Oct 08, 2020

Xylem Inc. (XYL)

$88.20 (As of 10/07/20)

Price Target (6-12 Months): **$93.00**

Long Term: 6-12 Months	**Zacks Recommendation:** (Since: 06/22/20) Prior Recommendation: Underperform	**Neutral**
Short Term: 1-3 Months	**Zacks Rank:** (1-5)	**4-Sell**
	Zacks Style Scores:	VGM:D
	Value: D | Growth: B | Momentum: F	

Summary

In the past three months, Xylem's shares have outperformed the industry. The company is poised to benefit from solid product offerings, focus on innovation, diversified business structure and large contract wins. Also, its cost-saving measures and shareholder-friendly policy might be boons. In addition, the company seems to have healthy liquidity position of $2.4 billion at the end of the second quarter of 2020. However, its shares look overvalued compared to its industry. For 2020, Xylem refrained from reinstating its projections, which were suspended on Mar 31. Notably, an organic sales decline of 8-12% is predicted for the third quarter. The company has been grappling with the adverse impacts of cost inflation. High debt levels can impact its financial obligations. Its earnings estimates have been raised for 2020 in the past 60 days.

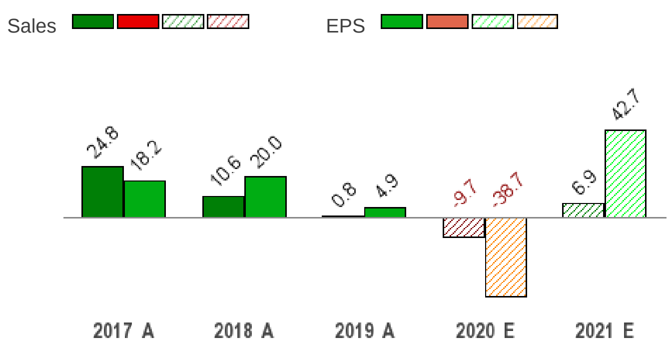
Price, Consensus & Surprise

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Data Overview

52-Week High-Low	**$89.47 - $54.62**
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	**930,311**
Market Cap	**$15.9 B**
Year-To-Date Price Change	**11.9%**
Beta	**1.05**
Dividend / Dividend Yield	**$1.04 / 1.2%**
Industry	**Manufacturing - General Industrial**
Zacks Industry Rank	**Bottom 35% (163 out of 252)**
Last EPS Surprise	**2.6%**
Last Sales Surprise	**0.5%**
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	**-0.2%**
Expected Report Date	**10/29/2020**
Earnings ESP	**3.6%**
P/E TTM	**37.7**
P/E F1	**47.7**
PEG F1	**2.9**
P/S TTM	**3.2**

Sales and EPS Growth Rates (Y/Y %)



Sales Estimates (millions of $)

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	1,165 E	1,243 E	1,284 E	1,382 E	5,067 E
2020	1,123 A	1,160 A	1,164 E	1,288 E	4,740 E
2019	1,237 A	1,345 A	1,296 A	1,371 A	5,249 A

EPS Estimates

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Annual*
2021	$0.46 E	$0.77 E	$0.70 E	$0.82 E	$2.64 E
2020	$0.23 A	$0.40 A	$0.51 E	$0.70 E	$1.85 E
2019	$0.52 A	$0.79 A	$0.82 A	$0.89 A	$3.02 A

*Quarterly figures may not add up to annual.

The data in the charts and tables, including the Zacks Consensus EPS and Sales estimates, is as of 10/07/2020. The reports text is as of 10/08/2020.

