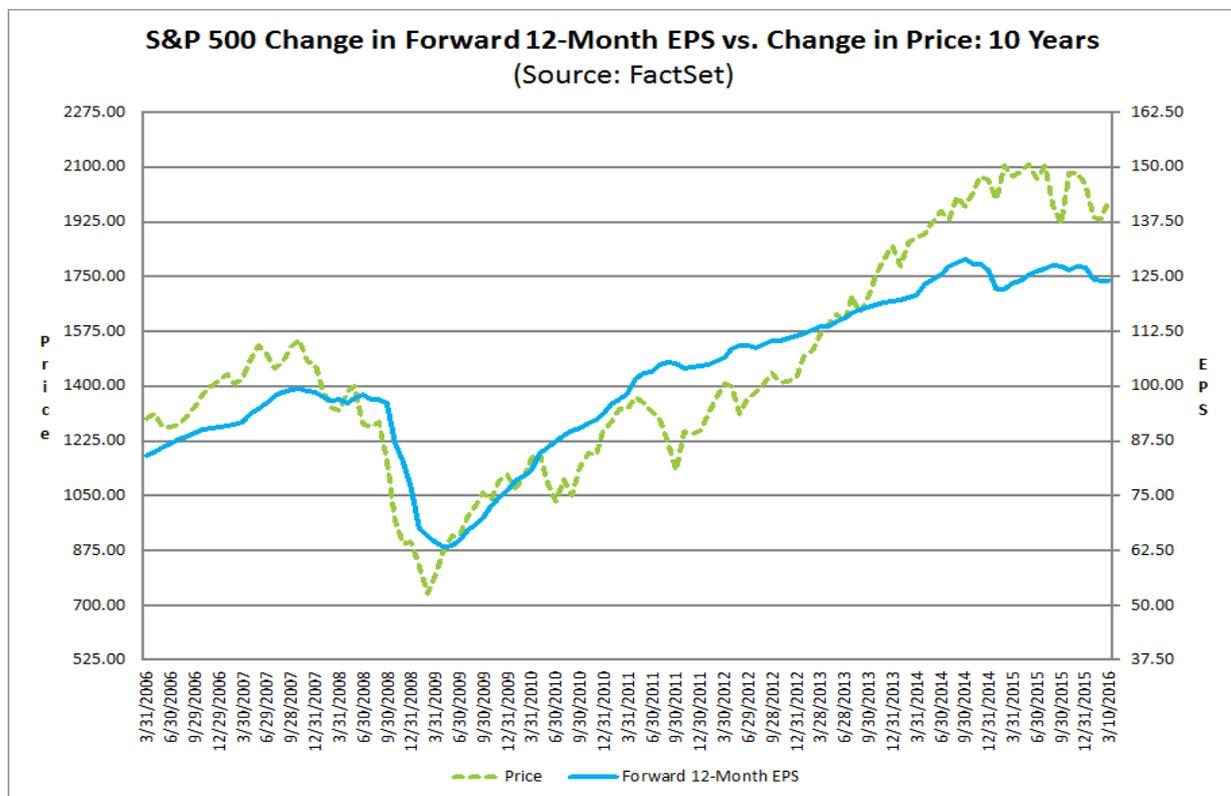


Key Metrics

- **Earnings Growth:** For Q1 2016, the estimated earnings decline is -8.3%. If the index reports a decline in earnings for Q1, it will mark the first time the index has seen four consecutive quarters of year-over-year declines in earnings since Q4 2008 through Q3 2009.
- **Earnings Revisions:** On December 31, the estimated earnings growth rate for Q1 2015 was 0.3%. All ten sectors have lower growth rates today (compared to December 31) due to downward revisions to earnings estimates, led by the Energy sector.
- **Earnings Guidance:** For Q1 2016, 91 companies have issued negative EPS guidance and 26 companies have issued positive EPS guidance.
- **Valuation:** The 12-month forward P/E ratio is 16.1. This P/E ratio is above the 5-year average (14.4) and the 10-year average (14.2).
- **Earnings Scorecard:** With 99% of the companies in the S&P 500 reporting earnings to date for Q4 2015, 69% have reported earnings above the mean estimate and 47% have reported sales above the mean estimate.



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Topic of the Week:

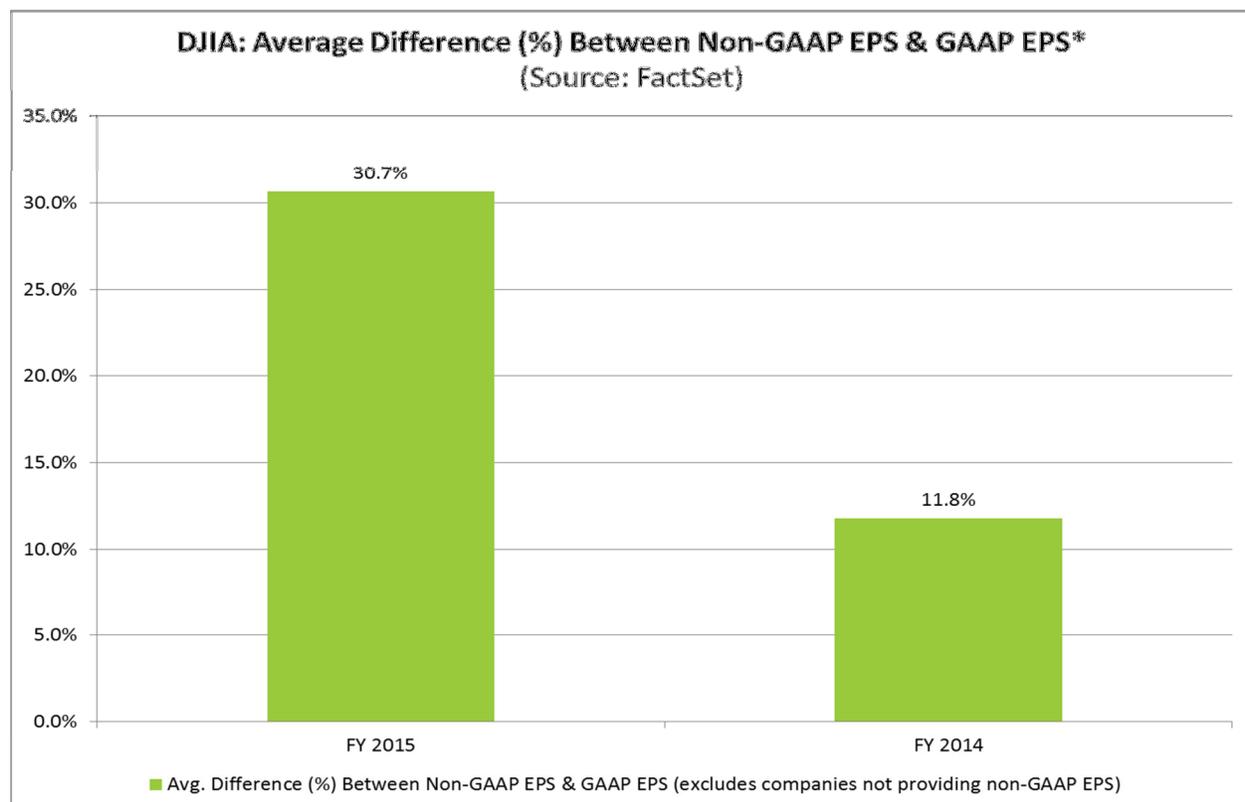
Did DJIA Companies Report Higher Non-GAAP EPS in FY 2015?

While all U.S. companies report EPS on a GAAP (generally accepted accounting principles) basis, many U.S. companies also choose to report EPS on a non-GAAP basis. There are mixed opinions in the market about the reporting of non-GAAP EPS by U.S. corporations. Supporters of the practice argue that it provides the market with a more accurate picture of earnings from the day-to-day operations of companies, as items that the companies deem to be one-time events or non-operating in nature are typically excluded from the non-GAAP EPS numbers. Critics of the practice argue that there is no industry-standard definition of non-GAAP EPS, and companies can take advantage of the lack of standards to (more often than not) exclude items that have a negative impact on earnings in order to boost non-GAAP EPS.

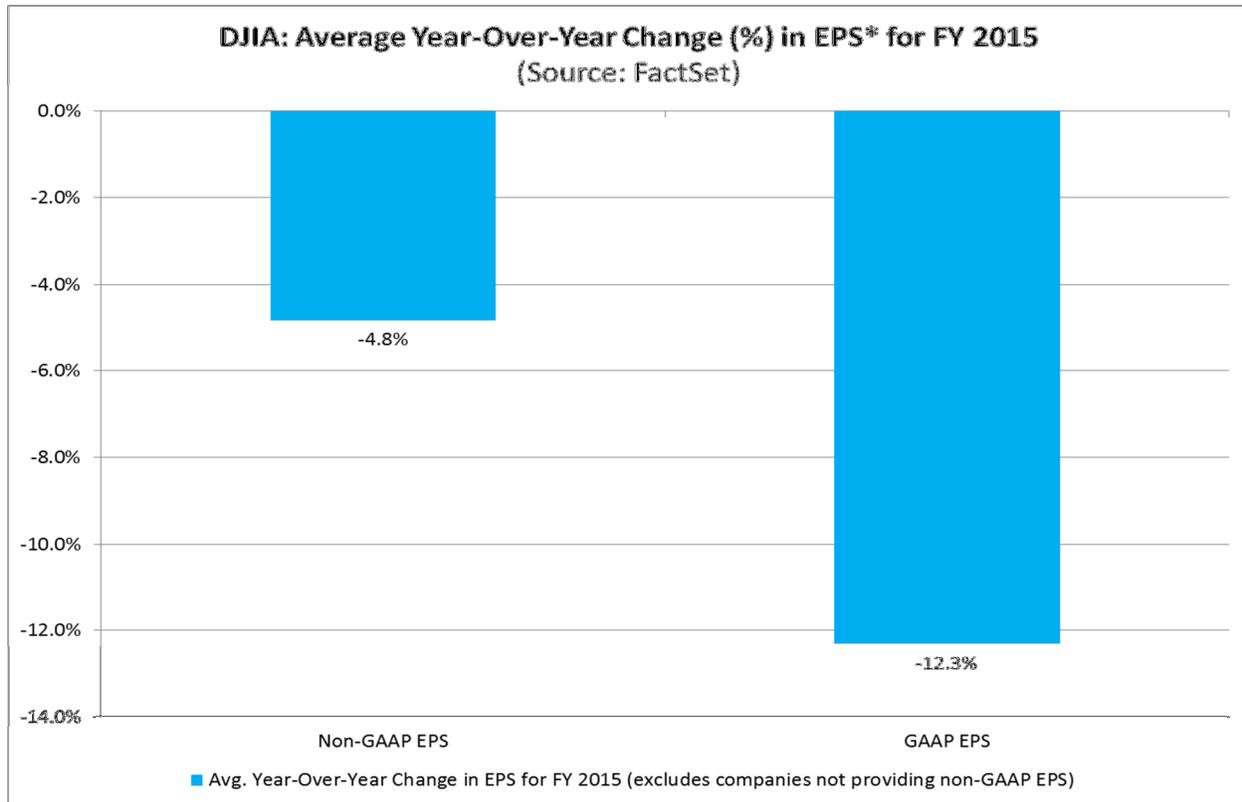
As of today, all of the companies in the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) have reported EPS for FY 2015. What percentage of these companies reported non-GAAP EPS for FY 2015? What was the average difference between non-GAAP EPS and GAAP EPS for companies in the DJIA for FY 2015? How did this difference compare to last year?

