

Corning Incorporated (GLW)

\$32.85 (As of 10/27/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$35.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

Zacks Recommendation:

Neutral

(Since: 10/26/20)

Prior Recommendation: Outperform

Short Term: 1-3 Months

Zacks Rank: (1-5)

3-Hold

Zacks Style Scores:

VGM:B

Value: C

Growth: C

Momentum: A

Summary

Corning reported healthy third-quarter 2020 results, wherein the top and the bottom lines beat the respective Zacks Consensus Estimate. The company holds a leadership position in each of the markets addressed by its five Market-Access Platforms. Corning is benefiting from improving demand and commercialization of its innovations. The company operates on a strong financial foundation that positions it for long-term growth. In the Specialty Materials segment, the performance is driven by demand for premium glasses and strength in its products for the IT and wearable markets. However, macroeconomic challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic persist. The Optical Communications segment is under pressure due to a decline in the passive optical market. For the TV market, the concentration of market share among a few large players is a concern.

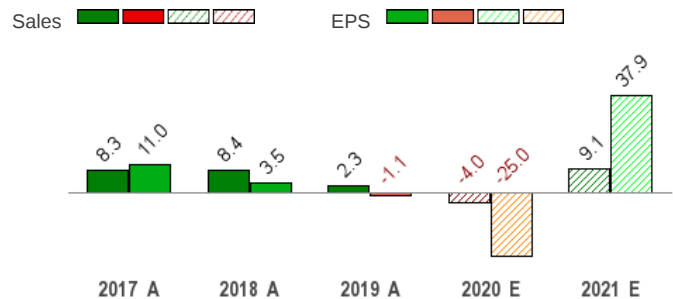
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	\$35.83 - \$17.44
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	4,324,528
Market Cap	\$25.0 B
Year-To-Date Price Change	12.9%
Beta	1.13
Dividend / Dividend Yield	\$0.88 / 2.7%
Industry	Communication - Components
Zacks Industry Rank	Bottom 30% (178 out of 254)

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	13.2%
Last Sales Surprise	2.9%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	2.5%
Expected Report Date	02/03/2021
Earnings ESP	1.1%
P/E TTM	24.5
P/E F1	24.9
PEG F1	10.4
P/S TTM	2.3

Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	2,595 E	2,812 E	3,005 E	3,077 E	12,199 E
2020	2,529 A	2,588 A	3,007 A	2,966 E	11,186 E
2019	2,850 A	2,986 A	2,969 A	2,851 A	11,656 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	\$0.36 E	\$0.42 E	\$0.47 E	\$0.52 E	\$1.82 E
2020	\$0.20 A	\$0.25 A	\$0.43 A	\$0.45 E	\$1.32 E
2019	\$0.40 A	\$0.45 A	\$0.44 A	\$0.46 A	\$1.76 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 10/27/2020. The reports text is as of 10/28/2020.

Overview

New York-based Corning Incorporated started out as a glass business that was reincorporated in 1936. The company has since developed its glass technologies to produce advanced glass substrates that are used in a large number of applications across multiple markets. Currently, Corning reports results under five operating segments.

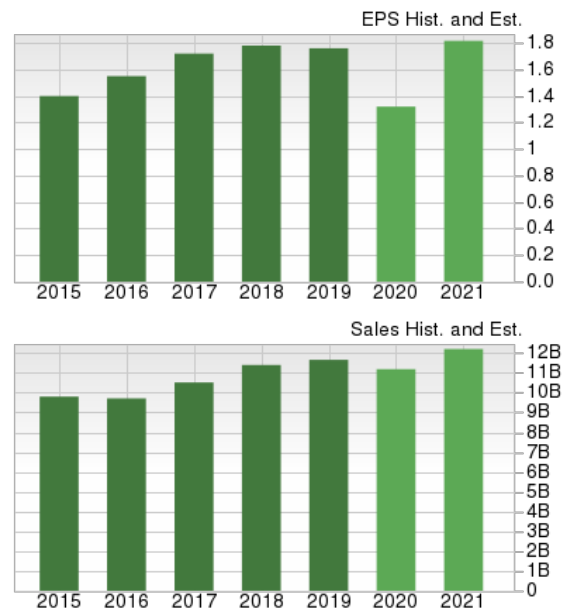
The **Display Technologies** segment (28.4% of total sales in third-quarter 2020) includes glass substrates that are commonly found in liquid crystal display (LCD) TVs, notebooks and flat-panel desktop personal computer (PC) monitors. The company's specialty, active-matrix substrates improve the brightness and sharpness of images.

