

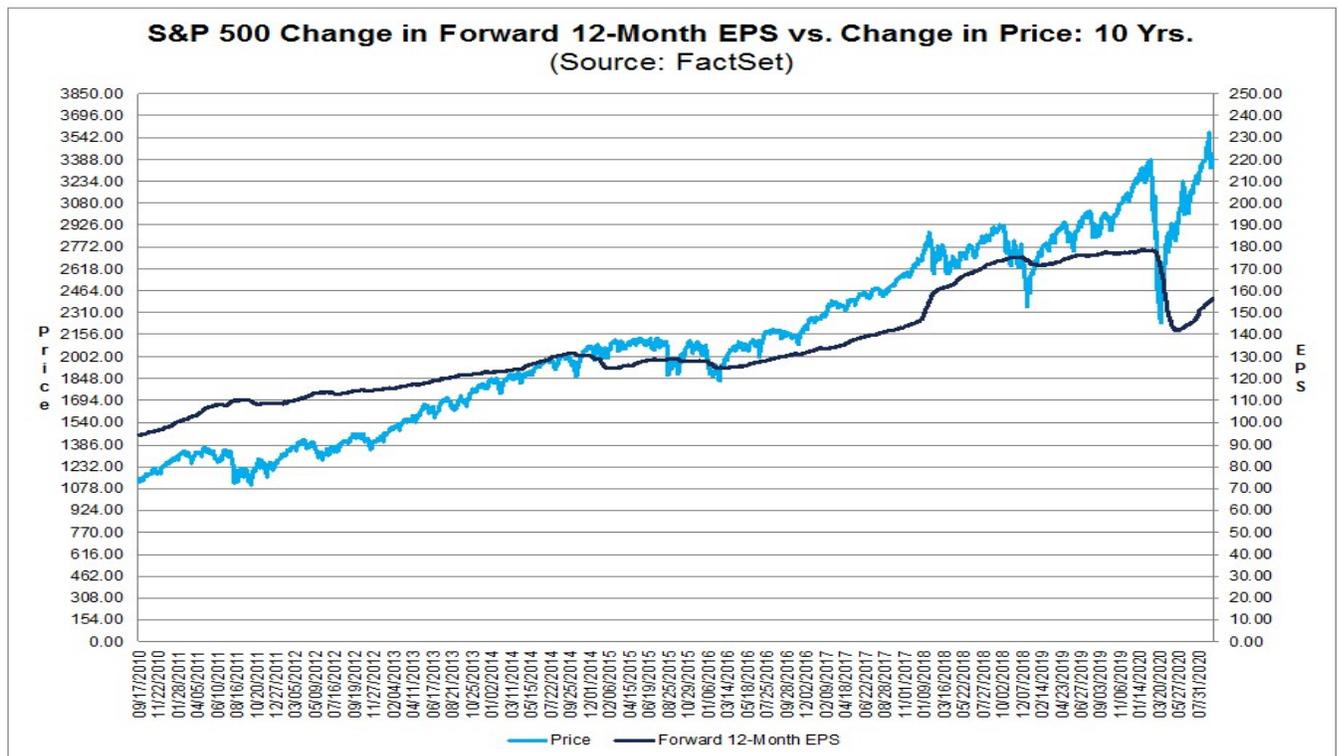
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Key Metrics

- **Earnings Growth:** For Q3 2020, the estimated earnings decline for the S&P 500 is -21.8%. If -21.8% is the actual decline for the quarter, it will mark the second largest year-over-year decline in earnings reported by the index since Q2 2009 (-26.9%).
- **Earnings Revisions:** On June 30, the estimated earnings decline for Q3 2020 was -25.4%. Eight sectors have smaller earnings declines or higher earnings growth rates today (compared to June 30) due to upward revisions to EPS estimates.
- **Earnings Guidance:** For Q3 2020, 22 S&P 500 companies have issued negative EPS guidance and 44 S&P 500 companies have issued positive EPS guidance.
- **Valuation:** The forward 12-month P/E ratio for the S&P 500 is 21.7. This P/E ratio is above the 5-year average (17.1) and above the 10-year average (15.4).
- **Earnings Scorecard:** For Q3 2020 (with 4 of the companies in the S&P 500 reporting actual results), 4 S&P 500 companies have reported a positive EPS surprise and 4 have reported a positive revenue surprise.



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Topic of the Week:

Where Are Analysts Most Optimistic on Ratings for S&P 500 Companies for Q4 2020?

With the end of the third quarter approaching, where are analysts most optimistic and pessimistic in terms of their ratings on stocks in the S&P 500 heading into the fourth quarter?

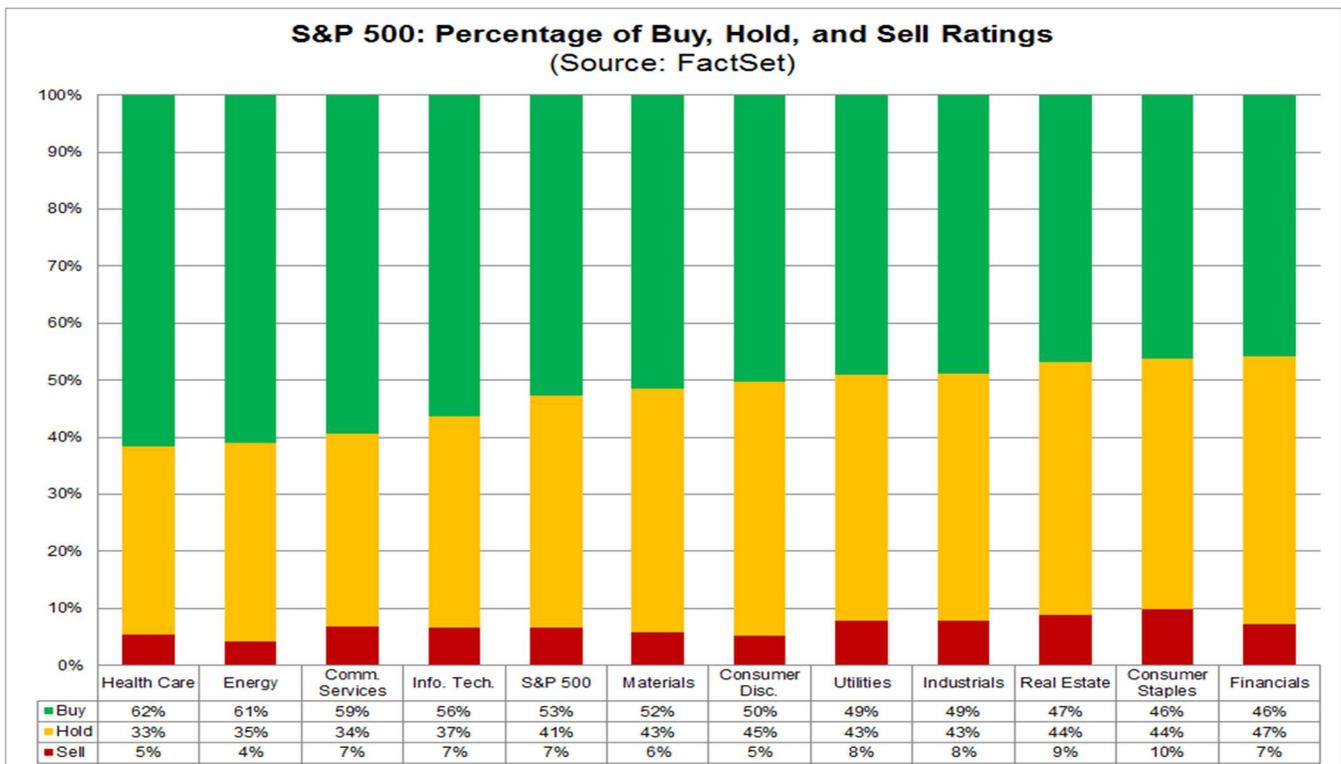
Overall, there are 10,256 ratings on stocks in the S&P 500. Of these 10,256 ratings, 52.8% are Buy ratings, 40.6% are Hold ratings, and 6.6% are Sell ratings. Over the past five years, the average (month-end) percentage of Buy ratings is 51.0%, the average (month-end) percentage of Hold ratings is 43.2%, and the average (month-end) percentage of Sell ratings is 5.8%.

At the sector level, analysts are most optimistic on the Health Care (62%), Energy (61%) and Communication Services (59%) sectors, as these three sectors have the highest percentages of Buy ratings. On the other hand, analysts are most pessimistic on the Financials (46%), Consumer Staples (46%) sector, and Real Estate (47%) sectors, as these three sectors have the lowest percentages of Buy ratings. The Financials sector also has the highest percentage of Hold ratings (47%), while the Consumer Staples sector also has the highest percentage of Sell ratings (10%).

It is interesting to note that analysts are more optimistic on S&P 500 stocks today compared to the start of the year (before the impact of COVID-19), based on the percentage of Buy ratings on S&P 500 stocks. On December 31, 50.6% of ratings on S&P 500 stocks were Buy ratings, compared to 52.8% today.

Three sectors have seen significant changes in their percentages of Buy ratings since the start of the year. The Consumer Staples (to 46% from 39%) and Utilities (to 49% from 42%) sectors have seen significant increases in their percentages of Buy ratings, while the Energy sector (to 61% from 66%) has seen a significant decrease in its percentage of Buy ratings.

However, there has been little change at the sector level in terms of ranking by Buy ratings. The same four sectors (Energy, Health Care, Communication Services, and Information Technology) that had the highest percentages of Buy ratings at the start of the year (before COVID-19) also have the highest percentages of Buy ratings today. Three of the four sectors (Consumer Staples, Financials, and Real Estate) that had the lowest percentages of Buy ratings at the start of the year also have the lowest percentages of Buy ratings today.



Month-End S&P 500 Sector Buy Ratings % (Source: FactSet)

Sector	Dec-19	Jan-20	Feb-20	Mar-20	Apr-20	May-20	Jun-20	Jul-20	Aug-20	Sep-20
Health Care	59%	59%	59%	62%	60%	60%	61%	61%	61%	62%
Energy	66%	66%	67%	66%	63%	62%	62%	62%	61%	61%
Comm. Services	60%	59%	61%	62%	60%	58%	59%	58%	59%	59%
Info, Tech.	53%	54%	55%	59%	56%	56%	56%	56%	56%	56%
S&P 500	51%	50%	51%	54%	52%	52%	53%	53%	52%	53%
Materials	50%	50%	49%	55%	53%	52%	52%	53%	52%	52%
Consumer Disc.	48%	48%	48%	50%	49%	50%	50%	50%	50%	50%
Utilities	42%	42%	43%	50%	48%	50%	52%	50%	48%	49%
Industrials	46%	46%	47%	50%	48%	49%	48%	49%	49%	49%
Real Estate	44%	44%	46%	49%	47%	47%	48%	47%	47%	47%
Consumer Spls.	39%	38%	38%	44%	43%	43%	44%	45%	46%	46%
Financials	43%	42%	42%	46%	45%	45%	46%	46%	45%	46%

Highest % of Buy Ratings in S&P 500: Top 10 (Source: FactSet)

Company	Buy	Hold	Sell
Quanta Services, Inc.	100%	0%	0%
Assurant, Inc.	100%	0%	0%
Teledyne Technologies Incorporated	100%	0%	0%
L3Harris Technologies Inc	95%	5%	0%
Phillips 66	95%	5%	0%
Centene Corporation	95%	5%	0%
Pioneer Natural Resources Company	94%	6%	0%
Jacobs Engineering Group Inc.	94%	6%	0%
Synopsys, Inc.	93%	0%	7%
Keysight Technologies Inc	92%	8%	0%

Highest % of Sell Ratings in S&P 500: Top 10 (Source: FactSet)

Company	Buy	Hold	Sell
American Airlines Group, Inc.	20%	35%	45%
CenturyLink, Inc.	13%	44%	44%
Franklin Resources, Inc.	0%	57%	43%
WEC Energy Group Inc	20%	40%	40%
Waters Corporation	0%	63%	38%
Omnicom Group Inc	21%	43%	36%
Expeditors International of Washington	7%	57%	36%
Brown-Forman Corporation Class B	6%	61%	33%
ResMed Inc.	22%	44%	33%
McCormick & Company, Incorporated	17%	50%	33%

Q3 Earnings Season: By The Numbers

Overview

Analyst and companies have been more optimistic than normal in their estimate revisions and earnings outlooks for the third quarter to date. As a result, expected earnings for the S&P 500 for the third quarter are higher today compared to the start of the quarter. Despite this increase, the index is still expected to report the second largest year-over-year decline in earnings over the past ten years, mainly due to the negative impact of COVID-19 on numerous industries. Earnings growth is projected to return in 2021.

In terms of estimate revisions for companies in the S&P 500, analysts have increased earnings estimates in aggregate for Q3 2020 to date. On a per-share basis, estimated earnings for the third quarter have increased by 3.4% since June 30. In a typical quarter, analysts usually reduce earnings estimates. Over the past five years (20 quarters), earnings estimates have fallen by 5.0% on average during the quarter. Over the past ten years, (40 quarters), earnings estimates have also fallen by 5.0% on average during the quarter. Over the past fifteen years, (60 quarters), earnings expectations have fallen by 5.2% on average during the quarter.

More S&P 500 companies have issued positive EPS guidance for Q3 2020 than average as well. At this point in time, 66 companies in the index have issued EPS guidance for Q3 2020. Of these 66 companies, 22 have issued negative EPS guidance and 44 have issued positive EPS guidance. The percentage of companies issuing positive EPS guidance is 67% (44 out of 66), which is above the 5-year average of 32%. However, the overall number of companies issuing EPS guidance for the third quarter of 66 is well below the 5-year average of 104.

Because of the net upward revisions to earnings estimates, the estimated (year-over-year) earnings decline for Q3 2020 is -21.8% today compared to the estimated (year-over-year) earnings decline of -25.4% on June 30. If -21.8% is the actual decline for the quarter, it will mark the second largest year-over-year decline in earnings reported by the index since Q2 2009 (-26.9%), trailing only the previous quarter (-31.6%). It will also mark the sixth time in the past seven quarters in which the index has reported a year-over-year decline in earnings. All eleven sectors are projected to report a year-over-year decline in earnings, led by the Energy, Industrials, and Consumer Discretionary sectors.

Because of the net upward revisions to revenue estimates, the estimated (year-over-year) revenue decline for Q3 2020 is -3.8% today compared to the estimated (year-over-year) revenue decline of -5.5% on June 30. Five sectors are projected to report year-over-year growth in revenues, led by the Health Care sector. Six sectors are predicted to report a year-over-year decline in revenues, led by the Energy and Industrials sectors.

Looking at future quarters, analysts predict a (year-over-year) decline in earnings in the fourth quarter (-12.8%) of 2020. However, they are also project a return to earnings growth starting in Q1 2021 (13.3%).

The forward 12-month P/E ratio is 21.7, which is above the 5-year average and above the 10-year average.

During the upcoming week, eight S&P 500 companies (including one Dow 30 component) are scheduled to report results for the third quarter.

Earnings Revisions: Energy & Consumer Discretionary Sectors See Largest Estimate Increases

Small Decrease in Estimated Earnings Decline for Q3 This Week

During the past week, the estimated earnings decline for the S&P 500 decreased slightly to -21.8% from -22.1%. The positive EPS surprise reported by FedEx (\$4.87 vs. \$2.70) was a substantial contributor to the small decrease in the overall earnings decline for the index during the week.

Since the start of the quarter, the estimated earnings decline for the S&P 500 has decreased to -21.8% today from -25.4% on June 30. Eight sectors have a recorded a decrease in their expected earnings declines due to upward revisions to earnings estimates, led by the Energy, Consumer Discretionary, and Financials sectors. On the other hand, three sectors have a recorded an increase in their expected earnings declines due to downward revisions to earnings estimates, led by the Utilities sectors.

Energy: Chevron and Exxon Mobil Lead Earnings Increase Since June 30

The Energy sector has recorded the largest decrease in its expected earnings decline since the start of the quarter (to -108.0% from -119.7%). Despite the increase in expected earnings, this sector has witnessed the largest decrease in price (-11.8%) of all eleven sectors since June 30. Overall, 19 of the 26 companies (73%) in the Energy sector have seen an increase in their mean EPS estimate during this time. Of these 19 companies, 17 have recorded an increase in their mean EPS estimate of more than 10%, led by Schlumberger (to \$0.12 from -\$0.05), EOG Resources (to \$0.05 from -\$0.09), Halliburton (to \$0.08 from -\$0.14), and Pioneer Natural Resources (to \$0.34 from \$0.15). However, Chevron (to -\$0.03 from -\$0.37) and Exxon Mobil (to -\$0.07 from -\$0.18) have been the largest contributors to the increase in expected earnings for this sector since June 30.

Consumer Discretionary: Amazon, Ford, Home Depot, & GM Lead Earnings Increase since June 30

The Consumer Discretionary sector has recorded the second largest decrease in its expected earnings decline since the start of the quarter (to -41.2% from -52.8%). This sector has also witnessed the third largest increase in price (+11.8%) of all eleven sectors since June 30. Overall, 40 of the 60 companies (67%) in the Consumer Discretionary sector have seen an increase in their mean EPS estimate during this time. Of these 40 companies, 34 have recorded an increase in their mean EPS estimate of more than 10%, led by Ford Motor (to \$0.14 from -\$0.03), L Brands (to \$0.07 from -\$0.21), and Mohawk Industries (to \$1.94 from \$0.85). However, Amazon.com (to \$7.18 from \$4.54), Ford Motor, General Motors (to \$1.29 from \$0.97), and Home Depot (\$2.95 to \$2.51) have been the largest contributors to the increase in expected earnings for this sector since June 30.

Financials: JPMorgan Chase Leads Earnings Increase Since June 30

The Financials sector has recorded the third largest decrease in its expected earnings decline since the start of the quarter (to -24.5% from -34.4%). This sector has also witnessed an increase in price of 6.2% since June 30. Overall, 54 of the 66 companies (82%) in the Financials sector have seen an increase in their mean EPS estimate during this time. Of these 54 companies, 30 have recorded an increase in their mean EPS estimate of more than 10%, led by Capital One Financial (to \$1.60 from \$0.72) and Huntington Bancshares (to \$0.21 from \$0.11). However, JPMorgan Chase (to \$1.96 from \$1.57) has been the largest contributor to the increase in expected earnings for this sector since June 30.

