

BUSINESS: Apple Inc. is one of the world's largest makers of PCs and peripheral and consumer products, such as the *iPod* digital 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.

As of 2016, Apple operated a total of around 488 retail outlets in 20 countries, with lease terms ranging from five to 20 years. R&D: 4.7% of '16 sales. Has about 116,000 employees. Off./dir. own less than 1.0% of common; Vanguard, 6.1%; BlackRock, 6.0% (1/17 Proxy). CEO: Tim Cook. Inc.: CA. Addr.: 1 Infinite Loop, Cupertino, CA 95014. Tel.: 408-996-1010. Internet: www.apple.com.

ANNUAL RATES Past Past Est'd '14-'16 to '20-'22 of change (per sh) 5 Yrs. 28.5% 31.5% Sales "Cash Flow" 32.0% 8.5% 46.0% 10.5% Earnings 45.0% 28.0% 11.0% Dividends Book Value 12.5% 15.0% 32 5% 22.0%

89378

35490

10999

80610

106869

37294 11605

79006

112875

31915

18475

81302

Current Assets

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab.

| Fiscal Year Ends | QUARTERLY SALES (\$ mill.) A Dec.Per Mar.Per Jun.Per Sep.Per | | | | Full Fiscal Year |
|------------------------|--|-----------|---------|---------|------------------------|
| 2014 | 57594 | 45646 | 37432 | 42123 | 182795 |
| 2015 | 74599 | 58010 | 49605 | 51501 | 233715 |
| 2016 | 75872 | 50557 | 42358 | 46852 | 215639 |
| 2017 | 78351 | 52896 | 45408 | 51345 | 228000 |
| 2018 | 86400 | 58300 | 50600 | 56700 | 252000 |
| Fiscal | EARNINGS PER SHARE A B Full | | | | |
| Year Ends | Dec.Pe | r Mar.Per | Jun.Per | Sep.Per | Fiscal Year |
| 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 | 3.36 | 2.10 | 1.67 | 1.92 | 9.05 |
| 2018 | 3.80 | 2.40 | 2.00 | 2.35 | 10.55 |
| Cal- | QUA | RTERLY D | VIDENDS | PAID F | Full |
| endar | Mar.31 | Jun.30 | Sep.30 | Dec.31 | Year |
| 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 | 2.23 |
| 2017 | .57 | .63 | .63 | | |
| | | | | | |

Apple shares have remained standouts since our last full-page review in June, rallying about 9% in value during the three-month stretch. The tech giant posted solid results for the third quarter of fiscal 2017 (year ends September 30th), with share net coming in at \$1.67 versus our \$1.59 call. But investor excitement for new products, including the 10th anniversary *iPhone*, seems to be driving the stock these days.

The company, notably, just held a big press event where it unveiled a host of new devices, highlighted by its cash-cow smartphones. The premiumtier model, dubbed the *iPhone X*, will retail at hefty price points (starting at \$999), prompting some to wonder whether Apple is catering too much to high-end consumers. The global luxury market is booming, however, suggesting that there will be plenty of demand for the *iPhone X*, which features facial recognition technology and a new edge-to-edge OLED display. (The product also establishes a foundation for the company to enter the promising augmented and virtual reality spheres.) Plus, the *iPhone X* series will likely carry

very high gross margins, which will be good news for the bottom line. And Apple is not forgetting the mainstream market, where the more affordable iPhone 8 and 8 Plus will compete. In fact, these new equipped smartphones, with better cameras and faster chips than their immediate predecessors, will probably account for the bulk of customer upgrades in the coming quarters. And they ought to help the company regain lost share in the important Greater China market, where lower-cost local competitors like Xiaomi have been making considerable strides.

We see earnings growing at a double-digit average annual pace to 2020-2022. Aside from a robust *iPhone* replacement cycle, the company should benefit from a booming services business and new additions to the *Apple Watch* and *Apple TV* lines. Deeper inroads in emerging geographies should be positives, as well.

At current levels, this issue still offers decent risk-adjusted long-term returns. These should be bolstered by regular dividend increases and further actions on the stock-buyback front.

Justin Hellman September 29, 2017

(A) Fiscal year ends last Saturday in September. (B) Diluted earnings. Quarters may not add to total due to rounding. Excludes non-recurring gains: '01, 1¢; '05, 2¢; loss: '02, 1¢.

Next earnings report due late October. (C) In mill., adjusted for splits. (D) Depreciation on accelerated basis. (E) Includes intangibles. In 2016, \$8620 mill., \$1.62 a share. (F) New divi-

dend policy adopted 3/12. Payments typically made in February, May, August, and November

Company's Financial Strength A++
Stock's Price Stability 60
Price Growth Persistence 85
Earnings Predictability 60