

Ubiquiti Inc. (UI)

\$303.66 (As of 02/03/21)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **\$319.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months

Zacks Recommendation:
Neutral

(Since: 01/08/21)

Prior Recommendation: Outperform

Short Term: 1-3 Months

Zacks Rank: (1-5)

3-Hold

Zacks Style Scores:

VGM:B

Value: D

Growth: A

Momentum: A

Summary

Ubiquiti is benefiting from an increase in direct-to-consumer sales through its web stores and growth in sales to distributors. The company's excellent global business model, which is flexible and adaptable to evolving changes in markets, helps it to beat challenges and maximize growth. It believes that investments in research and development, inventory and operations management will aid in expanding its addressable market. Ubiquiti is committed to reducing operational costs with a self-sustaining mechanism for product support. However, supply chain disruptions due to the pandemic, including higher tariffs and shipping costs, are concerns. Due to its diverse scale of operations, Ubiquiti is susceptible to macroeconomic challenges. The price-competitive environment and dynamic market with rapidly evolving technologies are other risks.

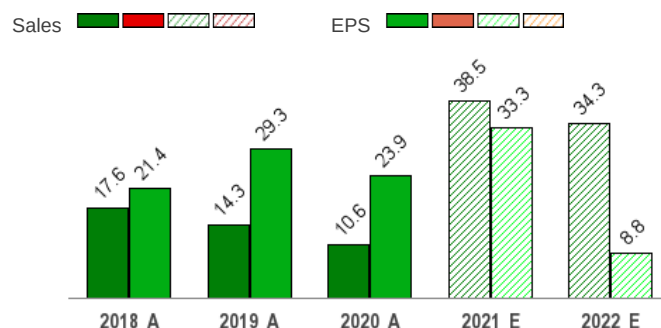
Price, Consensus & Surprise



Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	\$324.24 - \$110.01
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	132,475
Market Cap	\$19.1 B
Year-To-Date Price Change	9.0%
Beta	1.41
Dividend / Dividend Yield	\$1.60 / 0.5%
Industry	Wireless Equipment
Zacks Industry Rank	Top 45% (113 out of 253)

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Last EPS Surprise	68.0%
Last Sales Surprise	38.4%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	0.0%
Expected Report Date	02/05/2021
Earnings ESP	0.0%

Sales Estimates (millions of \$)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022					2,390 E
2021	474 A	414 E	426 E	466 E	1,780 E
2020	323 A	308 A	337 A	316 A	1,285 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2022					\$8.57 E
2021	\$2.47 A				\$7.88 E
2020	\$1.44 A	\$1.40 A	\$1.61 A	\$1.46 A	\$5.91 A

*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

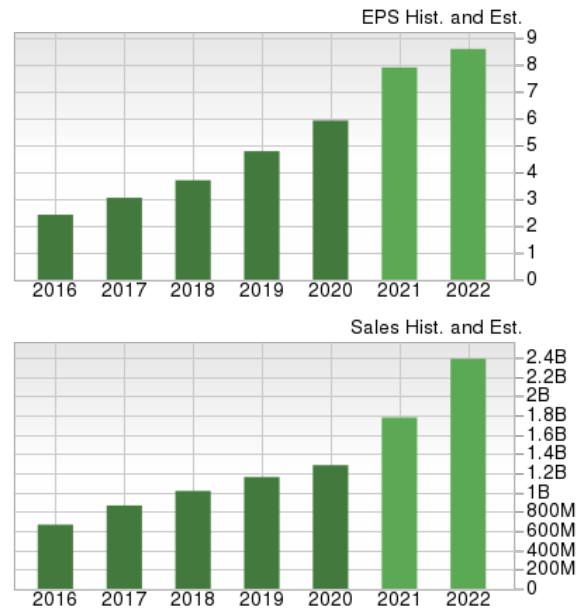
The data in the charts and tables, except sales and EPS estimates, is as of 02/03/2021. The report's text, and the analyst-provided sales estimates, EPS estimates and price target are as of 02/04/2021.

Overview

Headquartered in New York, Ubiquiti Inc., along with its subsidiaries, offers a comprehensive portfolio of networking products and solutions for service providers and enterprises. Its service-provider product platforms offer carrier-class network infrastructure for fixed wireless broadband, wireless backhaul systems and routing; while enterprise product platforms provide wireless local area network (WLAN) infrastructure, video surveillance products and machine-to-machine communication components. The company was earlier known as Ubiquiti Networks Inc. and traded under the symbol "UBNT".

Ubiquiti offers high-performance radios, antennas, software, communications protocols and management tools that are designed to deliver carrier and enterprise class wireless broadband access and other services primarily in the unlicensed radio frequency spectrum. The company offers its products and solutions through disruptive price offering. They are also integrated as well as easy to deploy and manage. Moreover, Ubiquiti follows a scalable community-led approach based on product feedback of customers.