Utilities: 68% of Companies Have Seen Decline in Earnings Estimates Since June 30

The Utilities sector has recorded the largest decrease in its expected earnings growth rate since the start of the quarter (to -2.0% from 1.2%). Despite the decline in expected earnings, this sector has witnessed an increase in price of 4.7% since June 30. Overall, 19 of the 28 companies (68%) in the Utilities sector have seen a decrease in their mean EPS estimate during this time. Of these 19 companies, 4 have recorded a decrease in their mean EPS estimate of more than 10%, led by NiSource (to \$0.03 from \$0.04) and Dominion Energy (to \$0.98 from \$1.21).

Guidance: More S&P 500 Companies Issuing Positive EPS Guidance for Q3 to Date

To date, more S&P 500 companies are issuing positive earnings guidance than average. At this point in time, 66 companies in the index have issued EPS guidance for Q3 2020. Of these 66 companies, 22 have issued negative EPS guidance and 44 have issued positive EPS guidance. The percentage of companies issuing positive EPS guidance is 67% (44 out of 66), which is well above the 5-year average of 32%.

However, the total number of companies issuing EPS guidance to date for Q3 2020 of 66 is well below the 5-year average for a quarter of 104.

The term "guidance" (or "preannouncement") is defined as a projection or estimate for EPS provided by a company in advance of the company reporting actual results. Guidance is classified as negative if the estimate (or mid-point of a range estimates) provided by a company is lower than the mean EPS estimate the day before the guidance was issued. Guidance is classified as positive if the estimate (or mid-point of a range of estimates) provided by the company is higher than the mean EPS estimate the day before the guidance was issued.

Earnings Decline: -21.8%

The estimated (year-over-year) earnings decline for Q3 2020 is -21.8%, which is below the 5-year average earnings growth rate of 4.0%. If -21.8% is the actual decline for the quarter, it will mark the second largest year-over-year decline in earnings for the index since Q2 2009 (-26.9%), trailing only the previous quarter (-31.6%). It will also mark the sixth time in the past seven quarters in which the index has reported a year-over-year decline in earnings. All eleven sectors are expected to report a year-over-year decline in earnings, led by the Energy, Industrials, and Consumer Discretionary sectors.

Energy: 3 of 5 Sub-Industries Expected to Report Year-Over-Year Decline of More Than 115%

The Energy sector is expected to report the largest (year-over-year) decline in earnings of all eleven sectors at -108.0%. Lower year-over-year oil prices are contributing to the earnings decline for this sector, as the average price of oil for Q3 2020 to date (\$41.06) is 27% below the average price for oil in Q3 2019 (\$56.44). At the sub-industry level, four of the five sub-industries in the sector are projected to report a decline in earnings. Three of these four sub-industries are predicted to report a decline in earnings of more than 115%: Oil & Gas Refining & Marketing (-128%), Oil & Gas Exploration & Production (-122%), and Integrated Oil & Gas (-117%). The only sub-industry in the sector projected to report year-over-year growth in earnings is the Oil & Gas Storage & Transportation (3%) sub-industry.

Industrials: Airlines Industry Expected to Lead Year-Over-Year Decline

The Industrials sector is expected to report the second largest (year-over-year) earnings decline of all eleven sectors at -61.2%. At the industry level, eleven of the twelve industries in this sector are predicted to report a decline in earnings. Four of these twelve industries are projected to report a decline in earnings of more than 30%: Airlines (-308%), Industrial Conglomerates (-51%), Aerospace & Defense (-41%), and Machinery (-35%). On the other hand, the only industry expected to report earnings growth in this sector is the Air Freight & Logistics (12%) industry.

The Airlines industry is also expected to be the largest contributor to the year-over-year decline in earnings for the sector. If the five companies in this industry were excluded, the estimated earnings decline for the sector would improve to -27.5% from -61.2%.

Consumer Discretionary: 4 of 11 Industries Expected to Report Year-Over-Year Decline of More Than 30%

The Consumer Discretionary sector is expected to report the third largest (year-over-year) earnings decline of all eleven sectors at -41.2%. At the industry level, nine of the eleven industries in this sector are expected to report a decline in earnings. Four of these nine industries are projected to report a decline in earnings of more than 30%: Hotels, Restaurants, & Leisure (-130%), Textiles, Apparel, & Luxury Goods (-58%), Auto Components (-37%), and Automobiles (-37%). On the other hand, the only two industries expected to report earnings growth in this sector are the Specialty Retail (4%) and Household Durables (1%) industries.

Revenue Decline: -3.8%

The estimated (year-over-year) revenue decline for Q3 2020 is -3.8%, which is below the 5-year average revenue growth rate of 3.4%. Five sectors are expected to report year-over-year growth in revenues, led by Health Care sector. Six sectors are expected to report a year-over-year decline in revenues, led by the Energy and Industrials sectors.

Health Care: 4 of 6 Industries Expected to Report Year-Over-Year Growth

The Health Care sector is expected to report the highest (year-over-year) revenue growth of all eleven sectors at 7.3%. At the industry level, four of the six industries in this sector are predicted to report year-over-year growth in revenues: Biotechnology (22%), Life Sciences, Tools, & Services (9%), Health Care Providers & Services (8%), and Pharmaceuticals (5%). On the other hand, two industries are expected to report a decline in revenue: Health Care Technology (-4%) and the Health Care Equipment & Supplies (-1%).

It should be noted that the revenue growth rates for some of the larger contributors to revenue growth for this sector are being boosted by apples-to-oranges comparisons of post-merger revenues in Q3 2020 to pre-merger revenues in Q3 2019, including Centene, Bristol Myers Squibb, and AbbVie.

Energy: 4 of 5 Sub-Industries Expected To Report Year-Over-Year Decline of More Than 25%

The Energy sector is expected to report the largest (year-over-year) decline in revenue of all eleven sectors at -30.5%. Lower year-over-year oil prices are contributing to the earnings decline for this sector. As the average price of oil for Q3 2020 to date (\$41.06) is 27% below the average price for oil in Q3 2019 (\$56.44). At the sub-industry level, all five sub-industries in the sector are predicted to report a year-over-year decline in revenue. Four sub-industries are projected to report a decline in revenue of more than 25%: Oil & Gas Exploration & Production (-39%), Oil & Gas Refining & Marketing (-36%), Oil & Gas Equipment & Services (-29%), and Integrated Oil & Gas (-26%).

Industrials: Airlines Industry Expected to Lead Year-Over-Year Decline

The Industrials sector is expected to report the second largest (year-over-year) revenue decline of all eleven sectors at -17.1%. At the industry level, eleven of the twelve industries in this sector are predicted to report a decline in revenues, led by the Airlines (-73%) industry. On the other hand, the Air Freight & Logistics (10%) industry is the only industry in the sector expected to report year-over-year earnings growth for the quarter.

The Airlines industry is also expected to be the largest contributor to the year-over-year decline in revenue for the sector. If the five companies in this industry were excluded, the estimated revenue decline for the sector would improve to -8.8% from -17.1%.

Looking Ahead: Forward Estimates and Valuation

Earnings: Analysts Expect Earnings Decline of -18.2% for CY 2020

For the third quarter, S&P 500 companies are expected to report a decline in earnings of -21.8% and a decline in revenues of -3.8%. Analysts expect an earnings decline of -18.2% and a revenue decline of -2.8% for CY 2020.

For Q4 2020, analysts are projecting an earnings decline of -12.8% and a revenue decline of -1.2%.

For CY 2020, analysts are projecting an earnings decline of -18.2% and a revenue decline of -2.8%.

For Q1 2021, analysts are projecting earnings growth of 13.3% and revenue growth of 3.3%.

For Q2 2021, analysts are projecting earnings growth of 44.3% and revenue growth of 13.9%.

For CY 2021, analysts are projecting earnings growth of 26.2% and revenue growth of 8.1%.

Valuation: Forward P/E Ratio is 21.7, Above the 10-Year Average (15.4)

The forward 12-month P/E ratio is 21.7. This P/E ratio is above the 5-year average of 17.1 and above the 10-year average of 15.4. It is equal to the forward 12-month P/E ratio of 21.7 recorded at the end of the second quarter (June 30). Since the end of the second quarter (June 30), the price of the index has increased by 8.3%, while the forward 12-month EPS estimate has increased by 8.0%.

At the sector level, the Consumer Discretionary (36.9) sector has the highest forward 12-month P/E ratio, while the Financials (14.1) sector has the lowest forward 12-month P/E ratio.

Targets & Ratings: Analysts Project 12% Increase in Price Over Next 12 Months

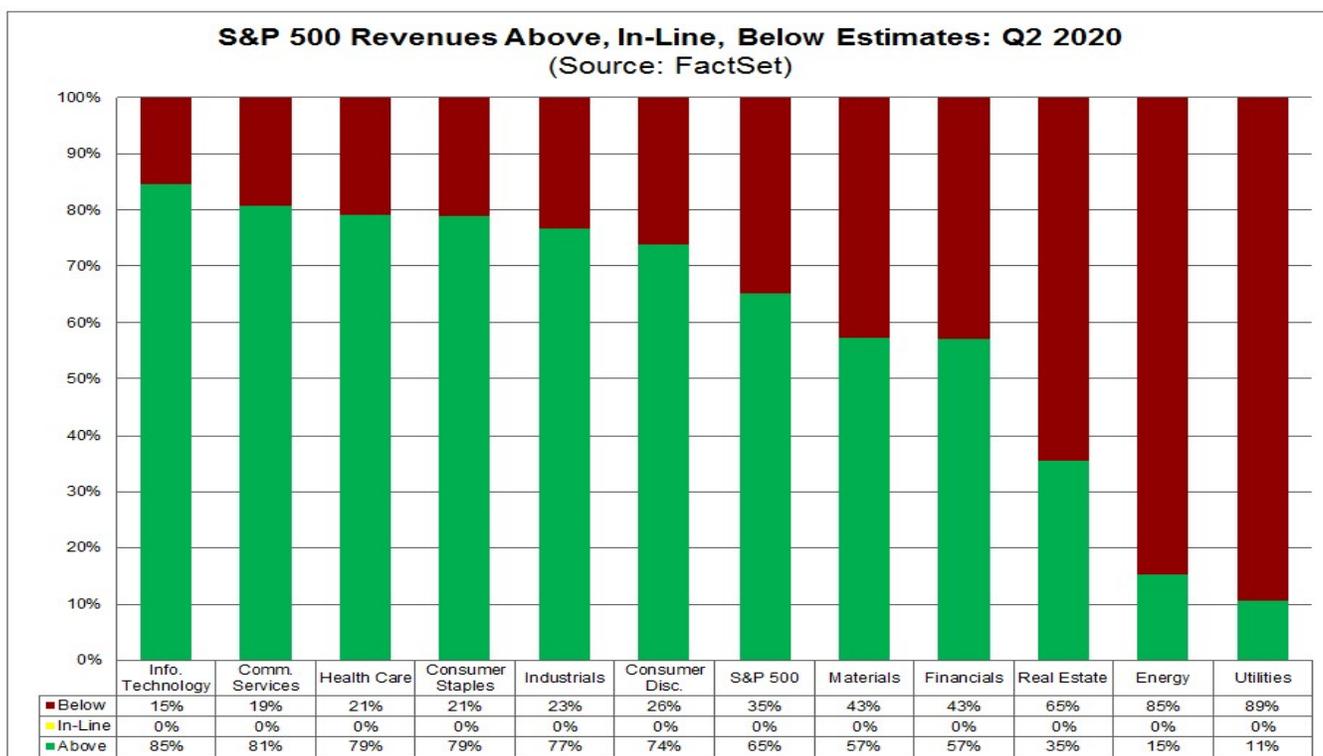
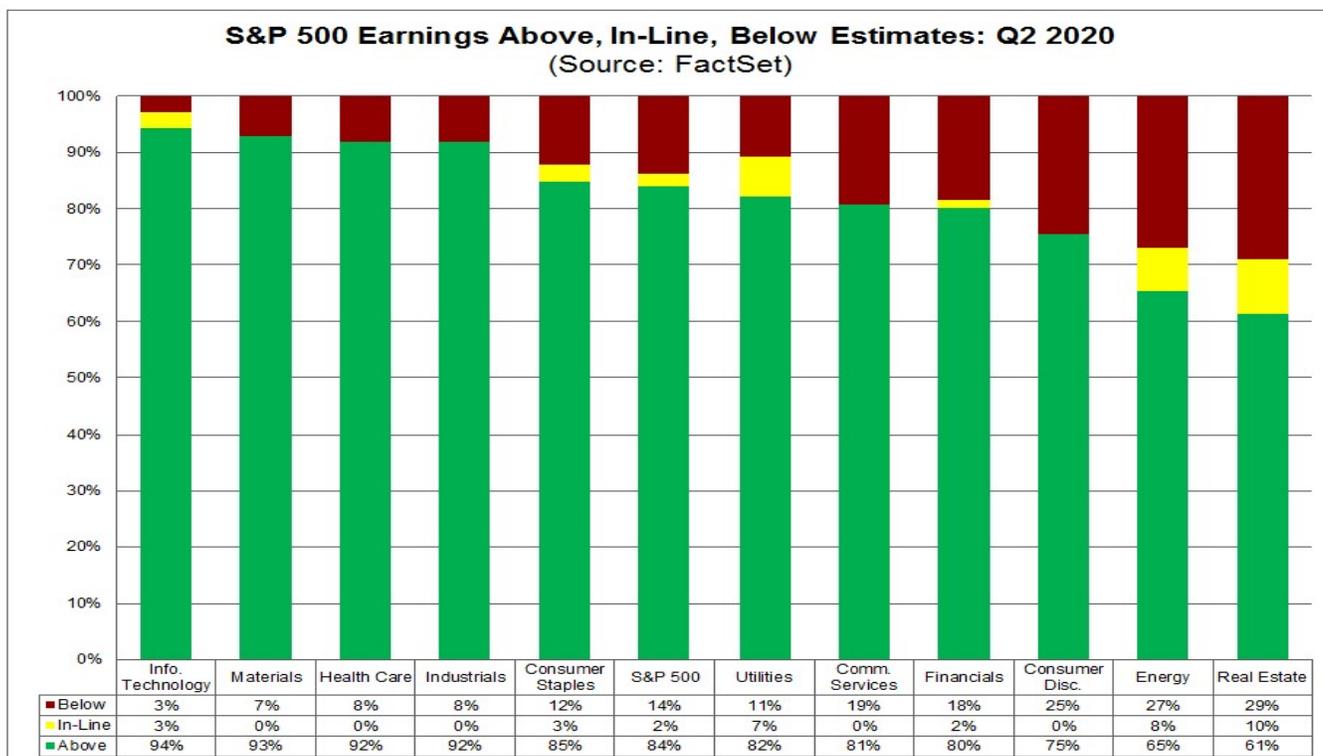
The bottom-up target price for the S&P 500 is 3747.66, which is 11.6% above the closing price of 3357.01. At the sector level, the Energy (+29.5%) sector is expected to see the largest price increase, as this sector has the largest upside difference between the bottom-up target price and the closing price. On the other hand, the Materials (+2.2%) sector is expected to see the smallest price increase, as this sector has the smallest upside difference between the bottom-up target price and the closing price.

Overall, there are 10,256 ratings on stocks in the S&P 500. Of these 10,256 ratings, 52.8% are Buy ratings, 40.6% are Hold ratings, and 6.6% are Sell ratings. At the sector level, the Health Care (62%) and Energy (61%) sectors have the highest percentages of Buy ratings, while the Financials (46%) and Consumer Staples (46%) sectors have the lowest percentages of Buy ratings.

