



# Relative Valuation

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## The Essence of relative valuation?

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- In relative valuation, the value of an asset is compared to the values assessed by the market for similar or comparable assets.
- To do relative valuation then,
  - we need to identify comparable assets and obtain market values for these assets
  - convert these market values into standardized values, since the absolute prices cannot be compared This process of standardizing creates price multiples.
  - compare the standardized value or multiple for the asset being analyzed to the standardized values for comparable asset, controlling for any differences between the firms that might affect the multiple, to judge whether the asset is under or over valued

## Relative valuation is pervasive...

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- Most asset valuations are relative.
- Most equity valuations on Wall Street are relative valuations.
  - Almost 85% of equity research reports are based upon a multiple and comparables.
  - More than 50% of all acquisition valuations are based upon multiples
  - Rules of thumb based on multiples are not only common but are often the basis for final valuation judgments.
- While there are more discounted cashflow valuations in consulting and corporate finance, they are often relative valuations masquerading as discounted cash flow valuations.
  - The objective in many discounted cashflow valuations is to back into a number that has been obtained by using a multiple.
  - The terminal value in a significant number of discounted cashflow valuations is estimated using a multiple.

## The Reasons for the allure...

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“If you think I’m crazy, you should see the guy who lives across the hall”

*Jerry Seinfeld talking about Kramer in a Seinfeld episode*

“ A little inaccuracy sometimes saves tons of explanation”

H.H. Munro

“ If you are going to screw up, make sure that you have lots of company”

Ex-portfolio manager

## The Market Imperative....

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- Relative valuation is much more likely to reflect market perceptions and moods than discounted cash flow valuation. This can be an advantage when it is important that the price reflect these perceptions as is the case when
  - the objective is to sell a security at that price today (as in the case of an IPO)
  - investing on “momentum” based strategies
- With relative valuation, there will always be a significant proportion of securities that are under valued and over valued.
- Since portfolio managers are judged based upon how they perform on a relative basis (to the market and other money managers), relative valuation is more tailored to their needs
- Relative valuation generally requires less information than discounted cash flow valuation (especially when multiples are used as screens)

# The Four Steps to Deconstructing Multiples

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- Define the multiple
  - In use, the same multiple can be defined in different ways by different users. When comparing and using multiples, estimated by someone else, it is critical that we understand how the multiples have been estimated
- Describe the multiple
  - Too many people who use a multiple have no idea what its cross sectional distribution is. If you do not know what the cross sectional distribution of a multiple is, it is difficult to look at a number and pass judgment on whether it is too high or low.
- Analyze the multiple
  - It is critical that we understand the fundamentals that drive each multiple, and the nature of the relationship between the multiple and each variable.
- Apply the multiple
  - Defining the comparable universe and controlling for differences is far more difficult in practice than it is in theory.

## Definitional Tests

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- Is the multiple consistently defined?
  - **Proposition 1: Both the value (the numerator) and the standardizing variable (the denominator) should be to the same claimholders in the firm. In other words, the value of equity should be divided by equity earnings or equity book value, and firm value should be divided by firm earnings or book value.**
- Is the multiple uniformly estimated?
  - The variables used in defining the multiple should be estimated uniformly across assets in the “comparable firm” list.
  - If earnings-based multiples are used, the accounting rules to measure earnings should be applied consistently across assets. The same rule applies with book-value based multiples.

## Example 1: Price Earnings Ratio: Definition

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$$\text{PE} = \text{Market Price per Share} / \text{Earnings per Share}$$

- There are a number of variants on the basic PE ratio in use. They are based upon how the price and the earnings are defined.
- Price: is usually the current price
  - is sometimes the average price for the year
- EPS:
  - earnings per share in most recent financial year
  - earnings per share in trailing 12 months (Trailing PE)
  - forecasted earnings per share next year (Forward PE)
  - forecasted earnings per share in future year



## Example 2: Enterprise Value /EBITDA Multiple

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- The enterprise value to EBITDA multiple is obtained by netting cash out against debt to arrive at enterprise value and dividing by EBITDA.

$$\frac{\text{Enterprise Value}}{\text{EBITDA}} = \frac{\text{Market Value of Equity} + \text{Market Value of Debt} - \text{Cash}}{\text{Earnings before Interest, Taxes and Depreciation}}$$

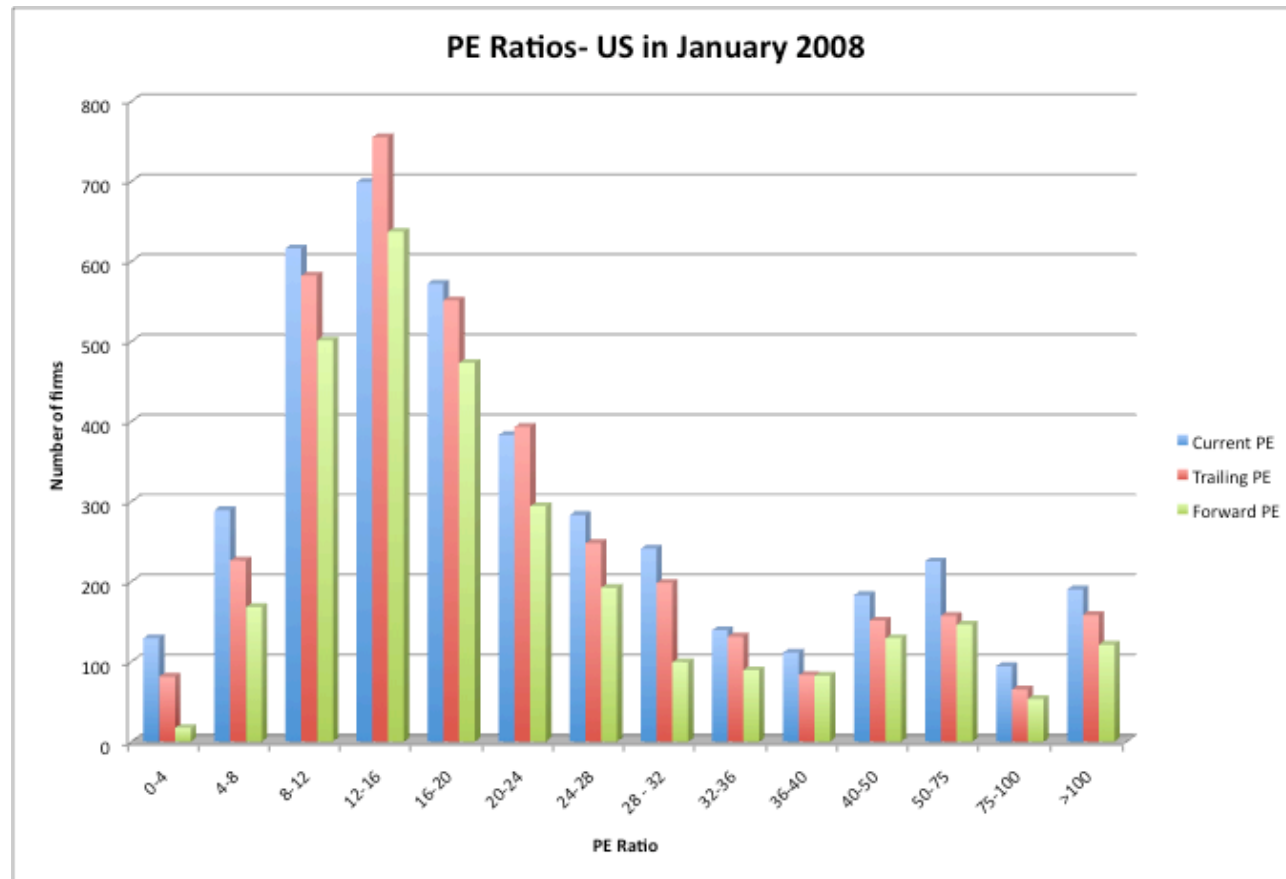
- Why do we net out cash from firm value?
- What happens if a firm has cross holdings which are categorized as:
  - Minority interests?
  - Majority active interests?

