May 04, 2020

Target Corporation (TGT)

$108.23 (As of 05/01/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **$115.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months	**Zacks Recommendation:** (Since: 01/20/20) Prior Recommendation: Outperform	**Neutral**
Short Term: 1-3 Months	**Zacks Rank:** (1-5)	**3-Hold**
	Zacks Style Scores:	VGM:A
	Value: B | Growth: A | Momentum: F	

Summary

Shares of Target have outpaced the industry in the past six months. Driven by coronavirus-led demand, the company witnessed higher traffic and sales for Essentials and Food & Beverage categories in the month of April. However, we note that Apparel & Accessories' performance remained soft. Management remains wary of persistent decline in higher-margin discretionary items sales due to COVID-19 outbreak. Owing to the pandemic, Target has not only withdrawn first-quarter and fiscal 2020 view but also shifted certain strategic projects. Nonetheless, it remains focused on enhancing omni-channel capabilities, expanding same-day delivery options and rationalizing supply chain as consumers stockpile essentials amid this catastrophe. However, management cited a number of factors that may hurt first-quarter operating margin by more than 5%.

Price, Consensus & Surprise

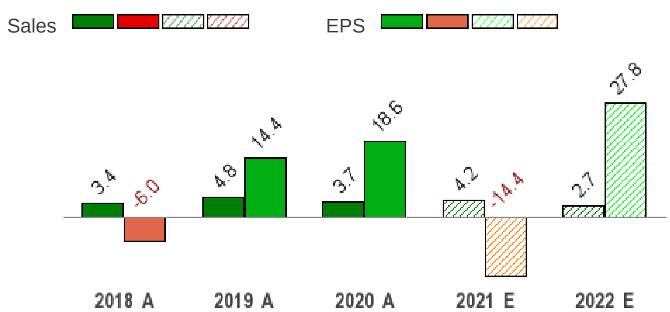
Data Overview

52 Week High-Low	**$130.24 - $70.03**
20 Day Average Volume (sh)	**5,777,394**
Market Cap	**$54.1 B**
YTD Price Change	**-15.6%**
Beta	**0.75**
Dividend / Div Yld	**$2.64 / 2.4%**
Industry	**Retail - Discount Stores**
Zacks Industry Rank	**Bottom 40% (153 out of 253)**

Last EPS Surprise	**1.8%**
Last Sales Surprise	**-0.3%**
EPS F1 Est- 4 week change	**-17.1%**
Expected Report Date	**05/20/2020**
Earnings ESP	**-32.1%**

P/E TTM	**16.9**
P/E F1	**19.8**
PEG F1	**2.8**
P/S TTM	**0.7**

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Sales Estimates (millions of $)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022	18,664 E	19,641 E	19,882 E	24,942 E	83,568 E
2021	18,769 E	19,198 E	19,213 E	24,297 E	81,377 E
2020	17,627 A	18,422 A	18,665 A	23,398 A	78,112 A

EPS Estimates

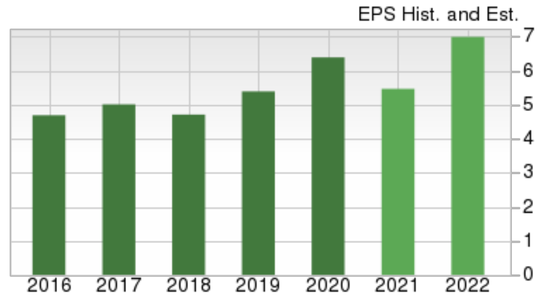
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022	$1.63 E	$2.03 E	$1.54 E	$1.92 E	$6.99 E
2021	$0.90 E	$1.62 E	$1.36 E	$1.76 E	$5.47 E
2020	$1.53 A	$1.82 A	$1.36 A	$1.69 A	$6.39 A

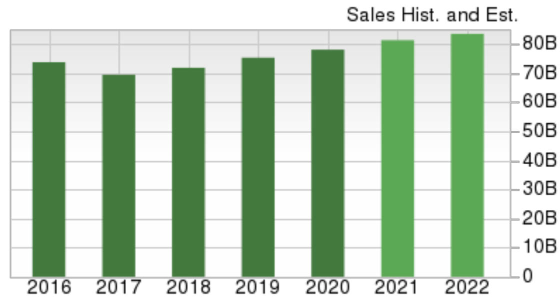
*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and Sales estimates, is as of 05/01/2020. The reports text is as of 05/04/2020.

