

music player, the iPad tablet, the iPhone smartphone, and the Apple Watch, for sale primarily to the business, creative, education, government, and consumer markets. It also sells operating systems, utilities, languages, developer tools, and database software.

Apple shares have enjoyed decent in-

'15 sales. Has about 110,000 employees. Off./dir. own less than 1.0% of common; Vanguard, 6.0%; BlackRock, 5.7% (1/16 Proxy). CEO: Tim Cook. Inc.: CA. Addr.: 1 Infinite Loop, Cupertino, CA 95014. Tel.: 408-996-1010. Internet: www.apple.com.

Past vestor support lately. The Dow stock ANNUAL RATES Past Est'd '13-'15 to '19-'21 of change (per sh) 5 Yrs. has rallied over 15% in value since our last 34.5% 54.0% 36.5% 44.5% Sales 9.5% full-page review in early July, bolstered by better-than-anticipated results for the third quarter of fiscal 2016 (year ended 'Cash Flow" 11.0% Earnings 55.0% 41.0% 11 5% 14.0% 9.5% Dividends Book Value 35.0% 31.5% September 24th) and hopes that the com-Full Fisca Year QUARTERLY SALES (\$ mill.) A **Fiscal** pany will soon return to a sustainable Year Ends Dec.Per Mar.Per Jun.Per Sep.Per growth track. For the third period, share 54512 43603 37472 2013 35323 170910 net came in at \$1.42, a nickel above our 57594 45646 37432 2014 42123 182795 estimate and \$0.02 ahead of the consensus 74599 58010 49605 view. The earnings beat was a quality one, too, as sales (of \$42.4 billion) and *iPhone* 2015 51501 233715 216000 227000 75872 50557 2016 42358 47213 2017 74500 55500 46000 51000 shipments (of 40.4 million) topped expecta-Full Fiscal Year Fiscal Year Ends EARNINGS PER SHARE A B tions. The iPhone SE, a low-cost device Dec.Per Mar.Per Jun.Per Sep.Per with a smallish 4-inch display, performed 1.97 1 44 1.18 2013 1.07 5.66 especially well during the interim, despite 2014 2.07 1.66 1.28 6.45 1.42 arriving to little fanfare back in March. In-1.85 1.96 2015 3.08 2.33 9.22 deed, the entry-level smartphone went a 8.25 2016 1 42 1.65 3 28 1 90 long way toward helping Apple to attract 2017 3.15 2.35 1.85 2.15 9.50 new customers — in both developed and QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID F Calemerging countries — and broaden its Mar.31 Jun.30 Sep.30 Dec.31 endar Year ecosystem of hardware and services. 2012 .379 .379 .76

The iPhone should remain a major growth catalyst for years to come. The iPhone 6 offerings have not reached blockbuster status (by the company's own very high standards), but they have bolstered

global market-share trends at a time of intense competition. Moreover, given the large installed base at present, as well as the good press and encouraging early sales data for the just-debuted iPhone 7 and 7 Plus, we think that a powerful upgrade cycle is now at hand. This augurs well for fiscal 2017, when we see earnings staging a double-digit rebound. (For fiscal 2016, we still envision share net of \$8.25, notwithstanding the solid third-quarter showing.) In the meantime, the company should continue to return cash to shareholders via dividends and stock buybacks. Apple grabbed headlines recently when the European Union served it with a hefty \$14.5 billion tax bill. The controversial move will almost certainly be appealed (a process that could take years), however, and we do not expect any material longterm impact on the company's business.

The stock does not score well (5) in our Timeliness system. Still, we continue to like the shares for the patient buyand-hold crowd, thanks to Apple's excellent finances and improving prospects. The valuation is attractive, as well.

Justin Hellman September 30, 2016

(A) Fiscal year ends last Saturday in September. (B) Diluted earnings. Quarters may not add to total due to rounding. Excludes nonrecurring gains: '00, 3¢; '01, 1¢; '05, 2¢; loss:

.436

.47

.52

.57

.436

.47

.52 .57

.379

.436

.47

.52

2013

2014

2015

2016

Current Assets

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab.

68531

30196

26944

63448

6308

89378

35490

10999

80610

.436

.47

.52

1.69

1.85

2.03

9376

26318 15996

71486

In 2015, \$9009 mill., \$1.61 a share. (F) New

'02, 1¢. Next earnings report due late October. (C) In mill., adjusted for splits. (D) Depreciation on accelerated basis. (E) Includes intangibles. dividend policy adopted 3/12. Payments typically made in February, May, August, and November.

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 65 Price Growth Persistence **Earnings Predictability** 60