Helen of Troy Limited (HELE)

$218.20 (As of 04/06/21)

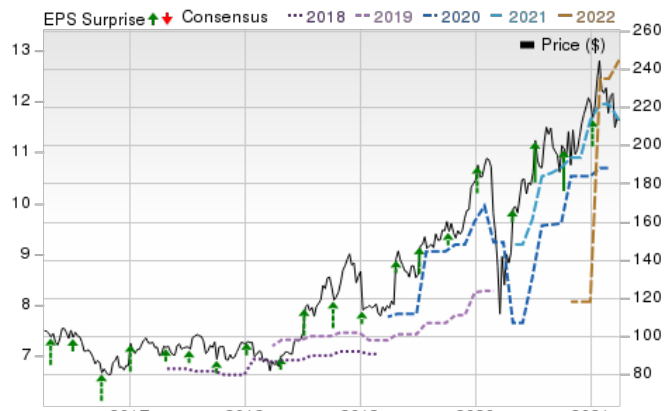
Price Target (6-12 Months): **$229.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months	**Zacks Recommendation:**	**Neutral**
	(Since: 03/02/21)	
	Prior Recommendation: Outperform	
Short Term: 1-3 Months	**Zacks Rank:** (1-5)	**4-Sell**
	Zacks Style Scores:	VGM:B
	Value: B | Growth: B | Momentum: C	

Summary

Shares of Helen of Troy have underperformed the industry in the past six months. The company witnessed drab operating margin during the third quarter of fiscal 2021 thanks to higher marketing, freight and distribution expenses as well as adverse product mix in the Housewares segment. Apart from this, Helen of Troy's international presence exposes it to risks associated with adverse foreign currency rates. Nevertheless, the company is gaining from strength in its Leadership Brands. During fiscal third-quarter, sales from such brands rallied 33.9% year-over-year. Also, solid online growth and contributions from Drybar Products' buyout are driving the upside. Such trends were seen in the quarter with sales and earnings increasing and beating the Zacks Consensus Estimate. Moreover, management provided an optimistic view for fiscal 2021.

Price, Consensus & Surprise

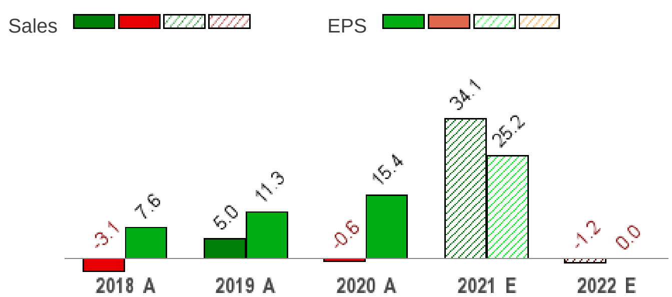


Source: Zacks Investment Research

Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	**$265.97 - $130.59**
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	**263,583**
Market Cap	**$5.2 B**
Year-To-Date Price Change	**-3.5%**
Beta	**0.86**
Dividend / Dividend Yield	**$0.00 / 0.0%**
Industry	**Cosmetics**
Zacks Industry Rank	**Bottom 18% (208 out of 253)**
Last EPS Surprise	**20.9%**
Last Sales Surprise	**13.4%**
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	**-2.5%**
Expected Report Date	**04/27/2021**
Earnings ESP	**0.0%**
P/E TTM	**18.0**
P/E F1	**18.8**
PEG F1	**2.0**
P/S TTM	**2.6**

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Sales Estimates (millions of $)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022	433 E	516 E	621 E	514 E	2,061 E
2021	421 A	531 A	638 A	496 E	2,086 E
2020	376 A	414 A	475 A	442 A	1,555 A

EPS Estimates

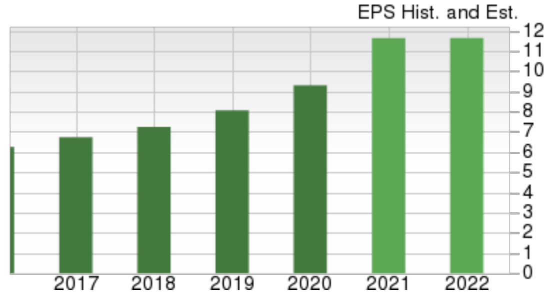
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022	$2.62 E	$3.61 E	$3.85 E	$2.06 E	$11.64 E
2021	$2.53 A	$3.77 A	$3.76 A	$1.56 E	$11.64 E
2020	$2.06 A	$2.24 A	$3.12 A	$1.88 A	$9.30 A