Broadly speaking, Ubiquiti has two different product categories, namely, Service Provider Technology (33.2% of total revenues in first-quarter fiscal 2021) and Enterprise Technology (66.8%). The Service Provider Technology segment includes airMAX, airFiber and EdgeMAX embedded radio and antenna product lines. This segment also includes products like base stations, radios, backhaul equipment and Customer Premise Equipment ("CPE"). The Enterprise Technology Segment includes UniFi and mFi product lines. This comprises UniFi Access Point ("UAP") products, UniFi Video Products, UniFi Voice Over IP ("VOIP") phones and UniFi switches.



Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Buy:

- ▲ Ubiquiti delivered a trailing four-quarter positive earnings surprise of 27.9%, on average. The company is benefiting from an increase in direct-to-consumer sales through its web stores and growth in sales to distributors. Ubiquiti's excellent global business model, which is flexible and adaptable to evolving changes in markets, helps it to beat challenges and maximize growth. Its operating model is backed by a rapidly growing and highly engaged community of service providers, distributors, value-added resellers, systems integrators and corporate IT professionals (referred to as the Ubiquiti Community). Moreover, the company's effective management of its strong global network of more than 100 distributors and master resellers has improved its visibility for future demand as well as inventory management techniques. Periodic reporting by channel partners has added to operational strength. Ubiquiti expects its resilient business model to contribute significantly toward growth momentum in the coming quarters.
- ▲ In the first quarter of fiscal 2021, Enterprise Technology revenues were \$316.1 million, up from \$207.4 million in the prior-year quarter, despite coronavirus-induced challenges. Disruptive pricing and higher average selling price of products boosted the top line. The company believes that its global market share in enterprise technology will continue to grow, fueled by the increasing adoption of UniFi products, including switches, security gateways, cameras and other complementary products.
- ▲ Ubiquiti spends significantly toward research and development (R&D) activities for developing innovative products and state-of-the-art technology to expand its addressable market and remain at the cutting edge of networking technology. The company believes its new product pipeline will help it increase average selling prices for high performance, best value products, thus raising the top line. It upgraded the UniFi ecosystem, which includes hotspot analytics and high-density WLAN improvements, and added new features to the AmpliFi product family. The company's strategic product launches at disruptive prices helped it beat rivals to a great extent. Apart from launching products, reduction of labor-related costs also remains one of the chief highlights of the R&D initiatives. The company believes investments in R&D, inventory and operations management will help it expand the addressable market and maintain its dominant foothold in the industry.
- ▲ Ubiquiti boasts a proprietary network communication platform that is well equipped to meet end-market customer needs. In addition, the company is committed toward reducing its operational costs by using a self-sustaining mechanism for rapid product support and dissemination of information by leveraging the strength of the Ubiquiti Community. The company has made significant investments in inventory to reduce lead times, meet increasing demand and support the growing number of customers. These efforts have optimized Ubiquiti's inventory with market demand. In addition, Ubiquiti is committed toward enhancing the value of its shareholders. During first-quarter fiscal 2021, it repurchased 602,003 shares at an average price of \$162.10 per share.

Ubiquiti is benefiting from an increase in direct-to-consumer sales through its web stores and growth in sales to distributors.

Reasons To Sell:

- ▼ Ubiquiti is experiencing a disruption in its supply chain due to the pandemic, including higher tariffs, shipping costs and inventory reserves. The company is susceptible to geopolitical instability on account of its geographically diverse scale of operations. Ubiquiti is prone to a number of intellectual property-related risks. Additionally, in emerging markets, namely China and South America, it is difficult for Ubiquiti to enforce Intellectual Property Rights and this is particularly risky as a significant portion of demand is generated from this region. Unfortunately, for Ubiquiti, it operates in an industry where component suppliers are targets of extensive intellectual property litigation, which adds to its legal expenses. These factors are beyond its control and can weigh on its profitability.
- ▼ Ubiquiti operates in an extremely price-competitive environment, which includes big telecom service providers. The company operates in enterprise WLAN, solar, video surveillance, wireless backhaul and machine-to-machine communications markets, which are highly competitive in nature. Longer operating histories, greater brand recognition, larger customer bases and significantly greater resources of competitors add to its woes. As a result, the company needs to maintain competitive selling prices while continuously enhancing its product offerings. Moreover, this dynamic market is characterized by rapid technological changes, evolving standards, frequent product introductions and short product life cycles that make it crucial for Ubiquiti to maintain its human resource pool. It needs to make substantial investments in R&D. This will likely hurt its margin in the short term.
- ▼ Ubiquiti's offerings are subject to export control and economic sanctions laws in the United States and elsewhere, and failure to comply with these laws can adversely impact its reputation and financials. Additionally, as government regulations are typically intended to protect the privacy and security of personal information that is collected, stored and transmitted in or from the governing jurisdiction, Ubiquiti may find it increasingly difficult to sell products on account of delayed product launches and escalating product launch costs.
- ▼ As of Sep 30, 2020, the company had \$129 million in cash and cash equivalents with \$612 million of long-term debt compared with the respective tallies of \$144 million and \$628 million at the end of the previous quarter. Ubiquiti has a debt-to-capital ratio of 1.7 compared with 0.34 of the industry. The times interest earned (TIE) ratio has declined over the past few quarters to 20.1 at present, compared with 17.2 of the industry. This indicates that Ubiquiti is reeling under pressure to meet its debt obligations. It is to be seen whether the company can turn the tables in the coming days amid disruptions stemming from the pandemic.

