

chain, operating 3,465 supercenters (includes grocery departments), 442 discount stores, 655 Sam's Clubs, and 667 Neighborhood Markets in the U.S., plus 6,299 foreign stores, many in Latin America, with the rest in Asia, Canada, and the U.K. as of 1/31/16. Total store space: 1.149 billion square feet. Retail space is largely

ter. Groceries accounted for 56% of U.S. sales; sales per square foot in 2015: about \$420. Has 2,300,000 employees. Off./dir. own 51.6% of shares (4/16 proxy). Chairman: S. Robson Walton. CEO and Pres.: Doug McMillon. Inc.: DE. Addr.: 702 S.W. 8th St., Bentonville, AR 72716. Tel.: 479-273-4000. Internet: www.walmart.com.

ANNUAL RATES Past Est'd '13-'15 Past 10 Yrs. to '19-'21 of change (per sh) 5 Yrs. Sales "Cash Flow" 8.0% 8.5% 6.5% 6.5% 4.0% 2.0% Earnings Dividends Book Value 6.0% 12.0% 6.5% 1.0% 3.5% 3.5% 7.5%

2224

63278

38410

6402 20460

**Current Assets** 

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab.

Other

1441

60239

38487

6004 20128

1800

59097

37997

6629 25656

Fiscal Year Begins	QUA Apr.30	RTERLY S Jul.31	ALES (\$ m Oct.31	nill.) A Jan.31	Full Fiscal Year
2013	114071	116829	115688	129706	476294
2014	114960	120125	119001	131565	485651
2015	114826	120229	117408	129667	482130
2016	115904	119000	118000	129096	482000
2017	116000	122000	120500	134500	493000
Fiscal	EARNINGS PER SHARE A B				_Full
Year Begins	Apr.30	Jul.31	Oct.31	Jan.31	Full Fiscal Year
2013	1.14	1.24	1.14	1.59	5.11
2014	1.10	1.21	1.15	1.61	5.07
2015	1.03	1.08	1.03	1.43	4.57
2016	.98	1.00	.93	1.28	4.20
2017	.95	1.05	.95	1.35	4.30
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID = C				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2012	.365	.795	.3975	.3975	1.96
2013	.47	.47	.47	.47	1.88
2014	.48	.48	.48	.48	1.92
2015	.49	.49	.49	.49	1.96
2016	.50	.50			

Wal-Mart shares have outpaced their Dow counterparts in recent weeks. A combination of better-than-expected fiscal first-quarter results, and investors' rising interest in "safe haven" stocks amid market volatility and poor visibility help explain why WMT has beaten the benchmark Dow index by over 10% since earnings were released in late May.

Consumer satisfaction scores have im**proved.** The company continues to make progress managing inventory and labor to keep shelves stocked. Too, more associates are being made available to assist shoppers and keep lines moving. This helped Walmart U.S. grow first-quarter samestore sales 1% (1.6% excluding food deflation) on a 1.5% rise in traffic. These numbers are solid considering Walmart's massive scale. The core business also enjoyed 44 basis points of gross margin expansion, thanks to success with merchandise price negotiations, lower transportation costs (fuel), and less lost/stolen merchandise.

The customer base has mixed feelings about retail spending. Low unemployment, interest rates, inflation, and gas prices are all positives for Walmart shop-

pers. Still, many continue to focus on saving money and paying down debt. Overall, we think it will be difficult for comps to surpass the 1% guidance management provided for the July quarter.

E-commerce remains a priority. Companywide e-commerce sales rose 7% in the quarter. This pales in comparison to the 25% retail sales growth Amazon experienced in the first quarter. Too, that company recently became the largest apparel retailer in the U.S., behind only Walmart. The company hopes Walmart Pay will help fend off the juggernaut e-tailer. The technology allows shoppers to make purchases with iOS or Android devices via the Walmart app. We find the suggested convenience of tapping a phone versus swiping a card to be questionable at best.

These shares may interest those looking for a defensive play. Wal-Mart fits the bill as a safe-haven stock. That said, the recent appreciation of the shares leaves them with lackluster potential price appreciation. Further, the market seems to already be pricing in solid same-store sales growth in the coming quarters. Kevin Downing

July 29, 2016

(A) Fiscal year ends Jan. 31st of following calendar year. Sales exclude rentals from licensed depts. (B) Based on diluted shares. May not sum due to rounding. Excls. n/r

(losses)/gains: '01, (\$0.01); '05, \$0.03; '08, Mar., May, Aug., and Dec.■ Dividend reinvest-(\$0.07); '09, \$0.04; '10, \$0.40; '11, \$0.03; '13, ment plan available. (\$0.23); '15 (\$0.08). Next earnings report due (**D**) In millions. August 18th. (C) Divds. historically paid in early

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 100 Price Growth Persistence **Earnings Predictability** 100

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