For FY 2015, 20 of the 30 companies in the DJIA (or 67%) reported non-GAAP EPS in addition to GAAP EPS for the fiscal year. For 18 of these 20 companies, non-GAAP EPS was higher than GAAP EPS for. On average, non-GAAP EPS exceeded GAAP EPS by 30.7% for these 20 companies. For FY 2014, 19 of the 30 companies in the DJIA (or 63%) reported non-GAAP EPS in addition to GAAP EPS for the fiscal year. For 15 these 19 companies, non-GAAP EPS was higher than GAAP EPS. On average, non-GAAP EPS exceeded GAAP EPS by 11.8% for these 19 companies. Thus, there was a wider gap on average between non-GAAP EPS and GAAP EPS in FY 2015 compared to FY 2014 for companies in the DJIA.

Due in part to this wider gap between non-GAAP EPS and GAAP EPS, companies in the DJIA on average reported a much smaller year-over-year decline in year-over-year EPS on a non-GAAP basis than on a GAAP basis for the year. For FY 2015, the 20 companies in the DJIA that reported non-GAAP EPS reported an average year-over-year decline in non-GAAP EPS of -4.8%. These same 20 companies reported an average year-over-year decline in GAAP EPS of -12.3%.



* GAAP EPS & Non-GAAP EPS from Continuing Operations were used in calculations when provided



* GAAP EPS & Non-GAAP EPS from Continuing Operations were used in calculations when provided

DJIA: Top 5 Cos. With Widest Gap Between Non-GAAP EPS & GAAP EPS for FY 2015

<u>Company</u>	<u>Ticker</u>	<u>Non-GAAP EPS</u>	<u>GAAP EPS</u>	<u>Difference (%)</u>
Merck & Co., Inc.	MRK	3.59	1.56	130.1%
General Electric Company	GE	0.35	0.17	105.9%
Microsoft Corporation	MSFT	2.63	1.48	77.7%
Pfizer Inc.	PFE	2.20	1.24	77.4%
United Technologies Corporation	UTX	6.30	4.53	39.1%

* GAAP EPS & Non-GAAP EPS from Continuing Operations were used in calculations when provided

Q1 2016 Earnings Season: By the Numbers

Overview

In terms of estimate revisions for companies in the S&P 500, analysts have made higher cuts than average to earnings estimates for Q1 2016 to date. On a per-share basis, estimated earnings for the first quarter have fallen by 8.8% to date. This percentage decline is already larger than the trailing 5-year average (-4.0%) and trailing 10-year average (-5.3%) for an entire quarter.

In addition, a higher percentage of S&P 500 companies have lowered the bar for earnings for Q1 2016 relative to recent averages. Of the 117 companies that have issued EPS guidance for the first quarter, 91 have issued negative EPS guidance and 26 have issued positive EPS guidance. The percentage of companies issuing negative EPS guidance is 78% (91 out of 117), which is above the 5-year average of 73%.

As a result of the downward revisions to earnings estimates, the estimated year-over-year earnings decline for Q1 2016 is -8.3% today, which is below expected earnings growth of 0.3% at the start of the quarter (December 31). Seven sectors are projected to report a year-over-year decline in earnings, led by the Energy, Materials, and Industrials sectors. Three sectors are predicted to report year-over-year earnings growth, led by the Telecom Services and Consumer Discretionary sectors.

As a result of downward revisions to sales estimates, the estimated sales decline for Q1 2016 is -0.8% today, which is below the estimated year-over-year sales growth rate of 2.6% at the start of the quarter. Five sectors are projected to report year-over-year growth in revenues, led by the Telecom Services and Health Care sectors. Five sectors are predicted to report a year-over-year decline in revenues, led by the Energy and Materials sectors.

Looking at future quarters, analysts do not currently project earnings and revenue growth to return until Q3 2016.

The forward 12-month P/E ratio is now 16.1, which is still above the 5-year and 10-year averages.

During the upcoming week, 1 S&P 500 company is scheduled to report results for the fourth quarter and 6 S&P 500 companies are scheduled to report results for the first quarter.

Estimate Revisions: All 10 Sectors Have Seen Declines in Earnings Growth Expectations to Date

Small Increase in Projected Earnings Decline This Week for S&P 500

The estimated earnings decline for the first quarter is -8.3% this week, which is slightly higher than the estimated earnings decline of -8.0% last week. Small downward revisions to earnings estimates for companies in the Financials, and Energy sectors accounted for the slight increase in the expected earnings decline for the index during the week.

All 10 Sectors Have Seen Cuts to Earnings Growth Expectations to Date, Led By Energy

The estimated earnings decline for Q1 2015 of -8.3% as of today is well below the estimated earnings growth rate of 0.3% at the start of the quarter (December 31). All ten sectors have recorded a decline in expected earnings growth since the beginning of the quarter due to downward revisions to earnings estimates, led by the Energy, Materials, Information Technology, and Financials sectors.

The Energy sector has recorded the largest decrease in expectations for year-over-year earnings since the start of the quarter (to -96.7% from -43.8%). Overall, 37 of the 40 companies in this sector have seen downward revisions to EPS estimates for Q1 to date. Of these 37 companies, 25 have recorded EPS estimate cuts of 35% or more, led by EOG Resources (to -\$0.76 from -\$0.06), Occidental Petroleum (to -\$0.34 from \$0.06), and Cimarex Energy (to -\$0.34 from -\$0.05). However, the downward revisions to estimates for Exxon Mobil (to \$0.34 from \$0.75) and Chevron (to -\$0.03 from \$0.55) have been the largest contributors to the increase in the projected earnings decline for this sector. Despite this significant drop in expected earnings, the Energy sector has witnessed a slight increase in price (+0.8%) since the start of the quarter.

The Materials sector has seen the second largest decrease in expectations for year-over-year earnings since the start of the quarter (to -22.1% from -1.3%). Overall, 26 of the 27 companies in this sector have recorded downward revisions to EPS estimates to date for Q1. Of these 26 companies, 19 have witnessed EPS estimate cuts of 10% or more, led by Freeport-McMoRan (to -\$0.20 from \$0.11), Mosaic (to \$0.18 from \$0.60), and Alcoa (to \$0.03 from \$0.08). The downward revisions to estimates for Freeport-McMoRan have also been the largest contributor to the increase in the projected earnings decline for this sector. Despite this substantial decrease in expected earnings, the Materials sector has seen little change in price (0.0%) since the start of the quarter.

The Financials sector has seen the third largest decrease in expectations for year-over-year earnings since the start of the quarter (to -6.4% from 1.6%). Overall, 64 of the 90 companies in this sector have seen downward revisions to EPS estimates to date for Q1. Of these 64 companies, 21 have recorded EPS estimate cuts of 10% or more, led by Legg Mason (to \$0.04 from \$0.73). However, the downward revisions to estimates for JPMorgan Chase (to \$1.28 from \$1.54), Citigroup (to \$1.25 from \$1.50), and Bank of America (to \$0.27 from \$0.33) have been the largest contributors to the decrease in the projected earnings growth rate for this sector. The Financials sector has witnessed the largest decrease in price (-8.4%) of all ten sectors since the start of the quarter.

The Information Technology sector has recorded the fourth largest decrease in expectations for year-over-year earnings since the start of the quarter (to -7.4% from 0.4%). Overall, 44 of the 67 companies in this sector have seen downward revisions to EPS estimates to date for Q1. Of these 44 companies, 17 have recorded EPS estimate cuts of 10% or more, led by Autodesk (to -\$0.14 from -\$0.09), Yahoo! (to 0.08 from \$0.14), Activision Blizzard (to \$0.12 from \$0.19), and IBM (to \$2.12 from \$2.95). However, the downward revisions to estimates for Apple (to \$2.01 from \$2.37) and IBM have been the largest contributors to the decrease in the projected earnings growth rate for this sector. The Information Technology sector has witnessed the 3rd largest decrease in price (-3.6%) of all ten sectors since the start of the quarter.

Index-Level (Bottom-Up) EPS Estimate: Largest Decline since Q1 2009

Downward revisions to earnings estimates in aggregate for the first quarter to date have been well above recent averages. The percentage decline in the Q1 bottom-up EPS estimate (which is an aggregation of the earnings estimates for all 500 companies in the index and can be used as a proxy for the earnings for the index) to date is -8.8% (to \$26.57 from \$29.13). This decline in the EPS estimate for Q1 16 is already above the trailing 1-year (-4.4%) average, the trailing 5-year (-4.0%), and the trailing 10- year average (-5.5%) for the bottom-up EPS estimate for an entire quarter.

In fact, if -8.8% is the final number for the quarter, it will mark the largest percentage decline in the bottom-up EPS estimate for a quarter since Q1 2009 (-26.9%).

Guidance: Negative EPS Guidance (78%) for Q1 above Average

At this point in time, 117 companies in the index have issued EPS guidance for Q1 2016. Of these 117 companies, 91 have issued negative EPS guidance and 26 have issued positive EPS guidance. Thus, the percentage of companies issuing negative EPS guidance to date for the first quarter is 78% (91 out of 117). This percentage is above the 5-year average of 73%.

Earnings: Projected Fourth Consecutive Quarter of Year-Over-Year Earnings Declines (-8.3%)

The estimated earnings decline for Q1 2016 is -8.3%. If this is the final earnings decline for the quarter, it will mark the first time the index has seen four consecutive quarters of year-over-year declines in earnings since Q4 2008 through Q3 2009. It will also mark the largest year-over-year decline in earnings since Q3 2009 (-15.7%). Only three sectors are projected to report year-over-year growth in earnings, led by the Telecom Services and Consumer Discretionary sectors. Seven sectors are projected to report a year-over-year decline in earnings, led by the Energy, Materials, and Industrials sectors.

Telecom Services: AT&T Leads Growth

The Telecom Services sector is expected to report the highest earnings growth at 13.0%. Of the five companies in the sector, AT&T is predicted to be the largest contributor to earnings growth. The mean EPS estimate for Q1 2016 (which reflects the combination of AT&T and DIRECTV) is \$0.69, compared to year-ago EPS (which reflects standalone AT&T) of \$0.63. If this company is excluded, the estimated earnings growth rate for the Telecom Services sector would fall to 1.7%.

Consumer Discretionary: Internet Retail and Auto Manufacturers Lead Growth

The Consumer Discretionary sector is projected to report the second highest earnings growth at 10.1%. At the sub-industry level, 23 of the 31 sub-industries are expected to report earnings growth for the quarter. Of these 23 sub-industries, 10 are predicted to report double-digit earnings growth, led by the Internet Retail (82%) and Automobile Manufacturers (49%) sub-industries. On the other hand, the Department Stores sub-industry (-37%) is expected to report the largest year-over-year decline in earnings for the quarter.

Energy: Largest Contributor to Earnings Decline for the S&P 500

The Energy sector is expected to report the largest year-over-year decline in earnings (-96.7%) of all ten sectors. All the sub-industries in this sector are projected to report a year-over-year drop in earnings: Integrated Oil & Gas (-84%), Oil & Gas Drilling (-71%), Oil & Gas Equipment & Services (-68%), Oil & Gas Refining & Marketing (-46%), Oil & Gas Storage & Transportation (-3%), and Oil & Gas Exploration & Production (NA).

This sector is also expected to be the largest contributor to the earnings decline for the S&P 500 as a whole. If the Energy sector is excluded, the estimated earnings decline for the S&P 500 would improve to -3.6% from -8.3%.

