median	1.27	3.47	2.81	3.71
P/B TTM	Current	1.56	4.54	3.83	6.9
	5-Year High	2.88	5.16	5.12	6.9
	5-Year Low	1.18	2.81	3.03	3.83
	5-Year Median	2.07	4.17	4.36	4.98

As of 04/08/2021

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Bottom 31% (175 out of 253)



Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Baxter International Inc. (BAX)	Neutral	3
Bristol Myers Squibb Company (BMY)	Neutral	3
DaVita Inc. (DVA)	Neutral	3
Encompass Health Corporation (EHC)	Neutral	3
Eli Lilly and Company (LLY)	Neutral	3
Luminex Corporation (LMNX)	Neutral	3
MEDNAX, Inc. (MD)	Neutral	3
Medtronic PLC (MDT)	Neutral	3

The positions listed should not be deemed a recommendation to buy, hold or sell.

Industry Comparison Industry: Medical - Instruments				Industry Peers		
	FMS	X Industry	S&P 500	BAX	DVA	MDT
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Underperform	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	3	3	3
VGM Score	B	-	-	B	A	C
Market Cap	21.76 B	338.21 M	29.78 B	42.78 B	11.67 B	162.62 B
# of Analysts	4	2	12	11	5	14
Dividend Yield	1.34%	0.00%	1.34%	1.16%	0.00%	1.92%
Value Score	A	-	-	B	A	C
Cash/Price	0.06	0.09	0.06	0.09	0.05	0.09
EV/EBITDA	6.04	-4.70	16.88	19.63	9.79	22.34
PEG F1	2.80	3.08	2.37	2.70	1.12	3.64
P/B	1.54	5.56	3.98	4.90	7.45	3.19
P/CF	6.12	27.68	16.79	17.41	7.69	18.23
P/E F1	16.46	41.91	21.91	24.96	12.88	27.73
P/S TTM	1.07	6.63	3.39	3.66	1.01	5.82
Earnings Yield	6.14%	-1.24%	4.48%	4.00%	7.76%	3.61%
Debt/Equity	0.55	0.06	0.66	0.66	5.05	0.52
Cash Flow (\$/share)	6.13	-0.11	6.78	4.82	13.90	6.62
Growth Score	B	-	-	C	B	D
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	8.09%	8.72%	9.39%	14.44%	14.43%	-1.20%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	-13.83%	32.07%	15.24%	9.80%	14.08%	-5.23%
Current Cash Flow Growth	8.27%	-0.96%	0.61%	-3.94%	5.24%	-9.02%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	15.51%	7.22%	7.37%	9.99%	0.74%	7.68%
Current Ratio	1.18	3.27	1.39	2.52	1.27	2.10
Debt/Capital	35.54%	7.11%	41.26%	39.87%	85.51%	34.23%
Net Margin	6.49%	-22.06%	10.59%	9.44%	6.70%	10.36%
Return on Equity	10.69%	-20.96%	14.86%	19.23%	45.74%	9.37%
Sales/Assets	0.54	0.51	0.51	0.59	0.65	0.30
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	6.71%	14.61%	7.33%	7.37%	-0.46%	4.00%
Momentum Score	F	-	-	C	B	C
Daily Price Change	1.00%	0.52%	0.03%	-0.81%	0.16%	0.02%
1-Week Price Change	-2.34%	1.28%	0.35%	-1.90%	-3.06%	-0.31%
4-Week Price Change	2.49%	-2.63%	3.57%	8.05%	-0.76%	2.16%
12-Week Price Change	-10.13%	2.69%	8.22%	4.93%	-10.68%	2.45%
52-Week Price Change	8.06%	52.05%	51.47%	-3.33%	42.82%	19.42%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	332,748	248,801	2,047,782	2,491,831	636,040	4,651,884
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.47%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	-25.57%	0.00%	2.24%	-1.30%	0.31%	3.41%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Zacks Stock Rating System

We offer two rating systems that take into account investors' holding horizons: Zacks Rank and Zacks Recommendation. Each provides valuable insights into the future profitability of the stock and can be used separately or in combination with each other depending on your investment style.