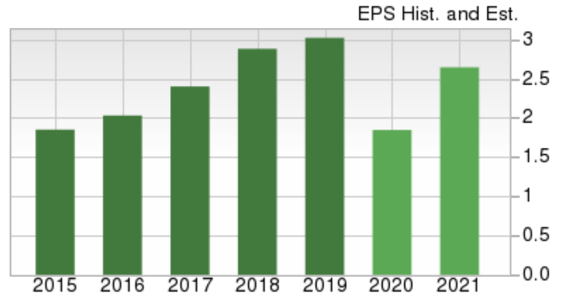
Overview

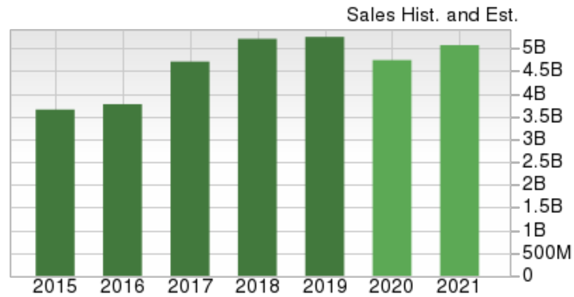
Headquartered in Rye Brook, NY, Xylem Inc. is one of the leading providers of water solutions worldwide. The company is involved in the full water-process cycle, including collection, distribution and returning of water to the environment. It has significant presence in the United States, the Asia Pacific, Europe and various other nations.

The company reports business operations under three segmental heads — Water Infrastructure, Sensus and Applied Water. Details of the company's segmental operations are discussed below:

- **Water Infrastructure** (43.2% of total revenues generated in the second quarter of 2020): This segment offers product range mainly used for transportation, treatment and testing of water. These products facilitate the process that involves collecting water from a source and distributing it to users while returning the wastewater to the environment. This process includes two applications — Transport and Treatment. The segment includes brands like Flygt, Godwin, Leopold, WEDECO and Sanitaire.

- **Applied Water** (29.1%): This segment offers various products that deal with the use of water. These products have a wide range of applications — including Building Services (commercial and residential) and Industrial Water. Brands like Goulds Water Technology, Lowara, Bell & Gossett, A-C Fire Pump, Standard, Jabsco, and Flojet form parts of this segment.





- **Measurement & Control Solutions** (27.7%):This segment includes consolidated results of Xylem's Analytics, Sensus and Visenti businesses. These products have a wide range of applications that include Water, Energy, Test and Software as a Service/Other. Brands like Pure, Sensus, EmNet, Visenti, Smith Blair, YSI and WTW form parts of this segment.

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Reasons To Buy:

Diversified business structure, solid product offerings and backlog level, and cost-reduction actions might benefit Xylem. Also, a healthy liquidity position and dividend payouts might work in the company’s favour.

- In the past three months, Xylem’s shares have gained 32.6% compared with the industry’s growth of 14.3%. In second-quarter 2020, Xylem’s earnings and sales surprise was 2.6% and 2.1%, respectively. Backlog at the end of the quarter was up 10%, pointing toward solid growth opportunities for 2021, stemming from large contract wins. In addition, the company might benefit from new products, innovation, efforts to boost growth and focus on operational execution in the quarters ahead. Its diversified business structure — with exposure in multiple end-markets, solid product offerings and others — might be beneficial, helping it offset weakness in one or more markets, with gains in others. Further, the company seems to be working diligently to continue with its operations despite the uncertainties caused by the pandemic. In the past 60 days, the company’s earnings estimates have been increased by 1.1% for 2020.

- Xylem has taken actions to control capital spending and operating expenses to offset some financial stress. For 2020, the company anticipates realizing structural cost savings of $70 million, while the same are expected to be $80 million in 2021. For the third quarter of 2020, it now anticipates operating margin of 11-11.5%, suggesting growth from 9.3% recorded in the second quarter. In addition, the company seems to have healthy liquidity position of $2.4 billion at the end of the second quarter of 2020. This comprised of $1.6 billion of available cash and liquidity available under credit facilities.

- Xylem believes in rewarding shareholders handsomely through share buybacks and dividend payments. In the first half of 2020, it paid out dividends amounting to $95 million, marking an increase of 9.2% from the year-ago comparable period. Also, share buybacks grew 53.8% year over year to $60 million in the first half of 2020 (no shares were repurchased in the second quarter). Notably, the company’s board of directors approved an 8% hike in its quarterly dividend rate in February 2020.