The company's **Optical Communications** (31.3%) products may be categorized into two. The first category comprises cables. Products are typically sold to its own subsidiaries, which then distribute to end users. The second category is hardware and equipment, which comprises optical and copper connectivity products.

The **Environmental Technologies** (13%) segment makes ceramic substrates required for mobile and stationary pollution and emission control systems. The primary users of Corning's products are automotive and diesel engine manufacturers.

Specialty Materials (19.6%) include different formulations for glass, glass ceramics and fluoride crystals that render special properties to each separate substrate, making it suitable for specific industrial and commercial use.

Life Sciences (7.7%) segment products are sold under the Corning, Costar and Pyrex brands primarily for laboratory equipment, such as microplate products, coated slides, filter plates for genomics sample preparation, plastic cell culture dishes, flasks, cryogenic vials, roller bottles, mass cell culture products, liquid handling instruments, Pyrex glass beakers, serological pipettes, centrifuge tubes and laboratory filtration products.



Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Buy:

- ▲ Corning delivered a trailing four-quarter positive earnings surprise of 40.7%, on average. The company reorganized its operating structure after extensive analysis and leadership review. Designed to unlock opportunities for valuable synergies, the structure aligns executive management and business teams around five Market-Access Platforms (MAPs) — Mobile Consumer Electronics, Optical Communications, Automotive, Life Sciences and Display. It holds a leadership position in each of the markets addressed by its five MAPs. Through 2023, the company expects to deliver 6-8% compound annual sales growth and 12-15% compound annual earnings per share growth while investing \$10 billion to \$12 billion in Research, Development and Engineering (RD&E), capital, and mergers and acquisitions. It plans to expand the operating margin and Return on Invested Capital (ROIC), and deliver \$8 billion to \$10 billion to shareholders, including annual dividend per share increase of at least 10%. To deliver its goals, the company expects to add an incremental \$3 billion to \$4 billion in annual sales and improve profitability by the end of 2023. The company extended performance under its 2020-2023 Strategy & Growth Framework. It is focused on its portfolio and utilizing financial strength to enhance shareholder returns. The company's capabilities are becoming increasingly vital to diverse industries.
- ▲ Corning is benefiting from improving demand and commercialization of its innovations. The company operates on a strong financial foundation that positions it for long-term growth. Multiple factors should drive Corning's fiber optic solutions business over the next several years, primarily the increasing use of mobile devices that require efficient data transfer and efficient networking systems. Supporting this trend is the proliferation of clouds, which are resulting in increased storage and even computing on a virtual plane. Since both consumers and enterprises are using the network more, there is tremendous demand for quality networking. Also, data consumption patterns are changing. For instance, there is a growing propensity to consume video content thus creating the need for faster data transfer. Since optical networks are more efficient and most of the existing networks are copper-based, the demand for optical solutions is particularly strong. Corning has several products focused on the datacenter with a portfolio consisting of optical fiber, hardware, cable and connectors that helps it to create optical solutions to meet evolving customer needs.
- ▲ In the Specialty Materials segment, the performance is driven by demand for premium glasses and strength in its products for the IT and wearable markets. Corning is a leading innovator in the glass substrate industry. The company has been developing formulations that are not only suitable for imparting superior picture quality, but also taking care of their effects on the environment. Corning's generation 10 substrates use the proprietary EAGLE XG formulation, which serves both these purposes. Corning was the first glass substrate developer with the generation 10 capability. A higher generation substrate is a larger-sized substrate, which enables panel makers to reduce manufacturing costs since more panels can be built from each substrate. Corning's capability positions it to better serve the secular increase in demand for LCD panels. The company's fusion technology reduces glass thickness, enabling panel manufacturers to do away with thinning costs that are usually necessary for making slimmer, lighter and more power efficient consumer devices. Also, the company's Iris glass presents significant growth opportunity.
- ▲ To accelerate growth, Corning is leveraging the automotive market to disrupt the 6 billion square-foot auto glazing market based on annual consumption. Corning announced a joint venture (JV) with Saint-Goban Sekurit to develop, manufacture and sell lightweight automotive glazing solutions. Per this JV, the company will continue to produce and market Gorilla Glass and other glazers, retaining 100% ownership of the glass business. This venture allows the company to move forward in the value chain beyond glass to manufacture and sell glazing solutions with a leading producer. It also provides a low-cost path for Corning to scale Gorilla Glass glazing solutions worldwide.
- ▲ Corning has made significant headway in the Life Sciences segment as it secured government funding to substantially augment the domestic manufacturing capacity of glass vials for vaccines. The company will receive \$204 million from the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority ("BARDA"), which forms part of the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The investment will facilitate Corning to scale up its manufacturing capabilities at three U.S. facilities — Big Flats, NY; Durham, NC; and Vineland, NJ — to bridge the demand-supply gap for glass containers as pharma companies accelerate clinical trials to develop therapeutic and preventative options for coronavirus. In particular, Corning will speed up the production of indigenously-built Valor Glass, which is specifically designed for pharmaceutical use with superior chemical durability and minimal particulate contamination for faster and more reliable drug manufacturing and delivery. The federal funds are likely to help the company strengthen its position as a leading packaging provider in the healthcare segment.