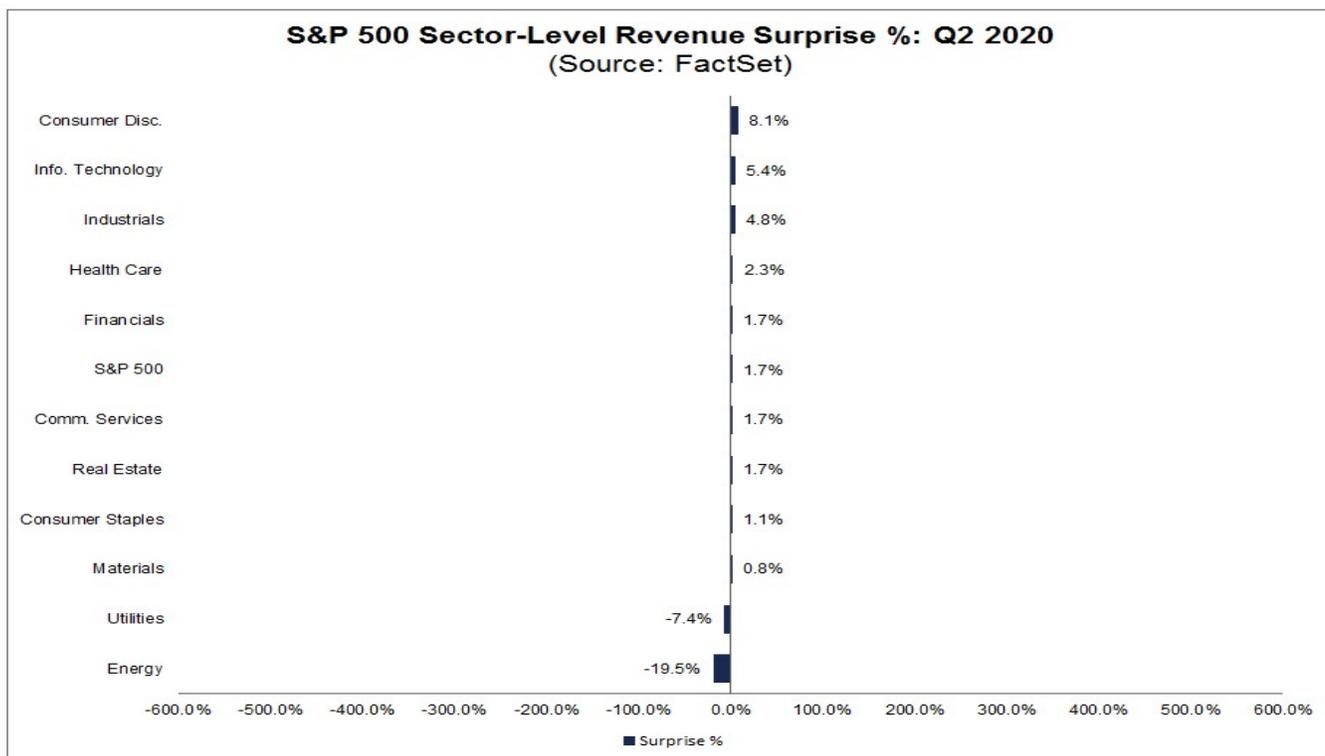
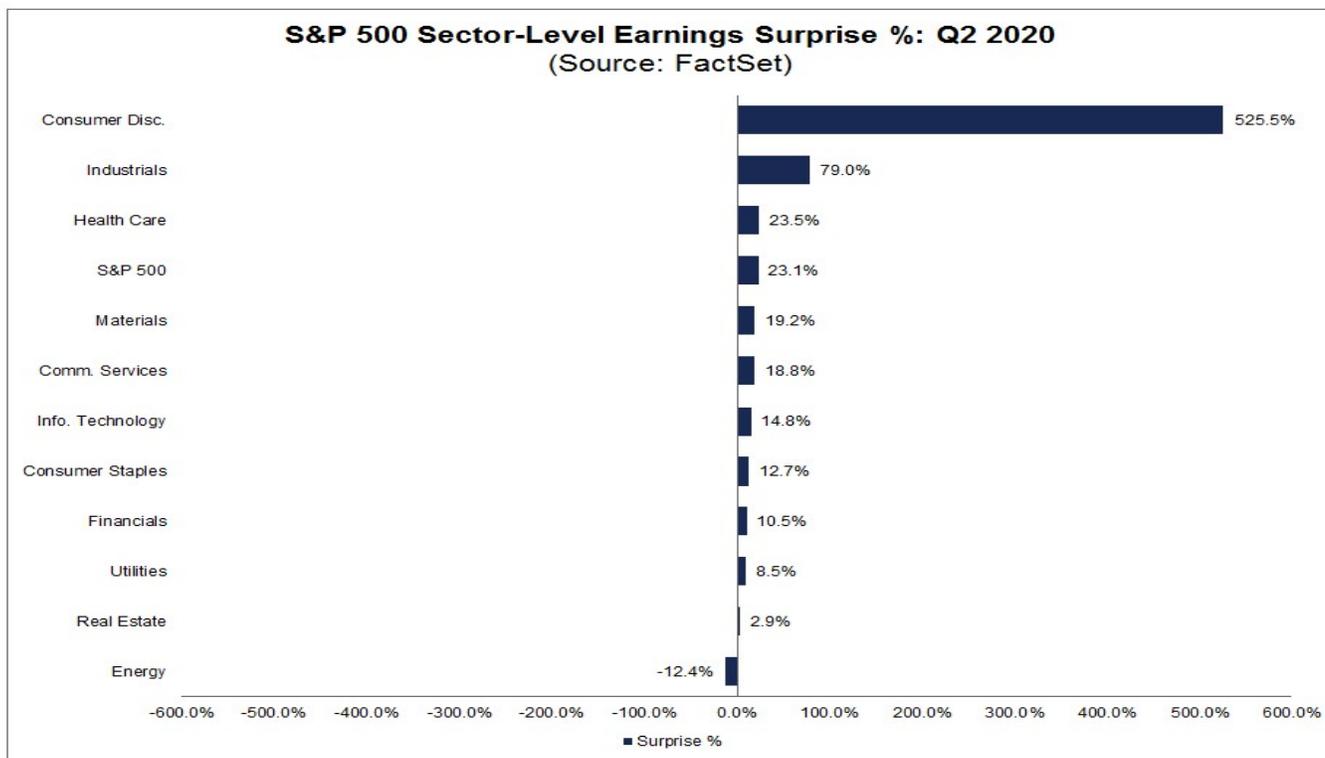
Companies Reporting Next Week: 8

During the upcoming week, eight S&P 500 companies (including 1 Dow 30 component) are scheduled to report results for the third quarter.

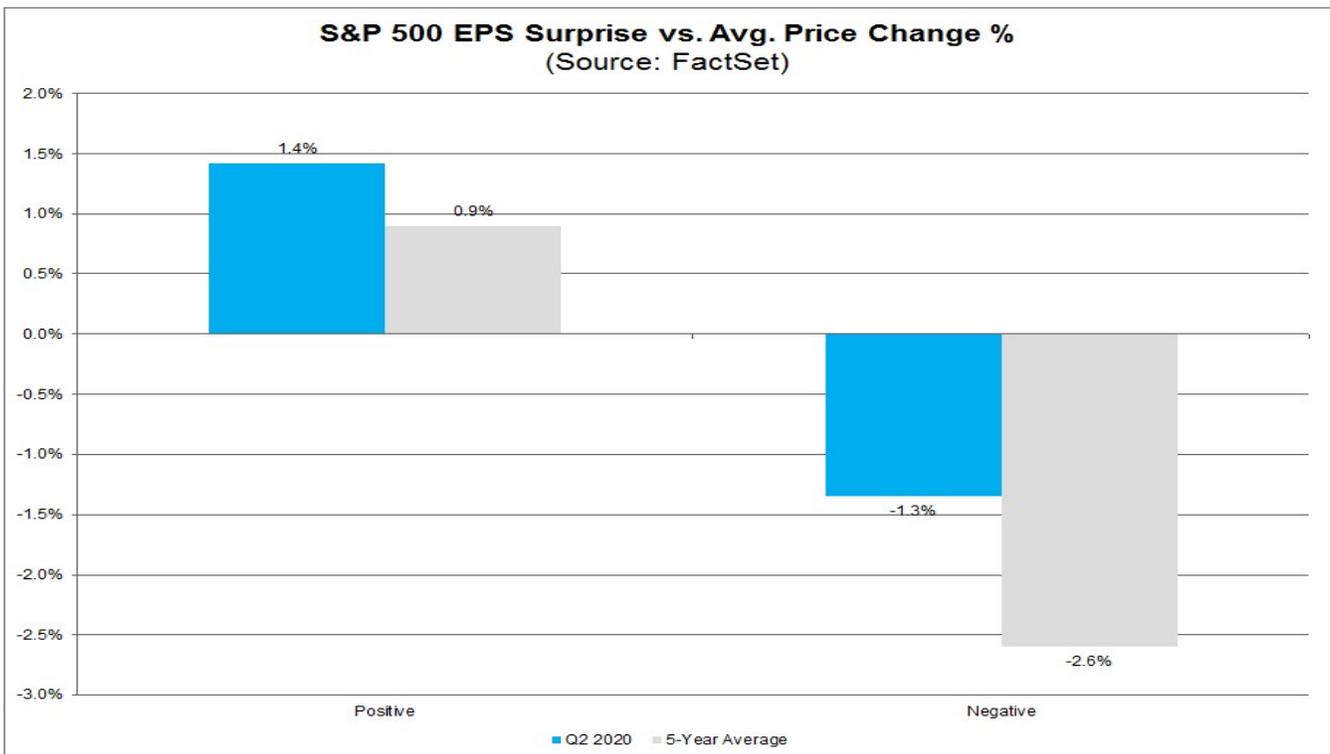
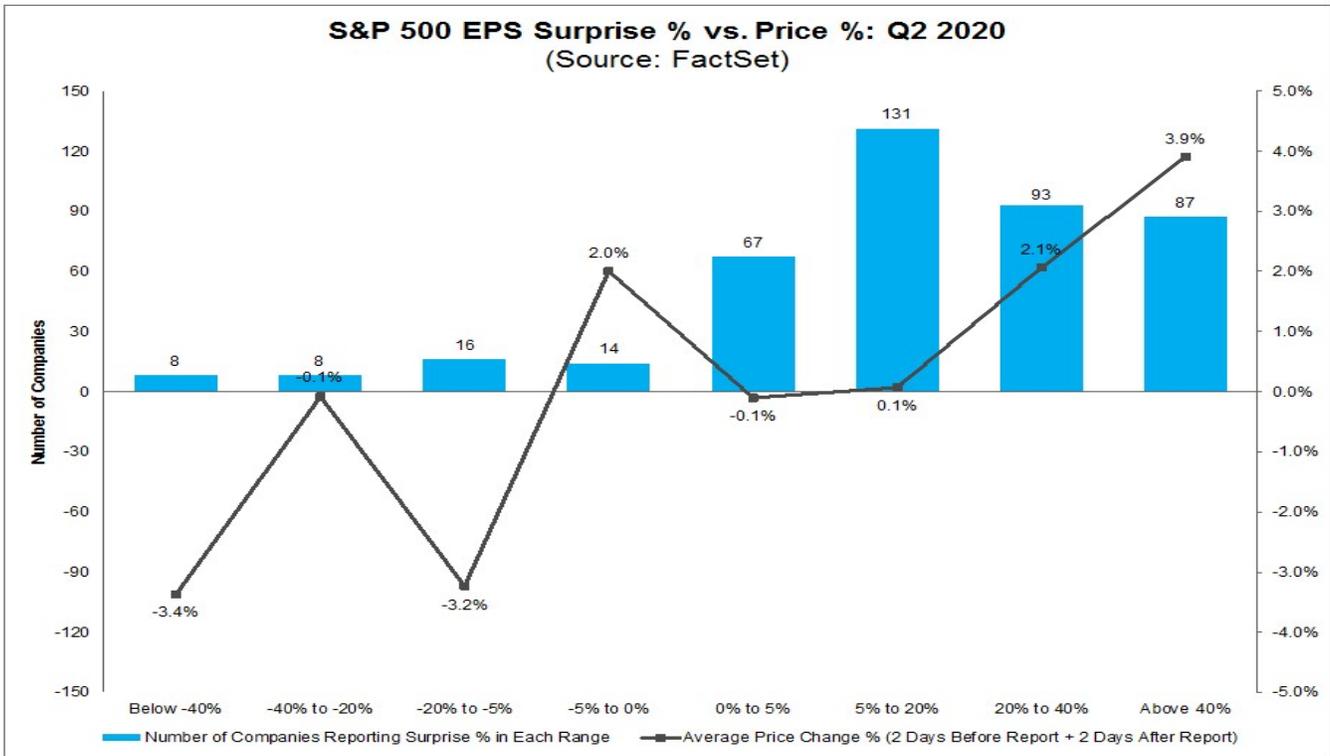
Q2 2020: Scorecard



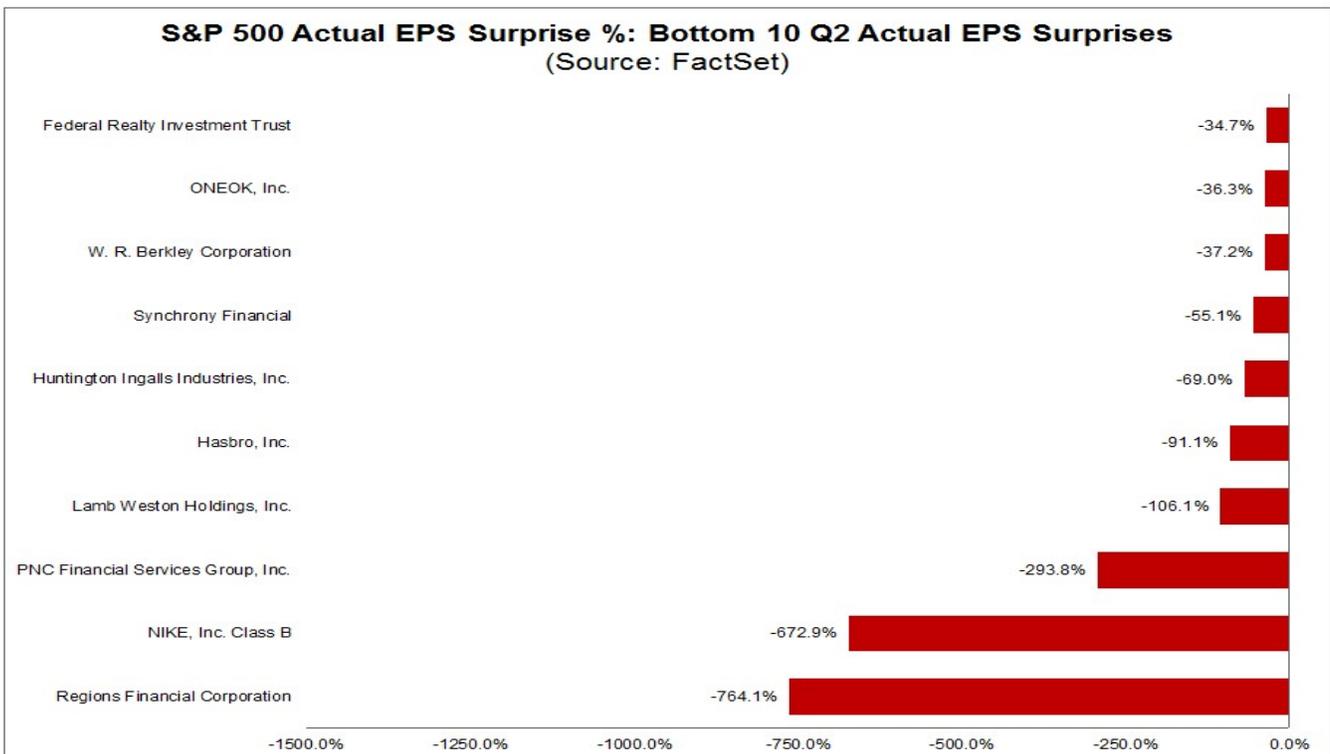
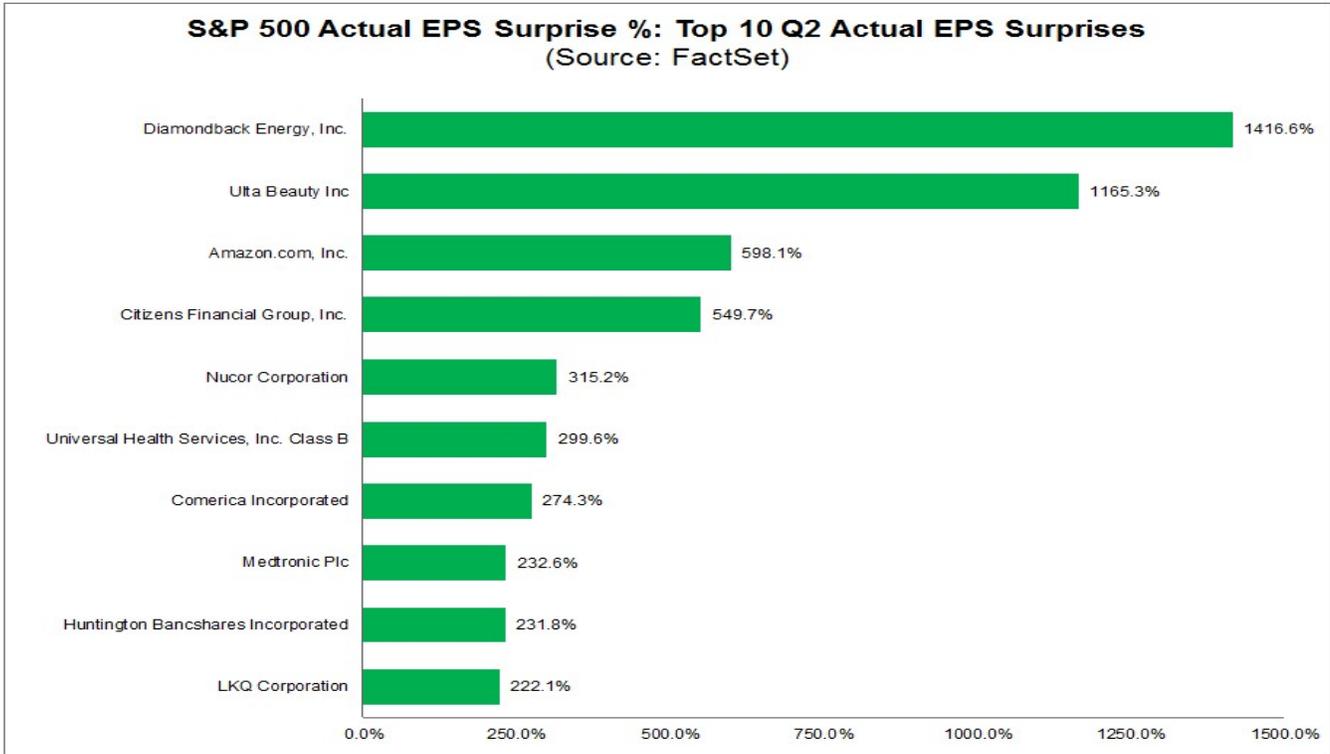
Q2 2020: Scorecard



