PPG Industries (PPG)

$129.25 (As of 09/17/20)

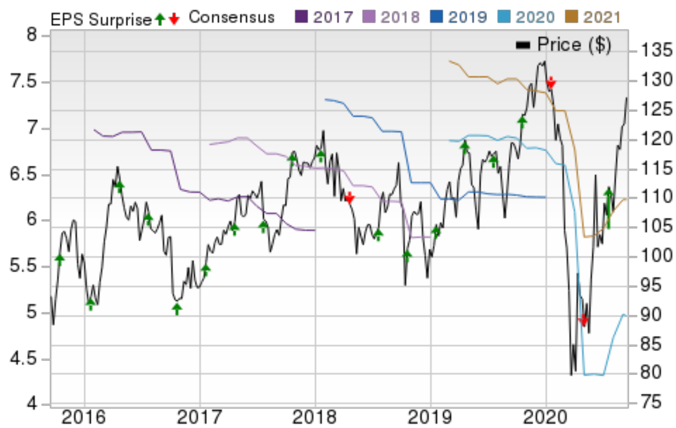
Price Target (6-12 Months): **$136.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months	**Zacks Recommendation:** (Since: 09/17/20) Prior Recommendation: Outperform	**Neutral**
Short Term: 1-3 Months	**Zacks Rank:** (1-5)	**3-Hold**
	Zacks Style Scores:	VGM:C
	Value: C | Growth: B | Momentum: D	

Summary

Earnings estimates for PPG Industries for the third quarter of 2020 have been stable of late. PPG Industries has diversified products offering and geographical presence. Cost savings from restructuring actions will also likely support the company's margins. PPG Industries is also committed to deploy cash on acquisitions and share repurchases. Buyouts are also expected to contribute to the company's sales. Moreover, the company has outperformed the industry in the past year. However, PPG Industries faces headwind from unfavorable currency translation. Unfavorable currency swings may continue to impact its sales and margins. Soft industrial demand due to the coronavirus pandemic is also expected to affect the company's sales volumes in the third quarter. The company's high debt level is another matter of concern.

Price, Consensus & Surprise

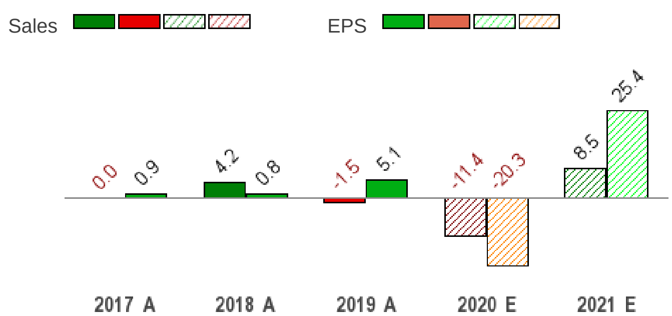


Source: Zacks Investment Research

Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	**$134.36 - $69.77**
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	**1,168,642**
Market Cap	**$30.5 B**
Year-To-Date Price Change	**-3.2%**
Beta	**1.26**
Dividend / Dividend Yield	**$2.16 / 1.7%**
Industry	**Chemical - Diversified**
Zacks Industry Rank	**Top 49% (124 out of 251)**
Last EPS Surprise	**52.3%**
Last Sales Surprise	**6.4%**
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	**-0.4%**
Expected Report Date	**10/15/2020**
Earnings ESP	**5.1%**
P/E TTM	**25.1**
P/E F1	**26.1**
PEG F1	**5.2**
P/S TTM	**2.2**

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Sales Estimates (millions of $)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	3,424 E	3,932 E	3,905 E	3,728 E	14,571 E
2020	3,377 A	3,015 A	3,493 E	3,514 E	13,425 E
2019	3,624 A	4,024 A	3,826 A	3,672 A	15,146 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	$1.32 E	$1.81 E	$1.80 E	$1.62 E	$6.22 E
2020	$1.19 A	$0.99 A	$1.48 E	$1.31 E	$4.96 E
2019	$1.38 A	$1.85 A	$1.67 A	$1.31 A	$6.22 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 09/17/2020. The reports text is as of 09/18/2020.

Overview

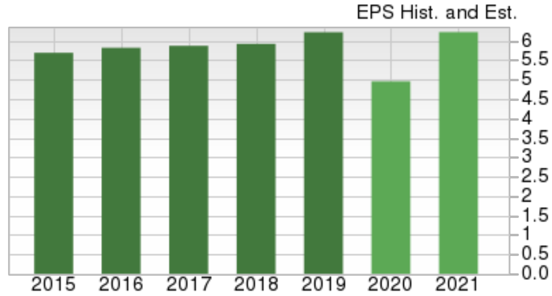
PPG Industries Inc., based in Pennsylvania, is a global supplier of paints, coatings, chemicals, specialty materials, glass, and fiber glass. The company has manufacturing facilities and equity affiliates in about 70 countries.