Zacks Recommendation

The Zacks Recommendation aims to predict performance over the next 6 to 12 months. The foundation for the quantitatively determined Zacks Recommendation is trends in the company's estimate revisions and earnings outlook. The Zacks Recommendation is broken down into 3 Levels; Outperform, Neutral and Underperform. Unlike many Wall Street firms, we maintain a balance between the number of Outperform and Neutral recommendations. Our team of 70 analysts are fully versed in the benefits of earnings estimate revisions and how that is harnessed through the Zacks quantitative rating system. But we have given our analysts the ability to override the Zacks Recommendation for the 1200 stocks that they follow. The reason for the analyst over-rides is that there are often factors such as valuation, industry conditions and management effectiveness that a trained investment professional can spot better than a quantitative model.

Zacks Rank

The Zacks Rank is our short-term rating system that is most effective over the one- to three-month holding horizon. The underlying driver for the quantitatively-determined Zacks Rank is the same as the Zacks Recommendation, and reflects trends in earnings estimate revisions.

Zacks Style Scores

The Zacks Style Score is as a complementary indicator to the Zacks rating system, giving investors a way to focus on the highest rated stocks that best fit their own stock picking preferences.

Academic research has proven that stocks with the best Value, Growth and Momentum characteristics outperform the market. The Zacks Style Scores rate stocks on each of these individual styles and assigns a rating of A, B, C, D and F. We also produce the VGM Score (V for Value, G for Growth and M for Momentum), which combines the weighted average of the individual Style Scores into one score. This is perfectly suited for those who want their stocks to have the best scores across the board.

Value Score	A
Growth Score	B
Momentum Score	F
VGM Score	B

As an investor, you want to buy stocks with the highest probability of success. That means buying stocks with a Zacks Recommendation of Outperform, which also has a Style Score of an A or a B.

Disclosures

This report contains independent commentary to be used for informational purposes only. The analysts contributing to this report do not hold any shares of this stock. The analysts contributing to this report do not serve on the board of the company that issued this stock. The EPS and revenue forecasts are the Zacks Consensus estimates, unless indicated otherwise on the reports first page. Additionally, the analysts contributing to this report certify that the views expressed herein accurately reflect the analysts personal views as to the subject securities and issuers. ZIR certifies that no part of the analysts compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the specific recommendation or views expressed by the analyst in the report.

Additional information on the securities mentioned in this report is available upon request. This report is based on data obtained from sources we believe to be reliable, but is not guaranteed as to accuracy and does not purport to be complete. Any opinions expressed herein are subject to change.

ZIR is not an investment advisor and the report should not be construed as advice designed to meet the particular investment needs of any investor. Prior to making any investment decision, you are advised to consult with your broker, investment advisor, or other appropriate tax or financial professional to determine the suitability of any investment. This report and others like it are published regularly and not in response to episodic market activity or events affecting the securities industry.

This report is not to be construed as an offer or the solicitation of an offer to buy or sell the securities herein mentioned. ZIR or its officers, employees or customers may have a position long or short in the securities mentioned and buy or sell the securities from time to time. ZIR is not a broker-dealer. ZIR may enter into arms-length agreements with broker-dealers to provide this research to their clients. Zacks and its staff are not involved in investment banking activities for the stock issuer covered in this report.

ZIR uses the following rating system for the securities it covers. **Outperform-** ZIR expects that the subject company will outperform the broader U.S. equities markets over the next six to twelve months. **Neutral-** ZIR expects that the company will perform in line with the broader U.S. equities markets over the next six to twelve months. **Underperform-** ZIR expects the company will underperform the broader U.S. equities markets over the next six to twelve months.

No part of this report can be reprinted, republished or transmitted electronically without the prior written authorization of ZIR.