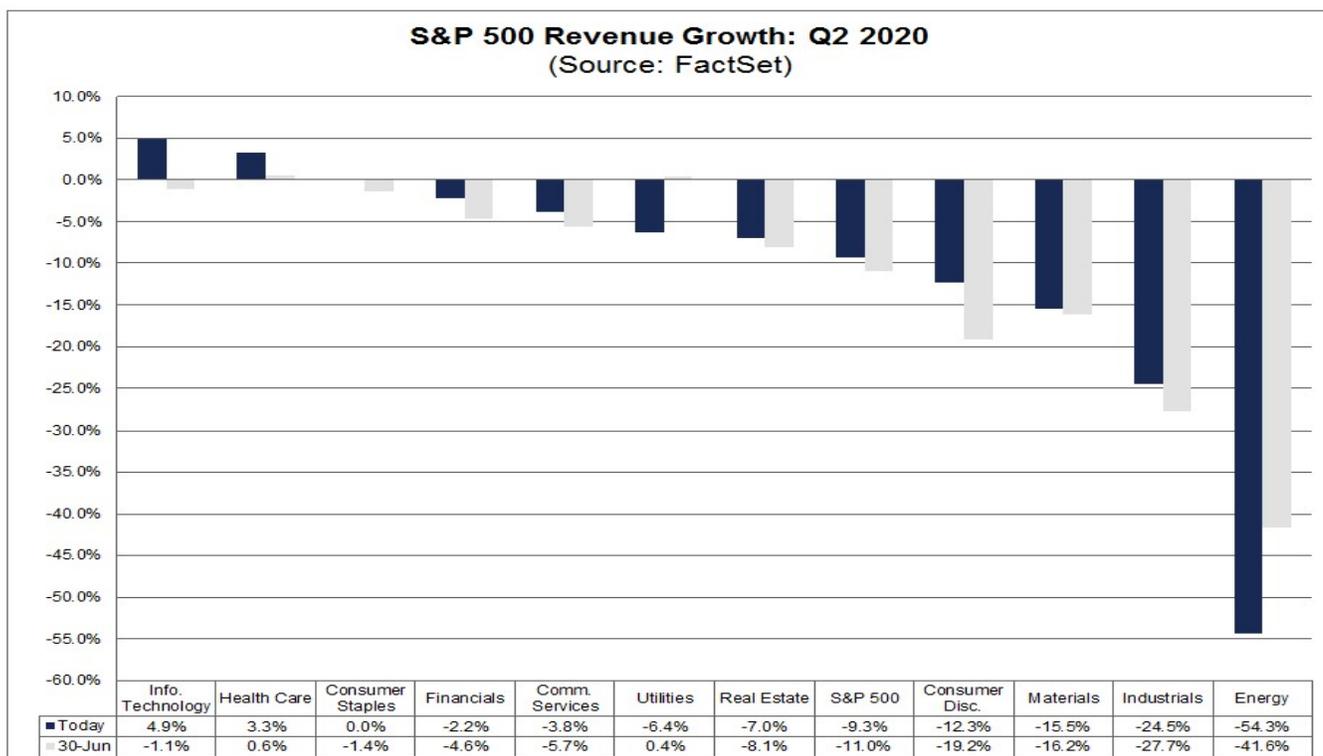
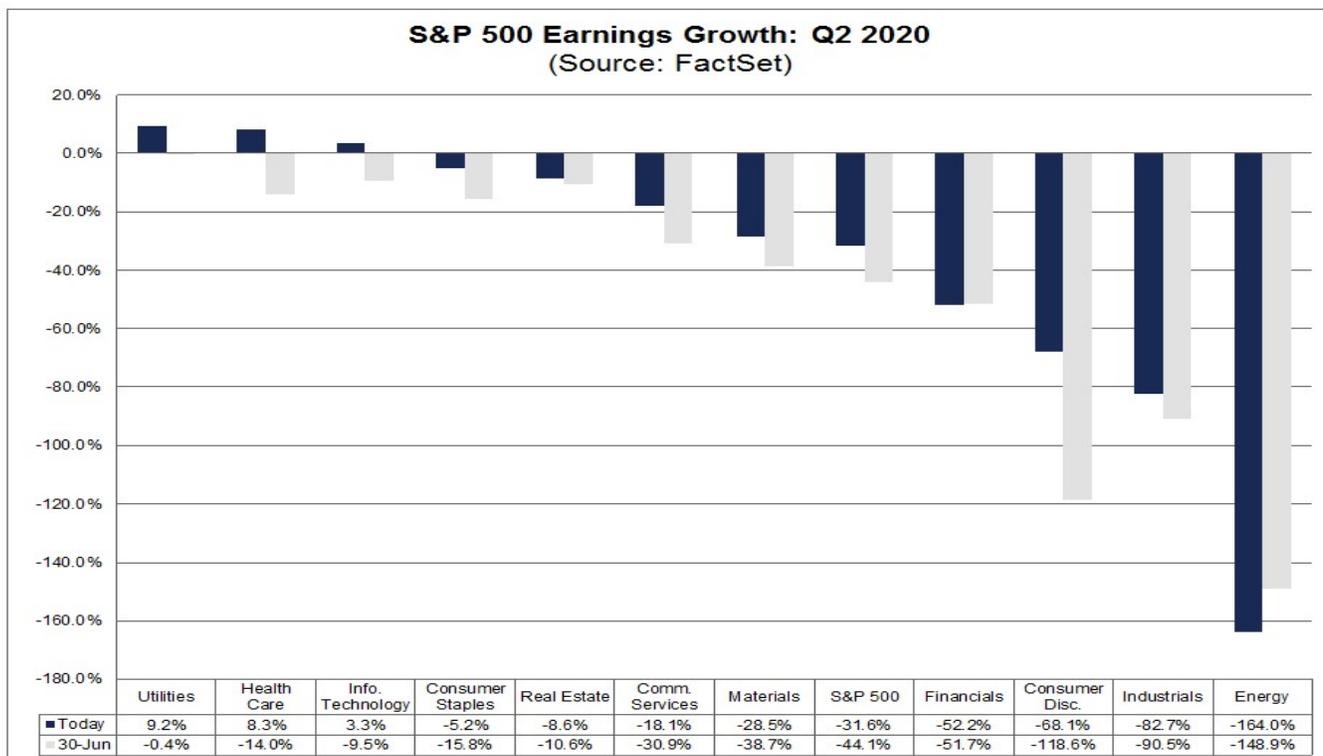
Q2 2020: Scorecard



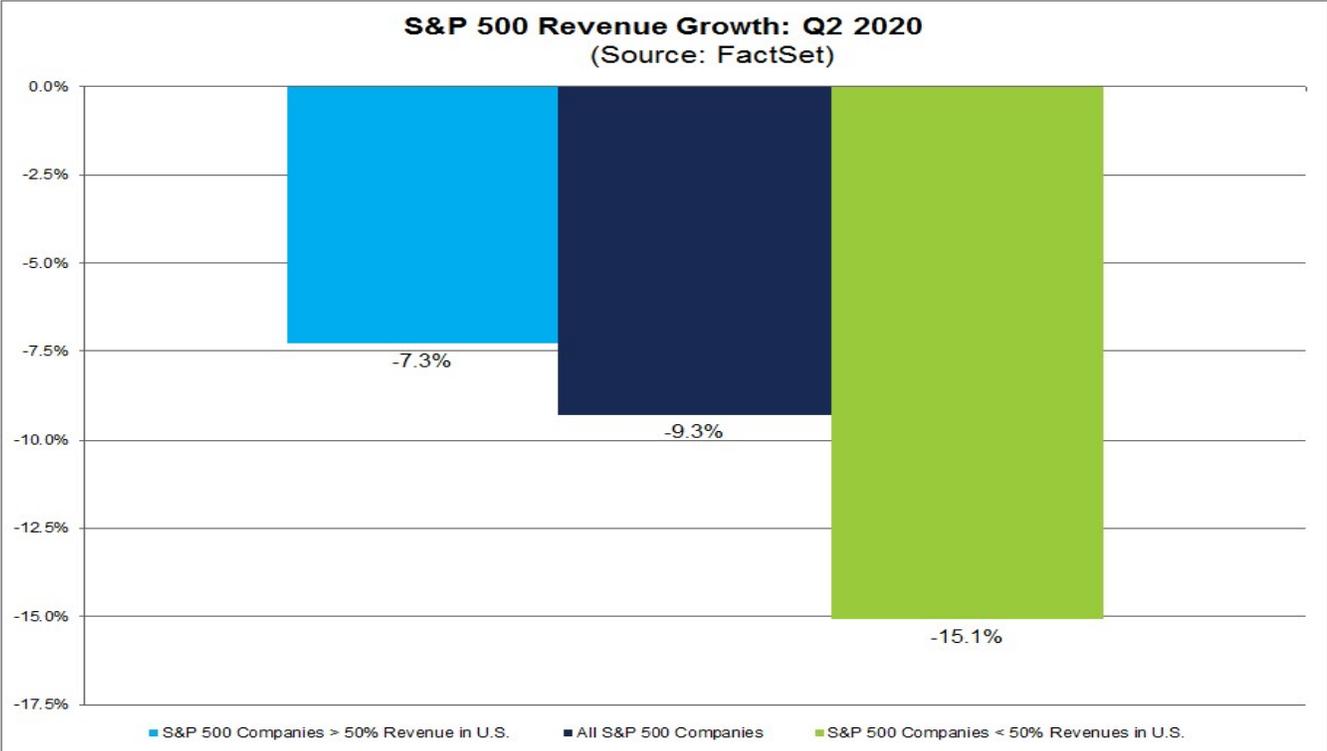
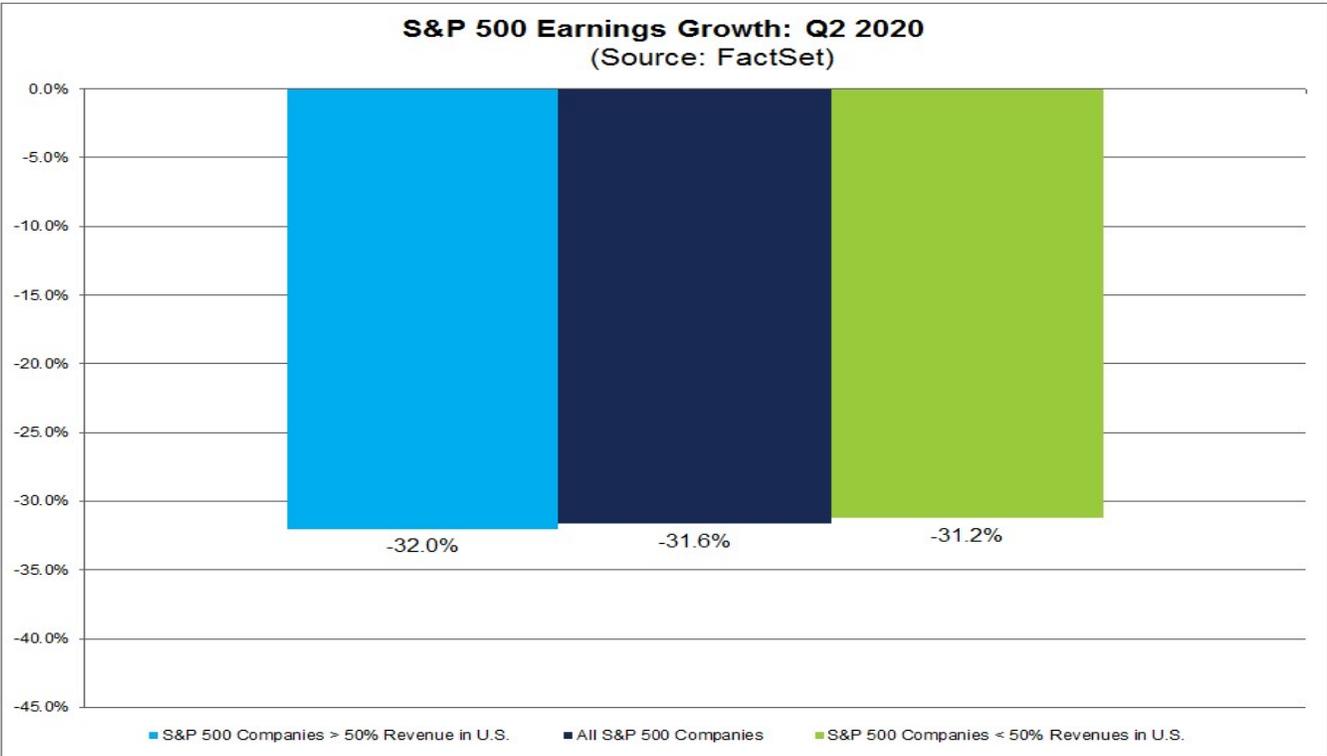
Q2 2020: Scorecard



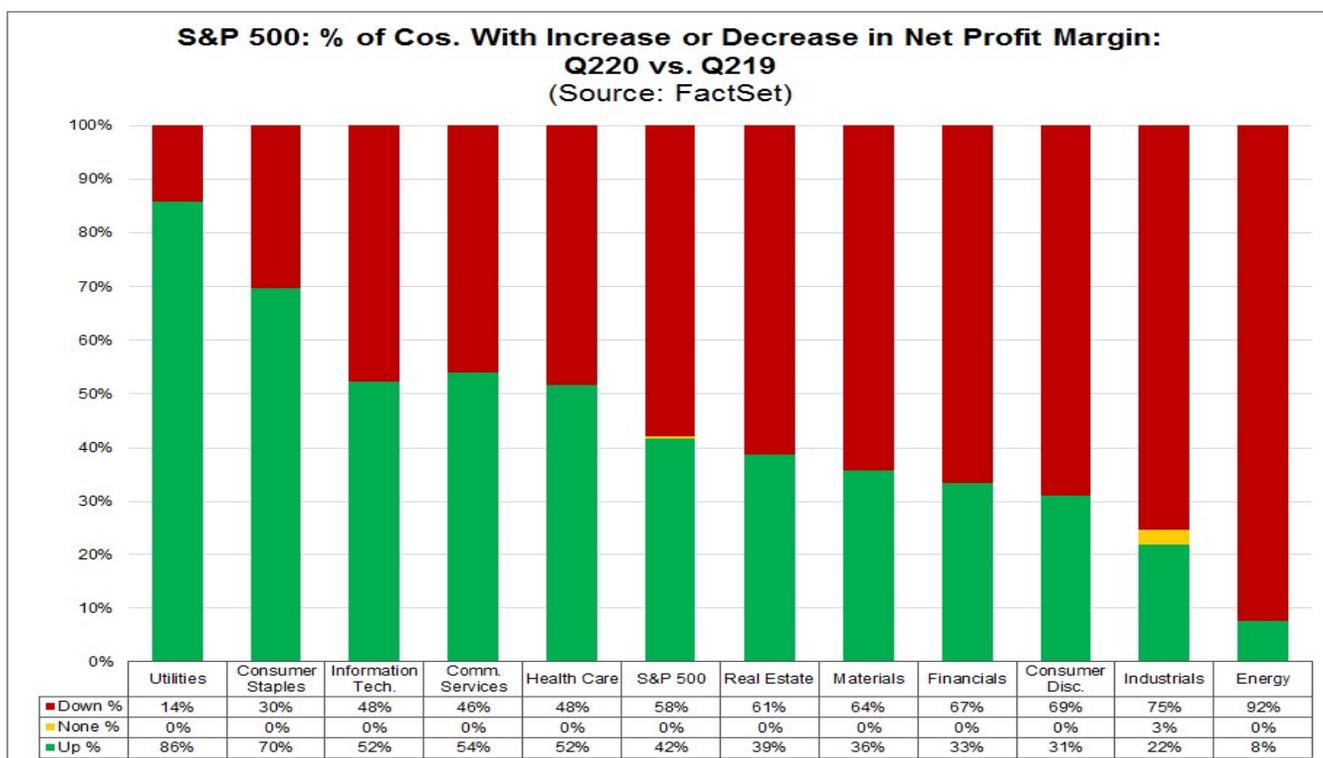
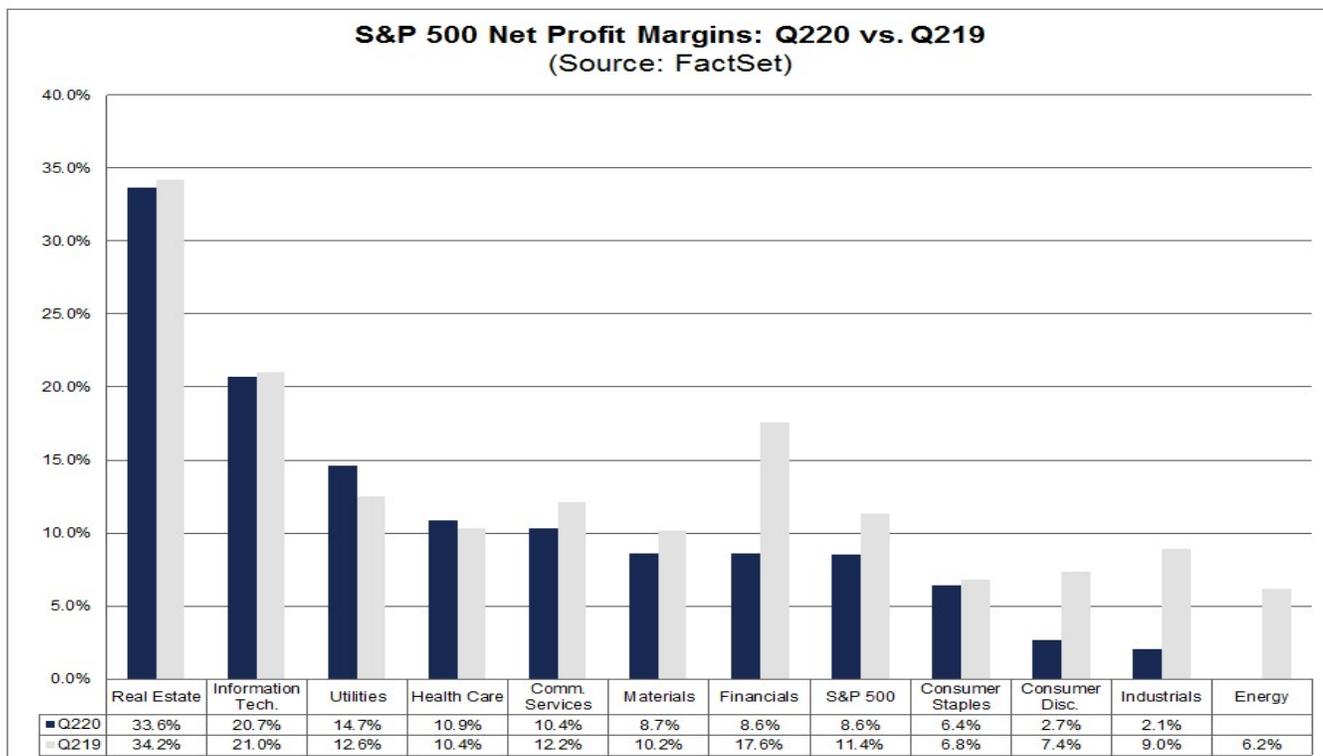
Q2 2020: Growth