## Descriptive Tests

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- What is the average and standard deviation for this multiple, across the universe (market)?
- What is the median for this multiple?
  - The median for this multiple is often a more reliable comparison point.
- How large are the outliers to the distribution, and how do we deal with the outliers?
  - Throwing out the outliers may seem like an obvious solution, but if the outliers all lie on one side of the distribution (they usually are large positive numbers), this can lead to a biased estimate.
- Are there cases where the multiple cannot be estimated? Will ignoring these cases lead to a biased estimate of the multiple?
- How has this multiple changed over time?

## Looking at the distribution...

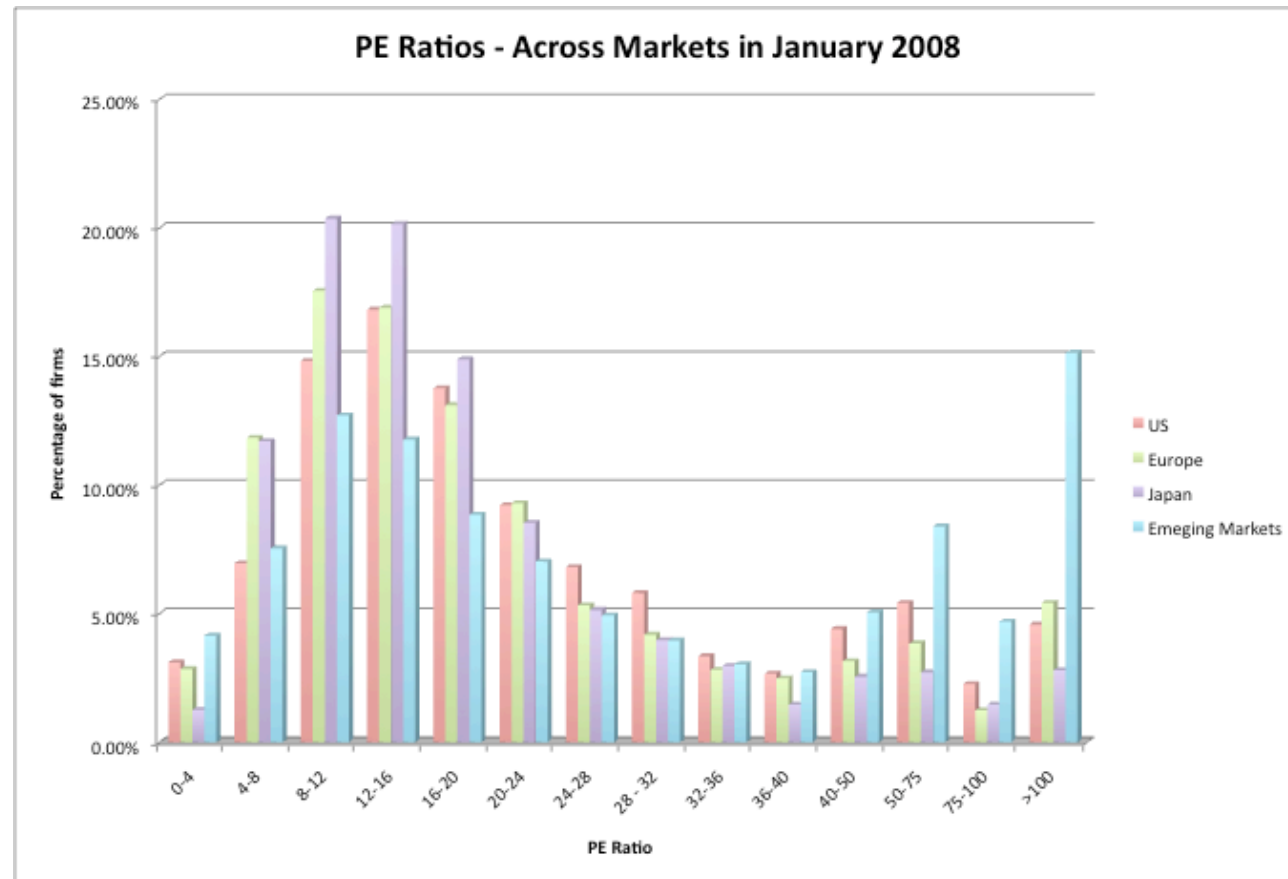


## PE: Deciphering the Distribution

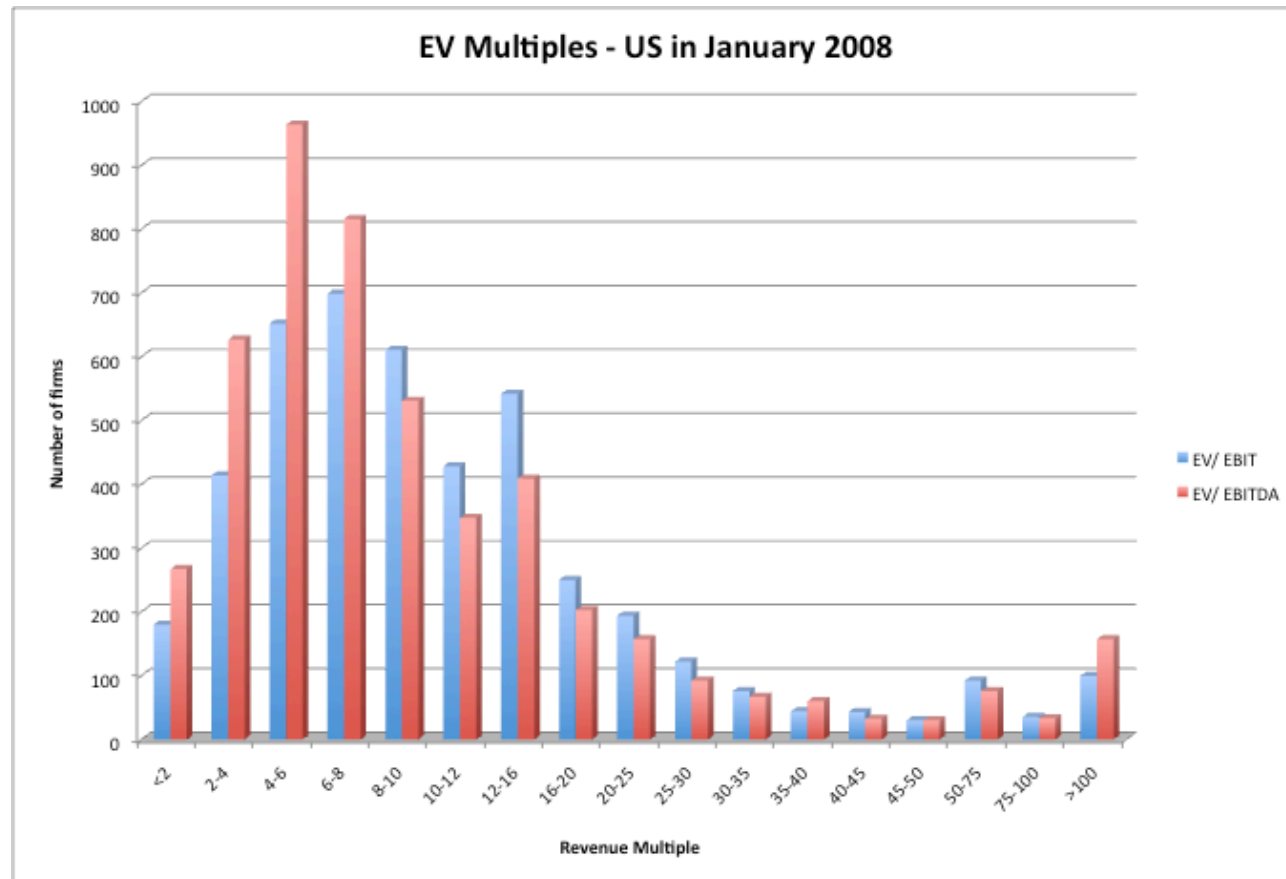
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	<i>Current PE</i>	<i>Trailing PE</i>	<i>Forward PE</i>
Mean	45.02	32.44	32.21
Standard Error	4.64	1.96	1.47
Median	18.16	17.00	17.28
Standard Deviation	299.11	123.29	80.82
Sample Variance	89468.12	15199.29	6532.53
Kurtosis	1618.20	1241.97	269.80
Skewness	35.41	30.30	14.23
Maximum	15126.20	5713.00	1912.33
Count	4155	3944	3004

# Comparing PE Ratios: US, Europe, Japan and Emerging Markets



## And 8 times EBITDA is not cheap



# Analytical Tests

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- What are the fundamentals that determine and drive these multiples?
  - Proposition 2: Embedded in every multiple are all of the variables that drive every discounted cash flow valuation - growth, risk and cash flow patterns.
  - In fact, using a simple discounted cash flow model and basic algebra should yield the fundamentals that drive a multiple
- How do changes in these fundamentals change the multiple?
  - The relationship between a fundamental (like growth) and a multiple (such as PE) is seldom linear. For example, if firm A has twice the growth rate of firm B, it will generally not trade at twice its PE ratio
  - **Proposition 3: It is impossible to properly compare firms on a multiple, if we do not know the nature of the relationship between fundamentals and the multiple.**

## PE Ratio: Understanding the Fundamentals

- To understand the fundamentals, start with a basic equity discounted cash flow model.