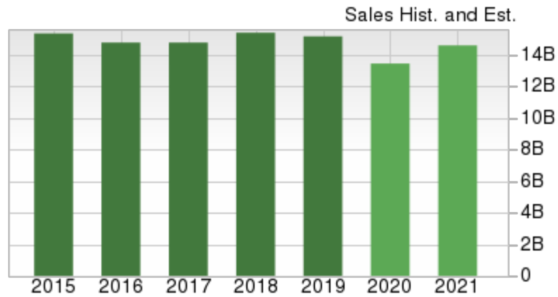
PPG Industries currently has two reportable segments: Performance Coatings and Industrial Coatings.

Performance Coatings: The division comprises refinish, aerospace, architectural coatings – Americas and Asia Pacific, architectural coatings – EMEA, and protective and marine coatings operating segments. The segment primarily supplies a variety of protective and decorative coatings, sealants and finishes along with paint strippers, stains and related chemicals, as well as transparencies and transparent armor.

Industrial Coatings: The segment consists of the automotive OEM coatings, industrial coatings, packaging coatings, and the specialty coatings and materials operating segments. The segment primarily supplies a variety of protective and decorative coatings and finishes along with adhesives, sealants, metal pretreatment products, optical monomers and coatings, precipitated silicas and other specialty materials.

PPG Industries recorded revenues of around $15.1 billion in 2019 with Performance Coatings and Industrial Coatings accounting for 60% and 40%, respectively.





PPG Industries is expanding inorganically through acquisitions. The company, in November 2014, completed its purchase of leading Mexican paint company – Consorcio Comex S.A. de C.V. – for $2.3 billion. Comex makes architectural and industrial coatings and related products in Mexico.

In January 2018, the company acquired Netherlands-based leading architectural paint and coatings wholesaler, ProCoatings. The buyout strengthens its architectural coatings Americas and Asia Pacific business within the Performance Coatings division. In January 2017, the company acquired certain assets of automotive refinish coatings company — Futian Xinshi — in the Guangdong province, China. The move enables the company to expand footprint in China.

In 2017, the company completed a multi-year strategic shift by divesting the Glass segment.

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Buy:

- PPG Industries has outperformed the industry it belongs to over a year. Its shares have gained 7.1% compared with the industry's rise of 3.9%. PPG Industries has a diversified business, both in terms of products offered and geographical presence. It has a leading position in several paints and coatings end markets. The company derives nearly a third of its revenues from emerging regions. This enables it to deliver growth to shareholders by tapping opportunities in fast growing regions.

Cost savings from restructuring actions should aid to PPG Industries' margins. Acquisitions should also contribute to its sales. The company also remains committed to boost returns to shareholders.

- The company is executing an aggressive cost cutting and restructuring strategy. Cost savings from these restructuring efforts will act as a positive catalyst for the company. To improve its cost structure, PPG Industries has announced significant restructuring actions mainly focused on regions and end-use markets with the weakest business conditions. The restructuring actions delivered $80 million of savings in 2018 and another $85 million in 2019. These actions also delivered more than $20 million in cost savings in the last reported quarter. The company is accelerating cost-saving initiatives amid a challenging environment and expects to deliver $60-$70 million in restructuring savings in second-half 2020. PPG Industries also expects incremental restructuring savings of $30-$35 million in the third quarter. The company, in June, also approved substantial restructuring actions to lower its global cost structure. The plan includes a voluntary separation program that was offered in the United States and Canada. Upon completion, PPG Industries anticipates the planned actions to offer $160-$170 million in annual pre-tax cost savings, with roughly $25-$35 million of savings predicted in 2020.

- PPG Industries is taking steps to grow its business inorganically. The acquisition of the North American architectural coatings business of AkzoNobel expanded its scale in the North American architectural paint market. PPG Industries also purchased Netherlands-based ProCoatings and U.S.-based specialized automotive refinish products manufacturer, SEM Products in 2018. The company also completed the buyouts of Hemmelrath and Whitford Worldwide in 2019. The company expects these three acquisitions to add around $400 million in annualized revenues. The buyouts will also provide the company with a broader range of technology and products to grow business. Notably, the SEM buyout has delivered strong financial performance in 2019. The acquisition of Dexmet Corporation also allowed the company to add value to its customers by enhancing product offerings as well as expanding R&D capabilities. The company, earlier this year, also closed the acquisitions of Industria Chimica Reggiana and Alpha Coating Technologies. These buyouts are expected to contributed to its sales in 2020.

