

building supply/home improvement "warehouse" stores across the U.S. and in Canada and Mexico (as of 5/4/14). Acquired Hughes Supply in 1/06. Average store size: 104,000 sq. ft. indoor plus 24,000 sq. ft. garden center. Items stocked: about 35,000. Product lines include building materials, lumber, floor/wall coverings; plumb-

items; hardware & tools. Has about 365,000 employees. Off. & dir. own less than 1.0% of common; Capital World Investors, 10.3% (4/14 Proxy). Chairman & CEO: Frank Blake. Inc.: DE. Address: 2455 Paces Ferry Road N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30339. Telephone: 770-433-8211. Internet: www.homedepot.com.

ANNUAL RATES Past Est'd '11-'13 Past 10 Yrs. to '17-'19 of change (per sh) 5 Yrs. Sales "Cash Flow" 7.5% 8.0% 2.5% 5.0% 9.5% 11.5% 6.5% 8.5% -0.5% 13.0% 15.5% -0.5% Earnings Dividends 7.0% 19.5% Book Value

15372

5376

4765

11462

**Current Assets** 

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab.

Other

895

15279

5797

33 4919

10749

830

17515

7739 34

13265

Fiscal Year Begins			ALES (\$ m Oct.Per	ill.) <sup>A</sup> Jan.Per	Full Fiscal Year
2011	16823	20232	17326	16014	70395
2012	17808	20570	18130	18246	74754
2013	19124	22522	19470	17696	78812
2014	19687	23600	20460	18853	82600
2015	21000	24300	21300	19600	86200
Fiscal	EARNINGS PER SHARE A B Full,				
Year Begins				Jan.Per	Fiscal Year
2011	.50	.86	.60	.51	2.47
2012	.65	1.01	.74	.67	3.10
2013	.83	1.24	.95	.73	3.76
2014	.96	1.45	1.11	.88	4.40
2015	1.15	1.65	1.30	1.05	5.15
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID C =				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2010	.236	.236	.236	.236	.95
2011	.25	.25	.25	.29	1.04
2012	.29	.29	.29	.29	1.16
2013	.39	.39	.39	.39	1.56
2014	.47	.47			

The Home Depot reported fiscal firstquarter (ended May 4th) results that fell short of forecasts, but management's outlook reassured Wall Street. While we expected lingering inclement weather to create a slow start to the spring selling season, the impact was more severe than we had anticipated. Indeed, sales and adjusted earnings were slightly below our calls, but rose 3% and 16% year over year, respectively, while comparablestore sales climbed 2.6%.

Our near-term expectations have not changed much, despite the fiscal firstquarter miss. Weather sapped roughly 100 basis points from April-period comps, and sales in regions where the weather was not an issue were quite strong. Too, potential sales that were lost last quarter will likely be recouped in the July interim. May comps are tough, but management described sales trends that month as "robust". Additionally, sales to professional customers have remained strong, big-ticket transactions continue to grow, and core products have seen steady demand (weakness in the April term was largely due to seasonal and outdoor prod-

ucts). Finally, online sales, which were up 40% in the fiscal first quarter, and the company's investments in interconnected retail (online, in store, and mobile) should continue to gain steam, as well.

Housing suffered some reversals in late 2013 and early 2014. A harsh winter, rising mortgage rates, and falling affordability levels weighed on the sector. A sharp rebound in April was followed by a backtrack in May when housing starts and building permits fell month to month. We are not overly concerned, however, given the aggregate levels of both starts and permits. Also, inventories are up (the lack of available housing stock has been a problem), mortgage rates have trended lower, home prices have climbed, and the broader economy has been picking up at an irregular speed.

All told, we shaved a nickel from our 2014 earnings call to account for the April-period miss, but management's outlook was virtually unchanged. We still like HD for conservative investors, as risk-adjusted total return potential appears favorable at the recent quotation. Matthew E. Spencer, CFA June 27, 2014

 (A) Fiscal year ends Sunday closest to January 31st of the following year.
 (B) Diluted earnings. Excludes nonrecurring. gains/(losses): '07, (\$0.10); '08, (\$0.44); '09,

(\$0.09); '10, (\$0.02); '12, (\$0.10); '14, \$0.04. Totals may not sum due to rounding. Next earnings report due August 19th.

Sept., and Dec. Div'd reinvest. plan avail.

(D) In millions, adjusted for stock splits.

(E) Includes intangibles. At 2/2/14: \$1,289 mill.

(C) Dividends historically paid in March, June, (\$0.93/share).

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 90 Price Growth Persistence 45 **Earnings Predictability** 80

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