Materials: Weakness in Metals & Mining

The Materials sector is predicted to report the second largest year-over-year decline in earnings (-22.1%) of all ten sectors. At the industry level, three of the four industries in the sector are expected to report a year-over-year decrease in earnings: Metals & Mining (-107%), Chemicals (-17%), and Containers & Packaging (-12%).

Industrials: Weakness in Industrial Conglomerates and Machinery

The Industrials sector is projected to report the third largest year-over-year decline in earnings (-12.1%) of all ten sectors. At the industry level, eight of the twelve industries in the sector are expected to report a year-over-year decrease in earnings. Six of these eight industries are projected to report a double-digit decrease in earnings, led by the Industrial Conglomerates (-25%) and Machinery (-25%) industries.

Revenues: Projected Fifth Consecutive Quarter of Year-Over-Year Revenue Declines (-0.8%)

The estimated revenue decline for Q1 2016 is -0.8%. If this is the final sales decline for the quarter, it will mark the first time the index has seen five consecutive quarters of year-over-year declines in sales since FactSet began tracking the data in Q3 2008. Five sectors are projected to report year-over-year growth in revenues, led by the Telecom Services and Health Care sectors. Five sectors are predicted to report a year-over-year decline in revenues, led by the Energy and Materials sectors.

Telecom Services: AT&T Leads Growth

The Telecom Services sector is expected to report the highest revenue growth of all ten sectors at 13.3%. At the company level, AT&T is predicted to be the largest contributor to revenue growth for the sector. The company is expected to report sales of \$43.1 billion for Q1 2016 (which reflects the combination of AT&T and DIRECTV), compared to year-ago sales (which reflects standalone AT&T) of \$32.6 billion. If AT&T is excluded, the estimated revenue growth rate for the sector would fall to 2.3%.

Health Care: Broad-Based Growth

The Health Care sector is projected to report the second highest revenue growth of all ten sectors at 8.1%. All six industries in this sector are expected to report sales growth for the quarter, led by the Health Care Technology (17%) and Biotechnology (12%) industries.

Energy: Largest Contributor to Revenue Decline for the S&P 500

The Energy (-26.9%) sector is expected to report the largest year-over-year decrease in sales for the quarter. Five of the six sub-industries in the sector are projected to report a decrease in revenues: Oil & Gas Drilling (-42%), Oil & Gas Equipment & Services (-35%), Integrated Oil & Gas (-33%), Oil & Gas Exploration & Production (-24%), and Oil & Gas Refining & Marketing (-18%). On the other hand, the Oil & Gas Storage & Transportation (7%) is the only sub-industry in the sector projected to see year-over-year growth in revenues for the quarter.

This sector is also expected to be the largest contributor to the revenue decline for the S&P 500 as a whole. If the Energy sector is excluded, the estimated revenue growth rate for the S&P 500 would jump to 1.9% from -0.8%.

Materials: Weakness in Metals & Mining and Chemicals

The Materials (-8.6%) sector is predicted to report the second largest year-over-year decrease in revenue of all ten sectors. Two of the four industries in the sector are expected to report a decline in sales for the quarter: Metals & Mining (-14%) and Chemicals (-11%).

Looking Ahead: Forward Estimates and Valuation

Earnings and Revenue Growth Not Expected to Return Until 2nd Half of 2016

For Q1 2016, S&P 500 companies are predicted to report year-over-year declines in both earnings (-8.3%) and revenues (-0.8%). Analysts currently do not expect earnings growth and revenue growth to return until Q3 2016.

As is usually the case, analysts are predicting significant increases in earnings and revenue growth in the 2nd half of the year. In terms of earnings, the estimated declines for Q1 2016 and Q2 2016 are -8.3% and -2.2%, while the estimated growth rates for Q3 2016 and Q4 2016 are 4.2% and 9.0%. In terms of revenues, the estimated declines for Q1 2016 and Q2 2016 are -0.8% and -0.7%, while the estimated growth rates for Q3 2016 and Q4 2016 are 1.9% and 4.5%.

For all of 2016, analysts are projecting earnings (2.7%) and revenues (1.6%) to increase year-over-year.

Valuation: Forward P/E Ratio is 16.1, above the 10-Year Average (14.2)

The forward 12-month P/E ratio is 16.1. At the sector level, the Energy (56.0) sector has the highest forward 12-month P/E ratio, while the Financials (12.0) sector has the lowest forward 12-month P/E ratio.

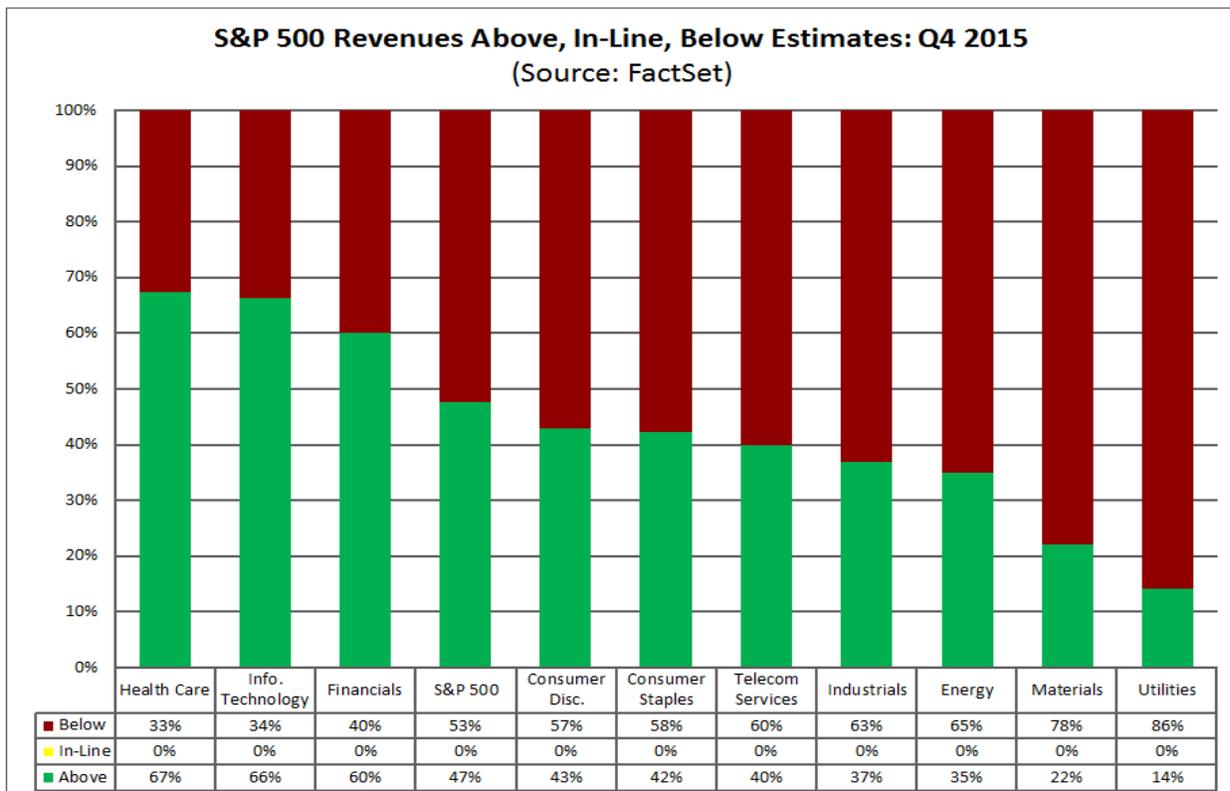
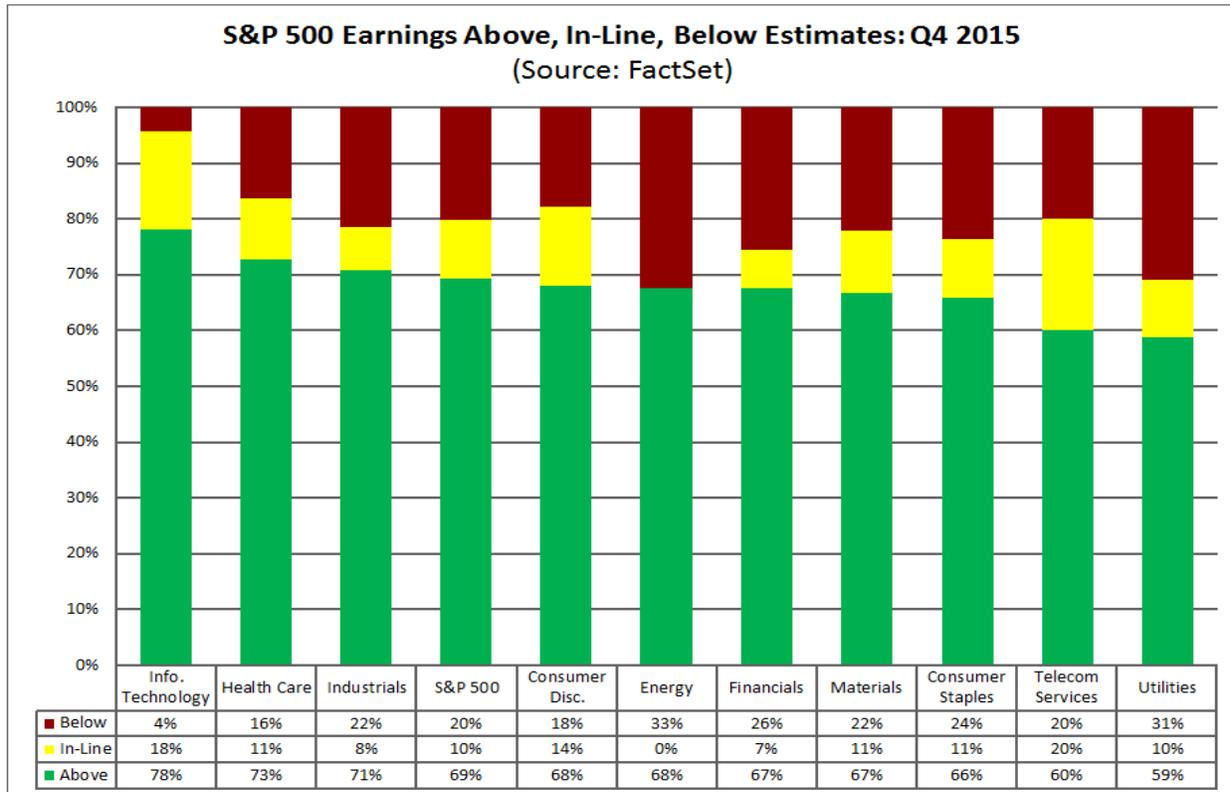
The P/E ratio of 16.1 for the index as a whole is above the prior 5-year average forward 12-month P/E ratio of 14.4, and above the prior 10-year average forward 12-month P/E ratio of 14.2. However, it is equal to the forward 12-month P/E ratio of 16.1 recorded at the start of the first quarter (December 31). Since the start of the first quarter, the price of the index has decreased by 2.7%, while the forward 12-month EPS estimate has decreased by 2.2%.

Seven sectors have forward 12-month P/E ratios that are above their 10-year averages, led by the Energy (56.0 vs. 14.0) sector. Three sectors have forward 12-month P/E ratios that are below their 10-year averages, led by the Telecom Services (13.5 vs. 14.7) sector.