Reasons To Sell:

The uncertainties caused by the coronavirus outbreak remain concerning for Xylem. Also, forex woes, cost inflation, strategic investments and high debts might be dragging.

- On a Price (P)/Earnings (E) (trailing 12 months - TTM) basis, Xylem's shares presently seem overvalued compared with the industry, with respective figures of 37.69X and 26.99X. Also, its multiple is higher than the industry's three-month highest levels of 26.99X. In second-quarter 2020, Xylem's earnings declined 49.4% year over year on weak sales generation (the pandemic adversely impacted the top line by 5%) and a fall in margins. For 2020, the company refrained from reinstating its projections, which were suspended on Mar 31. For the third quarter, it currently expects a year-over-year organic sales decline of 8-12% — including a mid- to high-single-digit decline in Water Infrastructure, a fall in low-teens in Applied Water, and mid- to high-teens decrease in Measurement & Control Solutions.

- Over the past few quarters, Xylem has been grappling with the adverse impacts of cost inflation. In second-quarter 2020, the company's operating margin was lowered by 270 bps due to cost inflation. The same metric reduced the operating margin by 260 bps in the first quarter of 2020. In addition to costs inflation, adverse impact of volume/mix/other lowered operating margin by 660 bps and strategic investments had a 60-bps adverse impacts in the second quarter of 2020. In the quarters ahead, the coronavirus pandemic might continue hurting the company's margins. Also, the persistence of headwinds related to cost inflation and strategic investments might be concerning. Geographical diversification is reflective of a flourishing business of Xylem. However, the diversity exposed the company to headwinds arising from geopolitical issues and unfavorable movements in foreign currencies. In the second quarter of 2020, forex woes adversely impacted earnings by one cent per share and sales by 2%.

- A high debt level can be concerning for Xylem, as it raises financial obligations and might hurt profitability. At the end of second-quarter 2020, the company's long-term debt was $3,031 million, reflecting a sequential increase of 49.2%. Proceeds from debt issuance totaled $987 million in the first half of 2020. Its total debt to total capital stood at 53.1% in second-quarter end, higher than 46.9% in the previous quarter. In addition to rise in debts, the company's ability to meet the financial obligation have weakened; evident from a fall in times interest earned from 6.6X in the first quarter to 4.7X in the second quarter. Also, return on total capital has declined from 10% in the first quarter to 8.2% in the second quarter.

Last Earnings Report

Xylem Surpasses Q2 Earnings Estimates, Provides View

Quarter Ending	06/2020
Report Date	Jul 30, 2020
Sales Surprise	0.47%
EPS Surprise	2.56%
Quarterly EPS	0.40
Annual EPS (TTM)	2.34

Xylem has reported better-than-expected results for second-quarter 2020. Its earnings surprise in the quarter was 2.6%.

Adjusted earnings in the quarter under review were 40 cents per share, surpassing the Zacks Consensus Estimate of 39 cents. However, the bottom line decreased 49.4% from the year-ago figure of 79 cents.

It is worth noting that unfavorable movements in foreign currencies had an adverse impact of 1 cent per share on earnings.

Revenue Details

Xylem's revenues of $1,160 million in the quarter under review moved down 13.8% from the year-ago quarter. Organic sales in the quarter declined 12% due mainly to the adverse impacts of the coronavirus outbreak.

Also, the company's revenues surpassed the Zacks Consensus Estimate of $1,136 million.

Geographically, organic sales fell 15% in the United States, 15% in emerging markets and 4% in Western Europe. Based on end-markets, organic sales in utilities fell 9%, while that in industrial declined 16%. Also, commercial and residential organic sales fell 10% and 15%, respectively.

Orders in the reported quarter fell 11% year over year to $1,232 million. Organically, orders declined 9%.

The company reports net sales under three segments, which are Water Infrastructure, Applied Water, and Measurement & Control Solutions.