- PPG Industries aims to boost shareholder returns with cash deployment. It has an impressive record of returning cash to shareholders through dividends and share buybacks. For 2019, the company has returned around $800 million to shareholders, which includes roughly $325 million of share repurchases and nearly $470 million in dividends. Moreover, the company recently raised its quarterly dividend by 6% to 54 cents per share. Notably, PPG Industries has raised its annual dividend payout for 49th straight year. The company paid dividend worth $120 million in the last reported quarter.

Reasons To Sell:

PPG Industries faces headwinds from soft industrial demand due to the coronavirus and unfavorable currency translation. The company's high debt level is another concern.

- Headwinds from weak demand amid the outbreak of coronavirus are expected to hurt the company's sales volumes in the third quarter of 2020. The company is seeing weak customer demand in automotive original equipment manufacturer, automotive refinish and aerospace coatings businesses. PPG Industries is seeing a reduction in automotive OEM industry production rates, mostly in the United States and Europe, which is affecting sales volumes in this market. Moreover, weaker demand due to lower miles driven is hurting volumes in automotive refinish. Sales volumes in aerospace also remain under pressure due to reduced customer builds and lower miles flown globally. Reduced customer activities in certain major regions are also hurting industrial volumes. PPG Industries expects total sales volume for the third quarter to decline 6-11%. It has also withdrawn its sales and earnings guidance for 2020 due to increased level of uncertainties over global demand.

- PPG Industries faces headwinds from unfavorable currency impact. Unfavorable currency swings reduced its sales by more than 3% or around $135 million in the last reported quarter. Unfavorable foreign currency translation dented net sales of the Performance Coatings unit by roughly 4% and also impacted sales in the Industrial Coatings unit by 3%. The company expects foreign currency translation headwinds to dent net sales by $50-$60 million in the third quarter of 2020. Currency impact on sales in the Performance Coatings unit is projected to be $30-$40 million while the same for the Industrial Coatings unit is $20-$25 million. As such, headwinds from unfavorable currency may continue to exert pressure on sales and margins.

- The company's high debt level is a concern. At the end of the second quarter of 2020, the company's total debt was $6,310 million, up from $6,207 million in the sequentially prior quarter and $5,499 million in the year-ago quarter. Further, its time-interest-earned ratio of 10.5 at the end of second-quarter 2020 fell from 12.7 in the prior quarter. As such, the company appears to have a higher default risk.

- PPG Industries' stretched valuation is another concern. Going by the EV/EBITDA (Enterprise Value/ Earnings before Interest, Tax, Depreciation and Amortization) multiple, which is often used to value chemical stocks, the company is currently trading at a trailing 12-month EV/EBITDA multiple of 15.95 compared with the industry average of 8.74.

Last Earnings Report

PPG Industries' Earnings & Sales Beat Estimates in Q2

Quarter Ending	06/2020
Report Date	Jul 16, 2020
Sales Surprise	6.43%
EPS Surprise	52.31%
Quarterly EPS	0.99
Annual EPS (TTM)	5.16

PPG Industries reported net income from continuing operations of $99 million or 42 per share in second-quarter 2020, down from the year-ago quarter's profit of $270 million or $1.13 per share.

Barring one-time items, adjusted earnings were 99 cents per share in the reported quarter, down 46.5% from $1.85 logged in the year-ago quarter. Nevertheless, the figure topped the Zacks Consensus Estimate of 65 cents.

Net sales declined 25.1% year over year to $3,015 million. However, the figure surpassed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $2,833 million. Unfavorable currency swings affected net sales by more than 3%. Sales volume fell 24% year over year.

Segment Highlights

Performance Coatings: Net sales in the segment amounted to around $2.1 billion in the second quarter, down 15% year over year. Sales volume in the segment declined around 15%. Unfavorable foreign currency translation impacted net sales by 4%.

Segment income declined 15% year over year to $362 million. Reduced sales volume associated with the coronavirus pandemic and unfavorable foreign currency translation were partly offset by higher selling prices, cost mitigation measures and restructuring initiatives.

Industrial Coatings: Sales in the segment totaled around $950 million, down roughly 40% from the prior-year quarter's figure. The benefits of slightly higher selling prices were offset by 38% decline in sales volume. Also, unfavorable foreign currency translation lowered sales by around 3% on a year-over-year basis.