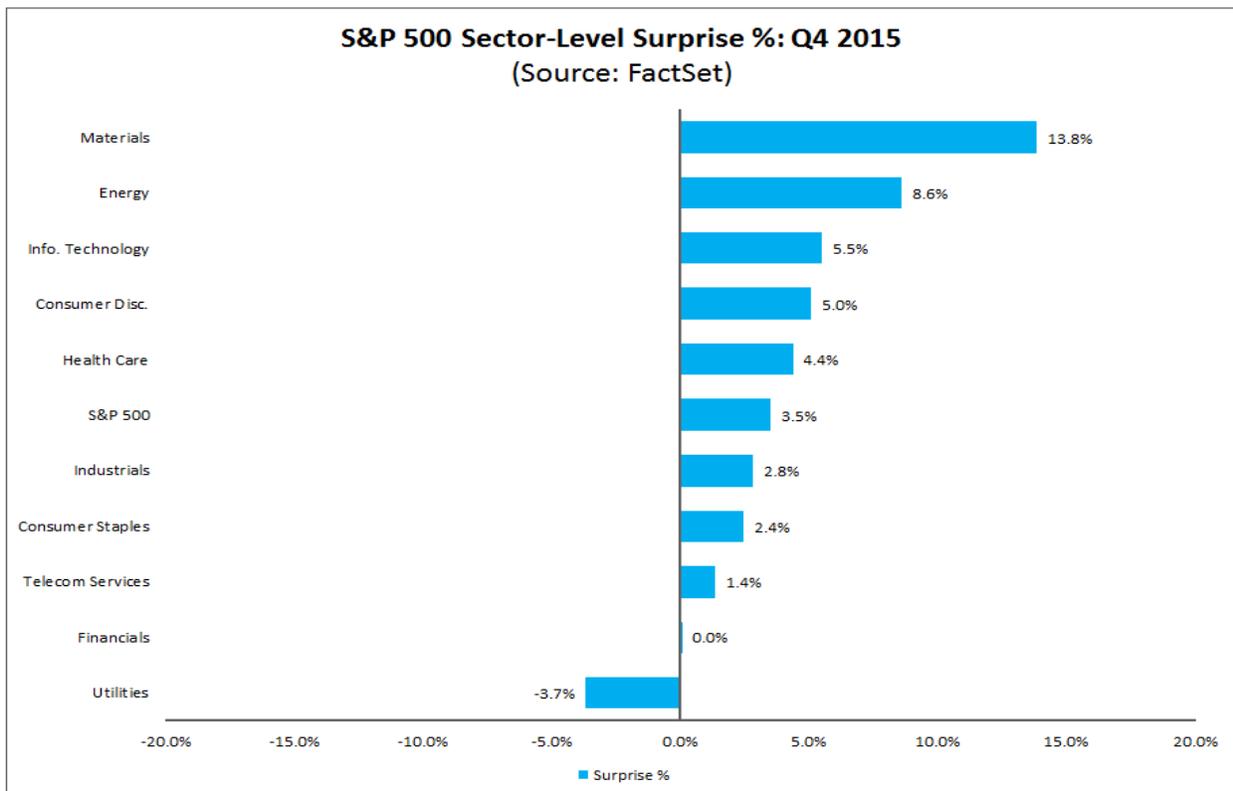
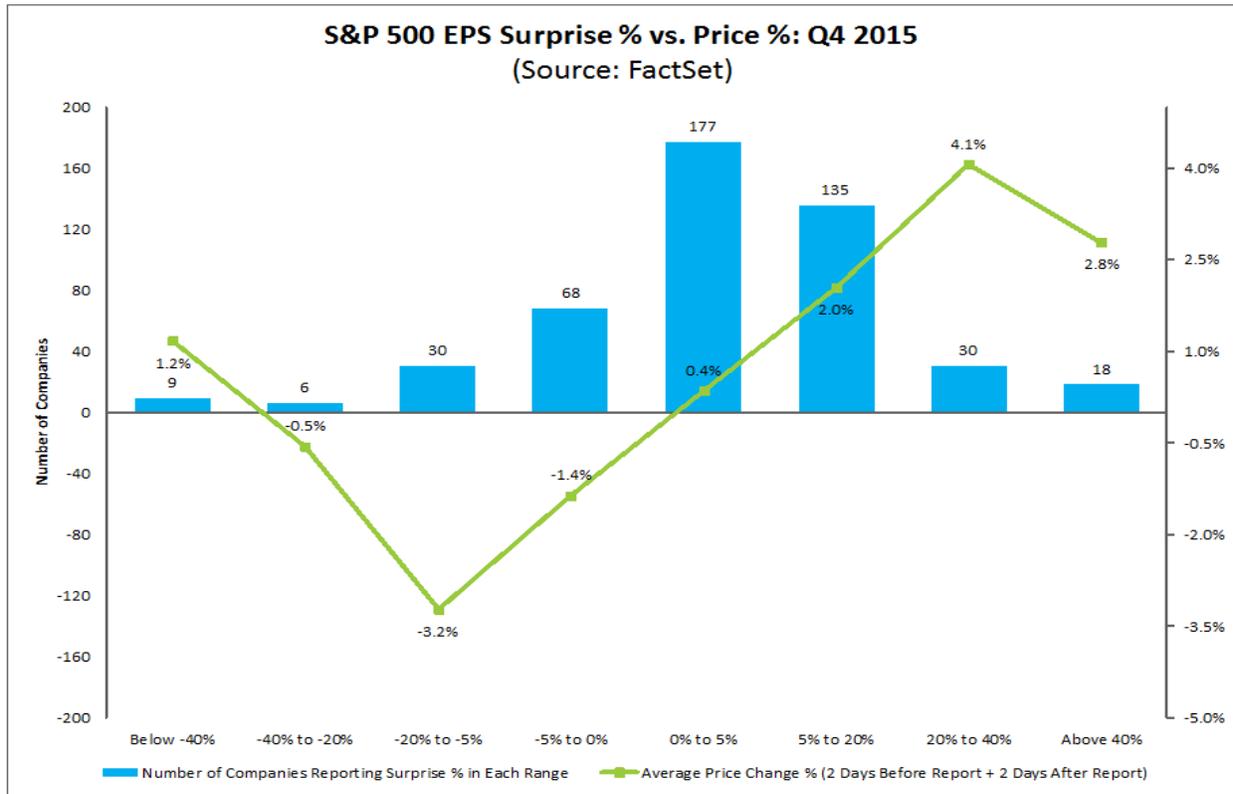
Companies Reporting Next Week: 7

During the upcoming week, 1 S&P 500 company is scheduled to report results for the fourth quarter and 6 S&P 500 companies are scheduled to report results for the first quarter.

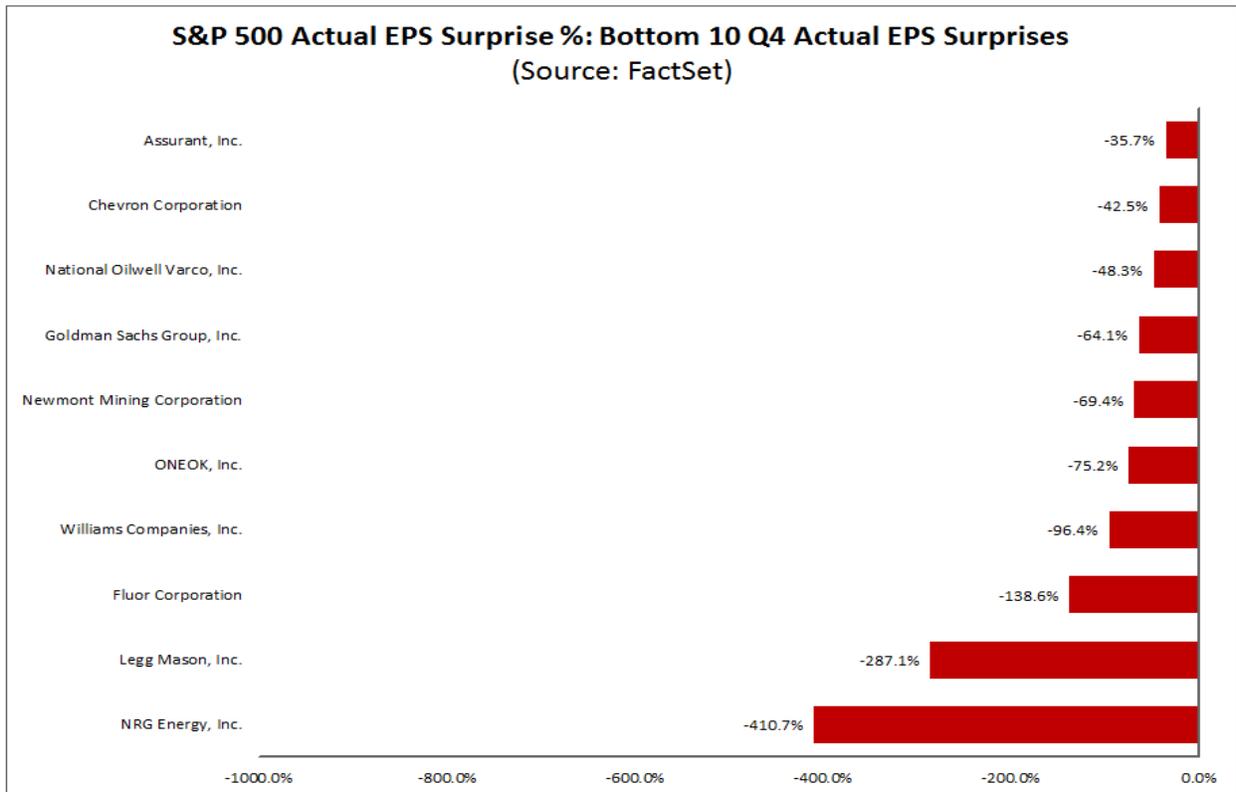
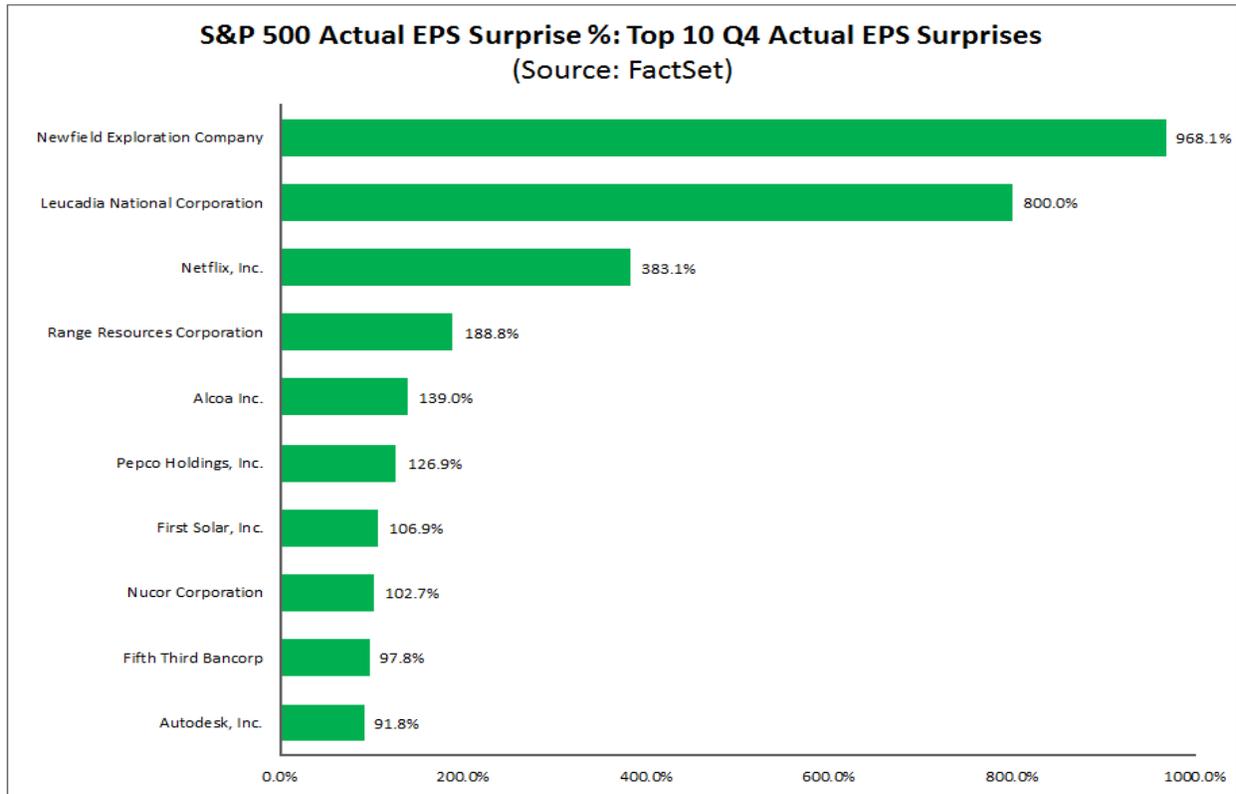
Q4 2015: Scorecard