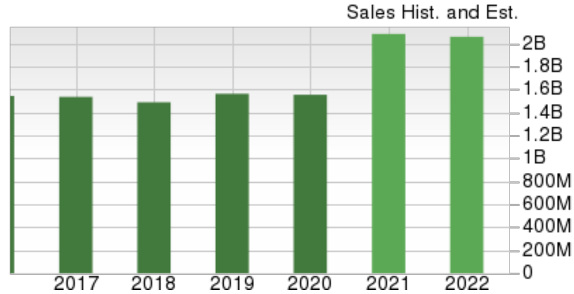
*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and sales estimates, is as of 04/06/2021. The report's text and the analyst-provided price target are as of 04/07/2021.

Overview

Founded in Texas in 1968, Helen of Troy is a leading consumer products player that operates through a diversified portfolio of renowned brands. The company, which was reorganized in Bermuda in 1994, has created a robust market position through its focus on product innovation, quality and effective pricing.





Helen of Troy operates through the following segments:

Housewares segment offers products required in cooking, cleaning, beverage services and other activities to make consumers' daily life convenient. Housewares sales are mainly made to retailers, alongside some direct-to-consumer distribution.

Health & Home segment offers products related to home environment and healthcare. Segment sales here are also mainly directed to retailers, alongside some direct-to-consumer distribution.

Beauty segment sells a wide range of personal care and beauty appliances products mainly to retailers and supply wholesalers.

The company divested its Nutritional Supplements segment in December 2017, through the sale of Healthy Directions LLC and its subsidiaries.

The company sells its products through merchandisers, warehouse clubs, home improvement stores, grocery and specialty stores, drugstore chains, wholesalers and distributors. Products of the company are marketed under a number of trademarks, many of which the company owns and some which have been licensed. In fact, substantial portion of revenues in the company's Beauty and Health & Home segments depend on continued use of trademarks licensed under various agreements. Further, the company extensively collaborates with retailers to come up with new product versions with exclusive designs and packaging.

Helen of Troy's products are marketed in over 90 countries.

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Buy:

> Strength in the company's Leadership Brands has been supporting top-line growth. Also, the company's online business is yielding well.

▲ **Focus on Leadership Brands**: The company has been focused on making solid investments in its "Leadership Brands," which is a portfolio of market leading brands. Brands in this portfolio, including OXO, Hydro Flask, Vicks, Braun, Honeywell, PUR, Hot Tools and Drybar are positioned well to enhance market share. These brands account for a significant chunk of the company's sales, which generate solid margins and volumes. The company's constant investments in these brands that are considered most productive have been delivering robust results. The company made another move in this direction, when it acquired Drybar Products in January 2020. Drybar Products, which marks the company's eighth Leadership Brand, is yielding results and was a contributor to the top line in third-quarter fiscal 2021.

During fiscal third quarter, sales from the company's eight Leadership Brands surged 33.9%, including 4.6 percentage points of growth from the Drybar products acquisition. Also, as part of its strategy of keeping focus on Leadership Brands, the company decided to divest certain assets of its mass channel personal care business. It expects the divestiture to be completed within fiscal 2021.

▲ **Solid Q3 Results**: Helen of Troy reported robust third-quarter fiscal 2021 results, with the top and the bottom line increasing year over year and beating the Zacks Consensus Estimate. Results gained from strength in Beauty and Health & Home segments along with solid online growth and contributions from Drybar Products' acquisition. Notably, adjusted earnings increased 20.5% to $3.76 per share driven by higher operating income in the Health & Home and Beauty businesses. Net sales advanced 34.3% to $637.7 million on the back of 30.3% increase in organic sales along with contributions from the Drybar Products acquisition. Organic sales growth was backed by increase in brick and mortar revenues, strong international sales and solid online revenues.

▲ **Impressive Outlook**: Helen of Troy provided an optimistic view for fiscal 2021 on assumptions that the growth trends witnessed during the fiscal second and third quarter will persist through the fourth quarter as well. The company expects net sales in the bracket of $2.075-$2.1 billion, which indicates growth in the range of 21.5-23.0% for fiscal 2021. In the Housewares segment, management expects sales growth in the range of 12-12.5%. Sales in the Health & Home unit are expected to rise 27.5%-30%. In the Beauty segment, the company anticipated sales growth of 27-28%. Additionally, management expects adjusted earnings in the range of $11.50-$11.70 for fiscal 2021. The company's outlook for the fiscal is based on the assumption that the COVID-19 led demand trends will persist.