Corning is benefiting from improving demand and commercialization of its innovations. The company operates on a strong financial foundation that positions it for long-term growth.

Reasons To Sell:

- ▼ Corning faces price erosion at the rate of 1-2% per quarter in the Display Technologies segment. We expect prices to remain a drag on margins, despite an improving demand/supply situation. Although management believes that 1-2% erosion per quarter could be tackled through cost containment, we assume there would be a limit to cost control. Moreover, macroeconomic challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic persist. The Optical Communications segment is under pressure due to a decline in the passive optical market.
- ▼ End market diversification is limited at present, with the display and optical segments accounting for almost 60% of total revenues. Since the Display Technologies and Specialty Materials segments are largely dependent on consumer spending, particularly on LCD TVs and mobile PCs, this further narrows down the market. Although the company is expected to benefit from massive growth in China, Chinese panel makers with whom Corning has limited relationship are entering the market. Building a significant position in China in the current situation is a big challenge. Also, while Gorilla Glass (GG) is being met with enthusiasm, its growing contribution to revenues will increase the dependence on display markets. Another concern with respect to the display market in general and the TV market in particular is the concentration of market share in the hands of a few large players. The loss of a single customer or its decision to cut orders could have significant impact on Corning's results.
- ▼ There is growing interest in sapphire substrates that could replace Corning's GG. Sapphire substrates are far more scratch-resistant than GG and therefore less likely to break. However, it is heavier and transmits less light, so its use is relatively limited (camera lens, thumb-print scanner, high end watch covers and in select smartphone screens). Current manufacturing technologies are also more expensive, but the situation could improve somewhat with volumes. Another competing technology that is a cause of concern is plastic Organic Light-Emitting Diode (OLED). Plastic brings with itself flexibility and practically removes all chances of breaking. However, manufacturing inefficiencies remain. Although Corning is working on glass improvements, these aren't likely to affect revenues soon while evolving technologies remain a constant threat.
- ▼ As of Sep 30, 2020, the company had \$2,514 million in cash and cash equivalents with \$7,822 million of long-term debt compared with the respective tallies of \$2,158 million and \$7,797 million at the end of the previous quarter. Corning currently has a debt-to-capital ratio of 0.39 compared with 0.67 of the industry. The times interest earned (TIE) ratio has declined over the past few quarters to 2.1 at present relative to 1.4 of the industry. This suggests that the company is less likely to meet its debt obligations. However, it has a dividend payout rate of 62.2%. The rate has increased steadily over the past quarters, indicating that the company is rewarding its shareholders. It is to be seen whether Corning reduces its dividend in the near future due to disruptions stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Macroeconomic challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic persist. The Optical Communications segment is under pressure due to a decline in the passive optical market.

Last Earnings Report

Corning Q3 Earnings Beat on Demand Growth, Innovation

Corning reported healthy third-quarter 2020 results, wherein the top and the bottom lines beat the respective Zacks Consensus Estimate.

Bottom Line

On a GAAP basis, net income in the quarter was \$427 million or 48 cents per share compared with \$337 million or 38 cents per share in the year-ago quarter. The improvement was primarily driven by a net transaction-related gain of \$498 million.