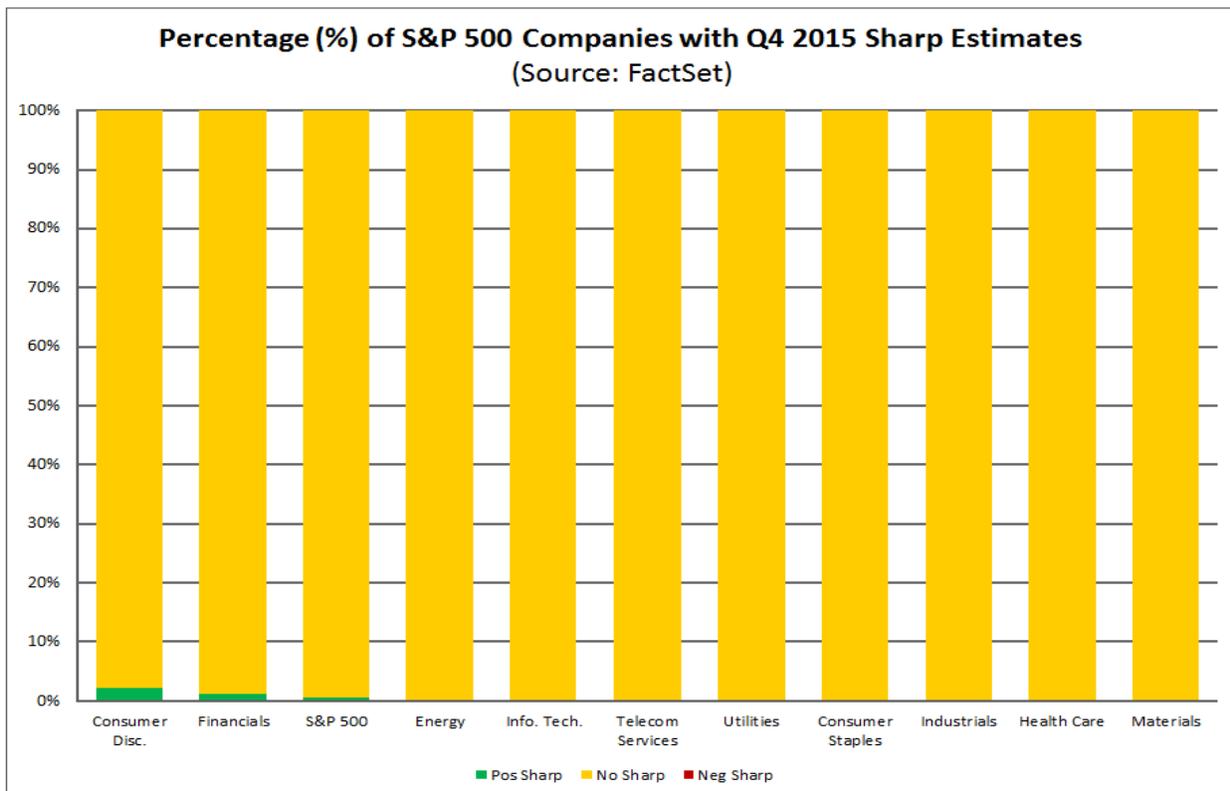
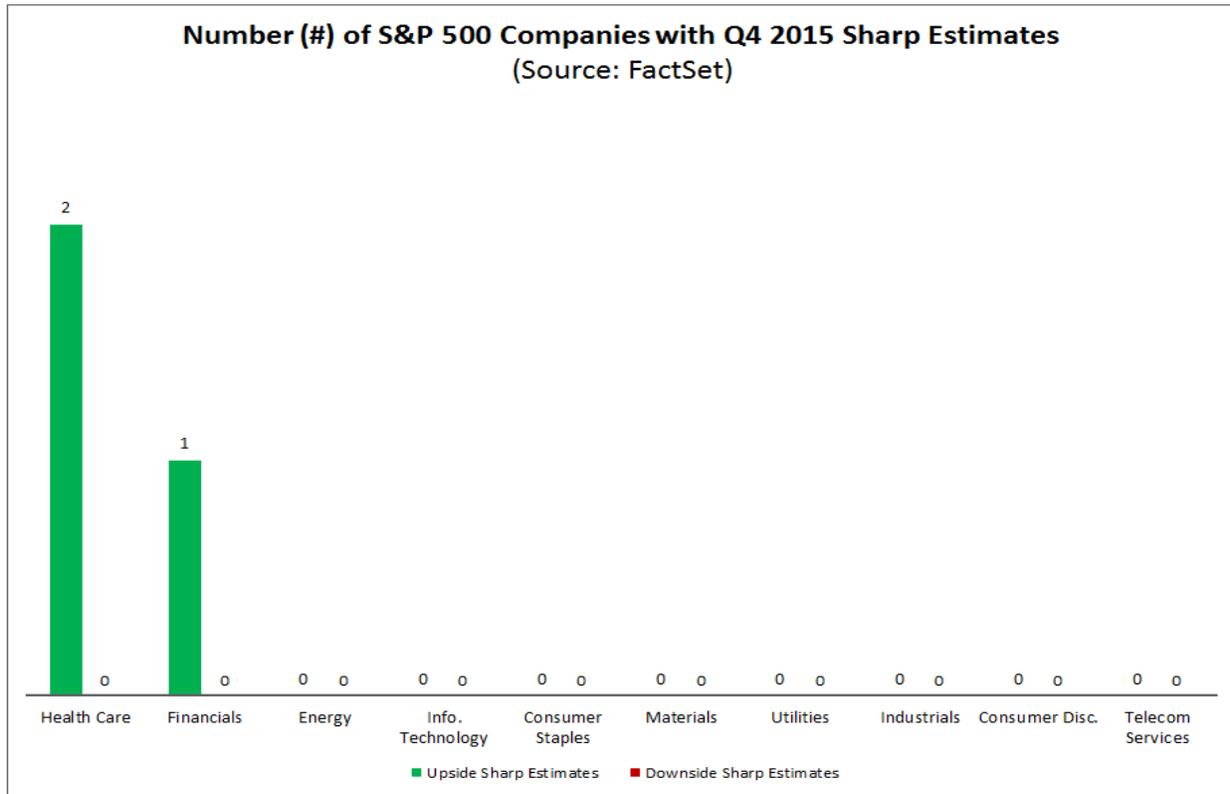
Q4 2015: Scorecard



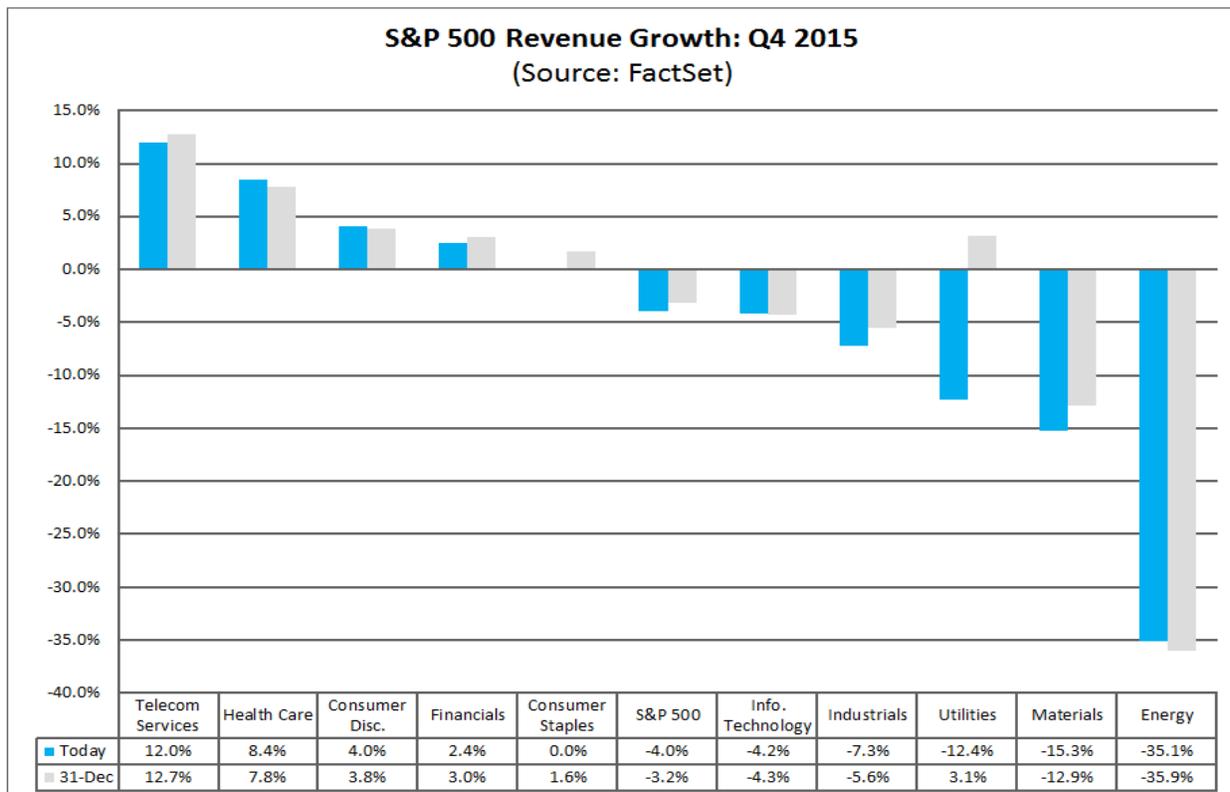
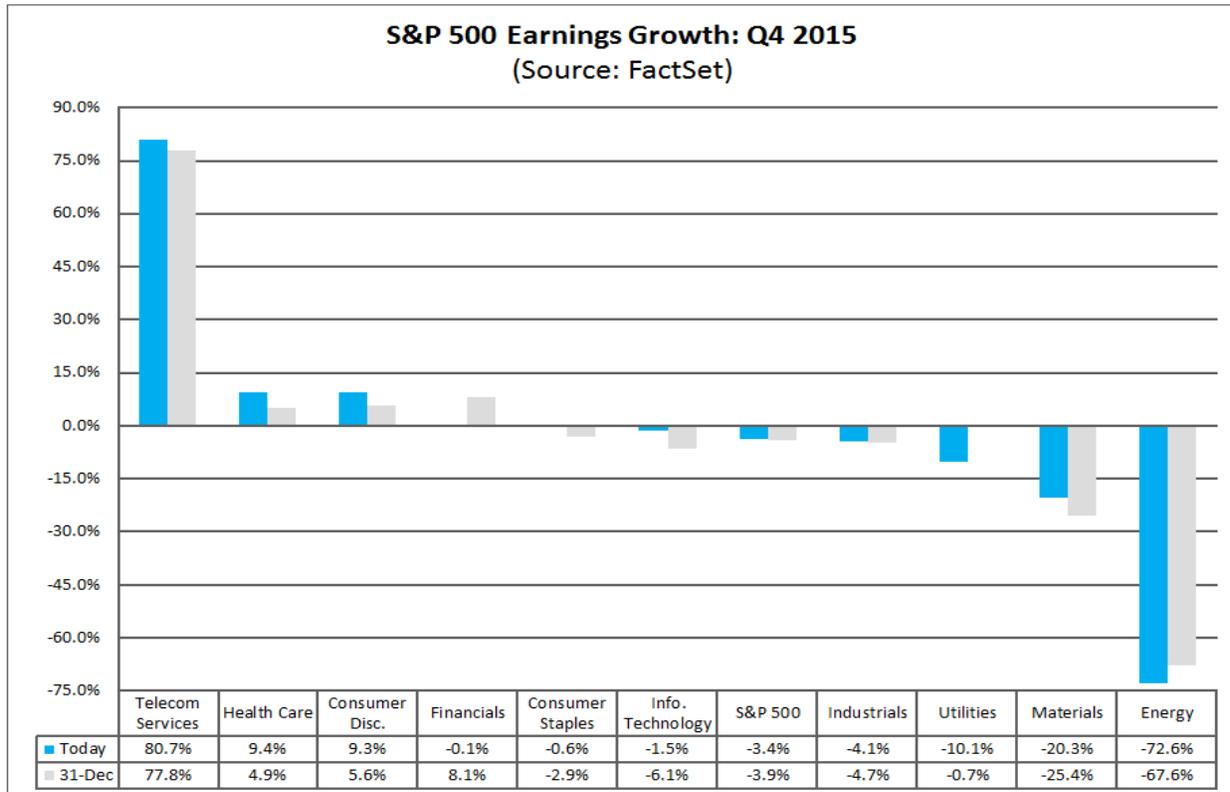
Q4 2015: Scorecard