Additional Disclosure

This material represents an assessment of the market and economic environment at a specific point in time and is not intended to be a forecast of future events, or a guarantee of future results. Forward-looking statements are subject to certain risks and uncertainties. Any statements that refer to expectations, projections or characterizations of future events or circumstances, including any underlying assumptions, are forward-looking statements. Actual results, performance, or achievements may differ materially from those expressed or implied.

Returns quoted represent past performance which is no guarantee of future results. Investment returns and principal value will fluctuate so that when shares are redeemed, they may be worth more or less than their original cost. Current performance may be higher or lower than the performance shown.

Investing involves risk; principal loss is possible. There is no guarantee that companies that can issue dividends will declare, continue to pay or increase dividends.

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

52-Week High-Low: The range of the highest and lowest prices at which a stock has traded during the past year. This range is determined based on the stock's daily closing price which may differ from the intra-day high or low. Many investors use it as a technical indicator to determine a stock's current value and future price movement. The idea here is that if price breaks out from the 52-week range, in either direction, the momentum may continue in the same direction.

20-Day Average Volume (Shares): The average number of shares of a company traded in a day over the last 20 days. It is a direct indication of a security's overall liquidity. The higher the average daily trading volume, the easier it is to enter or exit the stock at a desired price with more buyers and sellers being available.

Daily Price Change: This is the percentage difference between a trading day's closing price and the prior trading day's closing price. This item is updated at 9 p.m. EST each day.

1-Week Price Change: This is the percentage change in a stock's closing price over the last 5 trading days. This change reflects the collective buying and selling sentiment over the 1-week period.

A strong weekly price increase for the stock, especially when accompanied by increased volume, is an indication of it gaining momentum.

4-Week Price Change: This is the percentage change in a stock's closing price over the last 20 trading days or past 4 weeks. This is a medium-term price change metric and an indication of the stock gaining momentum.

12-Week Price Change: This is the percentage change of a stock's closing price over the last 60 trading days or past 12 weeks. Similar to 4-week price change, this is a medium-term price change metric. It shows whether a stock has been enjoying strong investor demand, or if it has been in consolidation, or distress over this period.

52-Week Price Change: This is the percentage change in a stock's closing price over the last 260 trading days or past 52 weeks. This long-term price change metric is a good reference point for investors. Some investors seek stocks with the best percentage price change over the last 52 weeks, expecting the momentum to continue.

Market Cap: The number of outstanding common shares of a company times its latest price per share. This figure represents a company's size, which indicates various characteristics, including price stability and risk, in which investors could be interested.

Year-To-Date Price Change: Change in a stock's daily closing price in the period of time beginning the first day of the current calendar year through to the previous trading day.

of Analysts: Number of EPS estimates used in calculating the current-quarter consensus. These estimates come from the brokerage analysts tracking this stock. However, the number of such analysts tracking this stock may not match the number of estimates, as all brokerage analysts may not come up with an estimate or provide it to us.

Beta: A measure of risk commonly used to compare the volatility of a stock to the overall market. The S&P 500 Index is the base for calculating beta and carries a value of 1. A stock with beta below 1 is less risky than the market as a whole. And a stock with beta above 1 is riskier.

Dividend: The portion of earnings a company is expected to distribute to its common shareholders in the next 12 months for each share they own. Dividends are usually paid quarterly. Dividend payments reflect positively on a company and help maintain investors' trust. Investors typically find dividend-paying stocks appealing because the dividend adds to any market price appreciation to result in higher return on investment (ROI). Moreover, a steady or increasing dividend payment provides investors a cushion in a down market.

Dividend Yield: The ratio of a company's annual dividend to its share price. The annual dividend used in the ratio is calculated based on the most recent dividend paid by the company. Dividend yield is an estimate of the dividend-only return from a stock in the next 12 months. Since dividend itself doesn't change frequently, dividend yield usually changes with a stock's price movement. As a result, often an unusually high dividend yield is a result of weak stock price.

