

Market Observations – January 2017 Recap

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After a strong fourth quarter of 2016 which was driven by optimism subsequent to the election of Donald Trump and his pro-growth agenda, the markets have settled down somewhat leaning towards a more wait and see approach as to what could actually be implemented by the Trump administration. Meanwhile, on the earnings front, US companies overall have so far exceeded expectations. Later in the month of January, the markets turned cautious after some earnings disappointments combined with concerns over President Trump's immigration policy. The S&P 500 finished the month with a 1.9% return.

The near-term uncertainty in the equity markets translated to a subdued flight to safety in the bond markets. The yield curve flattened modestly during the month resulting in positive returns for Treasury bonds. Spread tightening continued in the credit markets while municipal bonds began to recover after a sell-off in the fourth quarter.

Non-US equities posted strong returns in January as there were positive data coming out of Europe and Japan. The MSCI EAFE index outperformed the S&P 500 for the month. Emerging markets performed even better as exporters continue to benefit from the commodity recovery and weak currencies, which has been a boon for exporters. Foreign currencies appreciated vs. the US Dollar during the month as currency volatility picked up after the US Dollar reached highs and the Trump administration alluded to their preference for a weaker currency. The decline of the US Dollar during the month was a tailwind for both the MSCI EAFE and MSCI EM indices.

US Equity Summary:

- The S&P 500 was up 1.9% for the month. Growth outperformed value across the market cap spectrum which was a reversal from what we saw in the fourth quarter. Materials, information technology, and consumer discretionary were the top three performing sectors.
- Large-cap outperformed small-cap as the small-cap segment was dragged down by the financials and energy sectors. These sectors posted negative returns in January after being leading sectors in the fourth quarter.
- Four of the top five contributing stocks in the S&P 500 (Facebook, Apple, Amazon, and Microsoft) were technology companies which alone contributed approximately 58 basis points to the index's return. Information technology as a sector, contributed approximately 91 basis points to the index's return coming primarily from software and services companies.
- From a factor standpoint, Beta and Size were the dominant factors for the month.

Developed and Emerging Market Equity Summary:

- The MSCI EAFE Index was up 2.9% for the month, while the MSCI EM Index returned 5.5%. Large-cap stocks underperformed small-cap stocks in developed markets which is contrary to what occurred in the US. Large-cap stocks outperformed small-caps within emerging markets.
- Momentum and Growth factors performed best in developed markets. In emerging markets, Beta and Momentum were the strongest performing factors while Value factors also performed well.
- The Far East and Pacific regions were the best performing regions within the developed markets as both regions were up 4.8%. Europe and the EU were the weakest performing regions within developed markets with returns of 2.1% and 1.7%, respectively. Latin America was the best performing region within emerging markets (+7.6%), while Emerging Europe was the weakest (+1.8%). Frontier markets outperformed the broad emerging markets for the month, as the MSCI Frontier Emerging Markets index was up 6.7%.
- Materials and Information Technology were strong performing sectors within both developed and emerging markets. The bottom performing sectors in developed markets were Energy and Utilities, while Consumer Staples and Health Care were the weakest in emerging markets.

Fixed Income Summary:

- All major bond segments were up for the month. High yield was the best performing segment with the BofA ML US High Yield index returning 1.3% for the month. The lowest quality segment within high yield was the best performing.
- The Treasury curve flattened modestly during the month resulting in longer duration outperforming shorter duration.
- The municipal bond market recovered some of what had been lost in a difficult fourth quarter with the Barclays Muni Bond index up 0.6%.
- Global bonds outpaced most US sectors assisted by currency tailwinds as most major currencies appreciated vs. the US Dollar. Strong gains in locally-denominated emerging market sovereign bonds led the JPMorgan GBI-EM Global Diversified Index to a 2.25% return for the month. Furthermore, international corporate bonds performed in-line with their US high yield counterpart, returning 1.5% on the S&P International Corporate Bond Index.

Disclosures

Indices are unmanaged and presented for comparison purposes only. Please note that the returns displayed for indices do not take into account any of the costs associated with buying and selling individual securities. Individuals cannot invest directly in an index.

Bloomberg Barclays US Corporate High Yield TR USD: Bloomberg Barclays US Corporate High Yield TR USD

Bloomberg Barclays US Treasury 1-3 Yr TR USD: The Bloomberg Barclays Capital US Treasury Bond 1-3yr term index measures the performance of short-term government bonds issued by the US Treasury.

Bloomberg Barclays US Treasury 10 Yr USD: The index measures the performance of government bonds issued by the US Treasury.

Bloomberg Barclays US Treasury 20+ Yr TR USD: The Index is market capitalization weighted and includes all of the securities that meet the Index criteria. The index includes all publicly issued, U.S. Treasury securities that have a remaining maturity greater than 20 years, are non-convertible, are denominated in U.S. dollars, are rated investment grade (Baa3 or better) by Moody's Investors Service, are fixed rate, and have more than \$150 million par outstanding. Excluded from the Index are certain special issues, such as flower bonds, targeted investor notes (TINs) and state and local government series bonds (SLGs), and coupon issues that have been stripped from assets already included.

Bloomberg Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index: The U.S. Aggregate Index covers the USD-denominated, investment-grade, fixed-rate, taxable bond market of SEC-registered securities. The Index includes bonds from the Treasury, Government-Related, Corporate, MBS (agency fixed-rate and hybrid ARM pass throughs), ABS, and CMBS sectors. The U.S. Aggregate Index is a component of the U.S. Universal Index in its entirety.