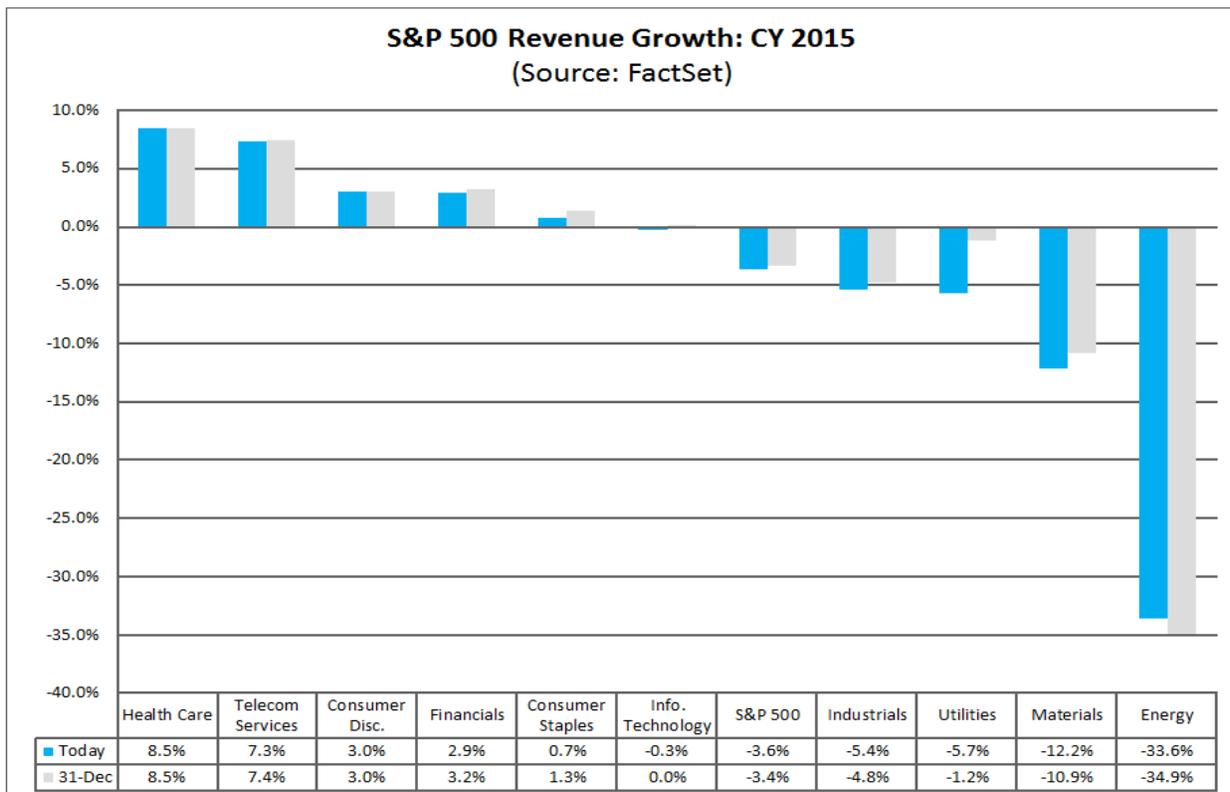
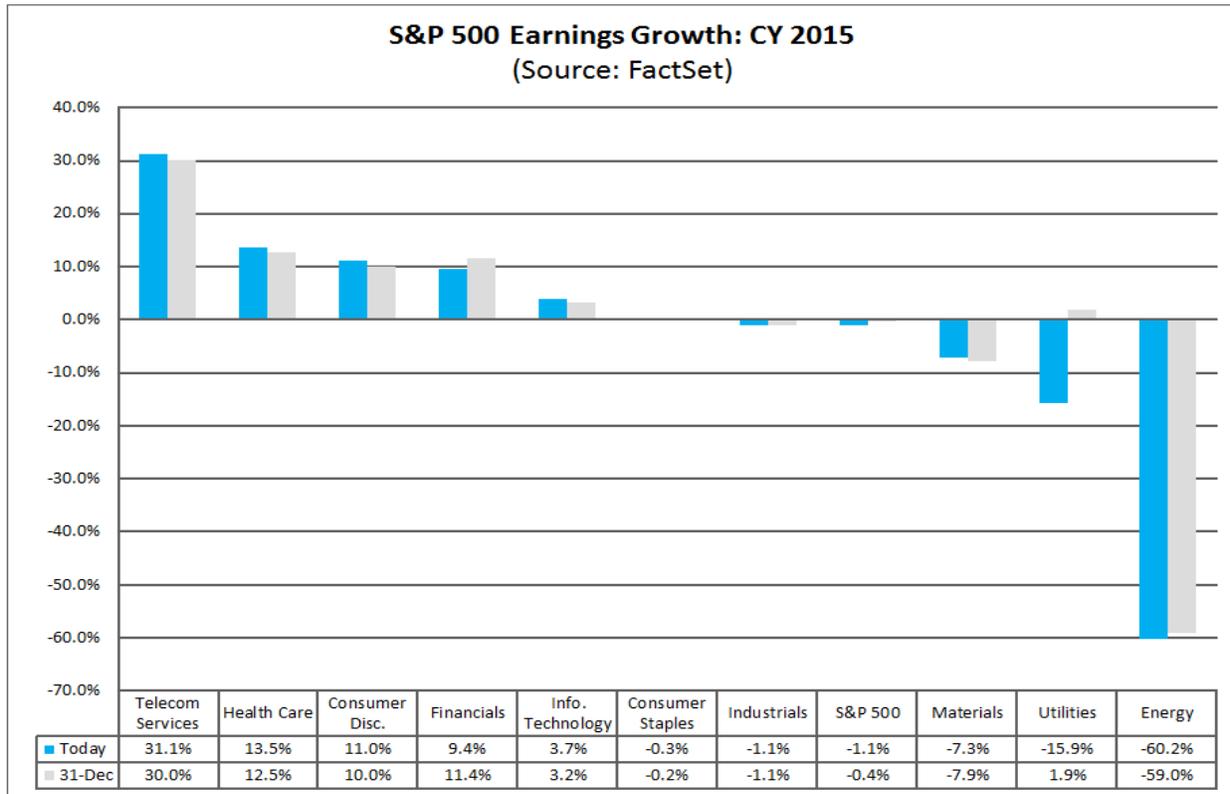
Q4 2015: Projected EPS Surprises (Sharp Estimates)