- With the dividend discount model,

$$P_0 = \frac{DPS_1}{r - g_n}$$

- Dividing both sides by the current earnings per share,

$$\frac{P_0}{EPS_0} = PE = \frac{\text{Payout Ratio} * (1 + g_n)}{r - g_n}$$

- If this had been a FCFE Model,

$$P_0 = \frac{FCFE_1}{r - g_n}$$

$$\frac{P_0}{EPS_0} = PE = \frac{(\text{FCFE/Earnings}) * (1 + g_n)}{r - g_n}$$



## Using the Fundamental Model to Estimate PE For a High Growth Firm

- The price-earnings ratio for a high growth firm can also be related to fundamentals. In the special case of the two-stage dividend discount model, this relationship can be made explicit fairly simply:

$$P_0 = \frac{\text{EPS}_0 * \text{Payout Ratio} * (1+g) * \left(1 - \frac{(1+g)^n}{(1+r)^n}\right)}{r-g} + \frac{\text{EPS}_0 * \text{Payout Ratio}_n * (1+g)^n * (1+g_n)}{(r-g_n)(1+r)^n}$$

- For a firm that does not pay what it can afford to in dividends, substitute FCFE/ Earnings for the payout ratio.
- Dividing both sides by the earnings per share:

$$\frac{P_0}{\text{EPS}_0} = \frac{\text{Payout Ratio} * (1+g) * \left(1 - \frac{(1+g)^n}{(1+r)^n}\right)}{r-g} + \frac{\text{Payout Ratio}_n * (1+g)^n * (1+g_n)}{(r-g_n)(1+r)^n}$$

## A Simple Example

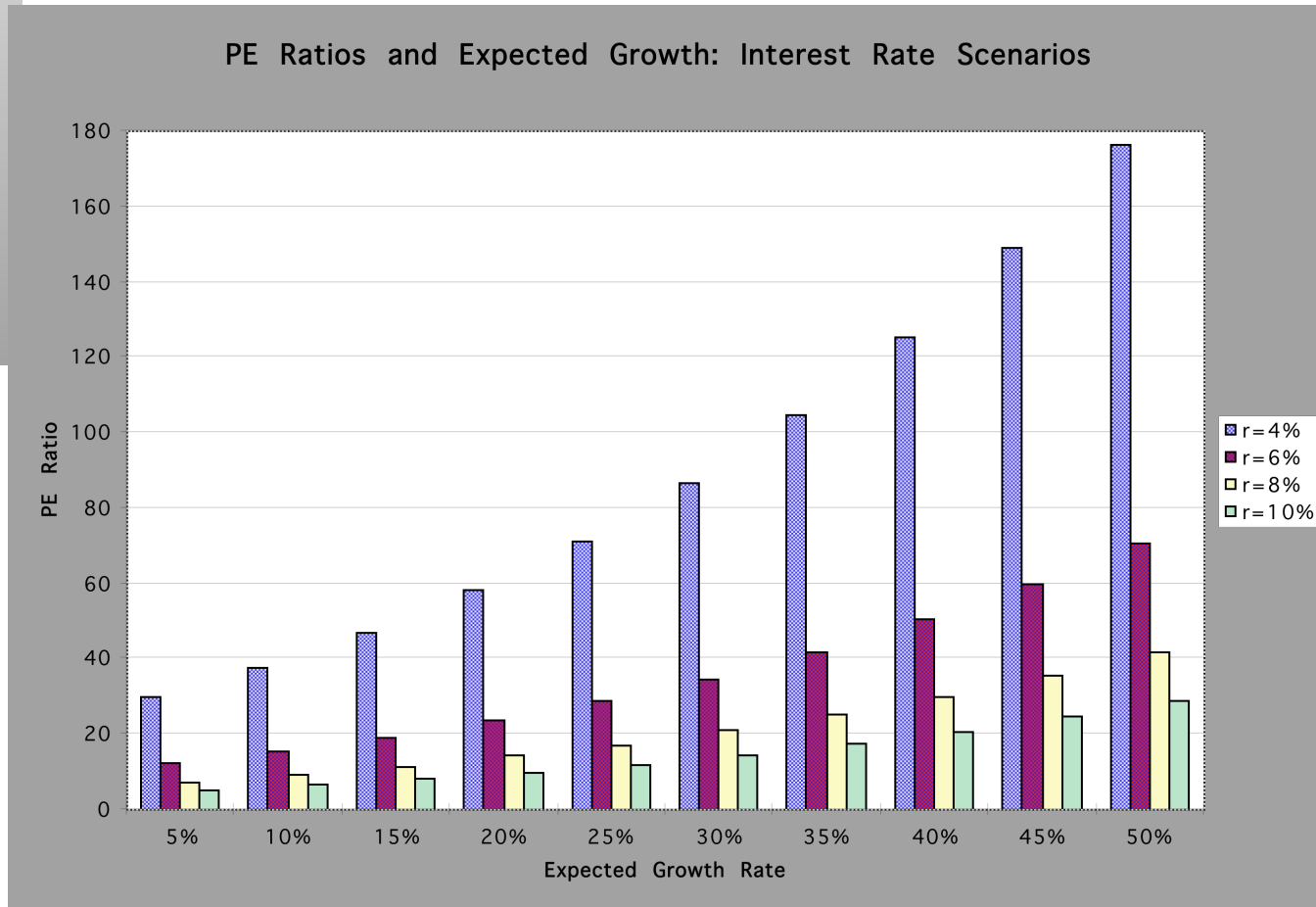
- Assume that you have been asked to estimate the PE ratio for a firm which has the following characteristics:

Variable	High Growth Phase	Stable Growth Phase
Expected Growth Rate	25%	8%
Payout Ratio	20%	50%
Beta	1.00	1.00
Number of years	5 years	Forever after year 5