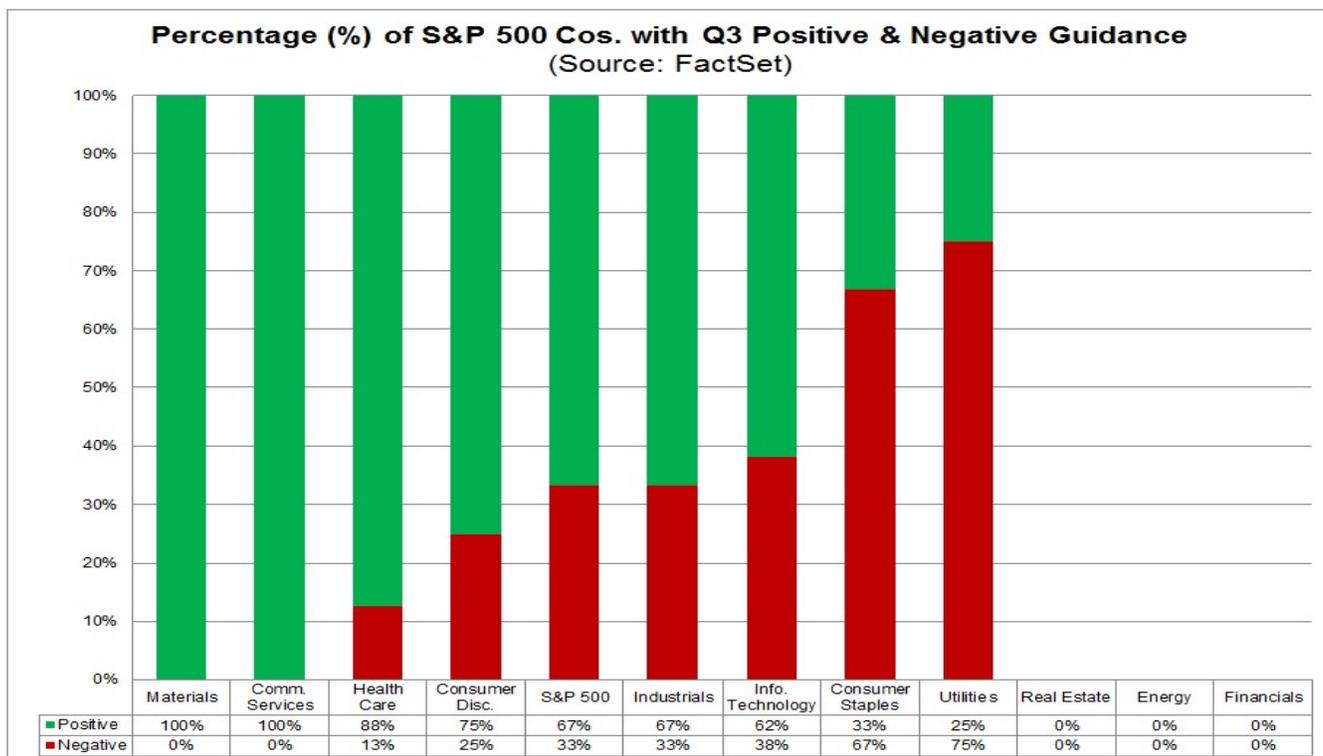
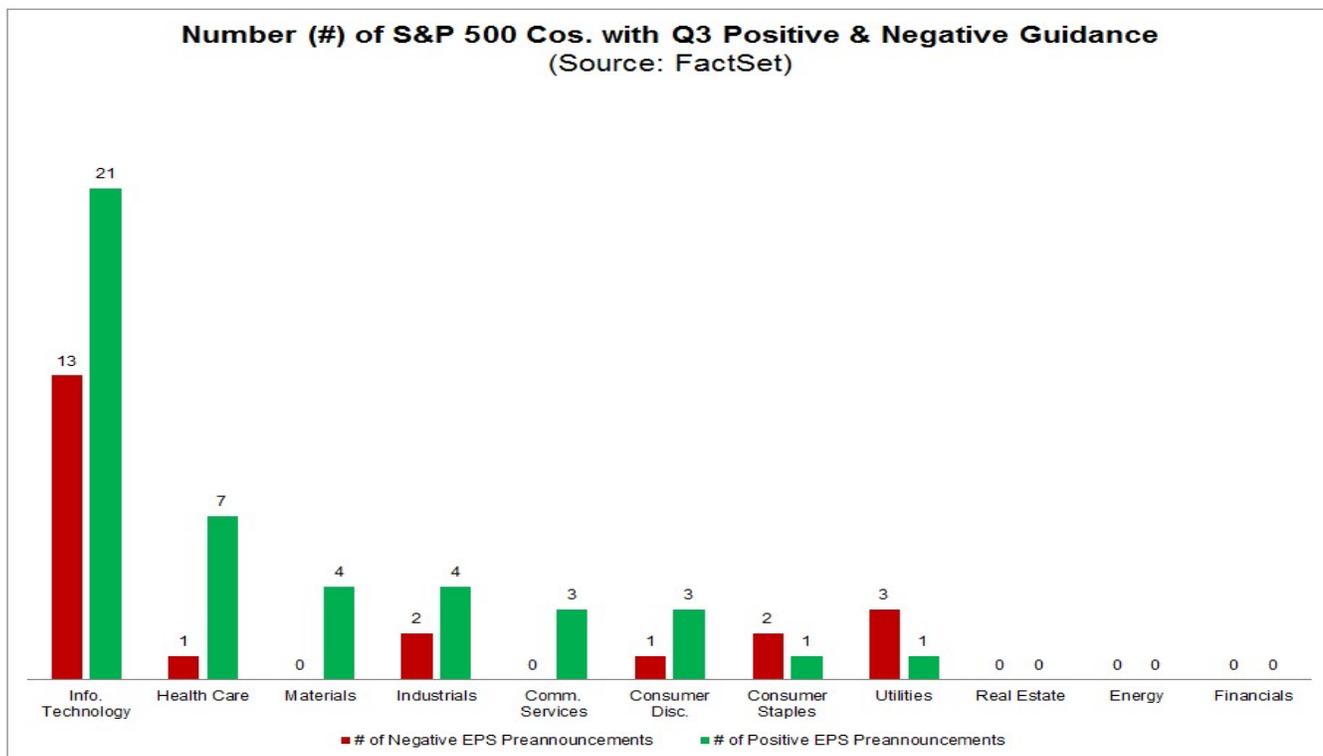
Q2 2020: Growth



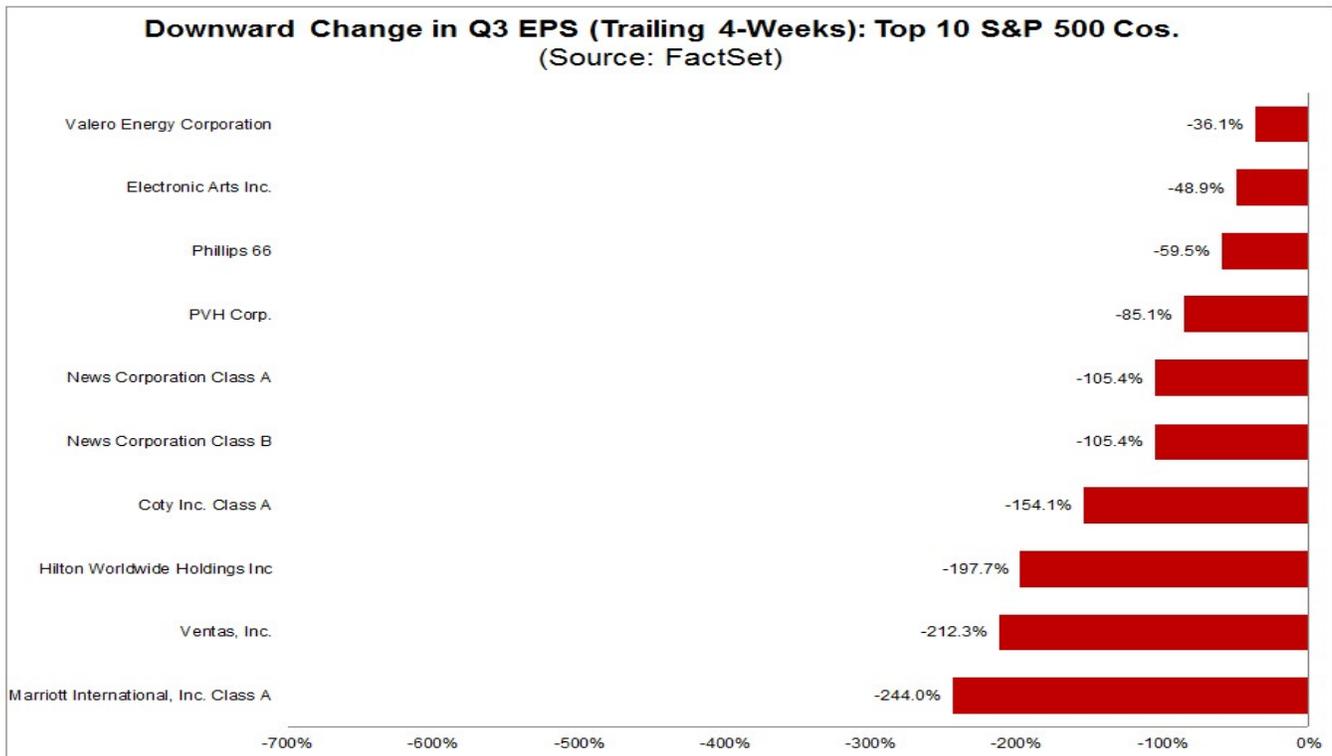
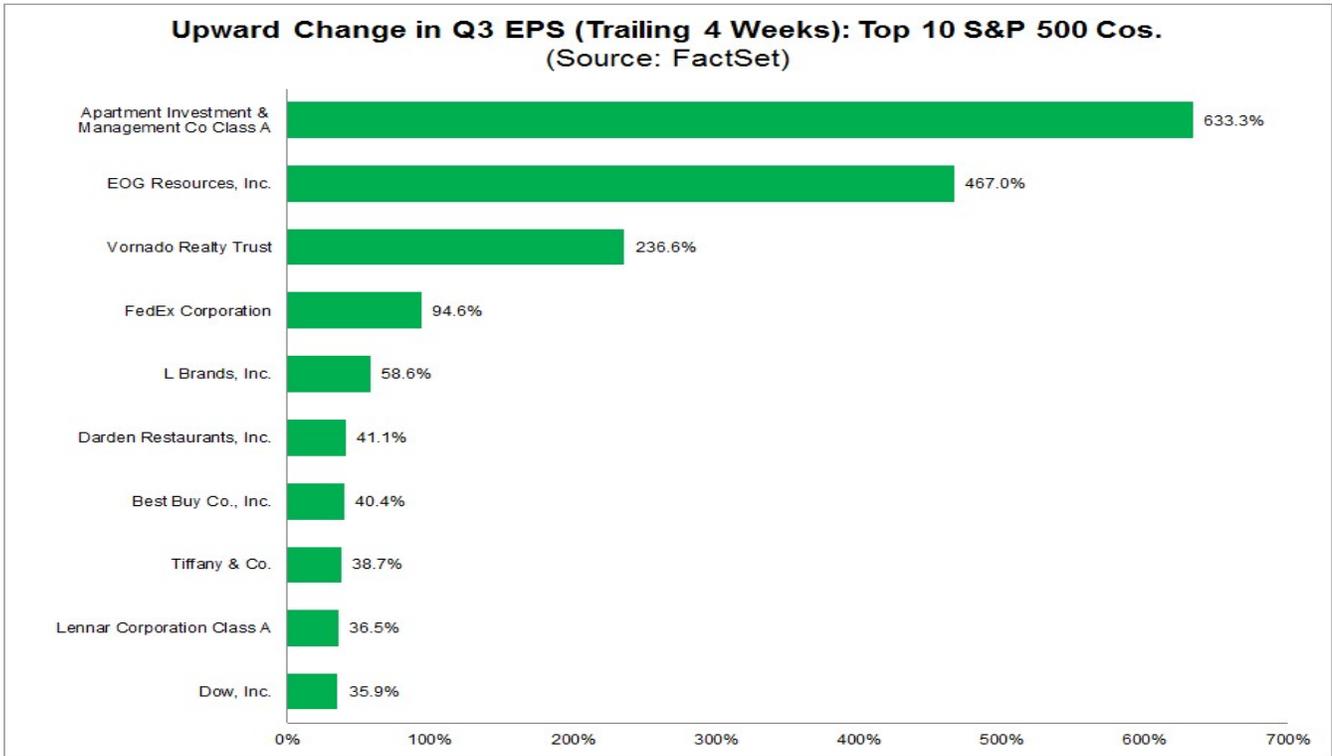
Q2 2020: Net Profit Margin