S&P 500 Index: The Standard & Poor's 500 (S&P 500) Index is an unmanaged group of securities considered to be representative of the stock market in general. It is a market-capitalization-weighted index of stocks of the 500 largest U.S. companies. Each stock's weight in the index is proportionate to its market value.

Industry: One of the 250+ groups that Zacks classifies all stocks into based on the nature of business. These groups are termed as expanded (aka "X") industries and map to their respective (economic) sectors; Zacks has 16 sectors.

Zacks Industry Rank: The Zacks Industry Rank is determined by calculating the average Zacks Rank for all stocks in the industry and then assigning an ordinal rank to it. For example, an industry with an average Zacks Rank of 1.6 is better than an industry with an average Zacks Rank of 2.3. So, the industry with the better average Zacks Rank would get a better Zacks Industry Rank. If an industry has the best average Zacks Rank, it would be considered the top industry (1 out of 250+), which would place it at the top 1% of Zacks-ranked industries. Studies have shown that roughly half of a stock's price movement can be attributed to the industry group it belongs to. In fact, the top 50% of Zacks-ranked industries outperforms the bottom 50% by a factor of more than 2 to 1.

Last EPS Surprise: The percentage deviation of a company's last reported earnings per share from the Zacks Consensus Estimate. Companies with a positive earnings surprise are more likely to surprise again in the future (or miss again if they recently missed).

Last Sales Surprise: The percentage deviation of a company's last reported sales from the Zacks Consensus Estimate.

Expected Report Date: This is an estimated date of a company's next earnings release. The information originated or gathered by Zacks Investment Research from its information providers or publicly available sources is the basis of this estimate.

Earnings ESP: The Zacks Earnings ESP compares the Most Accurate Estimate to the Zacks Consensus Estimate for the yet-to-be reported quarter. The Most Accurate Estimate is the most recent version of the Zacks Consensus EPS Estimate. The idea here is that analysts revising their estimates closer to an earnings release have the latest information, which could potentially be more accurate than what they and others contributing to the consensus had predicted earlier. Thus, a positive or negative Earnings ESP reading theoretically indicates the likely deviation of the actual earnings from the consensus estimate. However, the model's predictive power is significant for positive ESP readings only. A positive Earnings ESP is a strong predictor of an earnings beat, particularly when combined with a Zacks Rank #1 (Strong Buy), #2 (Buy) or #3 (Hold). Our research shows that stocks with this combination produce a positive surprise nearly 70% of the time.

Periods:

TTM: Trailing 12 months. Using TTM figures is an effective way of analyzing the most-recent financial data in an annualized format that helps neutralize the effects of seasonality and other quarter-to-quarter variation.

F1: Current fiscal year. This period is used to analyze the estimates for the ongoing full fiscal year.

F2: Next fiscal year. This period is used to analyze the estimates for the next full fiscal year.

F12M: Forward 12 months. Using F12M figures is an effective way of analyzing the near-term (the following four unreported quarters) estimates in an annualized manner. Instead of typically representing estimates for the full fiscal year, which may not represent the nitty-gritty of each quarter, F12M figures suggest an all-inclusive annualized estimate for the following four quarters. The annualization helps neutralize the potential effects of seasonality and other quarter-to-quarter variations.

P/E Ratio: The price-to-earnings ratio measures a company's current market price per share relative to its earnings per share (EPS). Usually, the trailing-12-month (TTM) EPS, current-fiscal-year (F1) EPS estimate, or forward-12-month (F12M) EPS estimate is used as the denominator. In essence, this ratio shows what the market is willing to pay today for each dollar of EPS. In other words, this ratio gives a sense of what the relative value of the company is at the already reported level of earnings or at a future level of earnings.

It is one of the most widely-used multiples for determining the value of a company and helps comparing its valuation with that of a competitor, the industry group or a benchmark.