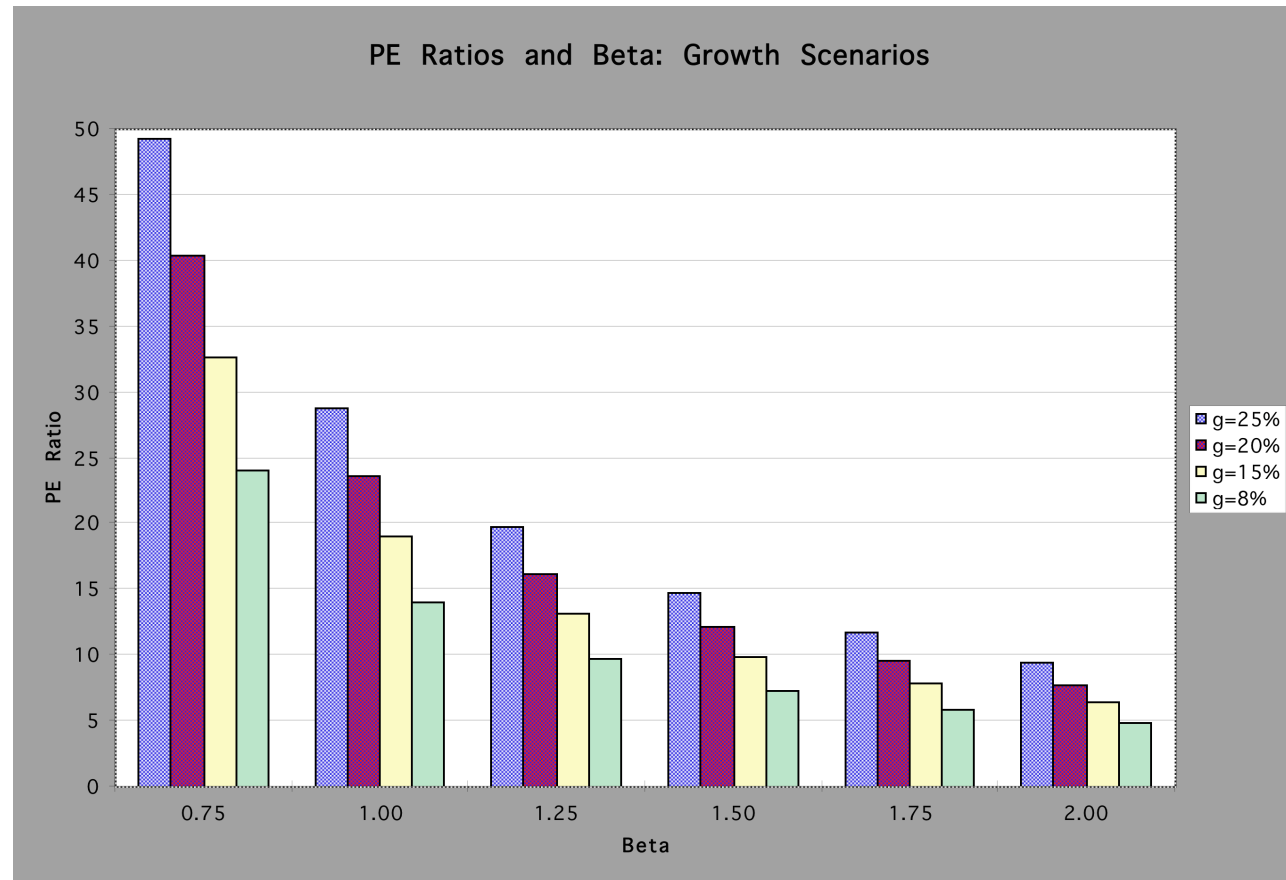
- Riskfree rate = T.Bond Rate = 6%
- Required rate of return = 6% + 1(5.5%)= 11.5%

$$PE = \frac{0.2 * (1.25) * \left(1 - \frac{(1.25)^5}{(1.115)^5}\right)}{(.115 - .25)} + \frac{0.5 * (1.25)^5 * (1.08)}{(.115 - .08) (1.115)^5} = 28.75$$

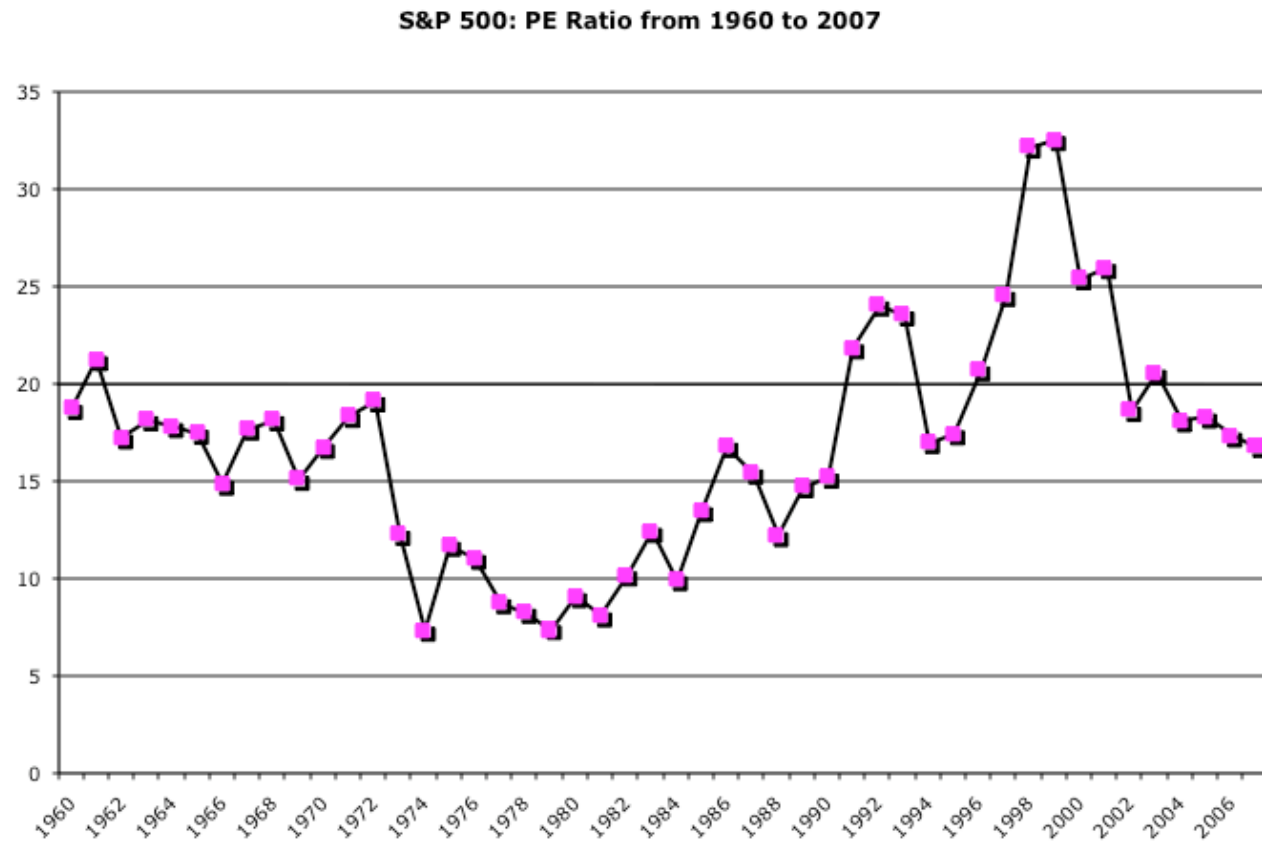
a. PE and Growth: Firm grows at  $x\%$  for 5 years, 8% thereafter