Core net income came in at \$380 million or 43 cents per share compared with \$397 million or 44 cents per share in the prior-year quarter. The bottom line beat the Zacks Consensus Estimate by 5 cents, delivering a positive surprise of 13.2%.

Top Line

Quarterly GAAP net sales increased 2.3% year over year to \$3,001 million, led by Specialty Materials and Display Technologies. Core sales grew to \$3,007 million from \$2,969 million in the year-ago quarter. The top line surpassed the consensus estimate of \$2,921 million.

Segment Results

Net sales in **Optical Communications** declined 9.7% year over year to \$909 million. This was due to the decline in the passive optical market. The segment's net income was \$115 million compared with \$127 million in the prior-year quarter.

Net sales in **Display Technologies** were \$827 million compared with \$793 million in the prior-year quarter, supported by higher glass volume. The segment's net income was \$196 million compared with \$185 million in the year-ago quarter.

Specialty Materials' net sales were up 23.1% year over year to \$570 million. The upside was driven by demand for premium glasses, Corning's new glass-ceramic product (Ceramic Shield) and strength in its products for the IT and wearable markets. The segment's net income was \$146 million compared with \$92 million in the prior-year quarter.

Environmental Technologies' net sales fell 4.5% year over year to \$379 million. This was a result of vehicle manufacturers' suspended production in key markets. The segment's net income was \$69 million compared with \$79 million in the prior-year quarter.

Net sales in **Life Sciences** were down 13% year over year to \$223 million. This was due to research lab closures in EMEA and North America. The segment's net income declined to \$28 million from \$41 million reported in the prior-year quarter.

Other Details

Quarterly cost of sales increased 4.3% year over year to \$2,000 million. Gross profit slipped to \$1,001 million from \$1,017 million. Core gross profit was \$1,130 million compared with \$1,156 million recorded in the prior-year quarter, with respective margins of 37.6% and 38.9%. Operating income was \$257 million compared with \$365 million in the prior-year quarter.

Cash Flow & Liquidity

In the first nine months of 2020, Corning generated \$1,406 million of net cash from operating activities compared with \$1,013 million in the prior-year period. As of Sep 30, the company had \$2,514 million in cash and cash equivalents with \$7,822 million of long-term debt.

Quarter Ending 09/2020

Report Date	Oct 27, 2020
Sales Surprise	2.93%
EPS Surprise	13.16%
Quarterly EPS	0.43
Annual EPS (TTM)	1.34

Recent News

On Oct 26, 2020, Corning introduced its newest innovation to help telecommunications network operators meet burgeoning demand for bandwidth. This includes 5G-ready terminals and connectors that are miniaturized to accommodate more fiber connections in smaller spaces. Corning's Evolv Hardened Connectivity Solutions with Pushlok Technology have been designed to streamline fiber deployment for all types of communications networks.

Valuation

Corning's shares are up 8.6% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry are down 5.6% over the past year, but stocks in the Zacks Computer and Technology sector are up 35.3% in the same period.

The S&P 500 Index is up 11.8% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 2.76X trailing 12-month book value, which compares to 3.48X for the Zacks sub-industry, 7.84X for the Zacks sector and 5.88X for the S&P 500 Index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 2.76X and as low as 1.19X, with a 5-year median of 1.86X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in line with the market. Our \$35 price target reflects 12.68X trailing 12-month book value.

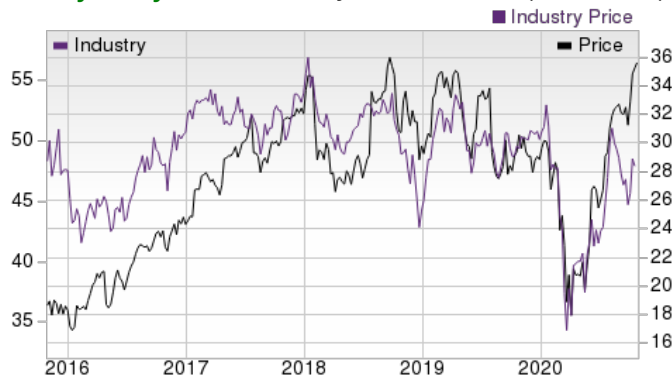
The table below shows summary valuation data for GLW

