

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.

4.7% of '16 sales. Has about 116,000 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 ANNUAL RATES Past Est'd '14-'16 to '19-'21 of change (per sh) 5 Yrs. 34.5% 54.0% 36.5% 44.5% Sales "Cash Flow" 9.0% 10.5% Earnings Dividends Book Value 11.5% 15.0% 10.0% 55.0% 41.0% 35.0% 31.5%

30196

26944

63448

6308

35490

10999

80610

37294 11605

79006

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab.

Fiscal Year Ends		RTERLY S r Mar.Per			Full Fiscal Year
2013	54512	43603	35323	37472	170910
2014	57594	45646	37432	42123	182795
2015	74599	58010	49605	51501	233715
2016	75872	50557	42358	46852	215639
2017	76000	56000	47000	51000	230000
Fiscal	EARNINGS PER SHARE A B Ful				
Year Ends	Dec.Pe	r Mar.Per	Jun.Per	Sep.Per	Fiscal Year
2013	1.97	1.44	1.07	1.18	5.66
2014	2.07	1.66	1.28	1.42	6.45
2015	3.08	2.33	1.85	1.96	9.22
2016	3.28	1.90	1.42	1.67	8.31
2017	3.20	2.25	1.80	2.00	9.25
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID F				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2012			.379	.379	.76
2013	.379	.436	.436	.436	1.69
2014	.436	.47	.47	.47	1.85
2015	.47	.52	.52	.52	2.03
2016	.52	.57	.57	.57	

Apple is coming off a challenging year. Fiscal 2016 (ended September 24th) closed with three straight quarters of topline declines, as *iPhone* momentum slowed (unit shipments fell 5% during the September interim) and business conditions softened in China (a key emerging market for the tech giant). Moreover, earnings slipped 10% for the year, to \$8.31 a share, only the second such profit decline since cash-cow smartphone franchise debuted back in 2007. This contributed to the stock's laggard performance, and prompted some investors to wonder whether there were any more chapters to come in Apple's incredible growth story.

Fiscal 2017 will probably be a solid, bounce-back year. Though initial supplies have been tight, the new iPhone 7 and 7 Plus (released in mid-September), which have been well received by customers and the tech press, ought to support a powerful smartphone upgrade cycle in the coming periods. This should be especially true given the battery issues that have affected rival Samsung's high-end smartphones. (Samsung had to recall millions of its Galaxy Note 7 devices because of

reported battery fires.) In the meantime. the services business, containing the *App* Store and software offerings like the Siri intelligent personal assistant, should continue to chug along. Services revenue jumped 24% in the fourth quarter, to a record \$6.3 billion, as Apple garnered benefits from strategic acquisitions, R&D investments, exclusive music downloads, and brisk demand for the "Pokemon Go" location-based augmented reality game. And this strength seems apt to persist through the current year and beyond. All told, we envision an 11% rebound in share net in fiscal 2017, to \$9.25, on a top-line advance in the mid- to high-single digits.

Longer term, earnings of \$13.75 a share still appear achievable by decade's end. This estimate may even prove to be conservative, depending on the pace of stock buybacks and how quickly the company can make further strides in China and other emerging markets.

We continue to like this tech name for the buy-and-hold crowd. The issue's Below Average (4) Timeliness rank suggests that there is no need to rush in, however. Justin Hellman December 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:

In 2016, \$8620 mill., \$1.62 a share. (F) New

'02, 1¢. Next earnings report due late January. (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++ 60 Price Growth Persistence **Earnings Predictability** 60

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