## b. PE and Risk: A Follow up Example



## Comparisons of PE across time: PE Ratio for the S&P 500



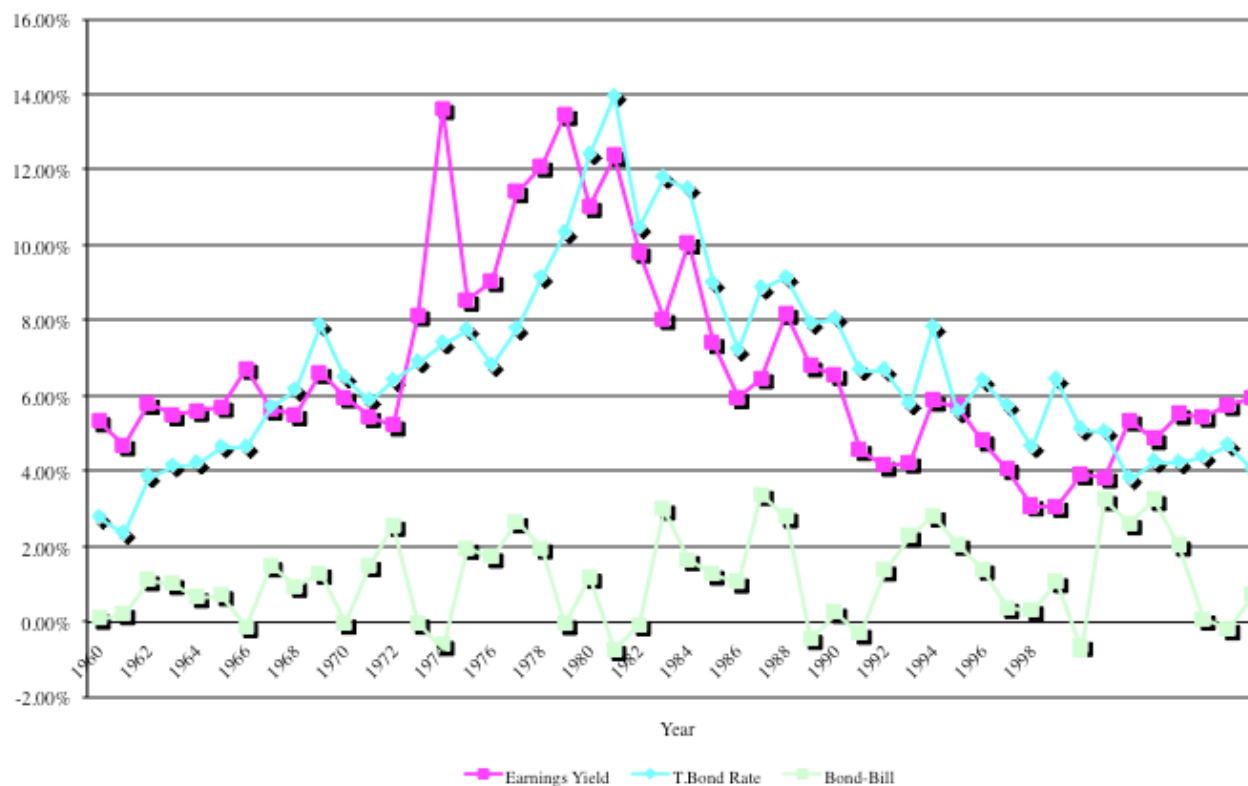
## Is low (high) PE cheap (expensive)?

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- A market strategist argues that stocks are over priced because the PE ratio today is too high relative to the average PE ratio across time. Do you agree?
  - Yes
  - No
- If you do not agree, what factors might explain the higher PE ratio today?

# E/P Ratios , T.Bond Rates and Term Structure

US Market: E/P and Interest Rates: 1960-2007



## Regression Results

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- There is a strong positive relationship between E/P ratios and T.Bond rates, as evidenced by the correlation of 0.70 between the two variables.,
- In addition, there is evidence that the term structure also affects the PE ratio.
- In the following regression, using 1960-2007 data, we regress E/P ratios against the level of T.Bond rates and a term structure variable (T.Bond - T.Bill rate)

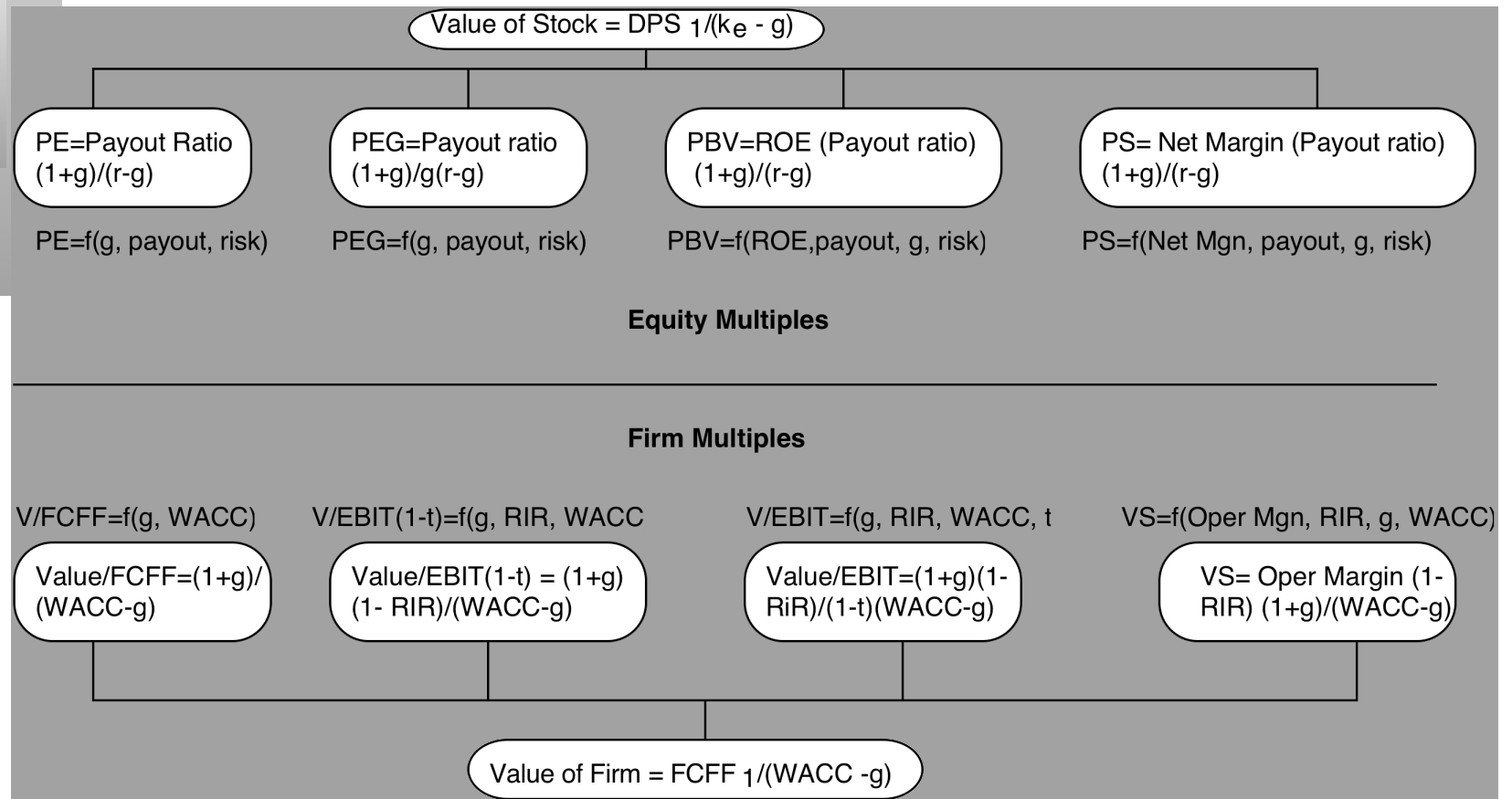
$$E/P = 2.19\% + 0.734 \text{ T.Bond Rate} - 0.335 (\text{T.Bond Rate} - \text{T.Bill Rate})$$

(2.70)                      (6.80)                      (-1.41)

$$R \text{ squared} = 51.23\%$$



# The Determinants of Multiples...



## Application Tests

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- Given the firm that we are valuing, what is a “comparable” firm?
  - While traditional analysis is built on the premise that firms in the same sector are comparable firms, valuation theory would suggest that a comparable firm is one which is similar to the one being analyzed in terms of fundamentals.
  - **Proposition 4: There is no reason why a firm cannot be compared with another firm in a very different business, if the two firms have the same risk, growth and cash flow characteristics.**
- Given the comparable firms, how do we adjust for differences across firms on the fundamentals?
  - **Proposition 5: It is impossible to find an exactly identical firm to the one you are valuing.**