Overview

Target Corporation (TGT) has evolved from just being a pure brick-&-mortar retailer to an omni-channel entity. The company has been making investment in technologies, improving websites and mobile apps and modernizing supply chain to keep pace with the changing retail landscape and better compete with pure e-commerce players. Its acquisition of Shipt to provide same-day delivery of groceries, essentials, home, electronics as well as other products is worth noting.





Founded in 1902, Target provides an array of goods ranging from household essentials and electronics to toys and apparel for men, women and kids. It also houses food and pet supplies, home furnishings and décor, home improvement, automotive products, and seasonal merchandise.

This Minneapolis, MN-based company also offers in-store amenities, consisting of Target Café, Target Photo, Target Optical, Portrait Studio, Starbucks, and other food service offerings. Target operates more than 1,800 stores.

A greater number of general merchandise stores provides an edited food assortment, including perishables, dry grocery, dairy, and frozen items. The company's stores, which are larger than 170,000 square feet, offer a full line of food items comparable to traditional supermarkets.

The company's small format stores, which are smaller than 50,000 square feet, offer curated general merchandise and food assortments. The company's digital channels include a wide merchandise assortment, including many items found in stores, along with a complementary assortment.

Some of the company's Owned Brands includes: A New Day, Cat & Jack, Cloud Island, Made By Design, Opalhouse, Prologue, Project 62, Ava & Viv, Smith & Hawken, Wild Fable and Wine Cube.

Some of the company's Exclusive Brands includes: C9 by Champion, Hand Made Modern, Kid Made Modern, DENIZEN from Levi's, Fieldcrest, Genuine Kids from OshKosh, Isabel Maternity by Ingrid & Isabel and Umbro.

Reasons To Buy:

▲ **Strategic Initiatives Bode Well:** Target has undertaken several strategic initiatives to boost performance. The company is deploying resources to enhance omni-channel capacities, come up with new brands, remodel or refurbish stores, and expand same-day delivery options. Target has also adopted cost reduction strategy, rationalization of supply chain with same-day delivery of in-store purchases and technology and process improvements. With regards to supply chain, Target will commence robotics solutions. To sum it up, the company has been aggressively adopting strategies to enhance the shopping experience through miscellaneous channels. It is well equipped to serve shoppers be it curbside pickup or delivery at home.

Target's initiatives, including the development of omni-channel capacities, diversification and localization of assortments along with emphasis on flexible format stores, bode well.

The company plans to expand its merchandise assortments with special emphasis on Style, Baby, Kids, and Wellness categories that are performing well. Moreover, management is focusing on key departments, such as Apparel, Beauty, Electronics and Food and Beverage. Target launched a new food brand, Good & Gather. Prior to this, the company's owned brand launches included Everspring, Auden, Colsie and Cloud Island Essentials. The company in collaboration with Disney launched exclusive collection of more than 350 items comprising apparel, toys, bedding, beauty, food and pet treats, inspired by Mickey Mouse. Although shares of Target have fallen 1.7% in the past six months, they have comfortably outperformed the industry's decline of 7.2% in the past three months.

▲ **Essentials and Food & Beverage Categories Boost Comps:** Target registered a sharp rise in comparable sales during the first quarter, courtesy of booming digital sales as consumers shop for essentials from home amid lockdown. Digital sales started to shoot up in the later part of the March month. The trend continued in April as well but accelerated significantly from the middle of the month. The company witnessed higher demand for same-day fulfillment services and saw market-share gains across core merchandising categories. Quarter-to-date as per a release on April 23, comparable sales have risen more than 7% versus 1.5% reported in the final quarter of fiscal 2019. This reflects more than 100% growth in digital channels. Notably, comparable sales across the company's core merchandise categories increased more than 20% in Essentials and Food & Beverage, over 16% in Hardlines and slightly in Home. In April, Target registered comparable sales growth of more than 5%, reflecting digital comparable sales improvement of over 275%. Mentioning of core categories, the metric has improved more than 12% in both Essentials and Food & Beverage, more than 30% in Hardlines and in the high teens in Home.