PEG Ratio: The price/earnings to growth ratio is a stock's P/E ratio using current fiscal year (F1) EPS estimate divided by its expected EPS growth rate over the coming 3 to 5 years. This ratio essentially determines a stock's value by factoring in the company's expected earnings growth and is thus believed to provide a more complete picture than just the P/E ratio, particularly for faster-growing companies.

P/S Ratio: The price-to-sales ratio is calculated as a company's current price per share divided by trailing 12 months (TTM) sales or revenues per share. This ratio shows what the market is willing to pay today for each dollar of TTM sales per share. The P/S ratio is at times the only valuation metric when the company has yet to become profitable.

Cash/Price Ratio: The cash-to-price ratio or Cash Yield is calculated as cash and marketable securities per share divided by the company's current share price. Like the earnings yield, which shows the anticipated yield (or return) on a stock from earnings for each dollar invested, the cash yield does the same, with cash being the source of return instead of earnings. For example, a cash/price ratio of 0.08 suggests a return of 8% or 8 cents for every \$1 investment.

EV/EBITDA Ratio: The EV/EBITDA ratio, also known as Enterprise Multiple, is calculated as a company's enterprise value (market capitalization + value of total long-term debt + book value of preferred shares - cash and marketable securities) divided by EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization). Usually, trailing-12-month (TTM) or forward-12-month (F12M) EBITDA is used as the denominator.

EV/Sales Ratio: The enterprise value-to-sales ratio is calculated as a company's enterprise value (market capitalization + value of total long-term debt + book value of preferred shares - cash and marketable securities) divided by annual sales. It is an expansion of the P/S valuation, which uses market value instead of enterprise value. The EV/Sales ratio is perceived as more accurate than P/S, in part, because the market capitalization does not take a company's debt into account when valuing it.

EV/CF Ratio: The enterprise value-to-cash flow ratio is calculated as a company's enterprise value (market capitalization + value of total long-term debt + book value of preferred shares - cash and marketable securities) divided by the trailing-12-month (TTM) operating cash flow. It's a measure of how long it would take to buy the entire business if you were able to use all the company's operating cash flow.

The EV/CF ratio is perceived as more accurate than the P/CF ratio, in part, because the market price does not take a company's debt into account when valuing it.

EV/FCF Ratio: The enterprise value-to-free cash flow metric compares a company's enterprise value to its trailing-12-month (TTM) free cash flow (FCF). This metric is very similar to the EV/CF ratio, but is considered a more exact measure owing to the fact that it uses free cash flow, which subtracts capital expenditures (CAPEX) from a company's total operating cash flow, thereby reflecting the actual cash flow available for funding growth activities and payments to shareholders.

P/EBITDA Ratio: The P/EBITDA ratio is calculated as a company's per share market value divided by EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization). This metric is very similar to the EV/EBITDA ratio, but is considered a little less exact measure as it uses market price, which does not take a company's debt into account. However, since EBITDA is often considered a proxy for cash income, the metric is used as a measure of what the market is willing to pay today for each dollar of the company's cash profitability in the trailing 12 months (TTM) or forward 12 months (F12M).

P/B Ratio: The price-to-book ratio is calculated as a company's current price per share divided by its book value (total assets – liabilities – preferred stocks) per share. In short, the book value is how much a company is worth. In other words, it reflects the total value of a company's assets that its common shareholders would receive if it were to be liquidated. So, the P/B ratio indicates whether you're paying higher or lower than what would remain if the company went bankrupt immediately. Investors typically use this metric to determine how a company's stock price stacks up to its intrinsic value.

P/TB Ratio: The price-to-tangible-book value ratio is calculated as the per share market value of a company divided by the value of its tangible assets (total assets – liabilities – preferred stocks – intangible assets) per share. Tangible book value is the same thing as book value except it excludes the value of intangible assets to get a step closer to the baseline value of the company.