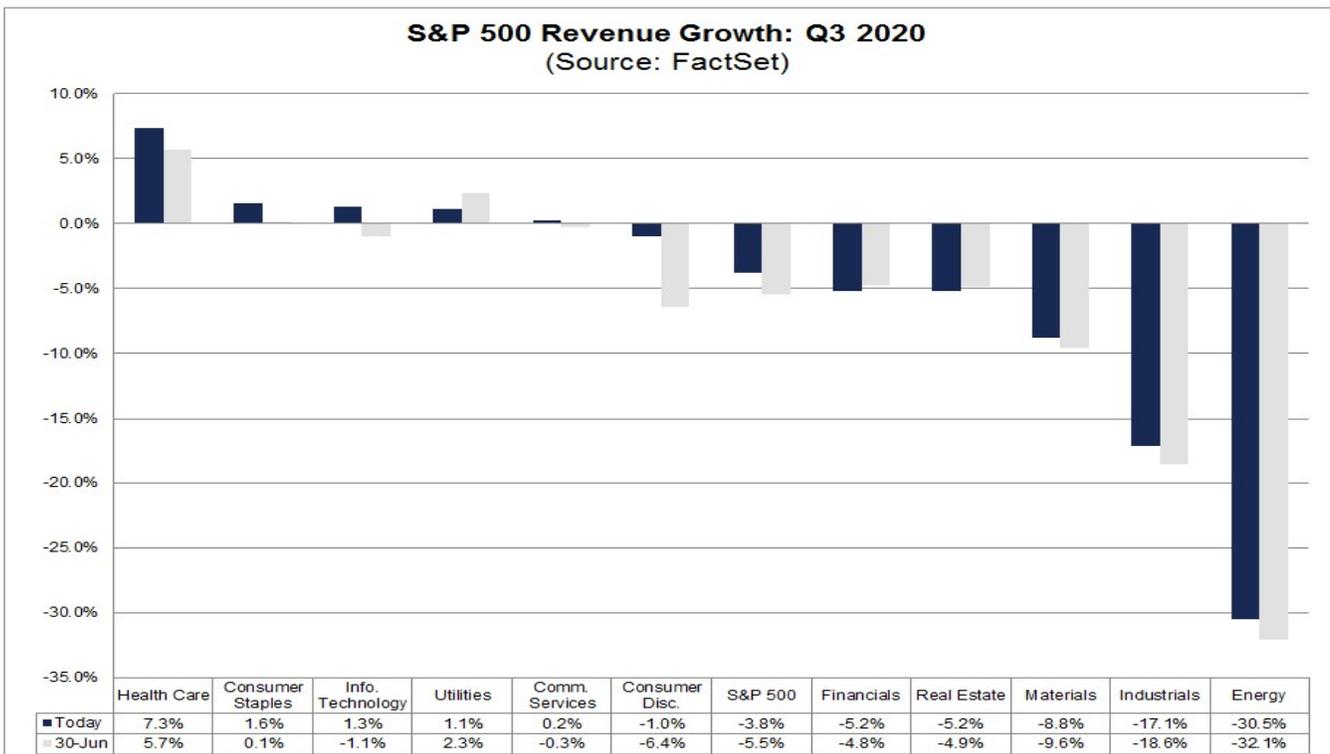
Q3 2020: EPS Guidance



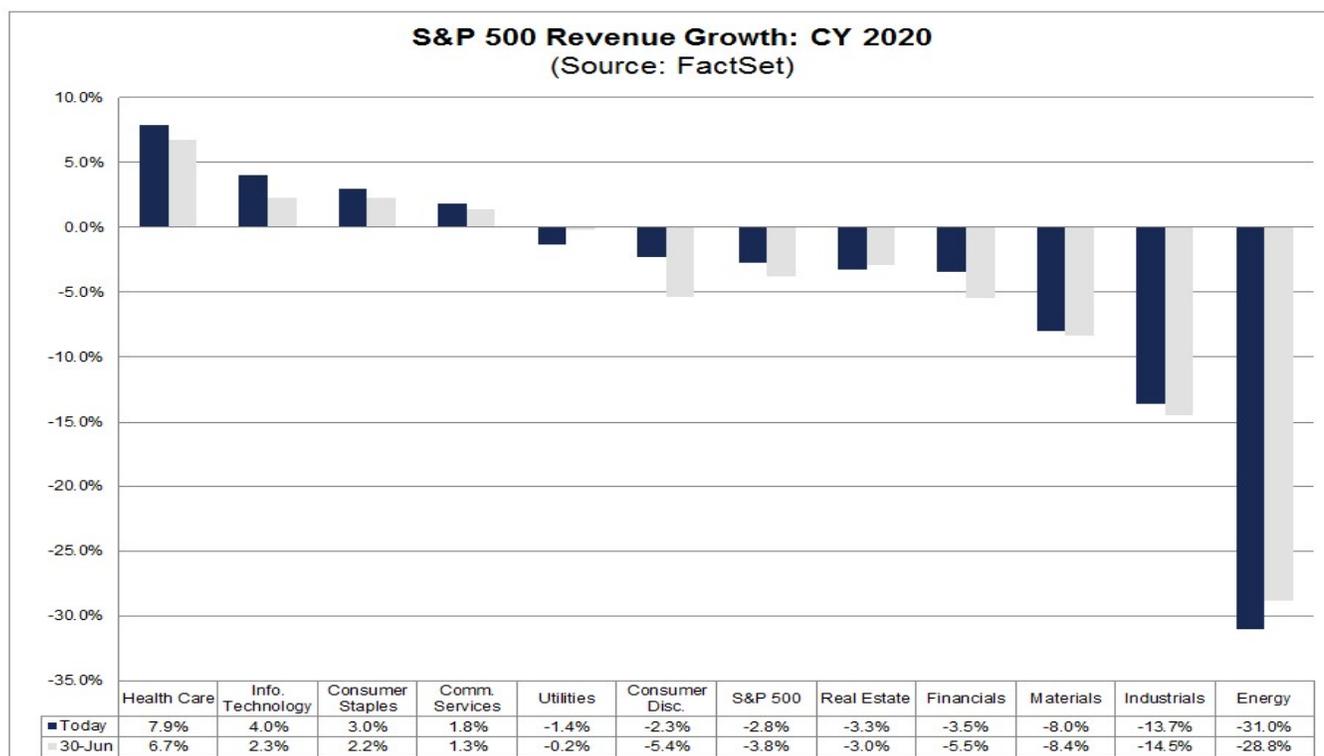
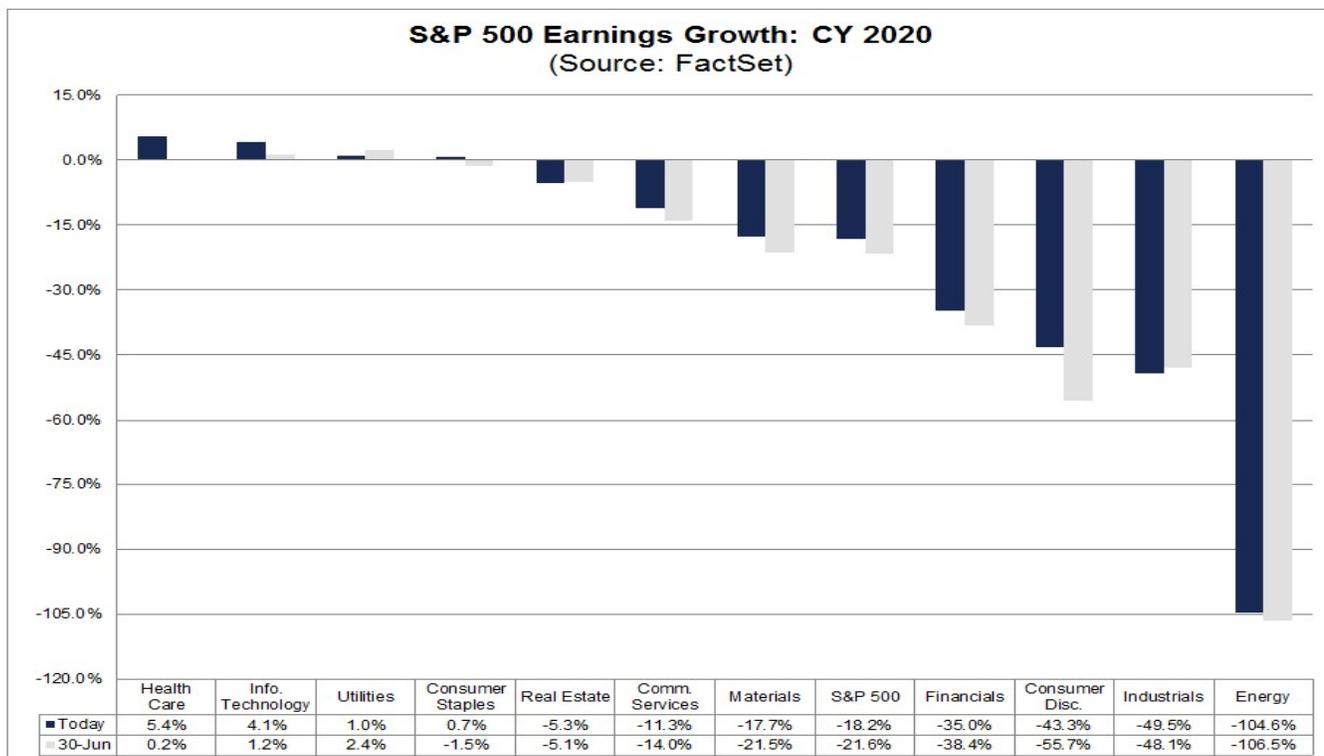
Q3 2020: EPS Revisions



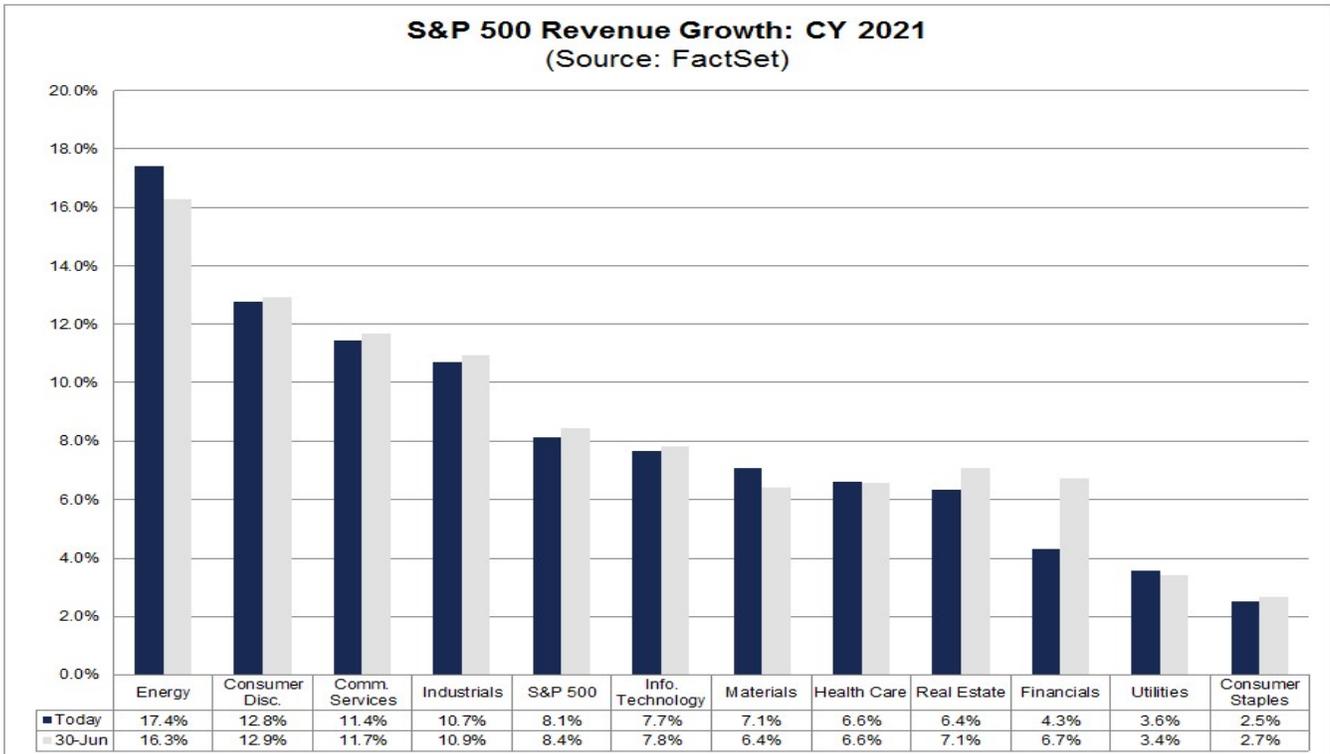
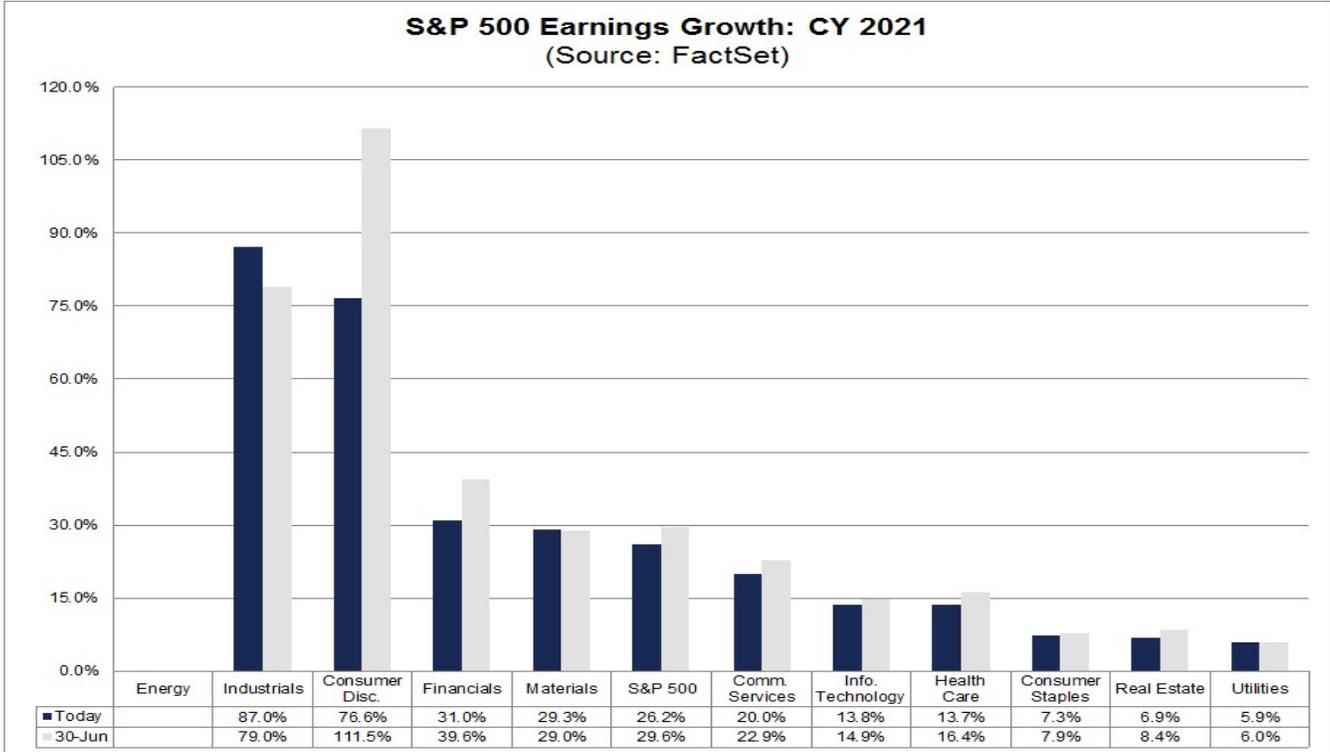
Q3 2020: Growth



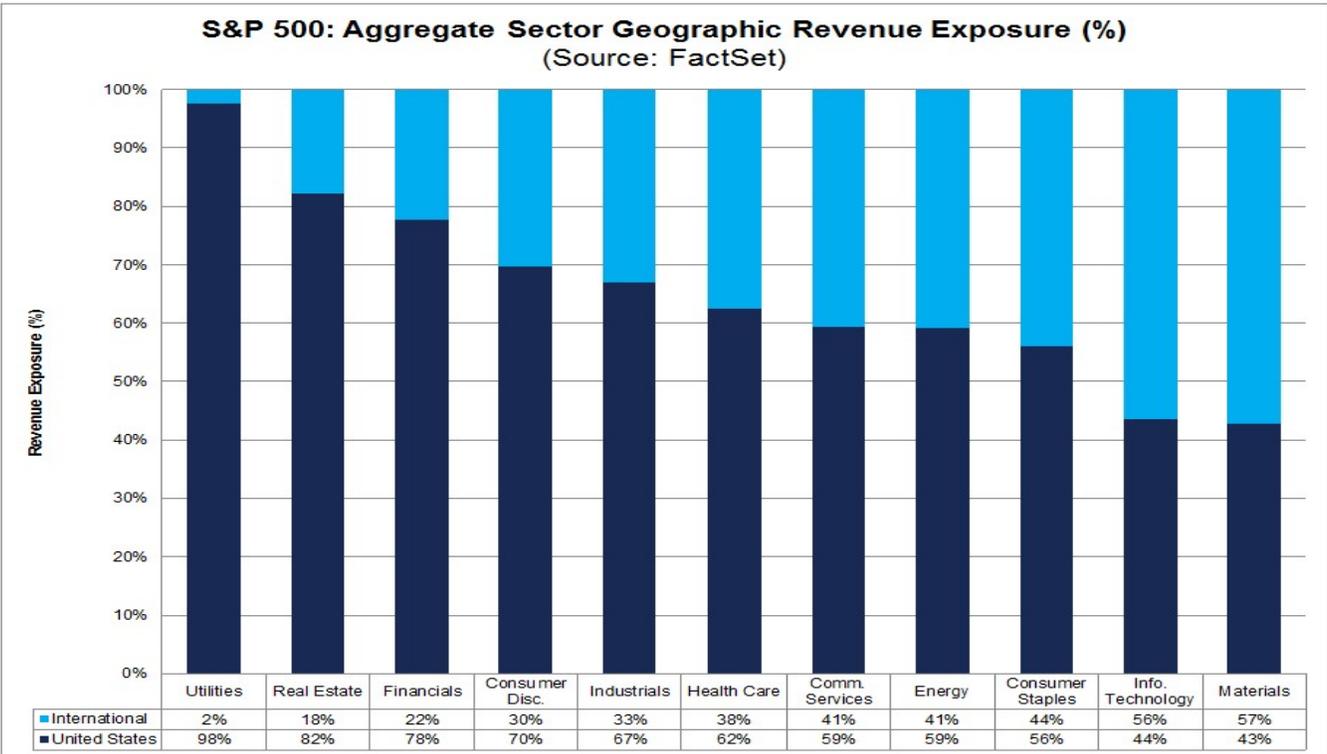
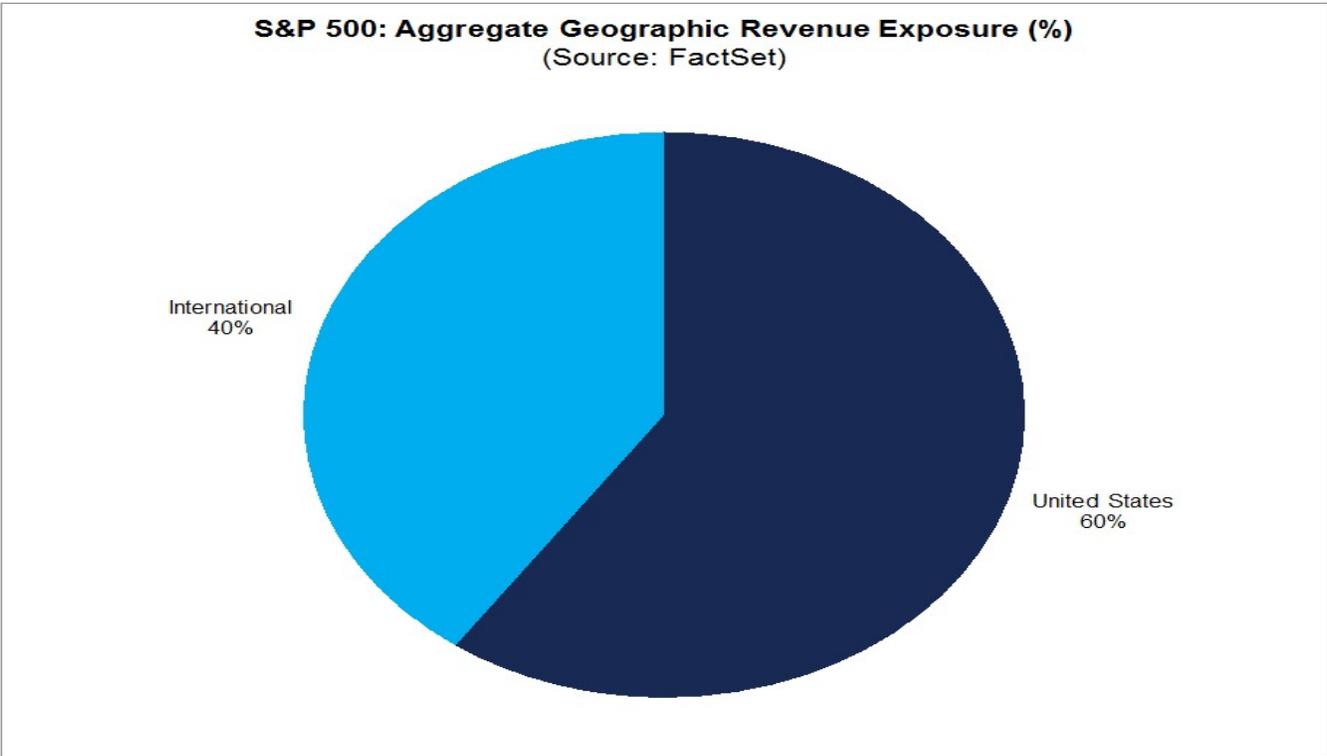
CY 2020: Growth