▲ **Positive Earnings Surprise Streak Continues:** Target Corporation came up with fourth-quarter fiscal 2019 results, which display the fourth straight quarter of an earnings beat. Notably, both the top and the bottom line continued to increase year over year. Again, management highlighted that this was the 11th successive quarter of comparable sales growth buoyed by decent performance in both stores and digital channels. Adjusted earnings of $1.69 per share surpassed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $1.66 and improved 10.6% from the prior-year period. This year-over-year growth can be attributable to higher sales and share repurchase activity.

▲ **Flexible & Smaller Format Stores:** Target continues to lay emphasis on developing flexible format stores to penetrate deeper into urban areas. Earlier, the company used to concentrate on large format stores for a particular location, which lowered its accessibility to the country's densely populated urban regions and space-crunched cities. However, with the changing business scenario and rising competition, Target felt the need to have stores of various sizes and formats in order to better serve its target areas. We believe this approach will help the company to augment its sales without substantial capital investment. These types of stores generally have higher sales productivity. These small format stores contributed more than $1 billion in total sales during fiscal 2019. The company intends to open 15-20 small-format stores during the current fiscal year, down from its prior plans of 36 openings. The company now plans to remodel roughly 130 stores in fiscal 2020, instead of 300 outlets. Further, the company is exploring sites for stores that are approximately 6,000 square feet – roughly half the size of its smallest small-format store. The first store lease is expected to be signed in 2020, with an opening date in 2021.

▲ **Customer Friendly Initiatives:** With an aim to capture the booming online grocery delivery market, Target teamed up with popular online grocery delivery service Instacart. The company further made significant headway in the same-day delivery race by acquiring Internet-based grocery delivery service Shipt to provide same-day delivery of groceries, essentials, home, electronics as well as other products. Shipt is now operating in more than 1,500 outlets in over 200 markets. The company also rolled out Target Restock program that allows customers to restock their shipping box with essential items online and get them delivered at door steps by the next business day for a nominal charge. Further, in order to improve supply chain and expand delivery capabilities, Target acquired Grand Junction. This transportation technology company provides a platform that allows retailers, distributors and third-party logistics providers to manage local deliveries through a network of over 700 carriers. Drive Up, an app-based service, is another initiative to expedite the shopping process. The service allows customers to place orders using the Target app and have them delivered to their cars. The company offers the service across more than 1,750 stores. To enhance service to its customers, the company rolled out a new loyalty program — Target Circle — nationwide on Oct 6, 2019. Courtesy of this program, customers can avail more convenient and customized shopping experience in the upcoming holiday season. The program also comes with a zero-membership fee.

▲ **Financial Flexibility:** Target's cash and cash equivalents at the end of fourth-quarter fiscal 2019 more than doubled to $2,577 million on a sequential basis. Notably, the company's cash position remains sufficient to meet current portion of long-term debt and other borrowings of about $161 million as of Feb 1, 2020. Although, the company's long-term debt and other borrowings (including operating lease liabilities) of $13,613 million — as of Feb 1, 2020 — has increased 7% sequentially, its debt-to-capital ratio of 0.54 stands below the industry's ratio of 0.56. Also, the company's debt-to-capitalization has improved from 0.55 at the end of the preceding quarter. Moreover, the company has a decent "times interest earned" ratio of 9.8. As of Feb 1, 2020, S&P's, Moody's and Fitch had assigned credit ratings of A, A2 and A-, respectively, on Target's long-term debt, which reflects high investment grade.

Reasons To Sell:

- **Apparel & Accessories' April Comps Fall:** We note that Apparel & Accessories' performance remained soft with comps down more than 20% quarter-to-date as per a release on April 23. In April, comparable sales across Apparel & Accessories category plunged more than 40%. Management remains wary of persistent decline in higher-margin discretionary items sales due to the coronavirus outbreak. Continued sales declines in higher-margin discretionary categories could result in lower-than-expected gross margin dollar performance.

> Some of Target's competitors are far more geographically diversified. We believe that incremental investments, higher wages and rise in costs due to new fulfillment options may squeeze margins.

- **Negative Sales Surprise:** Target's fourth-quarter fiscal 2019 total revenues fell shy of the Zacks Consensus Estimate, after surpassing the same in the preceding three quarters. Again, we note that the rate of comparable sales growth decelerated on a sequential basis. This may be due to disappointing holiday season with sales coming in below expectations. Softer-than-expected performance across Electronics, Toys and portions of Home assortment hurt the overall holiday sales. Comparable sales for the quarter increased 1.5% compared with 4.5% increase registered in the preceding quarter and 5.3% growth witnessed in the year-ago period. Also, comparable digital channel sales figure of 20% does not look as outstanding when compared with 31% increase reported in the third quarter of fiscal 2019.