The segmental information is briefly discussed below:

Revenues in the Water Infrastructure segment were $501 million, down 10.7% year over year. Organic sales in the quarter decreased 8% year over year. Results suffered from the weakness in utilities and industrial end markets. Business in the U.S. and emerging markets were down 15% and 9%, respectively.

The Applied Water segment generated revenues of $337 million in the second quarter, down 14.5% year over year. Organic sales dipped 13% on a year-over-year basis. Business in commercial, residential and industrial markets was weak in the quarter. Geographically, businesses fell 14% in the United States as well as declined 14% in emerging markets and 12% in Western Europe.

Quarterly revenues of the Measurement & Control Solutions segment were $322 million, down 17.4% year over year. Organic sales decreased 17% year over year. Results suffered from weakness in water, test, energy and SaaS/other end markets. While businesses in the United States declined 16%, that in emerging markets was down 29% and it decreased 5% in Western Europe.

Margin Profile

In the quarter, the company's cost of sales decreased 11.4% year over year to $726 million. As a percentage of revenues, it represented 62.6% versus 60.9% in the year-ago quarter. Gross profit decreased 17.5% year over year to $434 million, while margin dipped 170 basis points (bps) to 37.4%. Selling, general and administrative expenses dipped 2% to $288 million. Meanwhile, research and development expenses decreased 6.4% to $44 million.

Adjusted operating income in the quarter was $108 million, down 43.8% year over year. Operating margin was down 500 bps to 9.3% due mainly to lower volumes caused by the pandemic.

Balance Sheet and Cash Flow

Exiting the second quarter, Xylem had cash and cash equivalents of $1,577 million, surging 113.4% from $739 million at the end of the last reported quarter. Long-term debt balance increased 49.2% sequentially to $3,031 million.

In the first half of 2020, the company's proceeds from issuance of long-term debt instruments totaled $987 million.

In the quarter, it generated net cash of $181 million from its operating activities, reflecting an increase of 47.2% from the year-ago comparable quarter. Capital expenditure was $44 million, down 26.7% from the year-ago figure of $60 million. Free cash flow in the quarter was $137 million, up 117.5% from the year-ago quarter.

Shareholder-Friendly Policies

In the first half of 2020, the company paid out dividends amounting to $95 million, reflecting an increase of 9.2% from the year-ago comparable period. Share repurchased amounted to $60 million, up 53.8% year over year.

Outlook

Due to the pandemic-related uncertainties, Xylem refrained from reinstating its projections for 2020. Notably, it withdrew its yearly forecast on Mar 31.

For the third quarter, it expects an organic sales decline of 8-12% year over year. Adjusted operating margin is expected to be 11-11.5%. The projections are better than the results recorded in the second quarter.

Recent News

Dividend

On **Sep 24, 2020**, Xylem paid out a quarterly cash dividend of 26 cents per share to shareholders of record as of Aug 27, 2020.

Xylem Confirms Deal Wins

On **Jul 14, 2020**, Xylem communicated that it entered two significant contracts in the second quarter. Notably, it secured a large-scale irrigation project in India's Telangana region, valued at about $115 million. The company anticipates realizing revenues from the deal over the next two to three years, commencing late in this year's fourth quarter.

In addition, it clinched a deal from Anglian Water in the U.K. for the deployment of software, smart metering and network solutions. This $90-million deal will yield revenue over the next five years, starting late this year.

Valuation

Xylem shares are up 12% and 18.3% in the year-to-date and over the trailing 12-month period, respectively. Stocks in the Zacks sub-industry and the Zacks Industrial Products sector are down 4.2% and 2% in the year-to-date period, respectively. Over the past year, the Zacks sub-industry and the sector are up 13.33% and 20.5%, respectively.

The S&P 500 index has moved up 4.5% year to date and increased 17.4% in the past year.

The stock is currently trading at 35.85x forward 12-month earnings, which compares to 26.87x for the Zacks sub-industry, 22.78x for the Zacks sector and 21.96x for the S&P 500 index.

