



# Verizon Communications (VZ)

Updated April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023 by Nathan Parsh

## Key Metrics

<b>Current Price:</b>	\$39	<b>5 Year CAGR Estimate:</b>	13.2%	<b>Market Cap:</b>	\$163 B
<b>Fair Value Price:</b>	\$52	<b>5 Year Growth Estimate:</b>	2.5%	<b>Ex-Dividend Date:</b>	04/06/23
<b>% Fair Value:</b>	75%	<b>5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:</b>	5.8%	<b>Dividend Payment Date:</b>	05/01/23
<b>Dividend Yield:</b>	6.7%	<b>5 Year Price Target</b>	\$58	<b>Years Of Dividend Growth:</b>	18
<b>Dividend Risk Score:</b>	B	<b>Retirement Suitability Score:</b>	A	<b>Rating:</b>	Buy

## Overview & Current Events

Verizon Communications was created by a merger between Bell Atlantic Corp and GTE Corp in June 2000. Verizon is one of the largest wireless carriers in the country. Wireless contributes three-quarters of all revenues, and broadband and cable services account for about a quarter of sales. The company's network covers ~300 million people and 98% of the U.S.

On September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Verizon announced that it was increasing its quarterly dividend 2% to \$0.6525 for the November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 payment, extending the company's dividend growth streak to 18 consecutive years.

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Verizon announced earnings results for the first quarter for the period ending March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. For the quarter, revenue decreased 1.9% to \$32.9 billion, which was \$712 million below estimates. Adjusted earnings-per-share of \$1.20 compared unfavorably to \$1.35 in the prior year, but was \$0.01 higher than expected.

Verizon had postpaid phone net losses of 127K during the quarter, but retail postpaid net additions totaled 633K. Revenue for the Consumer segment declined 1.7% to \$24.9 billion as gains in service and other revenue was more than offset by lower equipment sales. Broadband continues to act well as the company added 437K net new customers during the period, the best result in more than a decade. This included 393K fixed wireless net additions. Fios additions totaled 63K. Retail connections totaled 143 million and the wireless retail postpaid phone churn rate was low at 0.90%. Business revenue fell 2.8% to \$7.5 billion. Free cash flow more than doubled to \$2.3 billion from \$1 billion in the prior year.

Verizon reaffirmed guidance for 2023 as well with the company still expecting adjusted earnings-per-share of \$4.55 to \$4.85 for the year. Wireless service revenue is still projected to grow 2.5% to 4.5%.

## Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2028
<b>EPS</b>	\$4.00	\$3.35	\$3.99	\$3.87	\$3.75	\$4.71	\$4.81	\$4.90	\$5.39	\$5.06	<b>\$4.70</b>	<b>\$5.32</b>
<b>DPS</b>	\$2.08	\$2.16	\$2.23	\$2.29	\$2.32	\$2.37	\$2.46	\$2.47	\$2.52	\$2.57	<b>\$2.61</b>	<b>\$2.88</b>
<b>Shares<sup>1</sup></b>	4141	4155	4073	4077	4080	4050	4025	4141	4169	4207	<b>4207</b>	<b>4200</b>

Verizon has seen its earnings-per-share grow at a rate of 2.6% per year for the past 10 years. We have lowered our forward growth rate to 2.5% to better reflect the long-term trend combined with guidance for the year. Applying our expected earnings growth rate to the company's guidance for 2023 means that shares of Verizon could earn \$5.32 per share by 2028.

## Valuation Analysis

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Now	2028
<b>Avg. P/E</b>	12.2	14.5	11.8	13.3	12.3	13.1	12.8	11.5	9.6	7.7	<b>8.3</b>	<b>11.0</b>
<b>Avg. Yld.</b>	4.3%	4.4%	4.7%	4.5%	4.8%	4.1%	4.0%	4.2%	4.8%	6.6%	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Share count in millions

Disclosure: This analyst has a long position in the security discussed in this research report.