P/CF Ratio: The price-to-cash flow ratio measures a company's per share market price relative to its trailing-12-month (TTM) operating cash flow per share. This metric is used to determine whether a company is undervalued or overvalued relative to another stock, industry or sector. And like the P/E ratio, a lower number is typically considered better from the value perspective.

One of the reasons why P/CF ratio is often preferred over P/E ratio is the fact that operating cash flow adds back non-cash expenses such as depreciation and amortization to net income. This feature helps valuing stocks that have positive cash flow but are not profitable because of large noncash charges.

P/FCF Ratio: The price-to-free cash flow ratio is an extension of P/CF ratio, which uses trailing-12-month (TTM) free cash flow per share instead of operating cash flow per share. This metric is considered a more exact measure than P/CF ratio, as free cash flow subtracts capital expenditures (CAPEX) from a company's total operating cash flow, thereby reflecting the actual cash flow available for funding activities that generate additional revenues.

Earnings Yield: The earnings yield is calculated as current fiscal year (F1) EPS estimate divided by the company's current share price. The ratio, which is the inverse of the P/E ratio, measures the anticipated yield (or return) from earnings for each dollar invested in a stock today.

For example, earnings yield for a stock, which is trading at \$35 and expected to earn \$3 per share in the current fiscal year (F1), would be 0.0857 ($3/35 = 0.0857$) or 8.57%. In other words, for \$1 invested in the stock today, the yield from earnings is anticipated to be 8.57 cents.

Investors most commonly compare the earnings yield of a stock to that of a broad market index (such as the S&P 500) and prevailing interest rates, such as the current 10-year Treasury yield. Since bonds and stocks compete for investors' dollars, stock investors typically demand a higher yield for the extra risk they assume compared to investors of U.S. Treasury-backed securities that offer virtually risk-free returns. This additional return is referred to as the risk premium.

Debt/Equity Ratio: The debt-to-equity ratio is calculated as a company's total liabilities divided by its shareholder equity. This metric is used to gauge a company's financial leverage. In other words, it is a measure of the degree to which a company is financing its operations through debt versus its own funds. The higher the ratio, the higher the risk for shareholders.

However, this ratio is difficult to compare across industry groups where ideal amounts of debt vary. Some businesses are more capital intensive than others and typically require higher debt to finance their operations. So, a company's debt-to-equity ratio should be compared with other companies in the same industry.

Cash Flow (\$/share): Cash flow per share is calculated as operating cash flow (after-tax earnings + depreciation + other non-cash charges) divided by common shares outstanding. It is used by many investors as a measure of a company's financial strength. Since cash flow per share takes into consideration a company's ability to generate cash by adding back non-cash expenses, it is regarded by some as a more accurate measure of a company's financial situation than earnings per share, which could be artificially deflated.

Current Ratio: The current ratio or liquidity ratio is a company's current assets divided by its current liabilities. It measures a company's ability to pay short-term obligations. A current ratio that is in line with the industry average or slightly higher is generally considered acceptable. A current ratio that is lower than the industry average would indicate a higher risk of distress or default. A higher number is usually better. However, a very high current ratio compared to the industry average could be an indication of inefficient use of assets by management.

Debt/Capital Ratio: Debt-to-capital ratio is a company's total debt (interest-bearing debt + both short- and long-term liabilities) divided its total capital (interest-bearing debt + shareholders' equity). It is a measure of a company's financial leverage. All else being equal, the higher the debt-to-capital ratio, the riskier the stock.

However, this ratio can vary widely from industry to industry, the ideal amount of required debt being different. Some businesses are more capital intensive than others and typically require higher debt to finance their operations. So, a company's debt-to-capital ratio should be compared with the same for its industry.

Net Margin: Net margin is calculated as net income divided by sales. It shows how much of each dollar in sales generated by a company translates into profit. For example, if a company's net margin is 15%, its net income is 15 cents for every \$1 of sales it makes.