## I. Comparing PE Ratios across a Sector: PE

<i>Company Name</i>	<i>PE</i>	<i>Growth</i>
<i>PT Indosat ADR</i>	<i>7.8</i>	<i>0.06</i>
<i>Telebras ADR</i>	<i>8.9</i>	<i>0.075</i>
<i>Telecom Corporation of New Zealand ADR</i>	<i>11.2</i>	<i>0.11</i>
<i>Telecom Argentina Stet - France Telecom SA ADR B</i>	<i>12.5</i>	<i>0.08</i>
<i>Hellenic Telecommunication Organization SA ADR</i>	<i>12.8</i>	<i>0.12</i>
<i>Telecomunicaciones de Chile ADR</i>	<i>16.6</i>	<i>0.08</i>
<i>Swisscom AG ADR</i>	<i>18.3</i>	<i>0.11</i>
<i>Asia Satellite Telecom Holdings ADR</i>	<i>19.6</i>	<i>0.16</i>
<i>Portugal Telecom SA ADR</i>	<i>20.8</i>	<i>0.13</i>
<i>Telefonos de Mexico ADR L</i>	<i>21.1</i>	<i>0.14</i>
<i>Matav RT ADR</i>	<i>21.5</i>	<i>0.22</i>
<i>Telstra ADR</i>	<i>21.7</i>	<i>0.12</i>
<i>Gilat Communications</i>	<i>22.7</i>	<i>0.31</i>
<i>Deutsche Telekom AG ADR</i>	<i>24.6</i>	<i>0.11</i>
<i>British Telecommunications PLC ADR</i>	<i>25.7</i>	<i>0.07</i>
<i>Tele Danmark AS ADR</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>0.09</i>
<i>Telekomunikasi Indonesia ADR</i>	<i>28.4</i>	<i>0.32</i>
<i>Cable &amp; Wireless PLC ADR</i>	<i>29.8</i>	<i>0.14</i>
<i>APT Satellite Holdings ADR</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>0.33</i>
<i>Telefonica SA ADR</i>	<i>32.5</i>	<i>0.18</i>
<i>Royal KPN NV ADR</i>	<i>35.7</i>	<i>0.13</i>
<i>Telecom Italia SPA ADR</i>	<i>42.2</i>	<i>0.14</i>
<i>Nippon Telegraph &amp; Telephone ADR</i>	<i>44.3</i>	<i>0.2</i>
<i>France Telecom SA ADR</i>	<i>45.2</i>	<i>0.19</i>
<i>Korea Telecom ADR</i>	<i>71.3</i>	<i>0.44</i>

## PE, Growth and Risk

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Dependent variable is: PE

R squared = 66.2%    R squared (adjusted) = 63.1%

Variable	Coefficient	SE	t-ratio	prob
Constant	13.1151	3.471	3.78	0.0010
Growth rate	121.223	19.27	6.29	≤ 0.0001
Emerging Market	-13.8531	3.606	-3.84	0.0009

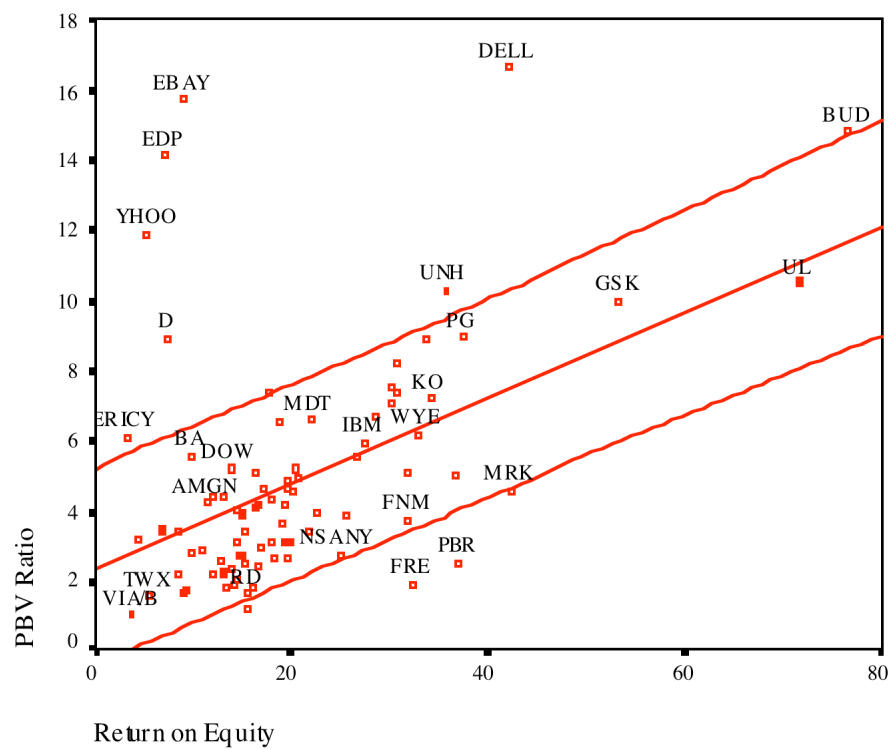
Emerging Market is a dummy: 1 if emerging market  
0 if not

## Is Telebras under valued?

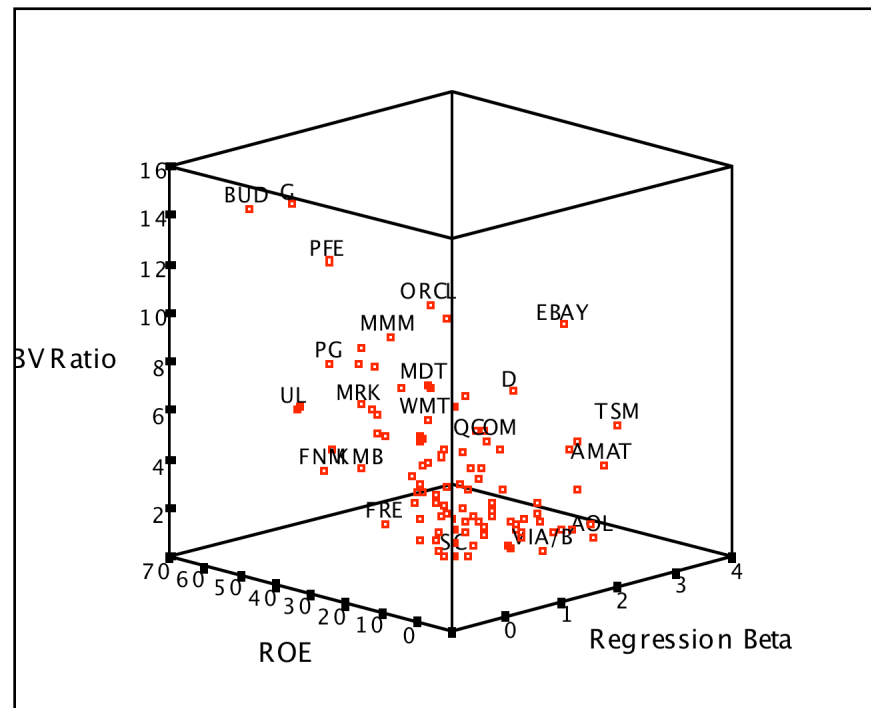
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- Predicted PE =  $13.12 + 121.22 (.075) - 13.85 (1) = 8.35$
- At an actual price to earnings ratio of 8.9, Telebras is slightly overvalued.