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Shares of Verizon have decreased \$2, or 4.9%, since our January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 report. Based off of the current share price and earnings guidance for 2023, Verizon has a forward P/E of 8.3. We reaffirm our target P/E of 11 to balance recent company weakness with tailwinds from 5G. This brings the target valuation more in-line with peers as well. If shares were to return to this ratio by 2028, then valuation could add 5.8% to total annual returns over this period of time. With a dividend yield of 6.7%, Verizon’s stock offers investors a yield that is about four times the average yield of the S&P 500.

## Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2028
Payout	52%	65%	56%	59%	61%	50%	51%	50%	47%	51%	56%	54%

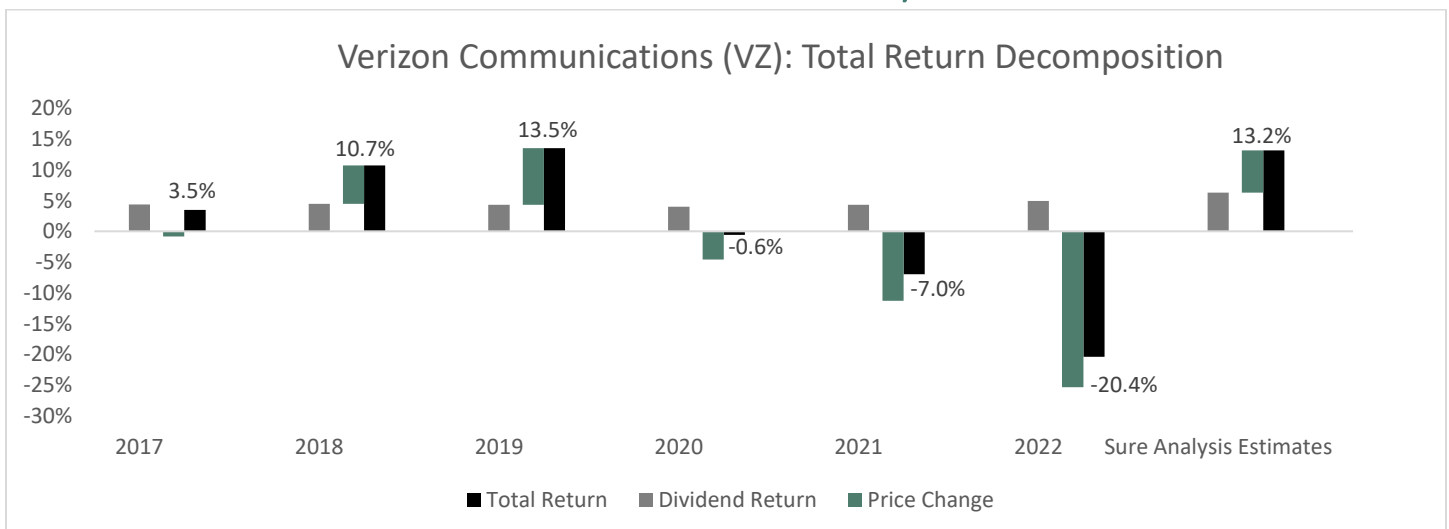
While investors aren’t likely to see a sizeable pickup in earnings growth, Verizon offers a very high and stable dividend yield. The company has seen its cash flow increase dramatically thanks to a lower tax rate. While the current net debt level is still high, it has been reduced recently.

One of Verizon’s key competitive advantages is that is often considered the best wireless carrier in the U.S. This is evidenced by the company’s wireless net additions and very low churn rate. This reliable service allows Verizon to maintain its customer base as well as give the company an opportunity to move customers to higher-priced plans. Verizon continues rolling out its 5G service, which will give it an advantage over other carriers. Another advantage for Verizon is the stock’s ability to withstand a downturn in the market.

## Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Following first quarter earnings results, Verizon Communications is expected to return 13.2% annually through 2028, up from our prior estimate of 12.0%. Our projected return stems from a 2.5% earnings growth rate, a starting yield of 6.7%, and a mid-single-digit contribution from multiple expansion. Verizon continues to seesaw between postpaid phone net additions and losses. However, broadband net additions continue to grow at a very high rate. The company is likely to eliminate many jobs with its cost savings program, rarely a good sign that the business model is working. That said, 5G is aiding results and the dividend yield is generous and appears safe. The stock still offers strong total return potential as well. We reaffirm our 2028 price target of \$58 due to earnings guidance and maintain our buy rating on Verizon due to projected returns.