Valuation Multiples - GLW					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/B TTM	Current	2.76	3.48	7.84	5.88
	5-Year High	2.76	3.7	8.31	6.2
	5-Year Low	1.19	1.12	4.09	3.75
	5-Year Median	1.86	2.52	5.59	4.91
P/E F12M	Current	20.53	21.88	26.61	21.75
	5-Year High	22.31	32.87	28	23.47
	5-Year Low	10.94	15.16	16.95	15.27
	5-Year Median	15.82	21.88	19.95	17.68
P/S F12M	Current	2.29	1.88	4.18	4.03
	5-Year High	2.88	2.95	4.48	4.31
	5-Year Low	1.18	1.54	2.77	3.18
	5-Year Median	2.22	2.07	3.44	3.67

As of 10/27/2020

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Bottom 30% (178 out of 254)



Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Acacia Communications, Inc. (ACIA)	Neutral	3
Arista Networks, Inc. (ANET)	Neutral	3
Altice USA, Inc. (ATUS)	Neutral	2
Knowles Corporation (KN)	Neutral	3
Plantronics, Inc. (PLT)	Neutral	3
Spirent Communications PLC (SPMY)	Neutral	3
TESSCO Technologies Incorporated (TESS)	Neutral	3
Viavi Solutions Inc. (VIAV)	Neutral	2

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

Industry Comparison Industry: Communication - Components				Industry Peers		
	GLW	X Industry	S&P 500	ANET	ATUS	PLT
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	3	2	3
VGM Score	B	-	-	C	A	A
Market Cap	25.02 B	167.35 M	23.55 B	16.01 B	15.55 B	740.72 M
# of Analysts	4	3	13	11	6	4
Dividend Yield	2.68%	0.00%	1.68%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Value Score	C	-	-	C	A	B
Cash/Price	0.08	0.15	0.07	0.17	0.12	0.36
EV/EBITDA	11.22	10.03	13.09	14.89	9.26	22.10
PEG F1	10.06	2.83	2.67	2.64	NA	NA
P/B	2.37	2.98	3.35	5.27	13.43	NA
P/CF	8.20	13.80	12.78	22.07	6.30	0.74
P/E F1	24.14	26.01	20.70	24.13	38.14	9.93
P/S TTM	2.32	1.55	2.55	7.37	1.58	0.46
Earnings Yield	4.02%	3.08%	4.54%	4.15%	2.60%	10.07%
Debt/Equity	0.74	0.00	0.70	0.00	21.01	-10.84
Cash Flow (\$/share)	4.01	0.21	6.92	9.54	4.27	24.52
Growth Score	C	-	-	C	B	A
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	4.02%	8.24%	10.10%	44.83%	NA	3.15%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	-25.00%	-13.31%	-1.78%	-10.31%	235.71%	-41.53%
Current Cash Flow Growth	3.88%	-1.54%	5.49%	22.40%	6.97%	171.96%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	-1.86%	14.62%	8.50%	57.99%	NA	50.11%
Current Ratio	2.09	2.20	1.37	5.59	0.69	1.36
Debt/Capital	37.83%	0.77%	42.02%	0.00%	95.46%	NA
Net Margin	2.71%	-3.86%	10.41%	34.67%	1.91%	-52.48%
Return on Equity	11.50%	-0.27%	14.92%	22.29%	14.30%	17.30%
Sales/Assets	0.38	0.71	0.50	0.53	0.29	0.61
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	-4.03%	0.00%	-0.46%	-2.48%	1.84%	-12.30%
Momentum Score	A	-	-	B	C	D
Daily Price Change	-4.09%	-0.44%	-1.23%	0.80%	-0.77%	0.39%
1-Week Price Change	1.08%	0.00%	0.01%	-5.03%	-3.46%	6.96%
4-Week Price Change	2.75%	1.49%	1.76%	0.04%	2.24%	45.91%
12-Week Price Change	5.32%	-6.55%	1.86%	-20.24%	-3.90%	-4.62%
52-Week Price Change	8.56%	-3.61%	-0.11%	-14.40%	-11.31%	-54.89%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	4,324,528	45,923	1,803,058	603,288	5,837,667	733,875
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	2.92%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	2.52%	0.00%	0.28%	0.00%	2.92%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	10.00%	7.30%	3.06%	2.10%	23.68%	13.85%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	0.56%	0.00%	0.12%	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	C
Growth Score	C
Momentum Score	A
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.

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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.