▲ **Solid Digital Efforts**: The company is likely to keep gaining from its consistent online sales and digital marketing efforts. Notably, online sales advanced nearly 34% year over year in the third quarter of fiscal 2021 and contributed roughly 24% to the company's top line. Management remains on track to make continued investments in this arena, in an attempt to keep pace with the evolving consumer environment. In fact, the company has been persistently augmenting its digital presence through sophisticated marketing plans and improved content. Earlier, the company stated that online development has been a key area of focus for its transformation plan — both Phase 1 and 2.

▲ **Strategic Initiatives**: Helen of Troy is making major investments in key areas to continue driving growth. To this end, the company is focused on investing in direct-to-consumer channels, new product development, customization, marketing, next-gen distribution infrastructure among others. Notably, management is on track to continue to invest in key growth areas as part of its Phase II Transformation efforts.

Moreover, the company expects to create further value though strategic acquisition in the future. Apart from these, in December 2020 Helen of Troy, via its subsidiaries, entered into a 100-year exclusive Trademark License Agreement with Revlon to license the trademark for hair care appliances and tools of the latter. Management, in its fiscal third-quarter earnings call, highlighted that its Revlon business has more than doubled in recent years, making it a major catalyst of its global hair appliance business. Well, this marks another step for Helen of Troy to bolster its Beauty business and strengthen its brand portfolio.

Reasons To Sell:

> Adverse currency movements affected the company’s Beauty segment in the third quarter of fiscal 2021.

- **Drab Operating Margin**: During the third quarter of fiscal 2021, Helen of Troy’s adjusted operating margin contracted 1.4 percentage points to 17.6%. The downside was triggered by higher marketing, freight and distribution expenses as well as adverse product mix in the Housewares unit. Moreover, increased royalty expenses, legal and other professional fees as well as higher bad debt expenses were a drag. We believe that persistence of such trends may dent the company’s performance. Though the company's stock has increased 12.2% during the past six months, it has underperformed the industry’s growth of 30.3%.

- **Currency Headwinds**: Helen of Troy’s international presence exposes it to risks associated with adverse currency movements. The same was in fact noticed in the third quarter of fiscal 2021, wherein unfavorable currency fluctuations affected sales in the company’s Beauty segment. We believe that volatility in currency movements remains a concern for the company.

- **Financial Status**: As of Nov 30, 2020, Helen of Troy’s total debt of $440.4 million increased from $300.1 million reported in the preceding quarter. Apart from this, the company’s leverage ratio was 1.3 times as of the end of third-quarter fiscal 2021 compared with 0.9 in the fiscal second quarter. The increase reflects incremental borrowings to find open market share buybacks among other reason.

- **Cough/Cold/Flu Variability**: Seasonality is a major concern for Helen of Troy’s Health & Home segment, which is extremely correlated to the severity of winter and occurrence of cold/cough/flu. Notably, the company’s thermometer sales are correlated to pediatric fever and Vicks humidifier sales are associated with congestion and cough. During third-quarter fiscal 2021 earnings call, management highlighted that the present cough, cold, and flu incidence levels are lower than historical averages. Social distancing, higher hygiene protocols, restricted back-to-school, work from home and reduced travel among other are somewhat causing reduced cold and flu incidence.

Last Earnings Report

Helen of Troy's Q3 Earnings Beat Estimates, Sales Up Y/Y

Quarter Ending	11/2020
Report Date	Jan 07, 2021
Sales Surprise	13.43%
EPS Surprise	20.90%
Quarterly EPS	3.76
Annual EPS (TTM)	11.94

Helen of Troy's adjusted earnings increased 20.5% year over year to $3.76 per share, which surpassed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $3.11. Higher operating income in the Health & Home and Beauty businesses was the key driver. The upside was partly offset by elevated income tax expenses and lower operating income in the Housewares segment.

Net sales advanced 34.3% year over year to $637.7 million, which beat the consensus mark of $562.2 million. The year-over-year growth was driven by an increase of 30.3% in organic sales along with contributions worth 3.7% from the Drybar Products acquisition. Notably, organic sales growth was backed by increase in brick and mortar revenues, strong international sales along with solid online revenues. The company's online sales channel registered net sales growth of nearly 34%. Leadership brands registered a rise of 33.9%, while the company's core business witnessed growth of 35.2%. These upsides were somewhat negated by sluggish back-to-school season stemming from COVID-19 related school closures, declines in non-core business as well as reduced traffic at specific retail stores.

Consolidated gross margin moved up 0.9 percentage points to 45.1%, courtesy of favorable product mix in the Organic Beauty business and the Health and Home segment, as well as positive impact from Drybar Products' buyout and improved channel mix in the Housewares unit. The upsides were partially offset by increased inbound freight expenses and unfavorable product mix in the Housewares unit.