## Total Return Breakdown by Year



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## Income Statement Metrics

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Revenue (\$B)</b>	120.55	127.08	131.62	125.98	126.03	130.86	131.87	128.29	133.6	136.8
<b>Gross Profit</b>	75,663	77,148	79,063	73,279	72,971	75,355	77,142	77,091	77,312	77,702
<b>Gross Margin</b>	62.8%	60.7%	60.1%	58.2%	57.9%	57.6%	58.5%	60.1%	57.9%	56.8%
<b>SG&amp;A Exp.</b>	27,089	41,016	29,986	27,095	26,818	31,083	29,896	31,573	28,658	30,136
<b>D&amp;A Exp.</b>	16,606	16,533	16,017	15,928	16,954	17,403	16,682	16,720	16,206	17,099
<b>Op. Profit</b>	31,968	19,599	33,060	30,256	29,199	26,869	30,564	28,798	32,448	30,467
<b>Op. Margin</b>	26.5%	15.4%	25.1%	24.0%	23.2%	20.5%	23.2%	22.4%	24.3%	22.3%
<b>Net Profit</b>	11,497	9,625	17,879	13,127	30,101	15,528	19,265	17,801	22,065	21,256
<b>Net Margin</b>	9.5%	7.6%	13.6%	10.4%	23.9%	11.9%	14.6%	13.9%	16.5%	15.5%
<b>Free Cash Flow</b>	21,634	13,086	11,310	4,096	6,488	16,252	16,909	21,450	-28,343	10,401
<b>Income Tax</b>	5,730	3,314	9,865	7,378	(9,956)	3,584	2,945	5,619	6,802	6,523

## Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Total Assets (\$B)</b>	274.10	232.62	244.18	244.18	257.14	264.83	291.73	316.48	366.6	379.7
<b>Cash &amp; Equiv</b>	53,528	10,598	4,470	2,880	2,079	2,745	2,594	22,171	2,921	2,605
<b>Acc. Receivable</b>	12,439	13,993	13,457	17,513	23,493	25,102	25,429	23,917	23,846	24,506
<b>Inventories</b>	1,020	1,153	1,252	1,202	1,034	1,336	1,422	1,796	3,055	2,388
<b>Goodwill (\$B)</b>	106.18	105.71	119.50	122.78	127.84	128.52	128.95	130.28	187.9	189.9
<b>Total Liab. (\$B)</b>	178.68	218.94	226.33	220.15	212.46	210.12	228.89	247.21	283.3	287.2
<b>Accts Payable</b>	4,954	5,598	5,700	7,084	7,063	7,232	7,725	6,667	8,040	
<b>LT Debt (\$B)</b>	93.59	113.27	109.73	108.08	117.10	113.06	111.49	129.06	150.9	150.6
<b>Total Equity</b>	38,836	12,298	16,428	22,524	43,096	53,145	61,395	67,842	81,790	91,144
<b>LTD/E Ratio</b>	2.41	9.21	6.68	4.80	2.72	2.13	1.82	1.90	1.84	1.65

## Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Return on Assets</b>	4.6%	3.8%	7.5%	5.4%	12.0%	5.9%	6.9%	5.9%	6.5%	5.7%
<b>Return on Equity</b>	31.9%	37.6%	125%	67.4%	91.7%	32.3%	33.6%	27.5%	29.5%	24.6%
<b>ROIC</b>	7.0%	6.1%	14.0%	10.1%	20.5%	9.4%	11.3%	9.6%	10.2%	8.9%
<b>Shares Out.</b>	4141	4155	4073	4077	4080	4050	4025	4141	4169	4207
<b>Revenue/Share</b>	41.95	31.92	32.16	30.83	30.82	31.67	31.85	30.97	32.20	32.55
<b>FCF/Share</b>	7.53	3.29	2.76	1.00	1.59	3.93	4.08	5.18	(6.83)	2.47

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

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