Ubiquiti is experiencing a disruption in its supply chain due to the pandemic, including higher tariffs, shipping costs and inventory reserves.

Last Earnings Report

Ubiquiti's Q1 Earnings and Revenues Beat Estimates

Ubiquiti reported solid first-quarter fiscal 2021 results, wherein the top and the bottom lines beat the respective Zacks Consensus Estimate.

Net Income

On a GAAP basis, net income in the September quarter was \$156.5 million or a record \$2.46 per share compared with \$98.1 million or \$1.43 per share in the prior-year quarter. The improvement was driven by higher operating income and a reduction in shares outstanding.

Non-GAAP net income came in at \$157.1 million or \$2.47 per share compared with \$98.7 million or \$1.44 per share in the year-ago quarter. The bottom line beat the Zacks Consensus Estimate by \$1, with the positive surprise being 68%.

Revenues

Quarterly revenues increased 46.5% year over year to a record \$473.5 million, driven by an increase in direct-to-consumer sales through the company's webstores and growth in sales to its distributors. Ubiquiti's revenues continue to be significantly influenced by distributor order patterns and inventory availability.

Revenues from **Service Provider Technology** were \$157.4 million compared with \$115.9 million in the year-ago quarter. **Enterprise Technology** revenues were \$316.1 million, up from \$207.4 million in the prior-year quarter. The top line surpassed the consensus estimate of \$342 million.

Region wise, revenues from North America were \$220.9 million compared with \$148 million in the year-ago quarter. Revenues from Europe, Middle East and Africa were \$179.2 million, up from \$125.8 million in the prior-year quarter. Revenues from Asia Pacific were \$41.9 million compared with \$29.7 million a year ago, and the same from South America totaled \$31.5 million, up from \$19.8 million.

Other Details

Gross profit increased to \$228.1 million from \$151.4 million in the year-ago quarter, led by higher revenues. Gross margin improved to 48.2% from 46.8%, supported by favorable changes in product mix. This was, however, partly offset by higher tariffs, shipping costs and inventory reserves.

Total operating expenses increased to \$38.2 million from \$30.7 million in the prior-year quarter. This was due to higher research and development) as well as sales, general and administrative expenses. Operating income came in at \$190 million compared with \$120.7 million a year ago.

During the quarter, Ubiquiti repurchased 602,003 shares at an average price of \$162.10 per share. The board approved a cash dividend of 40 cents per share. The amount is payable on Nov 23 to shareholders on record as of Nov 16.

Cash Flow & Liquidity

During the first quarter of fiscal 2021, Ubiquiti generated \$117 million of net cash from operating activities compared with \$119.7 million in the prior-year quarter.

As of Sep 30, 2020, the company had \$128.4 million in cash and cash equivalents with \$612.4 million of long-term debt compared with the respective tallies of \$142.6 million and \$628.4 million at the end of the previous quarter.

Quarter Ending	09/2020
Report Date	Nov 06, 2020
Sales Surprise	38.35%
EPS Surprise	68.03%
Quarterly EPS	2.47
Annual EPS (TTM)	6.94

Valuation

Ubiquiti's shares are up 58.5% in the past six months and up 80.7% over the trailing 12-month period. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry are up 31.2% over the past six months, while stocks in the Zacks Computer and Technology sector are up 24.4% in the same period. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry and sector are up 51% and 40.9%, respectively.

The S&P 500 Index is up 16.7% in the past six months and up 17.2% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 34.33X trailing 12-month EV/EBITDA, which compares to 31.48X for the Zacks sub-industry, 17.37X for the Zacks sector and 17.32X for the S&P 500 Index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 36.08X and as low as 9.49X, with a 5-year median of 16.49X. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in line with the market. Our \$319 price target reflects 8.71X forward 12-month earnings.