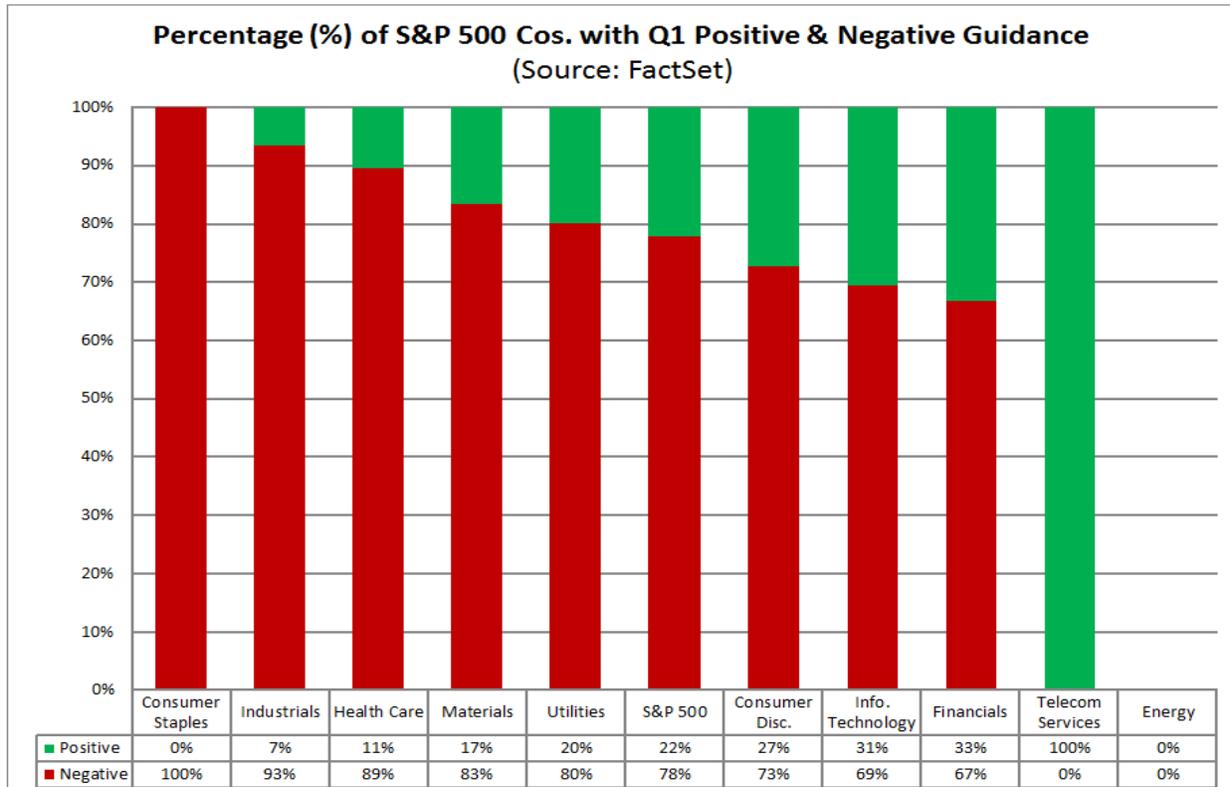
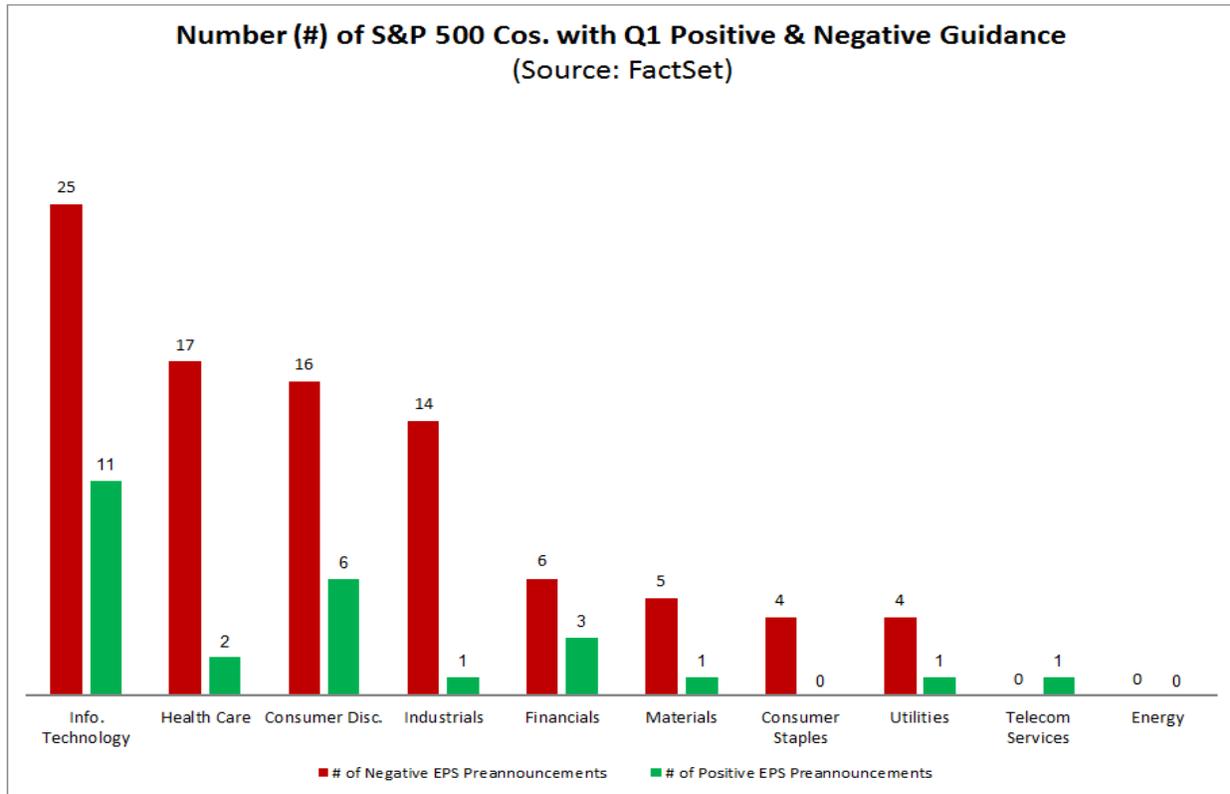
Q4 2015: Growth



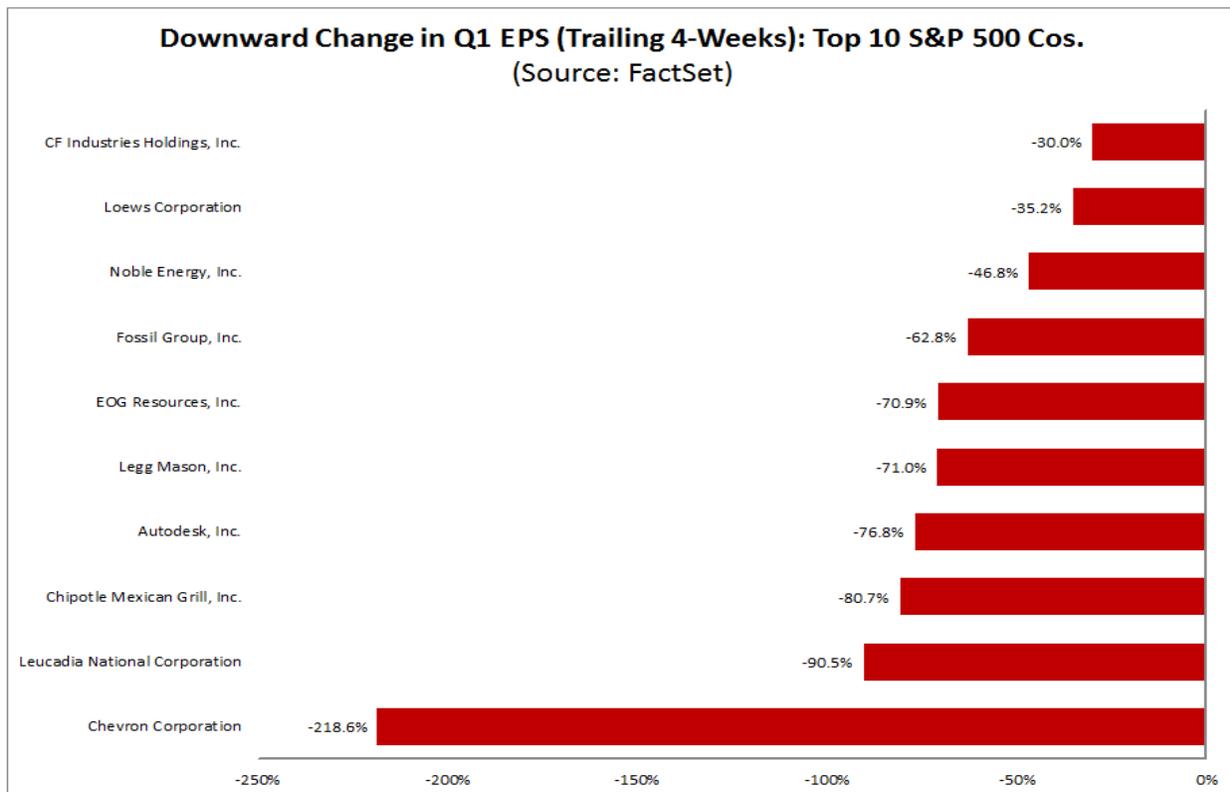
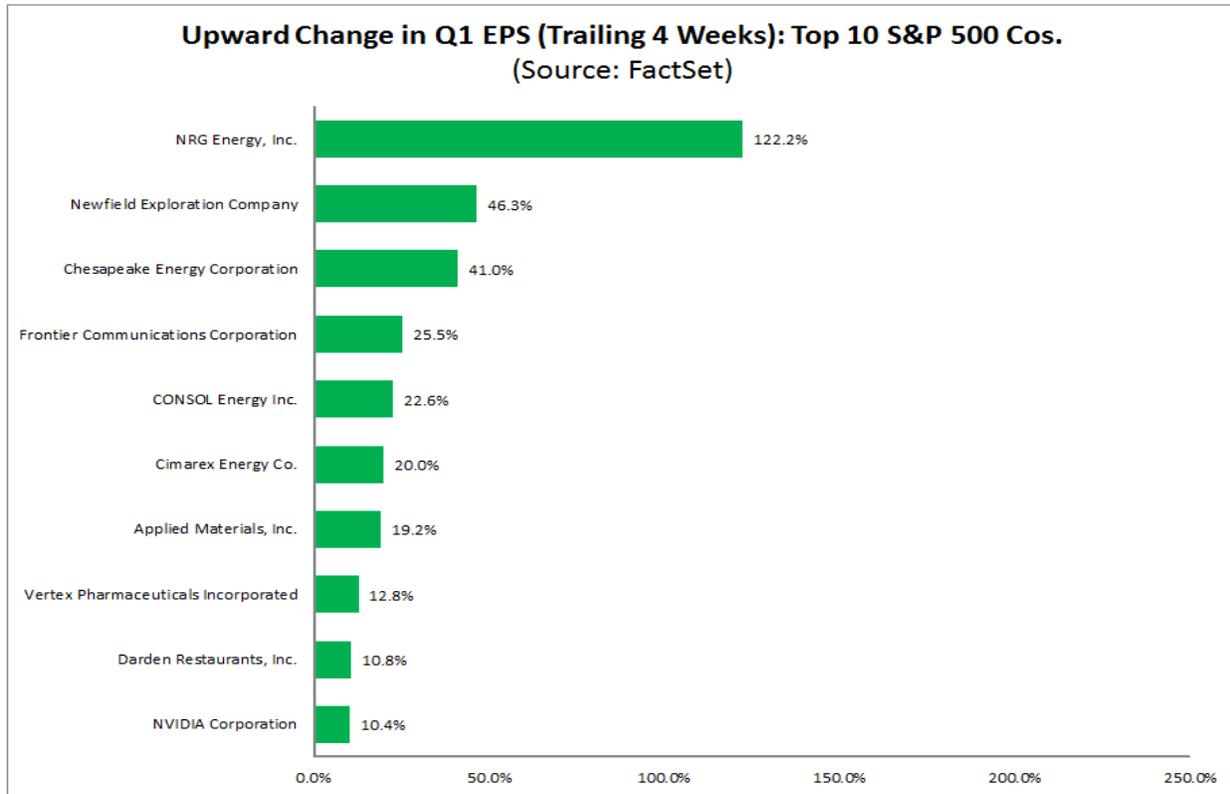
CY 2015: Growth