- **High SG&A Expense May Strain Margins:** SG&A expenses have been increasing for quite some time now. Certainly, any deleverage in the same has a direct bearing on margins. After increasing 5.5% during the third quarter of fiscal 2019, SG&A expenses rose 2.9% in the fourth quarter due to higher marketing expenses. Again, SG&A expense rate deleveraged 30 basis points to 19.3% during the quarter under review. Analysts pointed that any increase in depreciation and amortization on account of remodel program, rise in costs due to new fulfillment options, higher wages and incremental investments may also weigh on margins. Target expects to raise the minimum hourly wage to $15 by the end of 2020. Management expects SG&A expense rate to increase during the first quarter and fiscal 2020.

  Owing to the pandemic, the company shifted its certain strategic projects. The company, which called-off its first-quarter guidance on Mar 25, also highlighted various factors that will hurt quarterly profitability. These include investments in pay and benefits for frontline team members, shift in channel mix toward digital fulfillment, transition in category mix toward lower-margin categories, and inventory write-downs in Apparel & Accessories due to sharp deceleration in sales trends. Management stated that cumulatively these factors are expected to hurt operating margin rate by more than 5 percentage points.

- **Stiff Competition May Hurt Results:** The retail landscape has been witnessing a sea change with the focus gradually shifting to online shopping. In the retail segment, Target faces stiff competition from discount stores, department stores, drug stores, specialty stores, supermarkets, wholesale clubs, and other forms of retail commerce such as online retailers, contingent on location, price and quality of merchandise, in-stock consistency, merchandise assortments, and customer service. Some of the company's competitors are also far more geographically diversified. We believe that unhealthy price competition to gain market share and attract footfall might weigh on the company's profit margins.

- **Dip in Consumer Sentiment May Impact Sales:** Any dip in consumer confidence – a key determinant of the economy's health – may have serious bearing on spending. The company's customers remain sensitive to macroeconomic factors including interest rate hikes, increase in fuel and energy costs, credit availability, unemployment levels, and high household debt levels, which may negatively impact their sentiment. This may adversely impact its growth and profitability.

Last Earnings Report

Target Q4 Earnings Surpass Estimates, Increase Y/Y

Quarter Ending	01/2020
Report Date	Mar 03, 2020
Sales Surprise	-0.32%
EPS Surprise	1.81%
Quarterly EPS	1.69
Annual EPS (TTM)	6.40

Target Corporation came up with fourth-quarter fiscal 2019 results, which display the fourth straight quarter of an earnings beat. However, total revenues fell shy of the Zacks Consensus Estimate. On a brighter note, both the top and the bottom line continued to increase year over year. Again, management highlighted that this was the 11th successive quarter of comparable sales growth buoyed by decent performance in both stores and digital channels.

However, we note that the rate of comparable sales growth decelerated on a sequential basis. This may be due to disappointing holiday season with sales coming in below expectations. Softer-than-expected performance across Electronics, Toys and portions of Home assortment hurt the overall holiday sales. Nonetheless, Target continued to gain market share across core merchandise categories, namely Apparel, Essentials & Beauty and Food & Beverage.

Let's Delve Deeper

This operator of general merchandise stores reported adjusted earnings of $1.69 per share that surpassed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $1.66 and improved 10.6% from the prior-year period. This year-over-year growth can be attributable to higher sales and share repurchase activity.

Target envisions first-quarter fiscal 2020 adjusted earnings between $1.55 and $1.75 per share, the mid-point of which — $1.65 — is higher than $1.53 reported in the year-ago period. For fiscal 2020, management anticipates adjusted earnings in the band of $6.70-$7.00, the mid-point of which — $6.85 — is higher than earnings of $6.39 posted in fiscal 2019.

The company generated total revenues of $23,398 million that increased 1.8% from the year-ago period but fell short of the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $23,472 million, after surpassing the same in the preceding three quarters. We note that sales jumped 1.8% to $23,133 million, while other revenue rose 9.3% to $265 million.

Target is deploying resources to enhance omni-channel capacities, coming up with new brands, remodeling or refurbishing stores, and expanding same-day delivery options. Target has undertaken rationalization of supply chain with same-day delivery of in-store purchases along with technology and process improvements.