Net income in the segment totaled $34 million, down around 85% year over year. Reduced sales volume due to customer shutdowns associated with the coronavirus pandemic were partly offset by modestly higher selling prices, cost mitigation measures and restructuring cost savings.

Financial Position

As of Jun 30, 2020, PPG Industries had cash and cash equivalents of $2,252 million, up 133.9% year over year. Long-term debt fell 4.8% year over year to $4,613 million.

Outlook

Going forward, the company expects to achieve restructuring savings of $60-$70 million in the second half of 2020.

Moreover, it anticipates corporate expenses of $50-$55 million and net interest expenses of $32-$36 million for the third quarter.

Recent News

PPG Industries Gets DOE Fund for Energy-Efficient Coatings

PPG Industries, on **Aug 13, 2020**, announced a partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy ("DOE") Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory ("LBNL") that is aimed at producing energy-efficient coatings systems for the automotive industry.

The company's project known as, Modeling Coating Flow and Dynamics during Drying, was selected to receive funding through the DOE High Performance Computing for Energy Innovation ("HPC4EI") program.

Scientists at PPG Industries along with LBNL experts will collaborate to model the complex physics, which contributes to paint flow and leveling in a two-layer coatings system. The insights gained from their collaboration is likely to accelerate the introduction of new multi-layer coatings systems that will reduce paint line energy consumption for automotive OEMs by up to 30%.

Notably, PPG Industries' initiative was one of 11 research projects chosen in the HPC4EI award. The company has worked with the HPC4EI program over many years to advance programs that enables vehicle lightweighting and focus on increasing automotive manufacturing throughput. It also received a grant by DOE last year to study the aging characteristics of a new generation of structural adhesives.

Further, the HPC4EI program is funded by the DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewables and the Fossil Energy Office. The program uses world-class DOE capabilities to improve manufacturing processes as well as product and material development to reduce national energy consumption.

PPG Industries Issues July Sales Update, Raises Q3 Estimates

PPG Industries, on **Aug 11, 2020**, announced that total net sales for July surpassed its original estimates, reflecting a continuation of the strong demand recovery experienced in June.

Factoring in the stronger sales performance in July, the company now projects sales volumes for third-quarter 2020 to be down 6-11% year over year, excluding foreign currency translation, It earlier expected a year-over-year decline of 8-15%.

Additionally, the company now expects third-quarter operating margin decrements to be between 10% and 15%, which is better than roughly 25% experienced in the second quarter of 2020. The better margin decrements are on account of healthy operating margin leverage from higher-than-expected sales volumes coupled with sustained strong cost management.

Per PPG management, the company's sales for July increased sequentially on account of improving demand trends in China and Europe businesses throughout a range of coating end-use markets and in global industrial production. However, sales were down 7% year over year.

PPG Industries Launches Ultralast Interior Paint and Primer

PPG Industries, on **Jun 22, 2020**, announced the launch of Ultralast interior paint and primer. Notably, it is the first product to showcase the clean surface technology of the company.

The new product delivers washability performance that was previously not possible in a paint product. Notably, the overall wall-cleaning process is transformed and streamlined through the product.

Ultralast paint and primer's scratch and fade-defying formula maintains the vivid and gross color, while other competing products lose color over time on scrubbing or rubbing. Notably, the formula offers property managers, professional contractors and homeowners with a long-lasting freshly painted look.

Ultralast paint and primer lower the need for sponges and abrasive cleaners. The product is suitable for high-traffic areas, such as kitchens, playrooms, bathrooms, retail spaces, restaurants, educational facilities and more. Moreover, the product extends repaint cycles, eventually saving money and time.

Valuation

PPG Industries' shares are down 3.2% in the year-to-date period and up 7.1% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks Chemical - Diversified industry and Zacks Basic Materials sector are down 0.6% and up 4.7% in the year-to-date period, respectively. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry and sector are up 3.9% and up 11.2%, respectively.

The S&P 500 index is up 5.1% in the year-to-date period and up 13.1% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 15.95X trailing 12-month enterprise value-to EBITDA (EV/EBITDA) ratio, which compares to 8.74X for the Zacks sub-industry, 7.8X for the Zacks sector and 14.65X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 16.06X and as low as 8.04X, with a 5-year median of 11.69X.

Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in-line with the market. Our $136 price target reflects 23.21X forward 12-month earnings per share.