## II. Price to Book vs ROE: US Stocks in January 2005



# A Risk Adjusted Version?



### III. Value/EBITDA Multiple: Trucking Companies

Company Name	Value	EBITDA	Value/EBITDA
KLLM Trans. Svcs.	\$ 114.32	\$ 48.81	2.34
Ryder System	\$ 5,158.04	\$ 1,838.26	2.81
Rollins Truck Leasing	\$ 1,368.35	\$ 447.67	3.06
Cannon Express Inc.	\$ 83.57	\$ 27.05	3.09
Hunt (J.B.)	\$ 982.67	\$ 310.22	3.17
Yellow Corp.	\$ 931.47	\$ 292.82	3.18
Roadway Express	\$ 554.96	\$ 169.38	3.28
Marten Transport Ltd.	\$ 116.93	\$ 35.62	3.28
Kenan Transport Co.	\$ 67.66	\$ 19.44	3.48
M.S. Carriers	\$ 344.93	\$ 97.85	3.53
Old Dominion Freight	\$ 170.42	\$ 45.13	3.78
Trimac Ltd	\$ 661.18	\$ 174.28	3.79
Matlack Systems	\$ 112.42	\$ 28.94	3.88
XTRA Corp.	\$ 1,708.57	\$ 427.30	4.00
Covenant Transport Inc	\$ 259.16	\$ 64.35	4.03
Builders Transport	\$ 221.09	\$ 51.44	4.30
Werner Enterprises	\$ 844.39	\$ 196.15	4.30
Landstar Sys.	\$ 422.79	\$ 95.20	4.44
AMERCO	\$ 1,632.30	\$ 345.78	4.72
USA Truck	\$ 141.77	\$ 29.93	4.74
Frozen Food Express	\$ 164.17	\$ 34.10	4.81
Arnold Inds.	\$ 472.27	\$ 96.88	4.87
Greyhound Lines Inc.	\$ 437.71	\$ 89.61	4.88
USFreightways	\$ 983.86	\$ 198.91	4.95
Golden Eagle Group Inc.	\$ 12.50	\$ 2.33	5.37
Arkansas Best	\$ 578.78	\$ 107.15	5.40
Airlease Ltd.	\$ 73.64	\$ 13.48	5.46
Celadon Group	\$ 182.30	\$ 32.72	5.57
Amer. Freightways	\$ 716.15	\$ 120.94	5.92
Transfinancial Holdings	\$ 56.92	\$ 8.79	6.47
Vitrans Corp. 'A'	\$ 140.68	\$ 21.51	6.54
Interpool Inc.	\$ 1,002.20	\$ 151.18	6.63
Intrenet Inc.	\$ 70.23	\$ 10.38	6.77
Swift Transportation	\$ 835.58	\$ 121.34	6.89
Landair Services	\$ 212.95	\$ 30.38	7.01
CNF Transportation	\$ 2,700.69	\$ 366.99	7.36
Budget Group Inc	\$ 1,247.30	\$ 166.71	7.48
Caliber System	\$ 2,514.99	\$ 333.13	7.55
Knight Transportation Inc	\$ 269.01	\$ 28.20	9.54
Heartland Express	\$ 727.50	\$ 64.62	11.26
Greyhound CDA Transn Corp	\$ 83.25	\$ 6.99	11.91
Mark VII	\$ 160.45	\$ 12.96	12.38
Coach USA Inc	\$ 678.38	\$ 51.76	13.11
US 1 Inds Inc.	\$ 5.60	\$ (0.17)	NA
<b>Average</b>			<b>5.61</b>

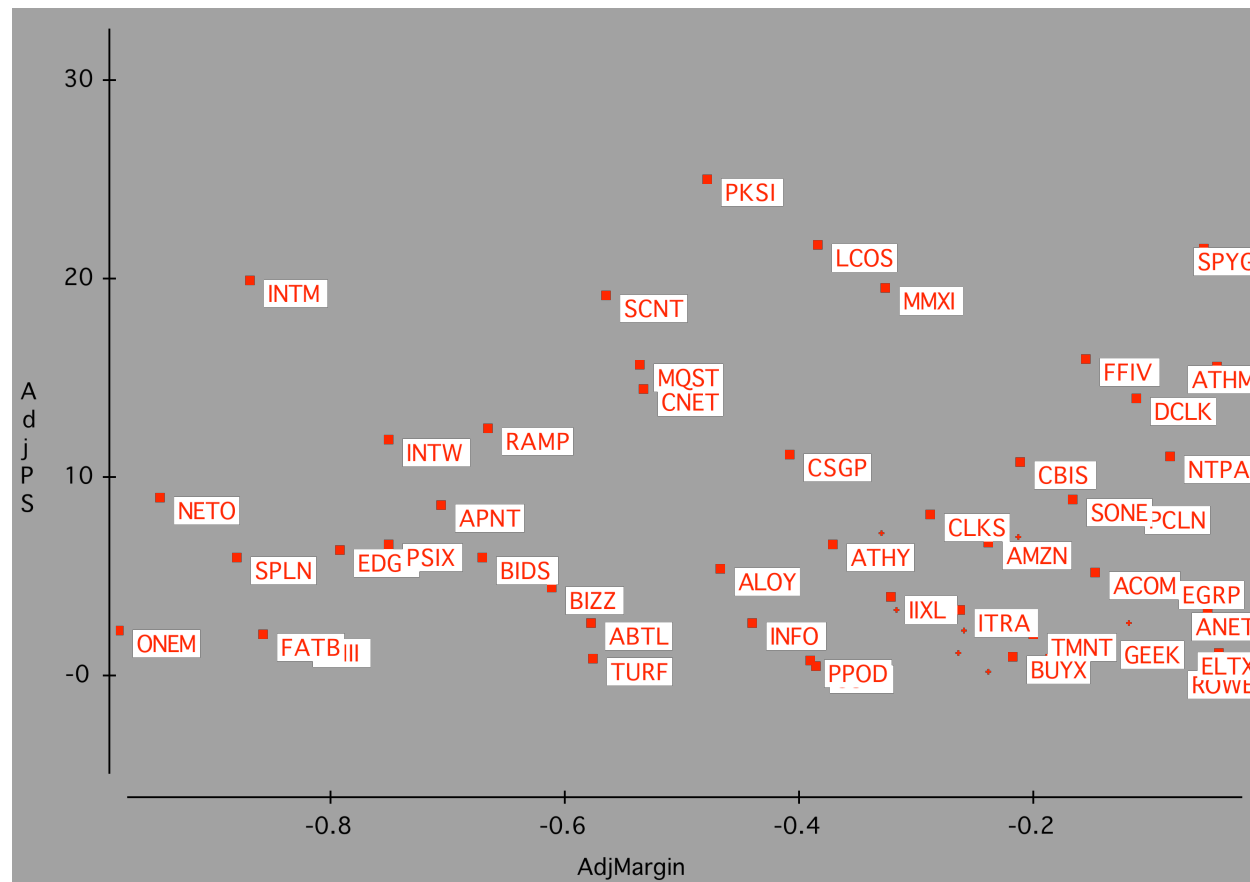


## A Test on EBITDA

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- Ryder System looks very cheap on a Value/EBITDA multiple basis, relative to the rest of the sector. What explanation (other than misvaluation) might there be for this difference?

## IV. A Case Study: Internet Stocks in early 2000



## PS Ratios and Margins are not highly correlated

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- Regressing PS ratios against current margins yields the following  
$$PS = 81.36 - 7.54(\text{Net Margin}) \quad R^2 = 0.04$$

(0.49)
- This is not surprising. These firms are priced based upon expected margins, rather than current margins.

## Solution 1: Use proxies for survival and growth: Amazon in early 2000

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- Hypothesizing that firms with higher revenue growth and higher cash balances should have a greater chance of surviving and becoming profitable, we ran the following regression: (The level of revenues was used to control for size)

$$\text{PS} = 30.61 - 2.77 \ln(\text{Rev}) + 6.42 (\text{Rev Growth}) + 5.11 (\text{Cash/Rev})$$

(0.66)      (2.63)      (3.49)

R squared = 31.8%

Predicted PS =  $30.61 - 2.77(7.1039) + 6.42(1.9946) + 5.11 (.3069) = 30.42$

Actual PS = 25.63

Stock is undervalued, relative to other internet stocks.