Meanwhile, comparable sales for the quarter increased 1.5% compared with 4.5% increase registered in the preceding quarter and 5.3% growth witnessed in the year-ago period. The number of transactions rose 1.3%, while the average transaction amount improved 0.2%. Management envisions low-single digit increase in comparable sales during the first quarter as well as fiscal 2020.

Comparable digital channel sales surged 20% and added 2.2 percentage points to comparable sales. Clearly, the figure does not look as outstanding when compared with 31% increase reported in the third quarter of fiscal 2019.

Gross margin expanded 60 basis points to 26.3% during the quarter on account of cost optimization, pricing, promotions and assortment, and favorable category sales mix. Management expects gross margin rate to improve moderately in the first quarter and remained flat in fiscal 2020.

Operating income increased 7.3% to $1,198 million, whereas operating margin expanded 20 basis points to 5.1%. Target expects mid-single digit increase in operating income in both the first quarter and fiscal 2020.

Target's debit card penetration shrunk 20 basis points to 12.4%, while credit card penetration fell 10 basis points to 10.9%. Total REDcard penetration declined to 23.3% from 23.6% in the year-ago quarter.

Other Financial Details

During the quarter, Target repurchased shares worth $606 million and paid dividends of $334 million. The company still had about $0.1 billion remaining under its $5 billion share buyback program approved in 2016. In September 2019, the company's board authorized a new $5 billion share repurchase program.

The company ended the quarter with cash and cash equivalents of $2,577 million, long-term debt and other borrowings of $11,338 million and shareholders' investment of $11,833 million. Management incurred capital expenditures of roughly $3 billion during fiscal 2019.

Recent News

Target's Digital Sales Surge – April 23, 2020

Quarter-to-date, Target's comparable sales have risen more than 7% versus 1.5% reported in the final quarter of fiscal 2019. This reflects a marginal fall in sales at stores but more than 100% growth in digital channels. Notably, comparable sales across the company's core merchandise categories increased more than 20% in Essentials and Food & Beverage, over 16% in Hardlines and slightly in Home. However, the retailer's Apparel & Accessories performance remained soft, as comparable sales in this category tumbled more than 20% year over year.

So far in the month of April, Target has registered comparable sales growth of more than 5%, reflecting digital comparable sales improvement of over 275%. However, we note that comparable-store sales have declined in the mid-teens. Mentioning of core categories, the metric has improved more than 12% in both Essentials and Food & Beverage, more than 30% in Hardlines and in the high teens in Home. As usual, comparable sales across Apparel & Accessories category plunged more than 40%.

Target Bolsters Offerings With Extended ISOPURE Partnership – April 13, 2020

Target and The ISOPURE Company have extended their collaboration, as part of which products from ISOPURE's protein powder portfolio are available at more than 1,600 Target stores across the country.

Valuation

Target shares are down 15.6% in the year-to-date period but up 42.4% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry and the Zacks Retail-Wholesale sector are down 9% and 1.7%, respectively, in the year-to-date period. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry and the sector are up 11.8% and 2.7%, respectively.

The S&P 500 index is down 12.1% in the year-to-date period and 3.7% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 18.48X forward 12-month earnings, which compares to 25X for the Zacks sub-industry, 27.84X for the Zacks sector and 20.18X for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 19.65X and as low as 10.88X, with a 5-year median of 14.15X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in-line with the market. Our $115 price target reflects 19.59X forward 12-month earnings.

The table below shows summary valuation data for TGT

Valuation Multiples - TGT

		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	18.48	25	27.84	20.18
	5-Year High	19.65	25	27.84	20.18
	5-Year Low	10.88	17.95	19.06	15.19
	5-Year Median	14.15	20.05	23.17	17.44
P/S F12M	Current	0.66	1.31	0.99	3.19
	5-Year High	0.81	1.39	1.11	3.44
	5-Year Low	0.4	0.94	0.8	2.54
	5-Year Median	0.57	1.12	0.93	3.01
EV/EBITDA TTM	Current	8.96	17.34	15.08	10.37
	5-Year High	11	19.7	16.36	12.86
	5-Year Low	5.38	10.89	10.9	8.28
	5-Year Median	7.89	13.83	12.55	10.77

As of 05/01/2020

Industry Analysis **Zacks Industry Rank:** Bottom 40% (153 out of 253)

Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Burlington Stores, Inc. **(BURL)**	Neutral	4
Costco Wholesale Corporation **(COST)**	Neutral	3
Dollar General Corporation **(DG)**	Neutral	2
Dollar Tree, Inc. **(DLTR)**	Neutral	3
Ross Stores, Inc. **(ROST)**	Neutral	3
Tuesday Morning Corp. **(TUES)**	Neutral	3
Big Lots, Inc. **(BIG)**	Underperform	3
The TJX Companies, Inc. **(TJX)**	Underperform	5

Industry Comparison Industry: Retail - Discount Stores

	TGT	X Industry	S&P 500	DG	DLTR	TJX
				Industry Peers		
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Neutral	Neutral	Underperform
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	2	3	5
VGM Score	A	-	-	A	A	B
Market Cap	54.10 B	15.48 B	20.61 B	43.51 B	18.33 B	57.80 B
# of Analysts	12	11	14	23	10	13
Dividend Yield	2.44%	0.87%	2.11%	0.83%	0.00%	1.91%
Value Score	B	-	-	B	B	D
Cash/Price	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.01	0.03	0.06
EV/EBITDA	9.06	13.02	11.87	19.44	12.05	12.41
PEG Ratio	2.80	2.64	2.47	1.90	1.50	2.68
Price/Book (P/B)	4.63	4.70	2.67	6.50	2.93	9.76
Price/Cash Flow (P/CF)	9.43	14.06	10.66	19.70	8.98	14.26
P/E (F1)	19.79	25.50	19.01	23.18	16.13	28.17
Price/Sales (P/S)	0.69	0.80	2.10	1.57	0.78	1.39
Earnings Yield	5.05%	3.63%	5.05%	4.31%	6.20%	3.54%
Debt/Equity	1.15	1.46	0.72	1.60	1.36	1.69
Cash Flow ($/share)	11.64	6.38	7.01	8.90	8.87	3.44
Growth Score	A	-	-	A	B	A
Hist. EPS Growth (3-5 yrs)	7.09%	12.09%	10.88%	13.67%	18.69%	11.85%
Proj. EPS Growth (F1/F0)	-14.48%	-22.32%	-7.32%	10.88%	0.82%	-35.84%
Curr. Cash Flow Growth	10.26%	9.68%	5.92%	9.68%	-55.39%	19.07%
Hist. Cash Flow Growth (3-5 yrs)	3.95%	8.54%	8.55%	9.69%	19.78%	7.38%
Current Ratio	0.89	1.19	1.23	1.14	1.20	1.24
Debt/Capital	53.50%	59.24%	43.84%	61.55%	57.61%	62.83%
Net Margin	4.20%	4.38%	11.08%	6.17%	3.50%	7.84%
Return on Equity	28.46%	24.73%	16.44%	26.04%	19.71%	59.70%
Sales/Assets	1.85	1.76	0.54	1.25	1.21	1.78
Proj. Sales Growth (F1/F0)	4.18%	0.72%	-1.42%	8.92%	4.34%	-10.29%
Momentum Score	F	-	-	A	D	B
Daily Price Chg	-2.11%	-1.42%	-2.39%	0.29%	-1.47%	-4.83%
1 Week Price Chg	-4.94%	-4.69%	-1.74%	-3.37%	-8.80%	-7.40%
4 Week Price Chg	16.30%	17.05%	17.07%	9.77%	13.07%	12.01%
12 Week Price Chg	-4.69%	-18.41%	-18.53%	12.76%	-9.40%	-20.66%
52 Week Price Chg	43.60%	-7.55%	-9.82%	40.66%	-27.21%	-9.92%
20 Day Average Volume	5,777,394	2,165,454	2,641,413	2,395,732	2,331,637	10,521,831
(F1) EPS Est 1 week change	-3.71%	-0.10%	0.00%	0.02%	-0.10%	-1.37%
(F1) EPS Est 4 week change	-17.05%	-2.48%	-6.62%	0.44%	-2.46%	-30.19%
(F1) EPS Est 12 week change	-20.03%	-27.16%	-13.28%	0.52%	-8.24%	-39.84%
(Q1) EPS Est Mthly Chg	-41.06%	-6.75%	-11.97%	2.05%	-6.75%	-107.07%

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 have an excellent 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	A
Momentum Score	F
VGM Score	A

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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