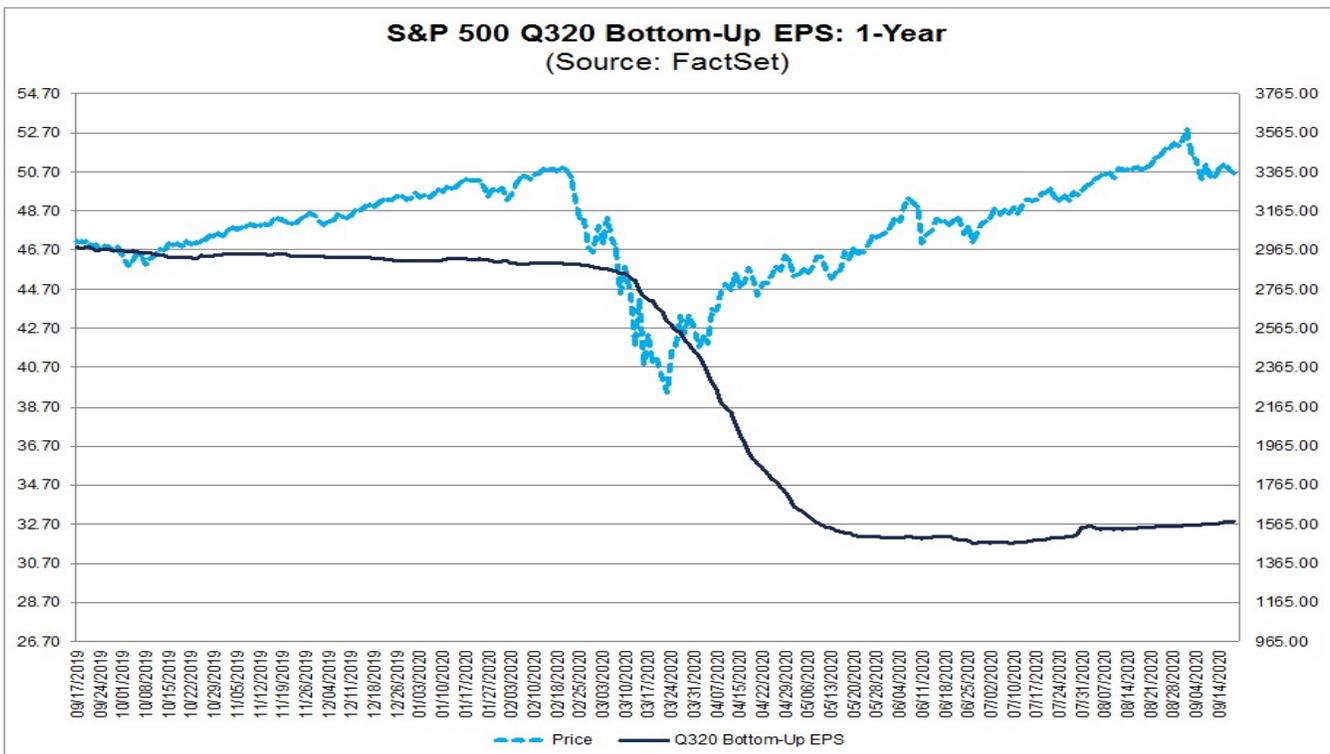
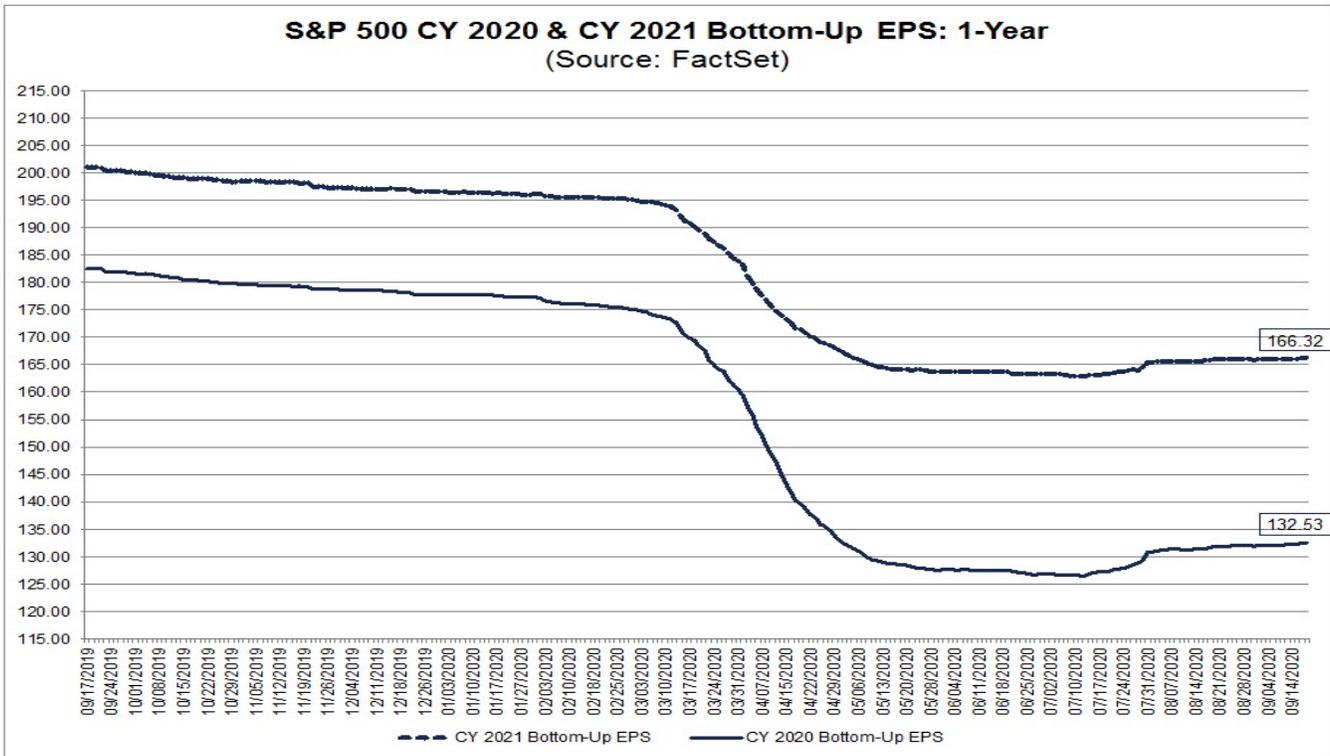
CY 2021: Growth



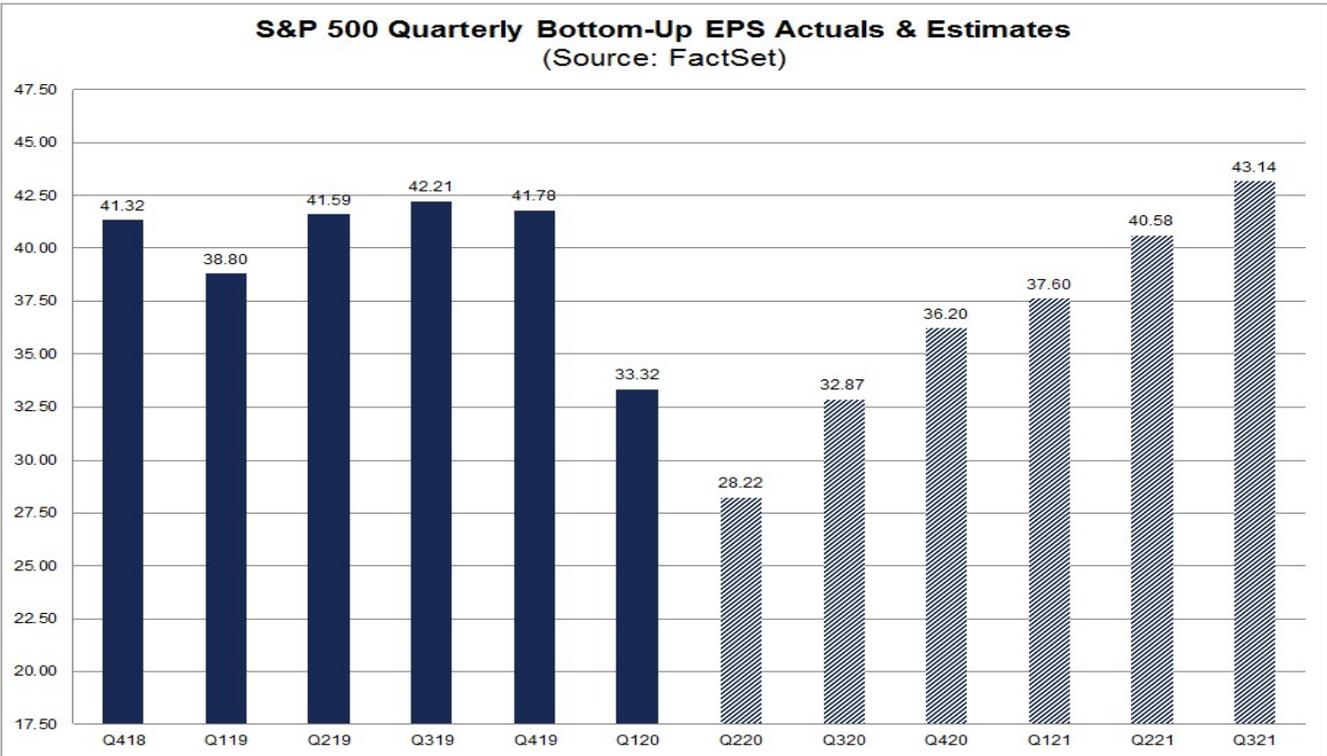
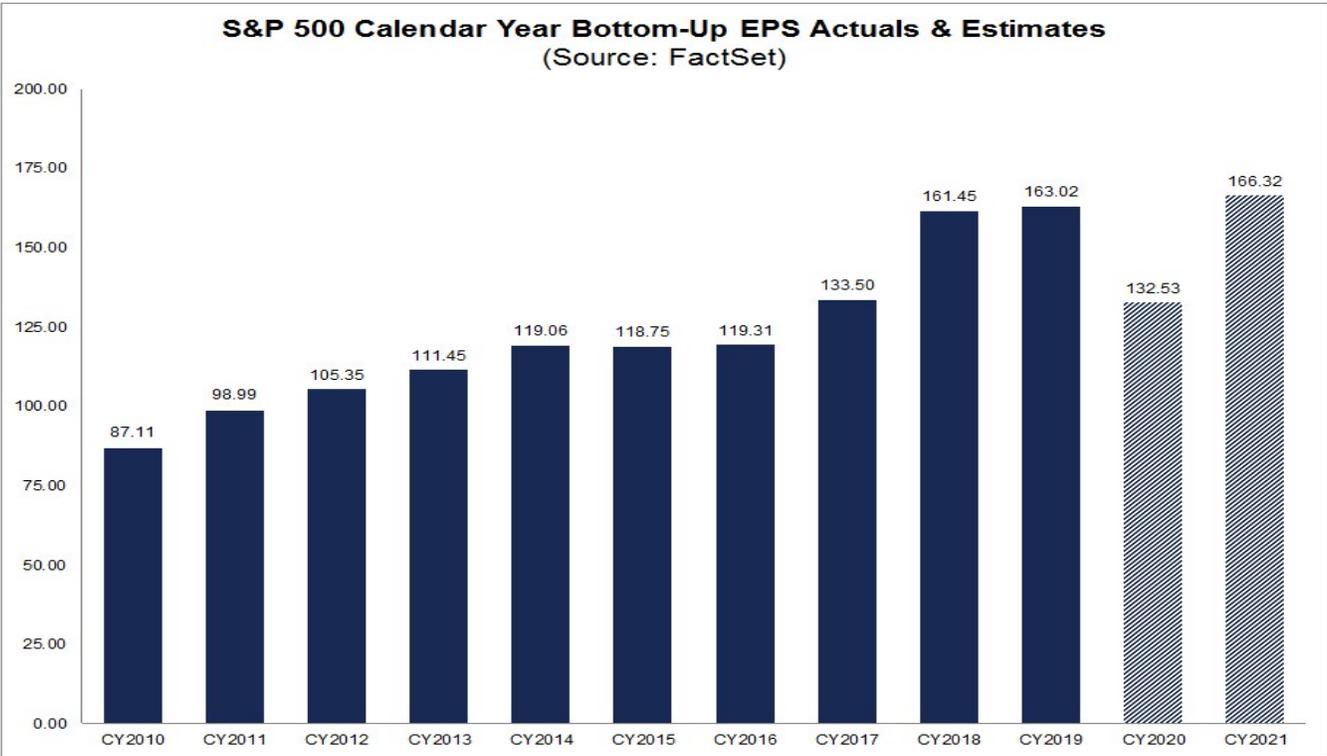
Geographic Revenue Exposure