Adjusted operating income surged 24% to $111.9 million. However adjusted operating margin contracted 1.4 percentage points to 17.6%. The downside was triggered by higher marketing, freight and distribution expenses as well as adverse product mix in the Housewares unit. Moreover, increased royalty expenses, legal and other professional fees and higher bad debt expenses were a drag. These were somewhat offset by higher net sales, favorable product mix within Health & Home and the Organic Beauty business, positive channel mix within the Housewares segment, as well as lower travel expenses due to COVID-19. Adjusted EBITDA grew 24% to $117 million.

Segmental Performance

Net sales in the **Housewares** segment increased 21.4% to $222.4 million driven by growth of 21.2% in organic business. Organic growth was backed by increased demand for OXO brand products amid COVID-19, which resulted in higher brick and mortar, online and international sales. Adjusted operating income in the unit declined 8.3% to $40.9 million.

Net sales in the **Health & Home** segment advanced 34.6% to $250.2 million, thanks to organic business growth of 33.8%. Organic sales were backed by burgeoning demand for healthy living and healthcare products across domestic and international markets, both in stores and online amid the pandemic. Adjusted operating income increased 22.5% to $35.3 million.

Sales in the **Beauty** segment jumped 56.2% to $165.2 million, thanks to contributions from the buyout of Drybar Products along with organic business growth stemming from strength in the appliance category, retail holiday promotions, expansion in distribution as well as higher international sales. Adjusted operating income surged significantly to $35.8 million.

Other Financial Details

Helen of Troy ended the quarter with cash and cash equivalents of $156.7 million and total debt (short and long-term) of $440.4 million. For the nine months ended Nov 30, net cash from operating activities was $249.7 million.

We note that on Dec 22, 2020, the company entered into a renewed license agreement with Revlon, in respect of the latter's trademark for hair care appliances and tools. To attain this exclusive global license, the company paid a one-time, up-front license fee of $72.5 million. As a result of this move, the company will not be obligated to pay royalties or other fees to Revlon, from December 22, 2020 onwards.

Additionally, we note that the company repurchased shares worth $191.6 million during the quarter, in the open market.

Guidance

For fiscal 2021, the company expects net sales in the bracket of $2.075-$2.1 billion, indicating growth in the range of 21.5-23.0%. For its Housewares segment, the company expects sales growth in the range of 12-12.5%. Sales in the Health & Home unit are expected to rise 27.5%-30%. In the Beauty segment, the company anticipated sales growth of 27% to 28%. Additionally, the company expects adjusted earnings in the range of $11.50-$11.70.

The company's outlook for the fiscal is based on the assumption that the COVID-19 led demand trends will persist. Also the company expects below average impacts from the cough/cold/flu season during the fourth quarter. Further, the company expects capital asset expenditures between $32 million and $35 million for full fiscal year 2021.

Valuation

Helen of Troy shares are up 1.8% in the year-to-date period and up 55.9% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry are up 8% and the Zacks Consumer Staples sector gained 2.21% in the year-to-date period. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry went up 67.8% and the sector gained 23.7%.

The S&P 500 index is up 9.1 in the year-to-date period and 51.3% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 18.55X forward 12-month earnings, which compares to 45.36X for the Zacks sub-industry, 20.37X for the Zacks sector and 22.97X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 27.31X and as low as 11.72X, with a 5-year median of 16.38X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in-line with the market. Our $229 price target reflects 19.48X forward 12-month earnings.

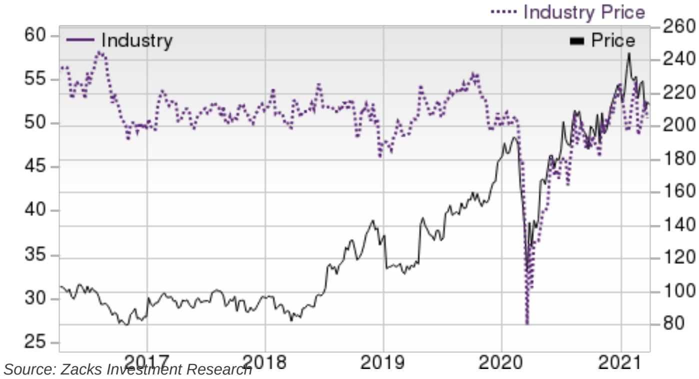
The table below shows summary valuation data for HELE