Over the past five years, the stock has traded as high as 37.33x and as low as 16.27x, with a 5-year median of 22.6x. Our Neutral recommendation indicates that the stock will perform in line with the market. Our $93 price target reflects 37.64x forward 12-month earnings.

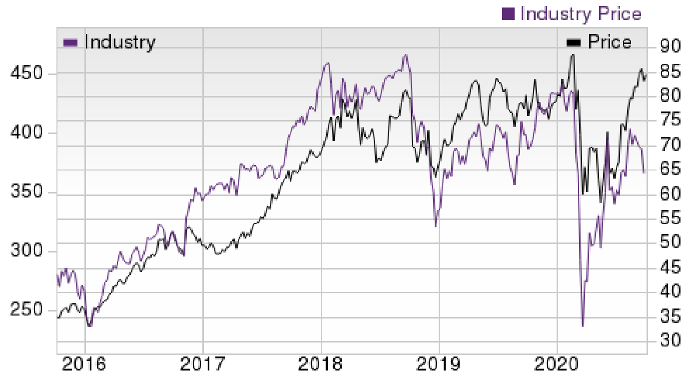
The table below shows summary valuation data for XYL.

Valuation Multiples - XYL

		Stock	Sub-Industry	Sector	S&P 500
P/E F12M	Current	35.85	26.87	22.78	21.96
	5-Year High	37.33	27.54	22.78	23.47
	5-Year Low	16.27	15.83	12.55	15.27
	5-Year Median	22.6	20.1	17.68	17.7
P/S F12M	Current	3.18	3.45	3.04	4.04
	5-Year High	3.18	3.49	3.04	4.3
	5-Year Low	1.56	1.65	1.6	3.18
	5-Year Median	2.37	2.27	2.07	3.67

As of 10/07/2020 *Source: Zacks Investment Research*

Industry Analysis **Zacks Industry Rank:** Bottom 35% (163 out of 252)



Source: Zacks Investment Research

Top Peers

Company (Ticker)	Rec	Rank
Danaher Corporation **(DHR)**	Outperform	2
Franklin Electric Co., Inc. **(FELE)**	Outperform	2
Badger Meter, Inc. **(BMI)**	Neutral	3
Itron, Inc. **(ITRI)**	Neutral	3
MUELLER WATER PRODUCTS **(MWA)**	Neutral	3
Pentair plc **(PNR)**	Neutral	2
United Rentals, Inc. **(URI)**	Neutral	3
Chart Industries, Inc. **(GTLS)**	Underperform	5

