



Accenture (ACN)

Updated October 7th, 2021 by Jonathan Weber

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$329	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	-1.0%	Market Cap:	\$207B
Fair Value Price:	\$201	5 Year Growth Estimate:	7.5%	Ex-Dividend Date:	10/13/21
% Fair Value:	164%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	-9.4%	Dividend Payment Date:	11/15/21
Dividend Yield:	1.2%	5 Year Price Target	\$288	Years Of Dividend Growth:	11
Dividend Risk Score:	D	Retirement Suitability Score:	F	Last Dividend Increase:	10.2%

Overview & Current Events

Accenture is an information technology company that offers services such as consulting, technology, and outsourcing solutions. Its customers include communications and media companies, banks and other financial corporations, the healthcare industry, and public services, as well as consumer goods, retail, travel, and other industries. Accenture was founded in 1989 and is headquartered in Dublin, Ireland.

Accenture reported its fourth quarter (fiscal 2021) earnings results on September 23. The company generated revenues of \$13.4 billion, which was 24% more than Accenture's revenues during the previous year's quarter. Accenture's sales were up by 21% in constant currencies, a weakening US Dollar was a bit of a tailwind for the company's reported results. The company's revenues were in-line with what the analyst community had expected. Accenture recorded new bookings of \$15.0 billion, which was up by 7% year over year.

The company was able to earn \$2.20 per share during the fourth quarter, which was marginally ahead of what the analyst community estimated. The company now forecasts revenue growth of 12% to 15% for fiscal 2022, which indicates that the current year will be another strong period for the company. Accenture forecasts that its earnings-per-share will fall in a range of \$9.90 to \$10.18 during fiscal 2022, which represents solid growth versus 2021. Accenture has raised its dividend by 10.2%, to \$3.88 a year, with the most recent dividend announcement.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2027
EPS	\$3.84	\$4.93	\$4.52	\$4.76	\$5.34	\$5.91	\$6.74	\$7.36	\$7.46	\$9.16	\$10.04	\$14.41
DPS	\$1.35	\$1.62	\$1.86	\$2.04	\$2.20	\$2.42	\$2.66	\$2.90	\$3.20	\$3.52	\$3.88	\$5.70
Shares¹	677	666	657	650	643	636	635	637	636	633	630	610

Accenture has recorded compelling growth rates in the past, although its earnings-per-share history has seen some ups and downs over the years. Overall, Accenture was able to grow its earnings-per-share by ~10% a year since 2010.

Accenture's growth has been primarily driven by organic revenue expansion. Except for a small setback during the financial crisis, the company was able to grow its top line every year. Accenture's biggest customer groups are what it calls Product (consumer goods, travel industry, retail) and Financial Services. There is a lot of pressure on these industries to lower their costs and to optimize their operations. This means that there is a lot of demand for Accenture to help its customers in fields such as digital, cloud, and security services. These services, Accenture calls them *The New*, are a major growth factor, as this segment now makes up more than 60% of Accenture's revenues. As IT remains a growth industry that is impacted by megatrends such as digital, cloud computing, security, and big data, the market for consulting in these fields should remain strong for the foreseeable future. Accenture has been able to record especially strong growth in markets outside of North America and Europe, where more potential for further optimization of processes exists. Thanks to strong cash flows and low capital expenditures, Accenture has ample means to finance share repurchases and dividend payments. Accenture's share count has declined meaningfully over the last decade. The combination of future revenue growth and share repurchases should make earnings-per-share grow meaningfully.

¹ In Millions

Disclosure: This analyst has no position in the security discussed in this research report, and no plans to initiate one in the next 72 hours.



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Valuation Analysis

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Now	2027
Avg. P/E	15.2	14.8	17.5	19.0	20.2	20.4	24.5	26.8	32.2	36.5	32.8	20.0
Avg. Yld.	2.3%	2.2%	2.4%	2.3%	2.0%	2.0%	1.6%	1.5%	1.3%	1.1%	1.2%	2.0%

Accenture's share price has risen since our last update. Shares are currently trading at a pretty high valuation, relative to how shares were valued over the last decade. We believe that shares are overvalued today, which will pressure total returns over the coming years, due to the impact of multiple contraction that we are forecasting.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2027
Payout	35.2%	32.9%	41.2%	42.9%	41.2%	40.9%	39.5%	39.5%	42.9%	38.4%	38.6%	39.6%