The table below shows summary valuation data for UI

Valuation Multiples - UI					
		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
EV/EBITDA TTM	Current	34.33	31.48	17.37	17.32
	5-Year High	36.08	31.52	17.37	17.38
	5-Year Low	9.49	9.84	8.26	9.55
	5-Year Median	16.49	18.06	12.22	13.24
P/E F12M	Current	36.61	22.68	28.55	22.55
	5-Year High	43.52	33.47	28.55	23.8
	5-Year Low	13.52	14.16	16.95	15.3
	5-Year Median	23.43	19.11	19.96	17.83
P/S F12M	Current	12.41	4.67	4.93	4.47
	5-Year High	12.41	4.67	4.93	4.47
	5-Year Low	3.6	2.07	2.78	3.2
	5-Year Median	6.26	2.86	3.49	3.68

As of 02/03/2021

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Industry Analysis Zacks Industry Rank: Top 45% (113 out of 253)



Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Comtech Telecommunications Corp. (CMTL)	Outperform	1
Aviat Networks, Inc. (AVNW)	Neutral	3
Clearfield, Inc. (CLFD)	Neutral	2
CommScope Holding Company, Inc. (COMM)	Neutral	3
Sonim Technologies, Inc. (SONM)	Neutral	2
Viasat Inc. (VSAT)	Neutral	4
InterDigital, Inc. (IDCC)	Underperform	3
Sierra Wireless, Inc. (SWIR)	Underperform	5

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

Industry Comparison Industry: Wireless Equipment				Industry Peers		
	UI	X Industry	S&P 500	CMTL	COMM	SWIR
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Outperform	Neutral	Underperform
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	3	-	-	1	3	5
VGM Score	B	-	-	F	A	F
Market Cap	19.07 B	635.84 M	26.72 B	567.49 M	3.10 B	704.19 M
# of Analysts	1	3	13	2	6	4
Dividend Yield	0.53%	0.00%	1.47%	1.76%	0.00%	0.00%
Value Score	D	-	-	D	A	F
Cash/Price	0.01	0.17	0.06	0.06	0.20	0.10
EV/EBITDA	39.68	12.50	14.76	13.07	44.16	-26.16
PEG F1	2.14	2.09	2.38	NA	5.14	NA
P/B	NA	2.03	3.66	1.23	12.19	2.04
P/CF	48.11	16.84	15.11	9.14	2.56	NA
P/E F1	39.40	21.60	20.08	24.80	8.58	NA
P/S TTM	13.29	1.72	2.94	0.98	0.36	1.19
Earnings Yield	2.60%	2.88%	4.89%	-11.90%	11.67%	-2.08%
Debt/Equity	-2.34	0.12	0.68	0.47	37.74	0.16
Cash Flow (\$/share)	6.31	0.71	6.78	2.48	6.09	-0.10
Growth Score	A	-	-	F	A	F
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	26.48%	-4.44%	9.46%	36.38%	-10.88%	-29.00%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	33.33%	41.55%	13.31%	-1,062.50%	28.57%	68.53%
Current Cash Flow Growth	15.77%	-10.25%	4.57%	-18.57%	53.52%	-108.17%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	17.65%	10.37%	8.19%	11.01%	11.92%	NA
Current Ratio	2.25	1.86	1.38	1.62	1.66	1.55
Debt/Capital	NA%	17.14%	41.49%	32.05%	97.67%	13.59%
Net Margin	30.57%	4.22%	10.47%	-14.65%	-12.02%	-10.39%
Return on Equity	-147.97%	5.25%	14.92%	3.43%	51.48%	-14.35%
Sales/Assets	2.07	0.80	0.51	0.62	0.61	0.92
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	38.57%	8.85%	6.17%	0.52%	0.98%	-9.53%
Momentum Score	A	-	-	C	F	D
Daily Price Change	-0.32%	0.35%	0.04%	1.61%	2.30%	1.37%
1-Week Price Change	16.24%	-3.55%	-4.02%	-10.56%	-0.27%	-13.91%
4-Week Price Change	13.41%	9.75%	-0.72%	4.66%	9.48%	28.63%
12-Week Price Change	12.45%	26.83%	6.66%	37.27%	59.16%	66.78%
52-Week Price Change	80.71%	16.03%	6.16%	-24.06%	22.85%	92.11%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	132,475	199,263	2,065,421	220,386	1,655,636	480,051
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-2.92%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	0.00%	0.00%	0.38%	0.00%	0.00%	-24.53%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	24.92%	2.92%	1.33%	12.96%	-4.14%	-89.32%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	NA%	0.00%	0.08%	0.00%	0.00%	19.32%

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	D
Growth Score	A
Momentum Score	A
VGM Score	B

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

Disclosures

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

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

Glossary of Terms and Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Periods:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

P/TB Ratio: The price-to-tangible-book value ratio is calculated as 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.