MSCI EM Index: The MSCI Emerging Markets Index captures large and mid cap representation across 23 Emerging Markets (EM) countries. With 822 constituents, the index covers approximately 85% of the free float-adjusted market capitalization in each country

MSCI EAFE Index: The MSCI EAFE Index is recognized as the pre-eminent benchmark in the United States to measure international equity performance. It comprises the MSCI country indices that represent developed markets outside of North America: Europe, Australasia and the Far East.

S&P 500 Index: The S&P 500 Index consists of 500 stocks chosen for market size, liquidity, and industry group representation. It is a market value weighted Index (stock price times number of shares outstanding), with each stock's weight in the Index proportionate to its market value. The Index is one of the most widely used benchmarks of US Equity Large Cap performance.

Alerian MLP Index: The Alerian MLP Index is the leading gauge of energy Master Limited Partnerships (MLPs). The float-adjusted, capitalization-weighted index, whose constituents represent approximately 85% of total float-adjusted market capitalization, is disseminated real-time on a price-return basis (AMZ) and on a total-return basis (AMZX).

J.P. Morgan Factor Definitions

Yield: Stocks are ranked by trailing 12 month dividend yield. Positive factor performance indicates that the highest yielding stocks outperformed the lowest yielding stocks (as well as those stocks that did not pay any dividends) in the universe.

Size: Stocks are ranked by their month end market cap. A negative Size factor return would indicate that smaller cap stocks generally outperformed larger cap stocks.

Quality: Combines ROE and Earnings Risk (inverted such that stocks with tightest forecasts are rewarded with a higher score).

Price Momentum: The 12 Month Price Momentum factor is calculated by ranking stocks by their total return over the previous 12 months.

Earnings Momentum: This factor ranks stocks by their forward earnings momentum (1Mth + 3 Mth). For each stock, the change in FY1 earnings over the last month and the last 3 months, and the change in FY2 earnings over the last month and the last 3 months are calculated. A 3-month revision number and a 1-month revision number is calculated by taking the average of the change in FY1 and FY2. A composite value as the average of the 1 month and 3 month values is then calculated.

Book-to-Price: Stocks are ranked by their 12 month trailing Book/Market ratio with the cheapest stocks exhibiting the lowest ratio. A positive factor return indicates that stocks with a lower book-to-price ratio outperformed higher book-to-price stocks in the universe.

Beta: Beta for the stock relative to its local benchmark index. Note this is a fundamental beta not a calculated Beta.

USD: United States Dollar.

EURO: The official currency of the Eurozone.

CAD: The official currency of Canada.

AUD: The official currency of Australia.

BRL: The official currency of Brazil.

CHF: The official currency of Switzerland.

JPY: The official currency of Japan.

INR: The official currency of India.

West Texas Intermediate (WTI): West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil is the underlying commodity of the New York Mercantile Exchange's oil futures contracts. The success of an investment program may be affected by general economic and market conditions, such as interest rates, availability of credit, inflation rates, economic uncertainty, changes in laws and national and international political circumstances. These factors may affect the level and volatility of securities prices and the liquidity of a portfolio's investments. Unexpected volatility or illiquidity could result in losses.

Investing in securities is speculative and entails risk. There can be no assurance that one's investment objectives will be achieved or that an investment strategy will be successful. Significant losses could result if a strategy involves the use leverage, short sales and derivative transactions, investment in foreign or illiquid securities, and potentially limited diversification.

The opinions expressed herein can change anytime without notice.

Any forward looking statements are not guaranteed and can be affected by inaccurate assumptions or by known or unknown risks and uncertainties. Given these uncertainties, you should not place undue reliance on these forward-looking statements

Special Risks of Foreign Securities

Investments in foreign securities are affected by risk factors generally not thought to be present in the US. The factors include, but are not limited to, the following: less public information about issuers of foreign securities and less governmental regulation and supervision over the issuance and trading of securities.

Special Risks of Master Limited Partnerships

Master limited partnerships (MLPs) are publicly listed securities that trade much like a stock, but they are taxed as partnerships. MLPs are typically concentrated investments in assets such as oil, timber, gold and real estate. The risks of MLPs include concentration risk, illiquidity, and exposure to potential volatility, tax reporting complexity, fiscal policy and market risk. MLPs are not suitable for all investors.

Special Risks of Small Market Capitalization Securities

Investments in companies with smaller market capitalization are generally riskier than investments in larger, well-established companies. Smaller companies often are more recently formed than larger companies and may have limited product lines, distribution channels and financial and managerial resources. These companies may not be well known to the investing public, may not have significant institutional ownership and may have cyclical, static or moderate growth prospects. There is often less publicly available information about these companies than there is for larger, more established issuers, making it more difficult for the Investment Manager to analyze that value of the company. The equity securities of small and mid capitalization companies are often traded over-the-counter or on regional exchanges and may not be traded in the volume typical for securities that are traded on a national securities exchange. Consequently, the Investment Manager may be required to sell these securities over a longer period of time (and potentially at less favorable prices) than would be the case for securities of larger companies. In addition, the prices of the securities of small and mid capitalization companies may be more volatile than those of larger companies.

Special Risks of Fixed Income Securities

For fixed income securities, there is a risk that the price of these securities will go down as interest rates rise. Another risk of fixed income securities is credit risk, which is the risk that an issuer of a bond will not be able to make principal and interest payments on time.

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