## Solution 2: Use forward multiples

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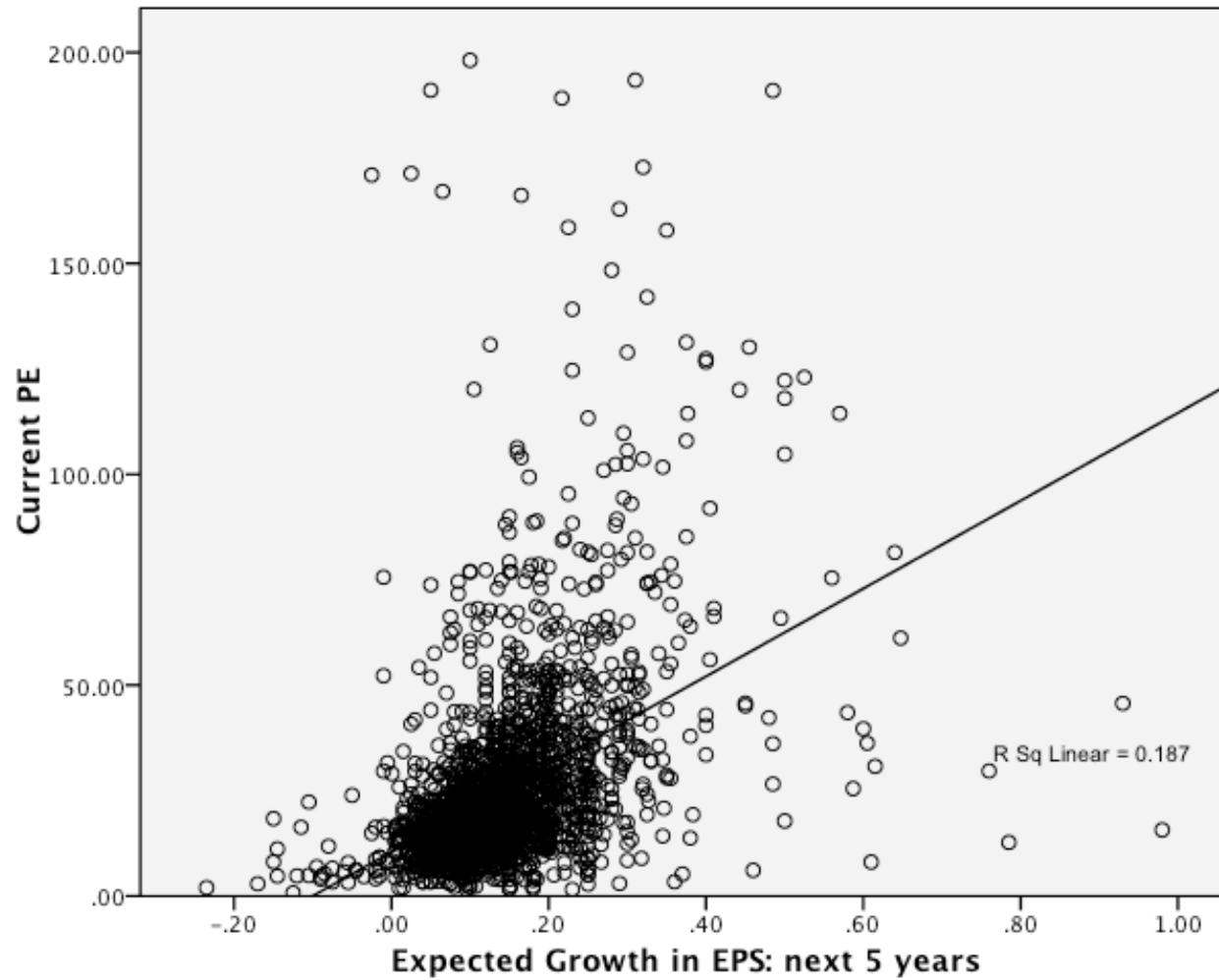
- Global Crossing lost \$1.9 billion in 2001 and is expected to continue to lose money for the next 3 years. In a discounted cashflow valuation (see notes on DCF valuation) of Global Crossing, we estimated an expected EBITDA for Global Crossing in five years of \$ 1,371 million.
- The average enterprise value/ EBITDA multiple for healthy telecomm firms is 7.2 currently.
- Applying this multiple to Global Crossing's EBITDA in year 5, yields a value in year 5 of
  - Enterprise Value in year 5 =  $1371 * 7.2 = \$9,871$  million
  - Enterprise Value today =  $\$ 9,871 \text{ million} / 1.138^5 = \$5,172$  million  
(The cost of capital for Global Crossing is 13.80%)
  - The probability that Global Crossing will not make it as a going concern is 77%.
  - Expected Enterprise value today =  $0.23 (5172) = \$1,190$  million

## Comparisons to the entire market: Why not?

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- In contrast to the 'comparable firm' approach, the information in the entire cross-section of firms can be used to predict PE ratios.
- The simplest way of summarizing this information is with a multiple regression, with the PE ratio as the dependent variable, and proxies for risk, growth and payout forming the independent variables.

## PE versus Expected EPS Growth: January 2008



## PE Ratio: Standard Regression for US stocks - January 2008

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.647 <sup>a</sup>	.419	.418	1273.85784

a. Predictors: (Constant), 3-yr Regression Beta, Expected Growth in EPS: next 5 years, Payout Ratio

**Coefficients<sup>ab</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.741	.914		2.999	.003
	Expected Growth in EPS: next 5 years	142.627	4.029	.669	35.397	.000
	Payout Ratio	5.668	1.199	.090	4.726	.000
	3-yr Regression Beta	.550	.477	.021	1.153	.249

a. Dependent Variable: Current PE

b. Weighted Least Squares Regression - Weighted by Market Cap



## Fundamentals hold in every market: PE regressions across markets...

Region	Regression	R squared
Europe	$PE = 14.15 - 2.62 \text{ Beta} + 7.50 \text{ Payout} + 29.06$ Expected growth rate	17.9%
Japan	$PE = 13.55 - 1.25 \text{ Beta} + 26.05 \text{ Payout} + 11.87$ Expected growth rate	18.4%
Emerging Markets	$PE = 5.63 + 11.35 \text{ Beta} + 2.71 \text{ Payout} + 92.72$ Expected growth rate	13.9%

## Relative Valuation: Some closing propositions

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- Proposition 1: In a relative valuation, all that you are concluding is that a stock is under or over valued, relative to your comparable group.
  - Your relative valuation judgment can be right and your stock can be hopelessly over valued at the same time.
- Proposition 2: In asset valuation, there are no similar assets. Every asset is unique.
  - If you don't control for fundamental differences in risk, cashflows and growth across firms when comparing how they are priced, your valuation conclusions will reflect your flawed judgments rather than market misvaluations.

## Choosing Between the Multiples

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- As presented in this section, there are dozens of multiples that can be potentially used to value an individual firm.
- In addition, relative valuation can be relative to a sector (or comparable firms) or to the entire market (using the regressions, for instance)
- Since there can be only one final estimate of value, there are three choices at this stage:
  - Use a simple average of the valuations obtained using a number of different multiples
  - Use a weighted average of the valuations obtained using a number of different multiples
  - Choose one of the multiples and base your valuation on that multiple

## Picking one Multiple

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- This is usually the best way to approach this issue. While a range of values can be obtained from a number of multiples, the “best estimate” value is obtained using one multiple.
- The multiple that is used can be chosen in one of two ways:
  - Use the multiple that best fits your objective. Thus, if you want the company to be undervalued, you pick the multiple that yields the highest value.
  - Use the multiple that has the highest R-squared in the sector when regressed against fundamentals. Thus, if you have tried PE, PBV, PS, etc. and run regressions of these multiples against fundamentals, use the multiple that works best at explaining differences across firms in that sector.
  - Use the multiple that seems to make the most sense for that sector, given how value is measured and created.

## A More Intuitive Approach

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- Managers in every sector tend to focus on specific variables when analyzing strategy and performance. The multiple used will generally reflect this focus. Consider three examples.
  - In retailing: The focus is usually on same store sales (turnover) and profit margins. Not surprisingly, the revenue multiple is most common in this sector.
  - In financial services: The emphasis is usually on return on equity. Book Equity is often viewed as a scarce resource, since capital ratios are based upon it. Price to book ratios dominate.
  - In technology: Growth is usually the dominant theme. PEG ratios were invented in this sector.

## In Practice...

- As a general rule of thumb, the following table provides a way of picking a multiple for a sector

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Multiple Used</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
Cyclical Manufacturing	PE, Relative PE	Often with normalized earnings
High Tech, High Growth	PEG	Big differences in growth across
High Growth/No Earnings	PS, VS	Assume future margins will be good
Heavy Infrastructure	VEBITDA	Firms in sector have losses in early years and reported earnings can vary depending on depreciation method
REITa	P/CF	Generally no cap ex investments from equity earnings
Financial Services	PBV	Book value often marked to market
Retailing	PS	If leverage is similar across firms
	VS	If leverage is different

## Reviewing: The Four Steps to Understanding Multiples

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- Define the multiple
  - Check for consistency
  - Make sure that they are estimated uniformly
- Describe the multiple
  - Multiples have skewed distributions: The averages are seldom good indicators of typical multiples
  - Check for bias, if the multiple cannot be estimated
- Analyze the multiple
  - Identify the companion variable that drives the multiple
  - Examine the nature of the relationship
- Apply the multiple