

Market Observations – July 2018 Recap

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US equities continued their ascent in the month of July. The S&P 500 finished the month with a return of 3.7%, bringing its year-to-date tally to 6.5%. Not too shabby for a market that has shown a lot of concern about trade tensions, Fed rate hikes and other geopolitical risks. Strong earnings and good economic data helped overcome these concerns and drove stock prices higher. A notable surprise within US equities was that large cap value stocks were the best performing segment, which has been a rare occurrence as of late. The Russell 1000 Value index posted a return of 4.0%, outperforming the Russell 1000 Growth index's return of 2.9%. The value index was helped by strong performance from the Industrials and Financials sectors, which were up 7.3% and 5.3%, respectively. The Information Technology sector underperformed the S&P 500, posting a return of 2.1%. Netflix, Facebook and Twitter all communicated disappointing news during their quarterly announcements. These three stocks were 3 of the 4 top detractors for the S&P 500 for the month and launched some skepticism about whether FAANG stocks are really invincible.

In the bond markets, all eyes have been on the 10 to 2 year Treasury yield spread, which ended the month at 31 basis points. A yield curve inversion, when the 2-year Treasury yield surpasses the 10-year yield, has historically been a reliable predictor of recession over the subsequent 18 months. During the month of July both short and long-term Treasuries were negative performers. Low quality investments continue to lead the US bond markets and emerging market sovereign debt led the non-US bond markets.

Below is a summary of what occurred in the markets globally during the month of July.

US Equity Summary:

- The S&P 500 was up 3.7% for the month. Large Cap stocks outperformed Mid and Small Cap stocks. The Value style outperformed the Growth style across all market cap segments.
- A change of leadership occurred among S&P sectors. Industrials, Health Care, Financials and Consumer Staples outperformed the broad index. These sectors, with the exception of Health Care, have been the weakest sectors year-to-date.
- Energy and Real Estate were the weakest performing sectors but still posted positive returns.
- Through the end of July, 65% of S&P 500 companies reporting earnings with earnings growth of 24.2% on top of 9.9% revenue growth.
- Based on JPMorgan factors Value, Quality and Size were the best performing factors. Growth and Momentum, both price and earnings momentum, were the weakest performing factors.

Developed and Emerging Market Equity Summary:

- The MSCI EAFE Index was up 2.5% for the month, while the MSCI EM Index returned 2.2%. Small cap stocks outperformed Large Cap stocks in both developed and emerging markets.
- The US Dollar index was down 0.15% for the month but was mixed relative to individual currencies; rose vs. GBP and JPY and declined vs. the Euro, CAD, MXP and AUD.
- Telecom, Health Care and Financials were the top three performing sectors for the month in developed markets. Consumer Discretionary, Information Technology and Real Estate were the weakest performing sectors.
- Value and Quality were the best performing factors in developed markets. Earnings and Price Momentum were the weakest performing.
- Within emerging markets Energy, Materials, Utilities and Financials were the top performing sectors. Health Care Consumer Discretionary and Information Technology were the weakest performing and were down for the month. From a factor perspective Growth factors and Volatility (low volatility) was the top performing Price Momentum, Quality and Growth factors were the weakest.
- Frontier markets outperformed the broad emerging markets, as the MSCI Frontier Markets index posted a July return of 3.7%.

Fixed Income Summary:

- The Treasury yield curve shifted up at both the short and long end due to strong economic data and a slightly higher inflationary outlook. The Bloomberg Barclays US Treasury index was down 0.4% while long-dated Treasuries (20+ years) were down 1.5%.
- Within corporate credit, lower quality outperformed higher quality. CCC-rated credit outperforming among the high yield segment and BBB-rated outperforming within the investment grade segment.
- Broad investment grade credit and municipal bonds were up modestly during the month. Leveraged loans were also up for the month but underperformed high yield credit.
- Following a challenging first half of the year, emerging market debt rebounded considerably in July as yields declined and currencies appreciated. The JPMorgan EMBI Global Diversified Index rose 2.6% for the month. Developed market returns were slightly negative as the FTSE WGBI Index declined 0.4%.

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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