

Market Valuations Fullish But Long Term Return Matrix Has an Upward Tilt

Post the ~ 15% rebound since mid-June Indian market valuations have pulled ahead of historical P/E averages. In 2022 India equities have meaningfully outperformed global and emerging market indices as a result of which India's premium over global markets and EM have expanded further.

On the other hand most top down indicators are suggesting that India is well placed for growth over next 3-5 years even though risks posed by the global macroeconomic slowdown cannot be ignored.

India is also getting increasingly recognised by global investors for being the only large country with a relatively stable economy especially if compared to the developed world that is struggling with uncontrolled inflation and the risks of recession. Not surprisingly FPI flow into India in August, that turned positive for the first time after October' 21 continues to gain momentum. Interestingly there is increased chatter around India getting included in JP Morgan for global bond index. By better integrating India's debt markets with global ones this can augur well for liquidity in Indian capital markets. From here we expect markets to be volatile broadly sideways over next six months. Over two years and more we continue to believe that India offers compelling wealth creation opportunities.

At this juncture the only sector where we are taking a combination of top down, and valuation driven bottom-up negative call is IT and software services.

Table

Indian IT stocks have been having a torrid time of late. In last one year, large-cap IT sector stocks (Infosys, TCS, HCL Tech, Wipro & Tech Mahindra) are down by between 14% and 40%. Such declines are rare (2007-09 was one period where even worse performance had been witnessed).

12 month rolling chart

Clouding of earnings growth prospects- margin pressure so far, and fear of slowdown in revenue growth next year, seems to be the main culprit here. EBITDA growth of large Indian IT companies (Infosys, TCS, HCL Tech, Wipro and Tech Mahindra) for FY22 was 12% as against last 10 year CAGR of 16%. Given the weakening global

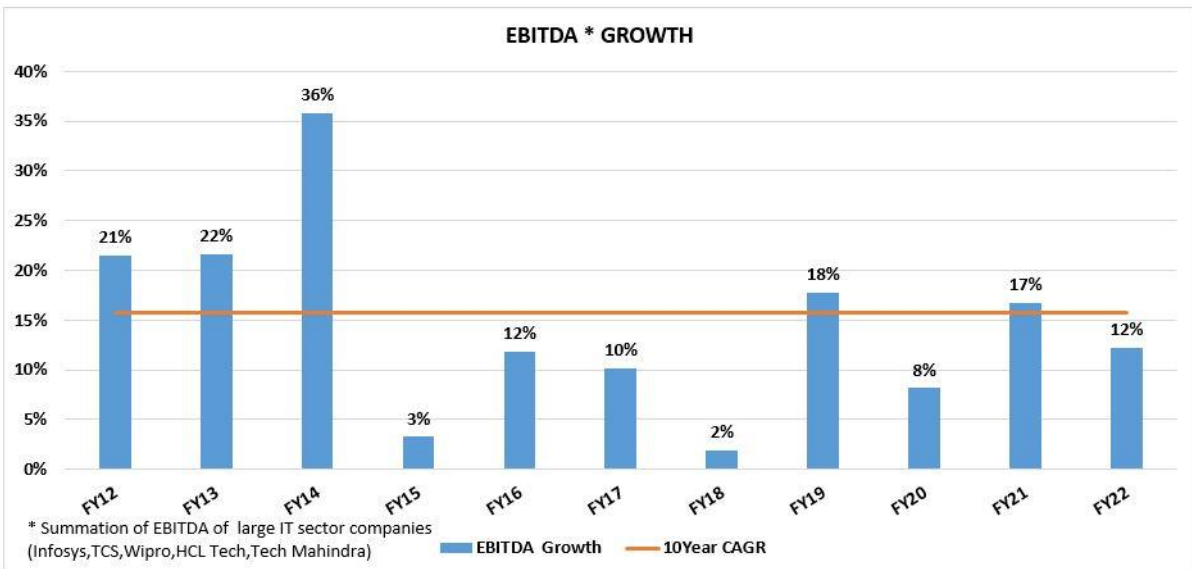
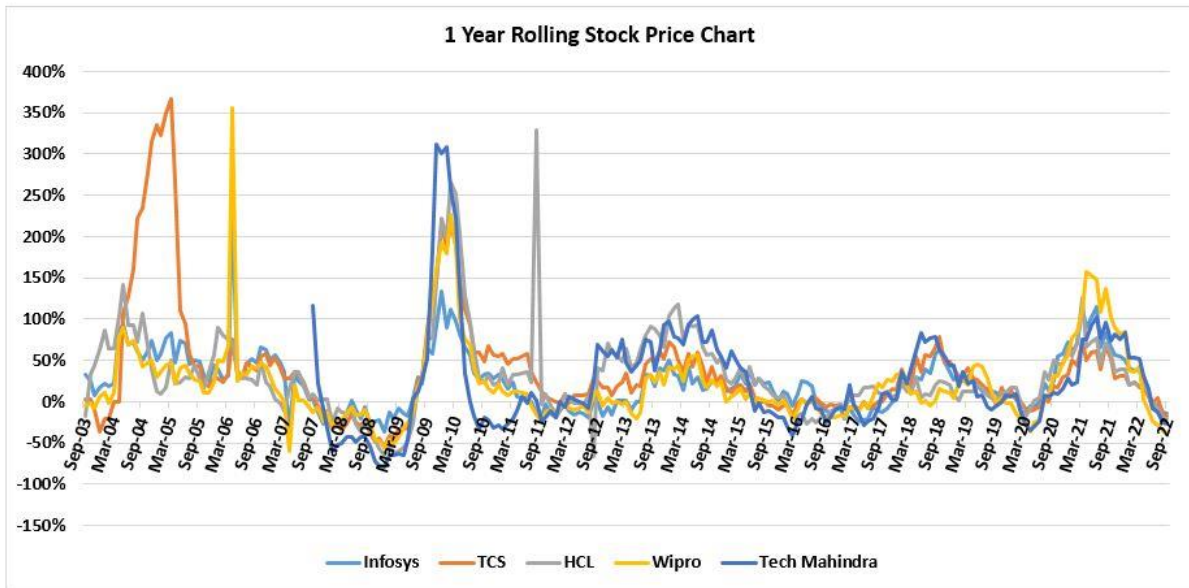
macro-economic outlook, particularly in the developed world, IT companies' EBITDA growth may slip further.