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

Industry Comparison Industry: Manufacturing - General Industrial

	XYL	X Industry	S&P 500	DHR	MWA	URI
				Industry Peers		
Zacks Recommendation (Long Term)	Neutral	-	-	Outperform	Neutral	Neutral
Zacks Rank (Short Term)	4	-	-	2	3	3
VGM Score	D	-	-	D	B	B
Market Cap	15.87 B	1.25 B	23.47 B	157.51 B	1.68 B	14.34 B
# of Analysts	7	3	14	8	5	9
Dividend Yield	1.18%	0.00%	1.62%	0.32%	1.97%	0.00%
Value Score	D	-	-	D	C	A
Cash/Price	0.10	0.12	0.07	0.04	0.10	0.01
EV/EBITDA	19.51	12.93	13.46	38.58	12.65	5.65
PEG F1	2.92	3.08	2.90	3.46	1.90	1.09
P/B	5.54	2.12	3.49	4.77	2.76	3.67
P/CF	16.68	10.45	13.28	35.73	11.15	4.15
P/E F1	48.18	24.95	21.75	40.53	18.99	13.03
P/S TTM	3.21	1.40	2.62	8.06	1.74	1.59
Earnings Yield	2.10%	3.41%	4.41%	2.47%	5.25%	7.67%
Debt/Equity	1.06	0.49	0.70	0.68	0.73	2.46
Cash Flow ($/share)	5.29	2.49	6.92	6.21	0.96	47.99
Growth Score	B	-	-	C	B	B
Historical EPS Growth (3-5 Years)	11.31%	9.79%	10.45%	2.68%	9.16%	26.03%
Projected EPS Growth (F1/F0)	-38.88%	-25.19%	-2.99%	23.93%	17.57%	-21.75%
Current Cash Flow Growth	21.58%	-0.29%	5.47%	1.84%	17.29%	17.38%
Historical Cash Flow Growth (3-5 Years)	13.56%	5.59%	8.50%	5.87%	7.36%	13.02%
Current Ratio	2.40	2.00	1.35	2.20	3.69	0.84
Debt/Capital	51.41%	33.65%	42.90%	38.15%	42.27%	71.07%
Net Margin	5.09%	4.34%	10.28%	17.73%	8.85%	12.37%
Return on Equity	14.72%	10.21%	14.79%	11.88%	14.01%	37.16%
Sales/Assets	0.63	0.74	0.51	0.30	0.73	0.48
Projected Sales Growth (F1/F0)	-9.69%	-8.20%	-0.62%	6.73%	4.70%	-10.87%
Momentum Score	F	-	-	D	B	F
Daily Price Change	1.95%	1.10%	1.74%	1.74%	2.01%	2.63%
1-Week Price Change	1.65%	1.72%	2.13%	2.58%	2.03%	10.04%
4-Week Price Change	5.74%	0.19%	1.57%	9.95%	-0.28%	13.12%
12-Week Price Change	17.63%	2.47%	5.89%	17.89%	8.66%	23.73%
52-Week Price Change	18.28%	-7.52%	6.10%	61.83%	-0.93%	78.47%
20-Day Average Volume (Shares)	930,311	93,389	2,147,698	2,027,858	1,100,112	839,714
EPS F1 Estimate 1-Week Change	-0.15%	0.00%	0.00%	0.07%	0.00%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 4-Week Change	-0.15%	0.00%	0.00%	0.07%	0.00%	0.00%
EPS F1 Estimate 12-Week Change	29.18%	7.20%	3.55%	12.04%	8.08%	27.27%
EPS Q1 Estimate Monthly Change	-0.24%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Source: Zacks Investment Research

Zacks Stock Rating System

We offer two rating systems that take into account investors' holding horizons: Zacks Rank and Zacks Recommendation. Each provides valuable insights into the future profitability of the stock and can be used separately or in combination with each other depending on your investment style.

Zacks Recommendation

The Zacks Recommendation aims to predict performance over the next 6 to 12 months. The foundation for the quantitatively determined Zacks Recommendation is trends in the company's estimate revisions and earnings outlook. The Zacks Recommendation is broken down into 3 Levels; Outperform, Neutral and Underperform. Unlike many Wall Street firms, we maintain a balance between the number of Outperform and Neutral recommendations. Our team of 70 analysts are fully versed in the benefits of earnings estimate revisions and how that is harnessed through the Zacks quantitative rating system. But we have given our analysts the ability to override the Zacks Recommendation for the 1200 stocks that they follow. The reason for the analyst over-rides is that there are often factors such as valuation, industry conditions and management effectiveness that a trained investment professional can spot better than a quantitative model.

Zacks Rank

The Zacks Rank is our short-term rating system that is most effective over the one- to three-month holding horizon. The underlying driver for the quantitatively-determined Zacks Rank is the same as the Zacks Recommendation, and reflects trends in earnings estimate revisions.

Zacks Style Scores

The Zacks Style Score is as a complementary indicator to the Zacks rating system, giving investors a way to focus on the highest rated stocks that best fit their own stock picking preferences.

Academic research has proven that stocks with the best Value, Growth and Momentum characteristics outperform the market. The Zacks Style Scores rate stocks on each of these individual styles and assigns a rating of A, B, C, D and F. We also produce the VGM Score (V for Value, G for Growth and M for Momentum), which combines the weighted average of the individual Style Scores into one score. This is perfectly suited for those who want their stocks to have the best scores across the board.

Value Score	D
Growth Score	B
Momentum Score	F
VGM Score	D

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.