A change in margin can reflect either a change in business conditions, or a company's cost controls, or both. If a company's expenses are growing faster than sales, its net margin will decline. However, different net margin rates are considered good for different industries, so it's better to compare net margin rates of companies in the same industry group.

Return on Equity: Return on equity (ROE) is calculated as trailing-12-month net income divided by trailing-12-month average shareholder equity (including reinvested earnings). This metric is considered a measure of how effectively management is using a company's assets to generate profits. For example, if a company's ROE is 10%, it creates 10 cents profits for every \$1 shareholder equity, which is basically the company's assets minus debt. A company's ROE deemed good or bad depends on what's normal for its peers or industry group.

Sales/Assets Ratio: The sales-to-assets ratio or asset utilization ratio or asset turnover ratio is calculated as a company's annual sales divided by average assets (average of assets at the beginning of the year and at the year's end). This metric helps investors understand how effectively a company is using its assets to generate sales. For example, a sales-to-assets ratio of 2.5 indicates that the company generated \$2.50 in sales for every \$1 of assets on its books.

The higher the sales-to-assets ratio, the better the company is performing. However, similar to many other ratios, the asset turnover ratio tends to be higher for companies in certain industries/sectors than in others. So, a company's sales-to-assets ratio should be compared with the same for its industry/sector.

Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years): This is the average annual (trailing-12-month) EPS growth rate over the last 3-5 years. This metric helps investors see how a company's EPS has grown from a long-term perspective.

Note: There are many factors that can influence short-term numbers — a recession will reduce this number, while a recovery will inflate it. The longterm perspective helps smooth out short-term events.

Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0): This is the estimated EPS growth rate for the current financial year. It is calculated as the consensus estimate for the current fiscal year (F1) divided by the reported EPS for the last completed fiscal year (F0).

Current Cash Flow Growth: It measures the latest year-over-year change in operating cash flow. Cash flow growth tells an investor how quickly a company is generating inflows of cash from operations. A positive change in the cash flow is desired and shows that more 'cash' is coming in than going out.

Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years): This is the annualized change in cash flow over the last 3-5 years. The change in a longer period helps put the current reading into proper perspective. By looking at the rate, rather than the actual dollar value, the comparison across the industry and peers becomes easier.

Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0): This metric looks at the estimated sales growth for the current year. It is calculated as sales estimate for the current fiscal year (F1) divided by the reported sales for the last completed fiscal year (F0).

Like EPS growth, a higher rate is better for sales growth. A look at a company's projected sales growth instantly tells you what the outlook is for their products and services. However, different sales growth rates are considered good for different industries, so it's better to compare sales growth rates of companies in the same industry group.

EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change: The percentage change in the Zacks Consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal year over the past week. The change in a company's consensus EPS estimate (or earnings estimate revision) has proven to be strongly correlated with the near-term price movement of its shares. It is an integral part of the Zacks Rank.

If a stock's consensus EPS estimate is \$1.10 now versus \$1.00 a week ago, that will be reflected as a 10% upward revision. If, on the other hand, it went from \$1.00 to 90 cents, that would be a 10% downward revision.

EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change: The percentage change in the Zacks Consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal year over the past four weeks.

A stock's earnings estimate revision in a 1-week period is important. But it's more meaningful to look at the longer-term revision. And, of course, the 4-week change helps put the 1-week change into proper perspective.

EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change: The percentage change in the Zacks Consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal year over the past 12 weeks.

This metric essentially shows how the consensus EPS estimate has changed over a period longer than 1 week or 4 weeks.

EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change: The percentage change in the Zacks Consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal quarter over the past four weeks.

While the revision in consensus EPS estimate for the current fiscal year is strongly correlated with the near-term price movement of its shares, the estimate revision for the current fiscal quarter is an important metric as well, especially over the short term, and particularly as a stock approaches its earnings date. If a stock's Q1 EPS estimate decreases ahead of its earnings release, it's usually a negative sign, whereas an increase is a positive sign.