Ebitda

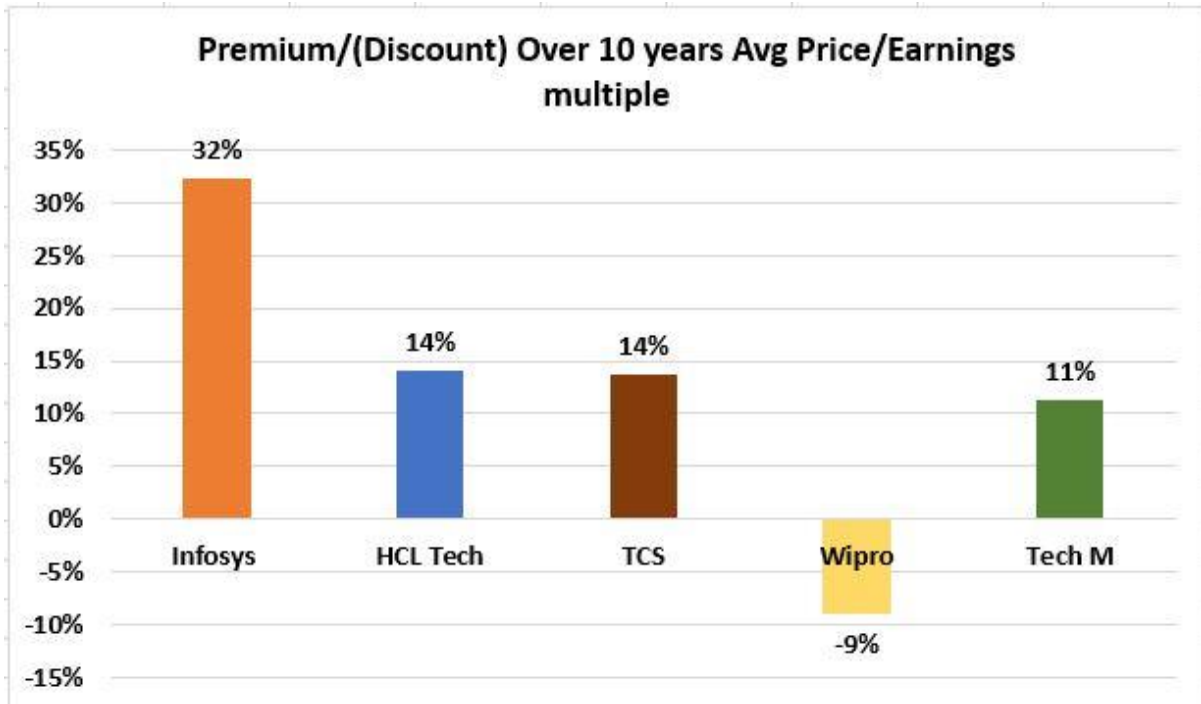
chart

Interestingly, P/E multiples (trailing twelve month basis) of these stocks (except for Wipro) are still at more than 10% premium over their 10 Year average PE. This means even in forward multiples the valuations do not look too great - unless earnings growth rebounds, or at least stabilises.

Valuation chart



Indices	YTD CY22	12 Months Returns
Nifty 50	0%	2%
Nifty IT	-28%	-20%
Nasdaq	-10%	-7%



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