Valuation Multiples - HELE

		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	18.55	45.36	20.37	22.97
	5-Year High	27.31	45.81	22.4	23.83
	5-Year Low	11.72	19.65	16.52	15.3
	5-Year Median	16.38	26.58	19.53	18
P/S F12M	Current	2.58	7.54	10.29	4.71
	5-Year High	3.07	7.54	11.96	4.71
	5-Year Low	1.37	1.53	8.6	3.21
	5-Year Median	1.89	3.08	10.35	3.71
EV/EBITDA F12M	Current	16.28	26.67	35.6	17.21
	5-Year High	18.23	32.48	38.26	18.81
	5-Year Low	9.62	8.72	25.83	13.02
	5-Year Median	12.97	18.34	34.1	15.76

As of 04/06/2021 *Source: Zacks Investment Research*

Industry Analysis **Zacks Industry Rank:** Bottom 18% (208 out of 253)



Source: Zacks Investment Research

Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Coty Inc. **(COTY)**	Neutral	3
e.l.f. Beauty Inc. **(ELF)**	Neutral	3
Inter Parfums, Inc. **(IPAR)**	Neutral	3
MANDOM CORP **(MDOMF)**	Neutral	4
Natura &Co Holding S.A. ADR **(NTCO)**	Neutral	4
Nu Skin Enterprises, Inc. **(NUS)**	Neutral	3
POLA ORBIS **(PORBF)**	Neutral	3
Revlon, Inc. **(REV)**	Neutral	4

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

Industry Comparison Industry: Cosmetics

Industry Peers

	HELE	X Industry	S&P 500	NUS	PORBF	REV
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	4	-	-	3	3	4
VGM Score	B	-	-	A	-	A
Market Cap	5.23 B	2.46 B	29.96 B	2.64 B	NA	665.39 M
# of Analysts	3	3	12	4	2	1
Dividend Yield	0.00%	0.00%	1.29%	2.92%	0.00%	0.00%
Value Score	B	-	-	A	C	B
Cash/Price	0.03	0.07	0.06	0.16	NA	0.15
EV/EBITDA	25.75	24.44	16.88	7.71	NA	-103.79
PEG F1	1.96	4.65	2.38	NA	NA	NA
P/B	4.32	3.78	3.99	2.96	2.80	NA
P/CF	21.67	27.34	16.85	10.05	17.17	17.31
P/E F1	18.43	44.18	22.08	13.13	38.98	NA
P/S TTM	2.58	1.80	3.42	1.02	NA	0.35
Earnings Yield	5.43%	2.05%	4.45%	7.61%	2.57%	-21.90%
Debt/Equity	0.36	0.36	0.66	0.34	NA	-1.67
Cash Flow ($/share)	10.07	1.15	6.78	5.21	1.16	0.69
Growth Score	B	-	-	A	C	A
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	11.93%	-0.07%	9.39%	2.65%	NA	NA
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	0.03%	16.97%	15.29%	9.09%	750.00%	-1.47%
Current Cash Flow Growth	13.99%	5.76%	0.44%	6.05%	-26.74%	-36.56%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	4.22%	4.22%	7.37%	2.26%	NA	-30.26%
Current Ratio	1.82	1.56	1.39	1.66	5.58	1.24
Debt/Capital	26.59%	30.19%	41.26%	25.46%	NA	NA
Net Margin	11.25%	1.97%	10.59%	7.41%	2.98%	-32.51%
Return on Equity	24.39%	5.52%	14.86%	23.09%	5.08%	NA
Sales/Assets	0.97	0.77	0.51	1.41	0.86	0.68
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	-1.18%	8.00%	7.36%	7.74%	8.05%	16.84%
Momentum Score	C	-	-	B	-	C
Daily Price Change	1.72%	0.00%	0.05%	0.75%	0.00%	-6.09%
1-Week Price Change	-0.80%	0.00%	0.35%	-0.62%	0.00%	0.66%
4-Week Price Change	-4.46%	2.13%	5.11%	1.65%	0.00%	7.12%
12-Week Price Change	1.18%	9.50%	8.79%	-5.12%	-3.87%	12.07%
52-Week Price Change	59.95%	57.51%	60.17%	139.71%	10.44%	20.49%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	263,583	52,893	2,103,543	573,438	0	231,683
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-9.26%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	-2.54%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-11.71%	-0.36%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	0.09%	0.09%	2.24%	6.57%	-15.52%	-0.36%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	NA%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	NA	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	B
Growth Score	B
Momentum Score	C
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

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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.

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 forwardlooking 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 mediumterm 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 mostrecent 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 a 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.