The table below shows summary valuation data for PPG:

Valuation Multiples - PPG		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
EV/EBITDA TTM	Current	15.95	8.74	7.8	14.65
	5-Year High	16.06	13.12	18.55	15.61
	5-Year Low	8.04	5.19	6.49	9.51
	5-Year Median	11.69	7.49	10.22	13.01
P/E F12M	Current	22.05	19.71	14.38	22.37
	5-Year High	22.9	19.71	21.06	23.44
	5-Year Low	10.95	8.97	9.84	15.26
	5-Year Median	16.57	13.16	13.5	17.63
P/B TTM	Current	6.18	2.03	2.31	5.82
	5-Year High	6.22	2.82	3.07	6.17
	5-Year Low	3.17	0.87	1.23	3.75
	5-Year Median	5.18	1.75	2.21	4.84

As of 09/17/2020 *Source: Zacks Investment Research*

Industry Analysis **Zacks Industry Rank:** Top 49% (124 out of 251)

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
The SherwinWilliams Company **(SHW)**	Outperform	2
Akzo Nobel NV **(AKZOY)**	Neutral	3
Axalta Coating Systems Ltd. **(AXTA)**	Neutral	3
Dow Inc. **(DOW)**	Neutral	3
Eastman Chemical Company **(EMN)**	Neutral	3
Ferro Corporation **(FOE)**	Neutral	3
Nippon Paint Holdings Co., Ltd. **(NPCPF)**	Neutral	3
RPM International Inc. **(RPM)**	Neutral	2

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

Industry Comparison Industry: Chemical - Diversified

	PPG	X Industry	S&P 500	AKZOY	RPM	SHW
				Industry Peers		
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Outperform
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	3	2	2
VGM Score	C	-	-	A	C	D
Market Cap	30.50 B	2.55 B	23.91 B	19.65 B	10.89 B	64.88 B
# of Analysts	8	3	13.5	3	7	10
Dividend Yield	1.67%	1.67%	1.62%	2.57%	1.72%	0.75%
Value Score	C	-	-	C	D	D
Cash/Price	0.08	0.11	0.07	0.07	0.02	0.00
EV/EBITDA	14.24	8.75	13.24	15.58	19.71	24.03
PEG F1	5.20	3.90	2.97	1.01	1.50	3.37
P/B	6.18	1.88	3.29	2.95	8.60	16.76
P/CF	15.35	7.13	12.82	17.76	19.56	24.54
P/E F1	26.11	21.33	21.49	24.01	22.75	31.07
P/S TTM	2.20	0.96	2.52	2.05	1.98	3.66
Earnings Yield	3.83%	4.46%	4.40%	4.17%	4.39%	3.22%
Debt/Equity	0.93	0.61	0.70	0.46	1.94	2.14
Cash Flow ($/share)	8.42	3.41	6.93	1.91	4.29	29.03
Growth Score	B	-	-	A	B	A
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	0.14%	8.03%	10.41%	NA	3.39%	17.73%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	-20.34%	-20.75%	-4.73%	21.55%	19.96%	8.60%
Current Cash Flow Growth	2.31%	-8.95%	5.26%	-19.52%	9.79%	13.15%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	1.88%	6.32%	8.49%	-6.50%	5.67%	20.20%
Current Ratio	1.35	1.89	1.35	1.63	2.22	1.10
Debt/Capital	48.30%	38.09%	42.95%	31.46%	66.03%	68.17%
Net Margin	7.23%	3.82%	10.25%	5.60%	5.53%	9.83%
Return on Equity	23.88%	10.78%	14.66%	9.64%	29.73%	53.67%
Sales/Assets	0.77	0.75	0.50	0.65	0.98	0.86
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	-11.36%	-4.57%	-1.43%	-3.07%	2.14%	0.02%
Momentum Score	D	-	-	A	D	F
Daily Price Change	0.16%	0.14%	-0.48%	0.45%	-0.93%	-0.36%
1-Week Price Change	3.66%	0.81%	-1.87%	4.72%	-0.86%	4.28%
4-Week Price Change	9.31%	5.80%	0.96%	4.31%	-1.28%	6.74%
12-Week Price Change	25.77%	15.58%	8.69%	14.71%	13.17%	24.31%
52-Week Price Change	7.09%	1.65%	1.36%	13.94%	21.68%	29.61%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	1,168,642	60,448	1,917,443	19,536	463,206	422,634
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.02%	0.00%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	-0.45%	0.00%	0.00%	9.02%	0.00%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	14.49%	4.32%	4.14%	19.83%	8.96%	15.66%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	0.43%	0.00%	0.00%	23.81%	0.00%	-0.09%

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	B
Momentum Score	D
VGM Score	C

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.