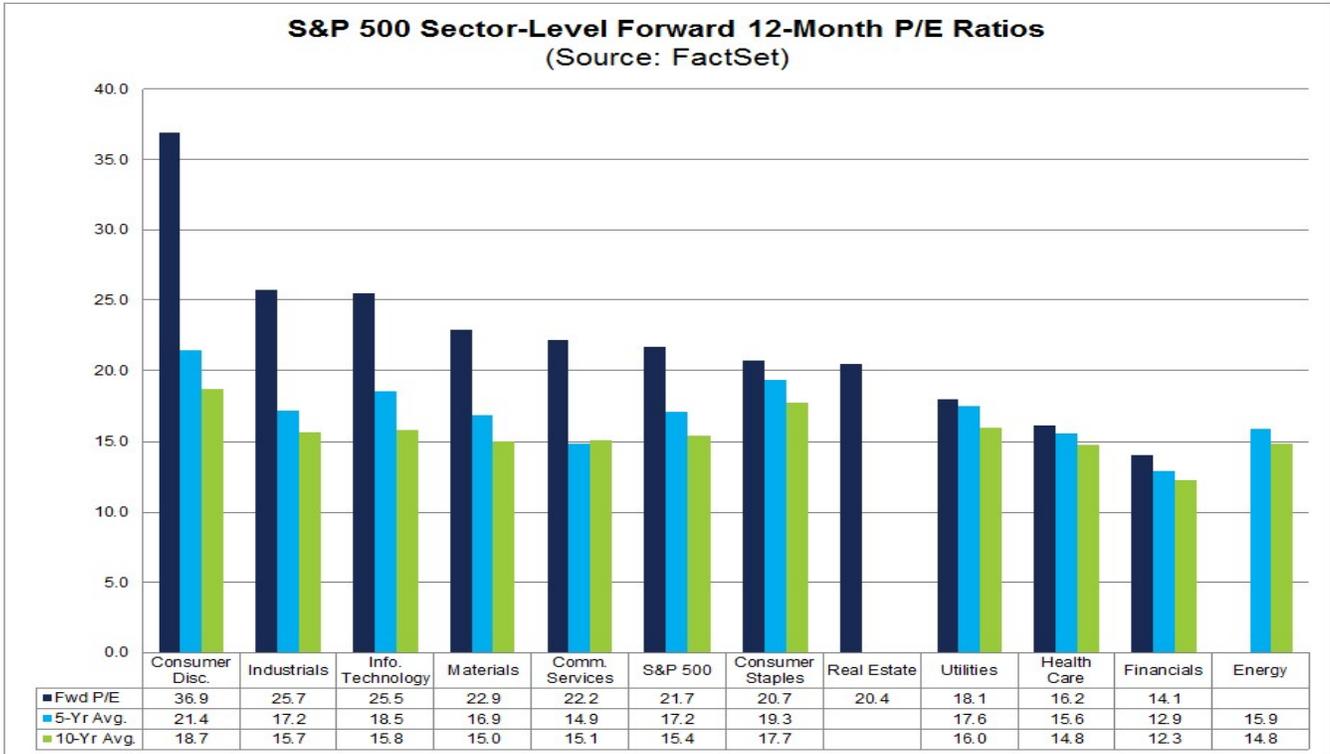
Bottom-up EPS Estimates: Revisions



Bottom-up EPS Estimates: Current & Historical

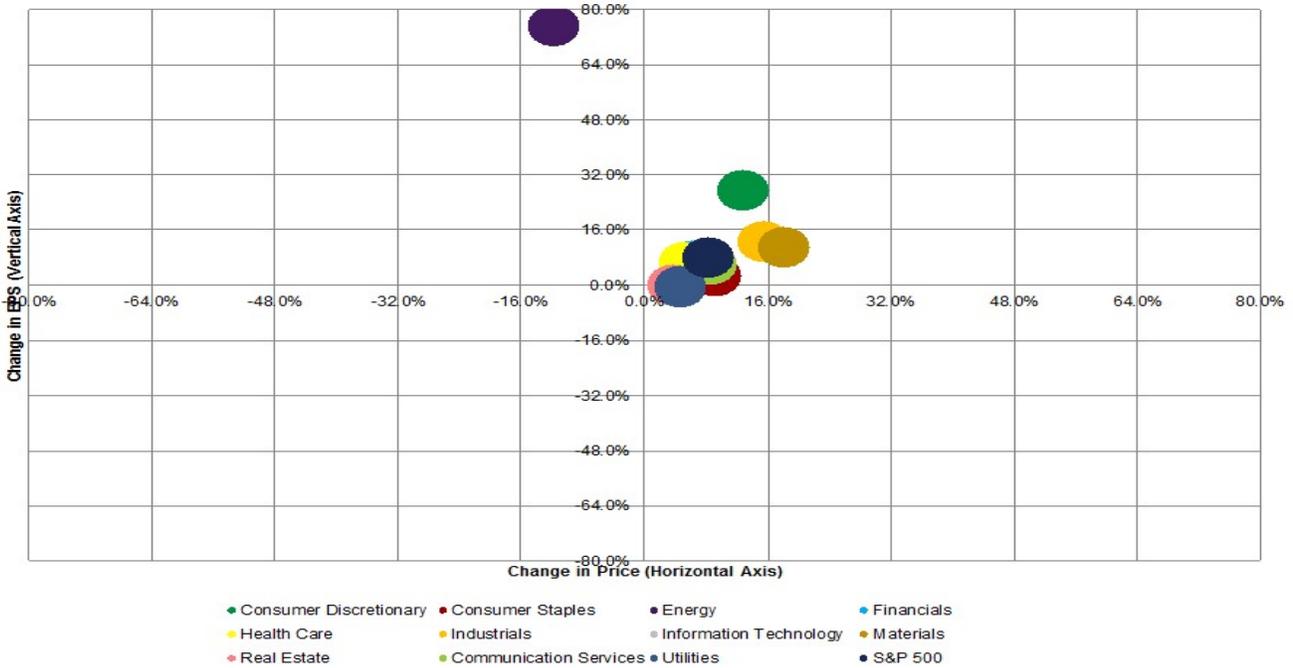


Forward 12M P/E Ratio: Sector Level

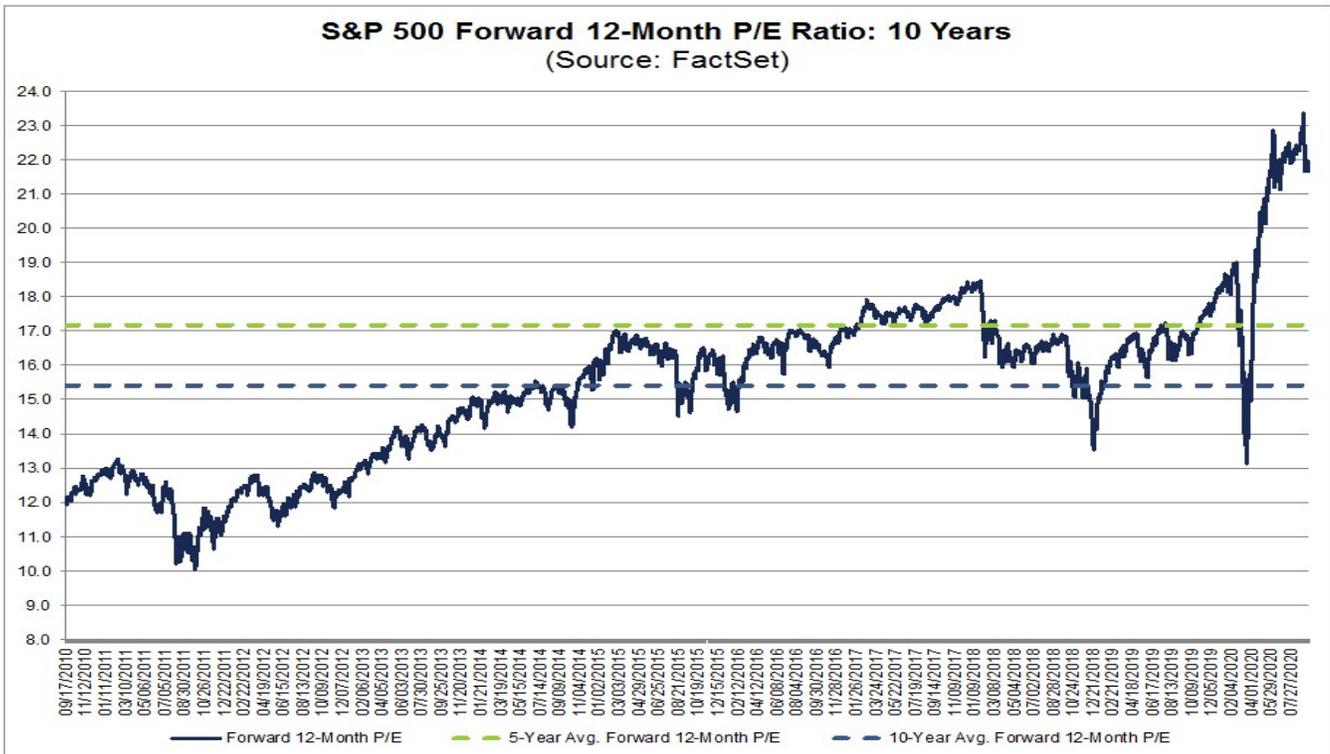
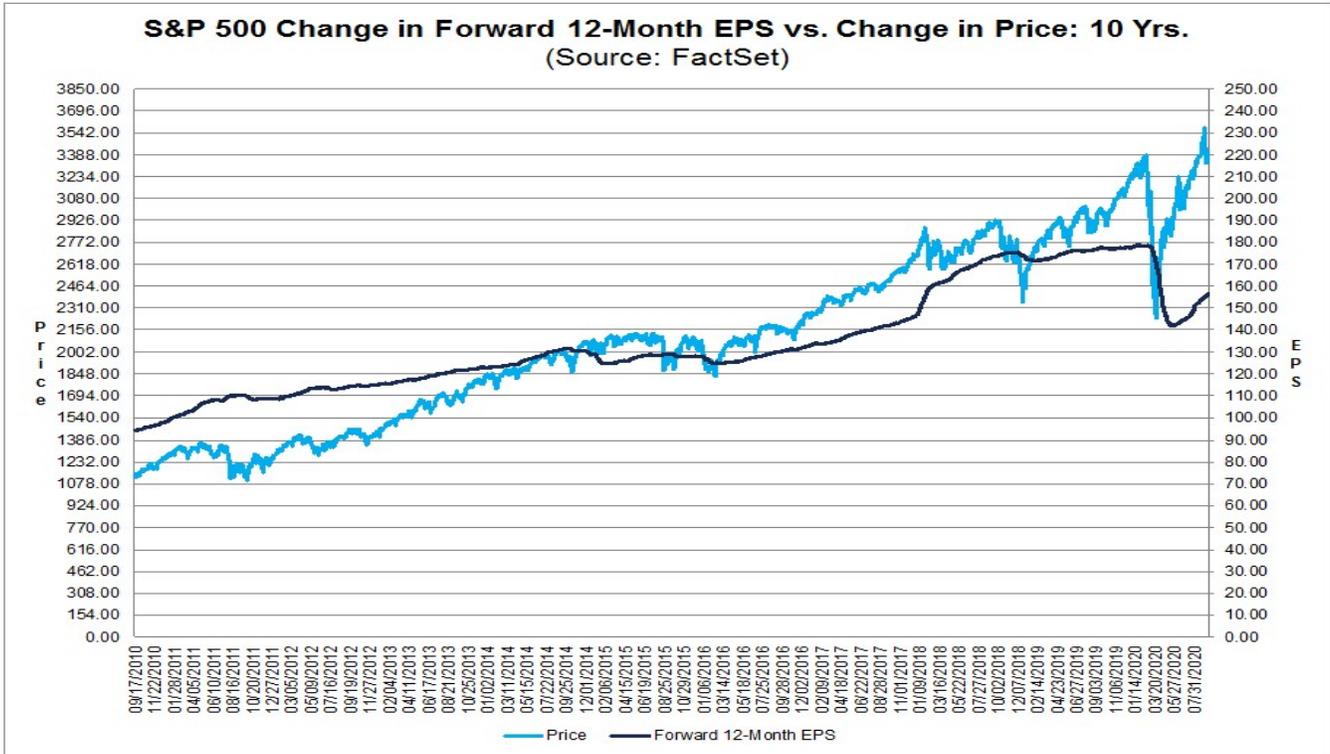


Sector-Level Change in Fwd. 12-Month EPS vs. Price: Since Jun. 30

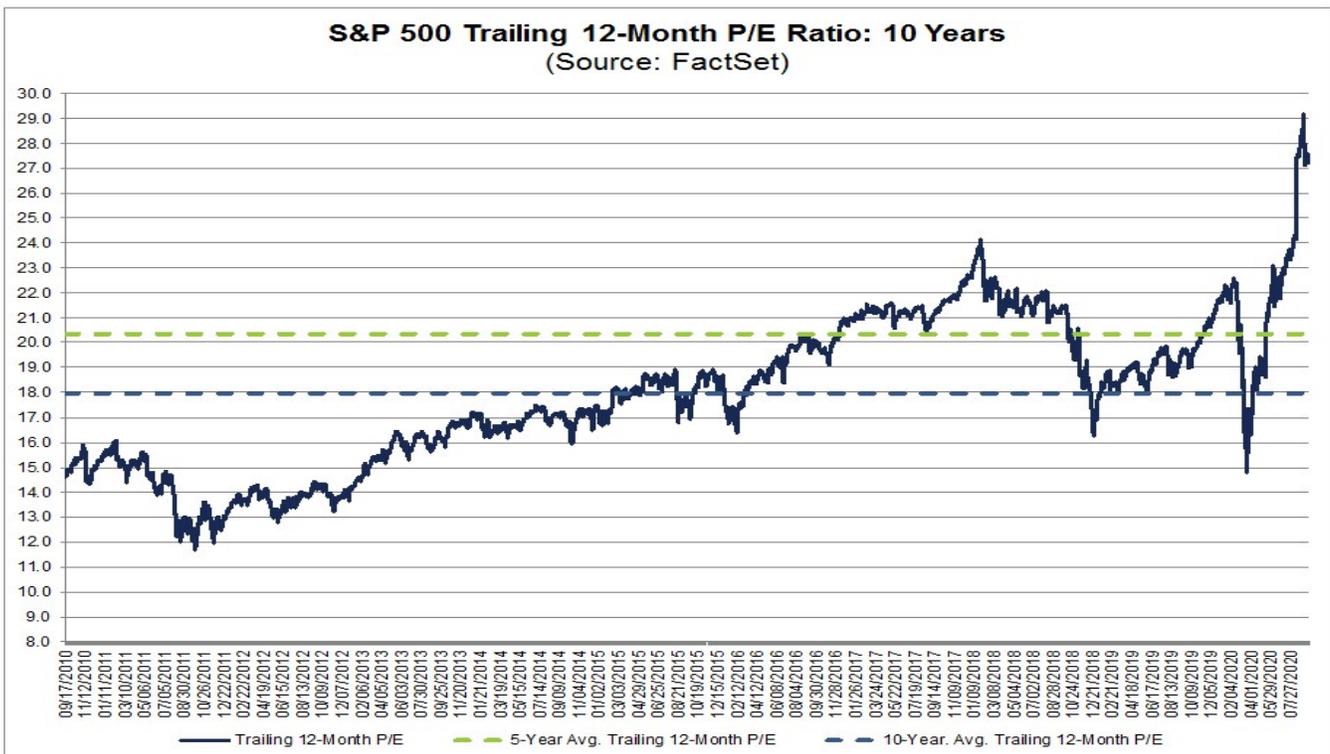
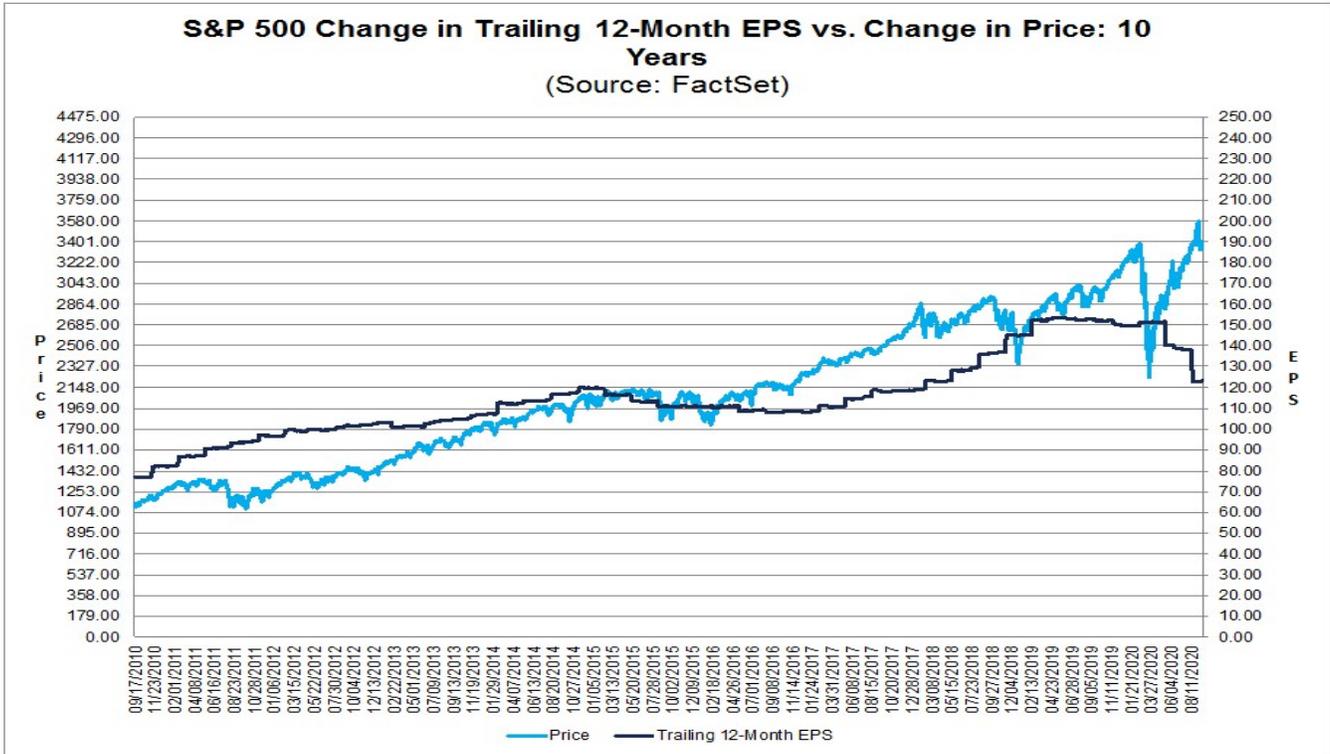
(Source: FactSet)



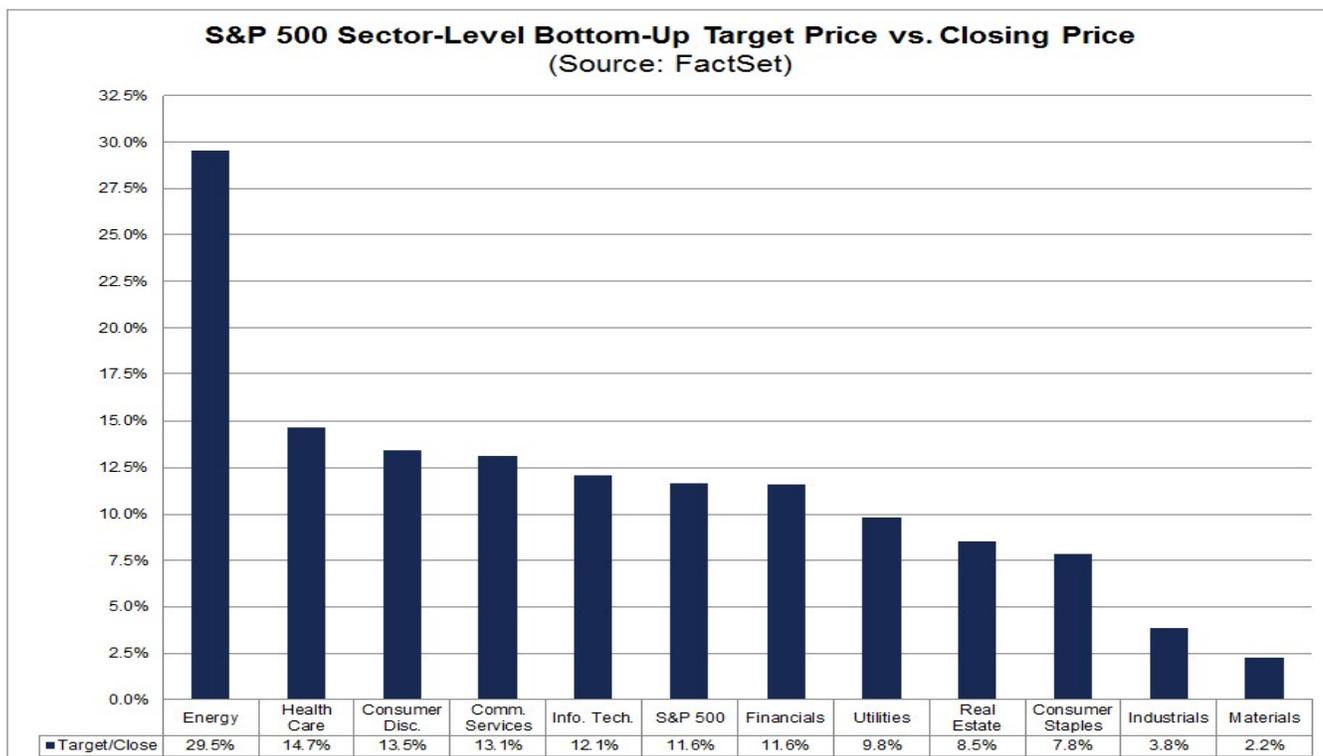
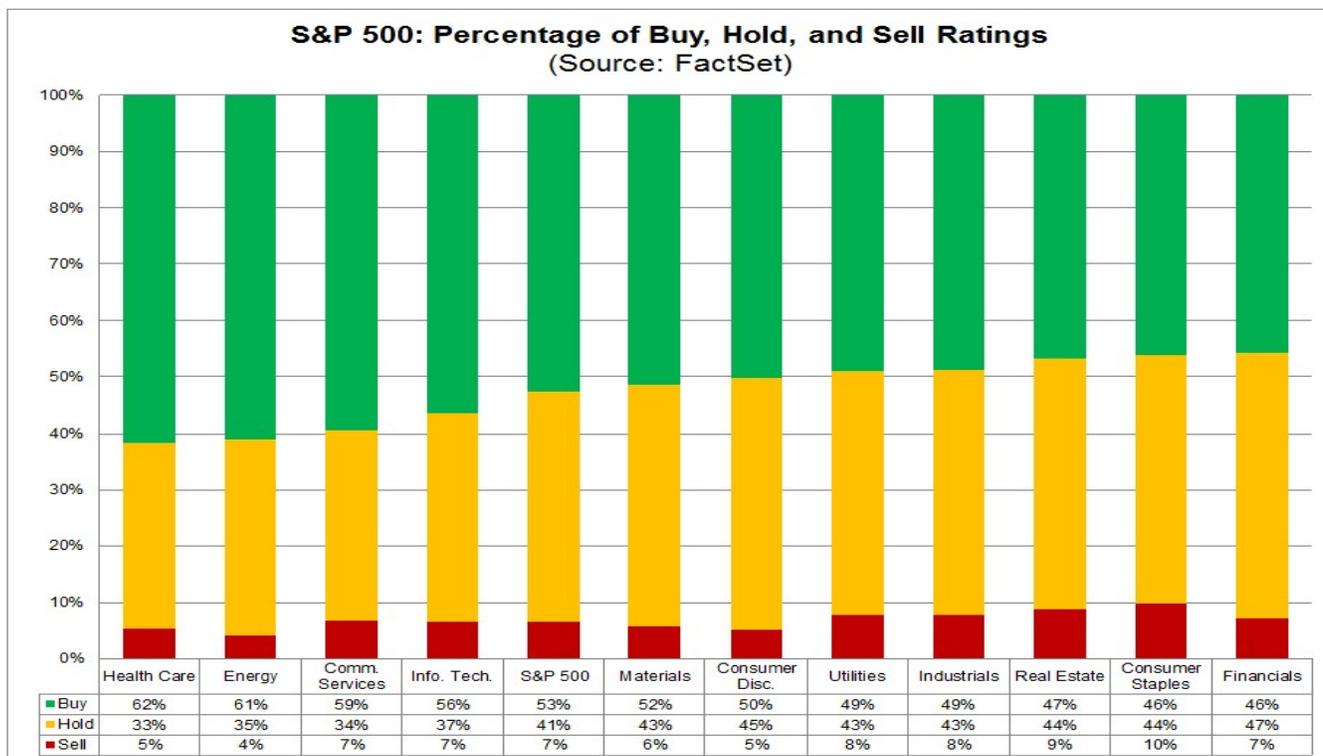
Forward 12M P/E Ratio: 10-Years



Trailing 12M P/E Ratio: 10-Years



Targets & Ratings



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