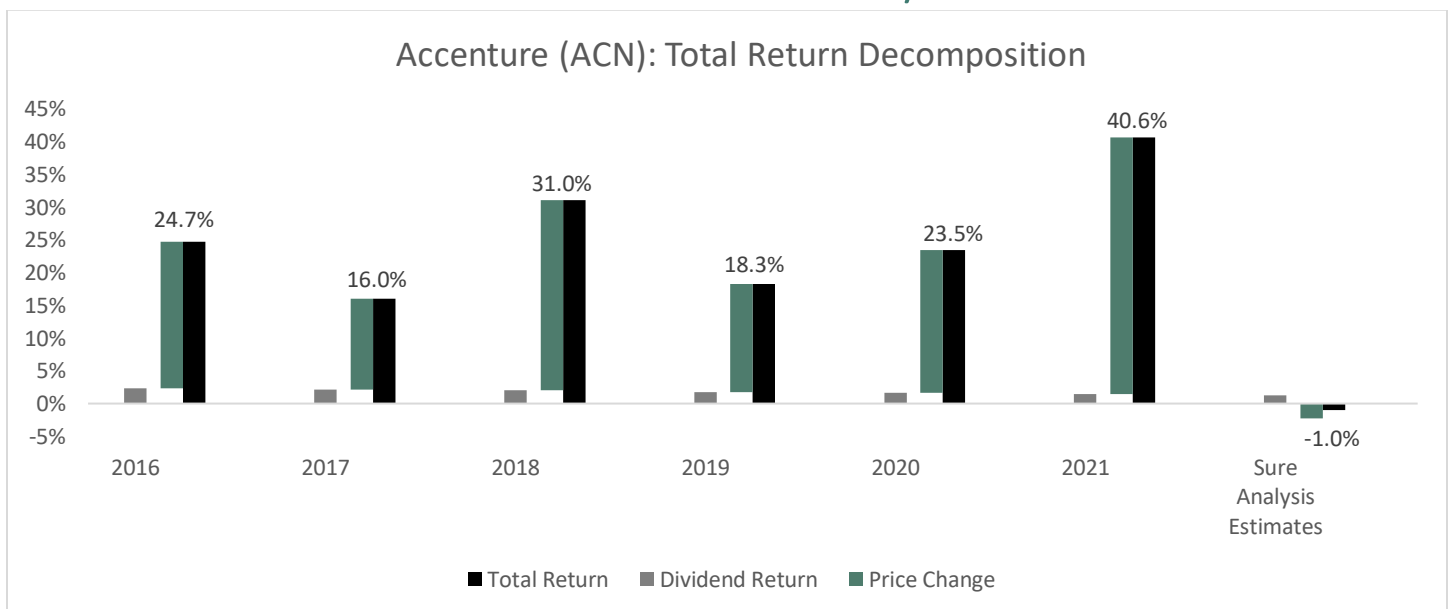
Accenture has raised its dividend at a fast pace over the last couple of years, but thanks to the fact that the company's earnings have grown considerably as well, its dividend payout ratio still is not overly high, as the company pays out roughly 40% of its net profits in the form of dividends. We believe that Accenture's dividend is very safe.

Accenture's competitive advantage mainly consists of its excellent fundamentals: Accenture has high returns on equity and assets, and it has a very strong balance sheet. Accenture is not particularly vulnerable to economic downturns, as demand for its services will remain strong even if profits at its customers are shrinking. One could even argue that such a time is when its customers have an especially significant need for Accenture's services. During the last financial crisis, between 2008 and 2010, earnings were flat, and the company forecasts earnings growth during the current pandemic.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Accenture's strong position in a high-growth industry and its strong track record of growing its profits indicate a lot of potential for future earnings-per-share growth, while we think that Accenture will also continue to increase its dividend regularly. Shares look substantially overvalued, however, which will be a major headwind for its total returns from the current price. The quite high earnings multiple is why we rate Accenture a sell at current prices.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Revenue	29,778	30,394	31,875	32,914	34,798	36,177	40,993	43,215	44,327	50,533
Gross Profit	8,988	9,384	9,684	9,809	10,277	11,071	12,493	13,315	13,976	16,364
Gross Margin	30.2%	30.9%	30.4%	29.8%	29.5%	30.6%	30.5%	30.8%	31.5%	32.4%
SG&A Exp.	5,114	5,318	5,402	5,373	5,467	5,880	6,595	7,010	7,463	8,743
D&A Exp.	594	593	621	646	729	802	927	893	1,773	1,891
Operating Profit	3,873	4,067	4,282	4,436	4,810	5,191	5,899	6,305	6,514	7,622
Op. Margin	13.0%	13.4%	13.4%	13.5%	13.8%	14.4%	14.4%	14.6%	14.7%	15.1%
Net Profit	2,554	3,282	2,941	3,054	4,112	3,445	4,060	4,779	5,108	5,907
Net Margin	8.6%	10.8%	9.2%	9.3%	11.8%	9.5%	9.9%	11.1%	11.5%	11.7%
Free Cash Flow	3,885	2,934	3,164	3,781	4,171	4,457	5,408	6,028	7,616	8,395
Income Tax	1,079	785	1,122	1,137	1,254	981	1,593	1,406	1,589	1,771

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Assets	16,665	16,867	17,930	18,203	20,609	22,690	24,449	29,790	37,079	43,176
Cash & Equivalents	6,641	5,632	4,921	4,361	4,906	4,127	5,061	6,127	8,415	8,168
Acc. Receivable	3,081	3,333	3,860	3,841	4,072	4,569	7,496	8,095	7,847	9,728
Goodwill & Int.	1,215	2,145	2,794	3,395	4,120	5,713	6,070	7,046	8,739	11,126
Total Liabilities	12,041	11,439	11,645	11,555	12,420	12,980	13,724	14,962	19,579	23,079
Accounts Payable	904	962	1,064	1,151	1,281	1,525	1,349	1,647	1,350	2,274
Long-Term Debt	0	26	27	27	27	25	25	23	62	66
Total Equity	4,146	4,960	5,732	6,134	7,555	8,949	10,365	14,409	17,001	19,528
D/E Ratio	-	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Return on Assets	15.8%	19.6%	16.9%	16.9%	21.2%	15.9%	17.2%	17.6%	15.3%	14.7%
Return on Equity	63.6%	72.1%	55.0%	51.5%	60.1%	41.7%	42.0%	38.6%	32.5%	32.3%
ROIC	56.9%	65.1%	50.0%	47.0%	55.2%	38.4%	39.6%	37.3%	31.5%	31.3%
Shares Out.	677	666	657	650	643	636	635	637	636	633
Revenue/Share	40.94	42.61	46.04	48.49	52.11	54.78	62.56	66.46	68.43	78.24
FCF/Share	5.34	4.11	4.57	5.57	6.25	6.75	8.25	9.27	11.76	13.00

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

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