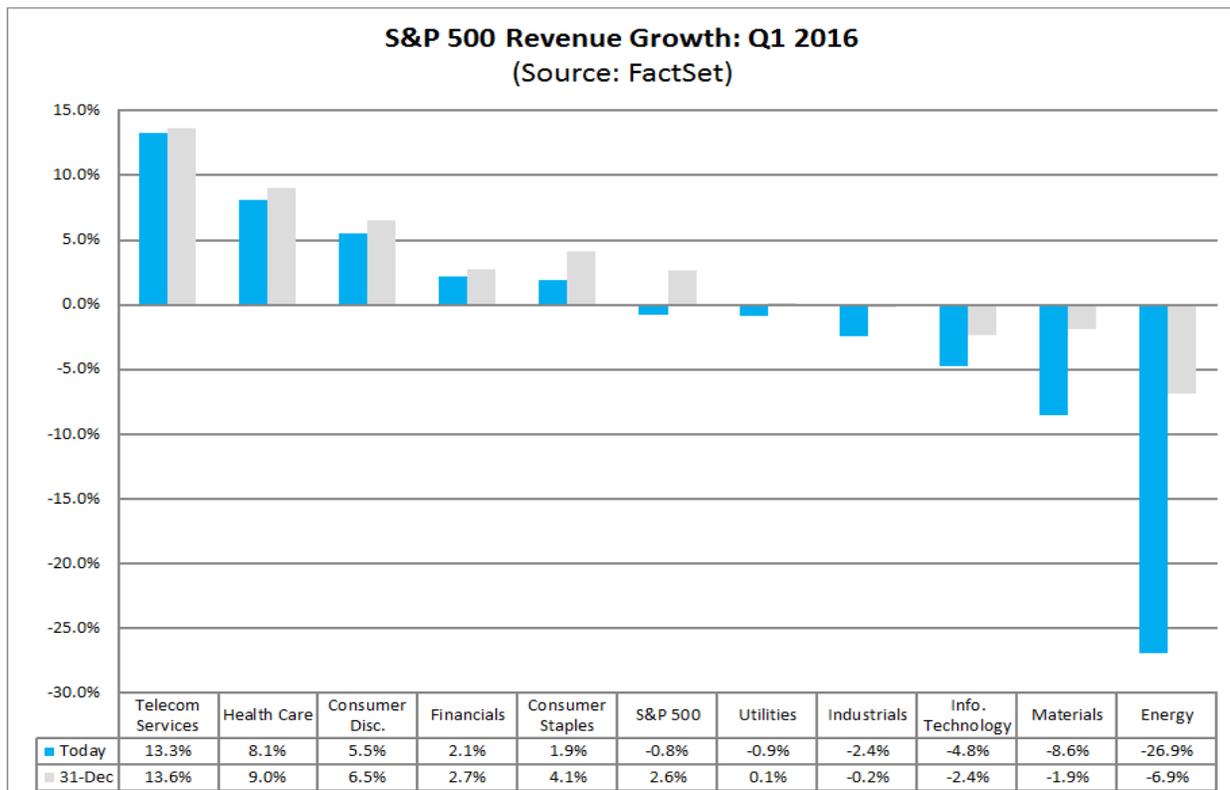
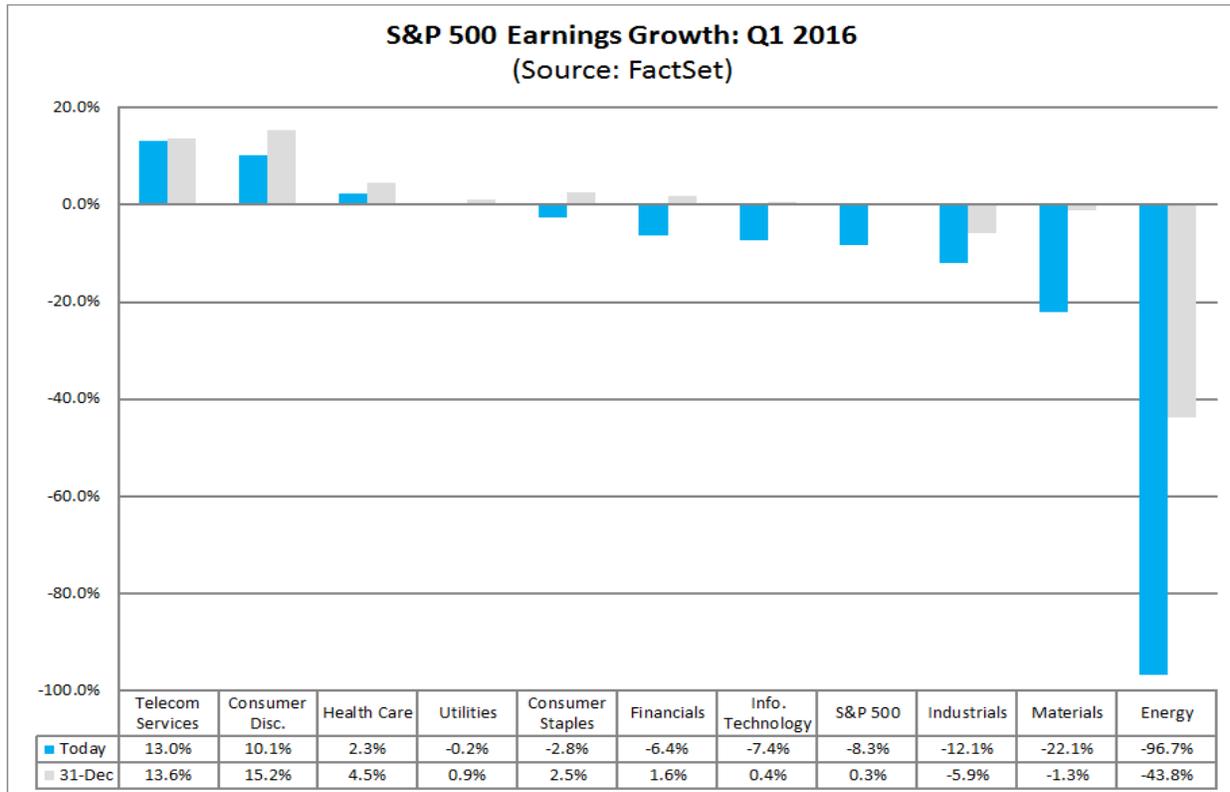
Q1 2016: EPS Guidance



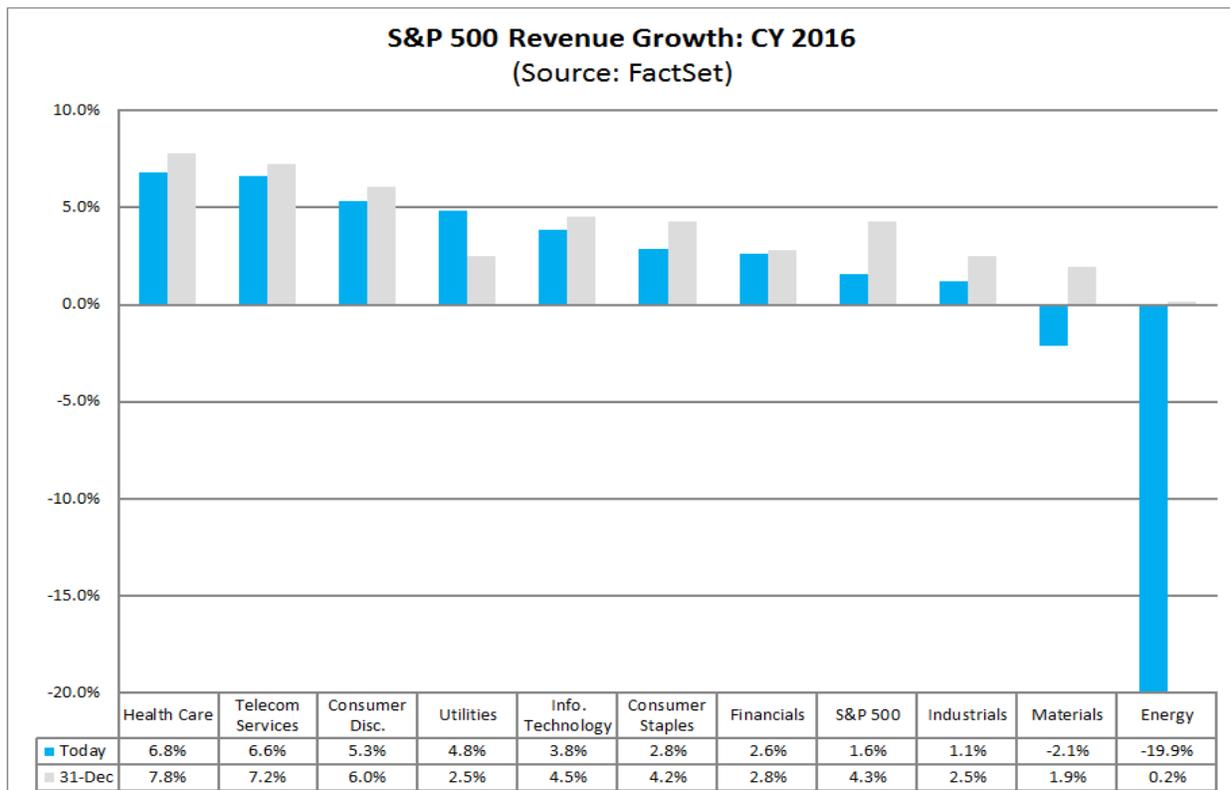
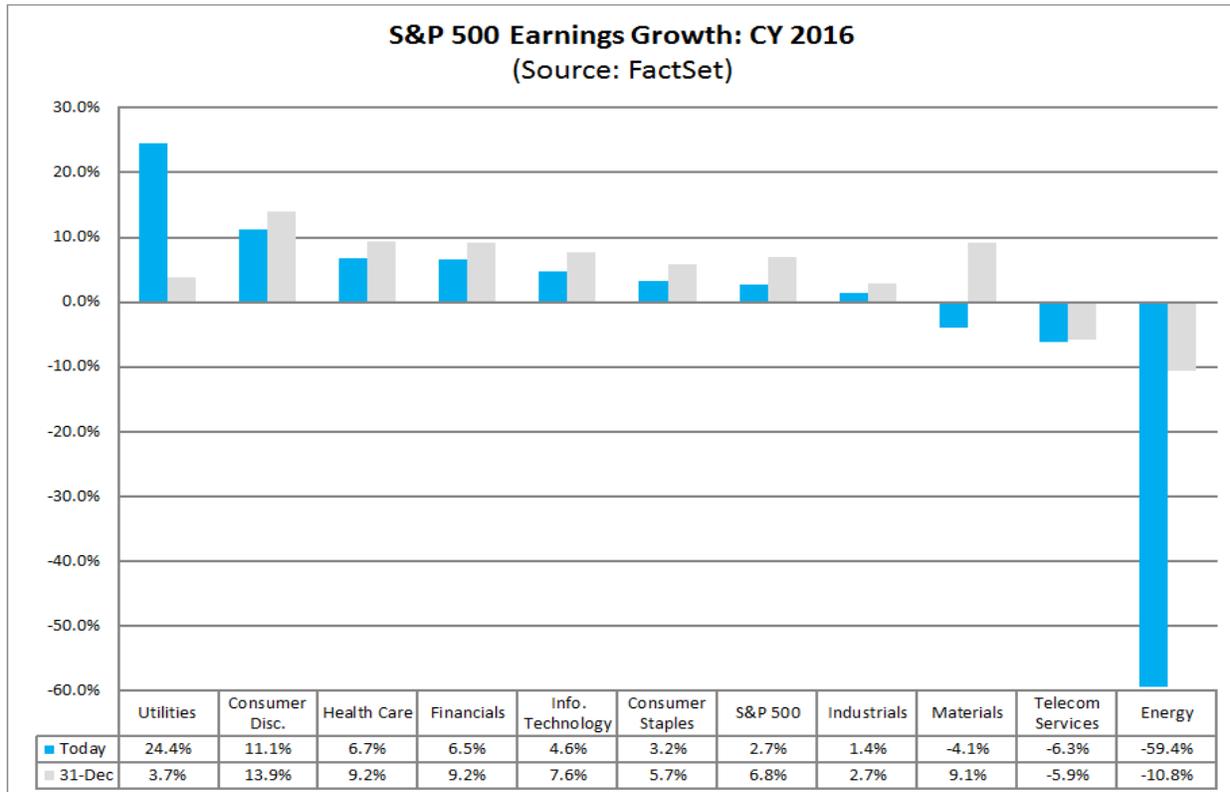
Q1 2016: EPS Revisions



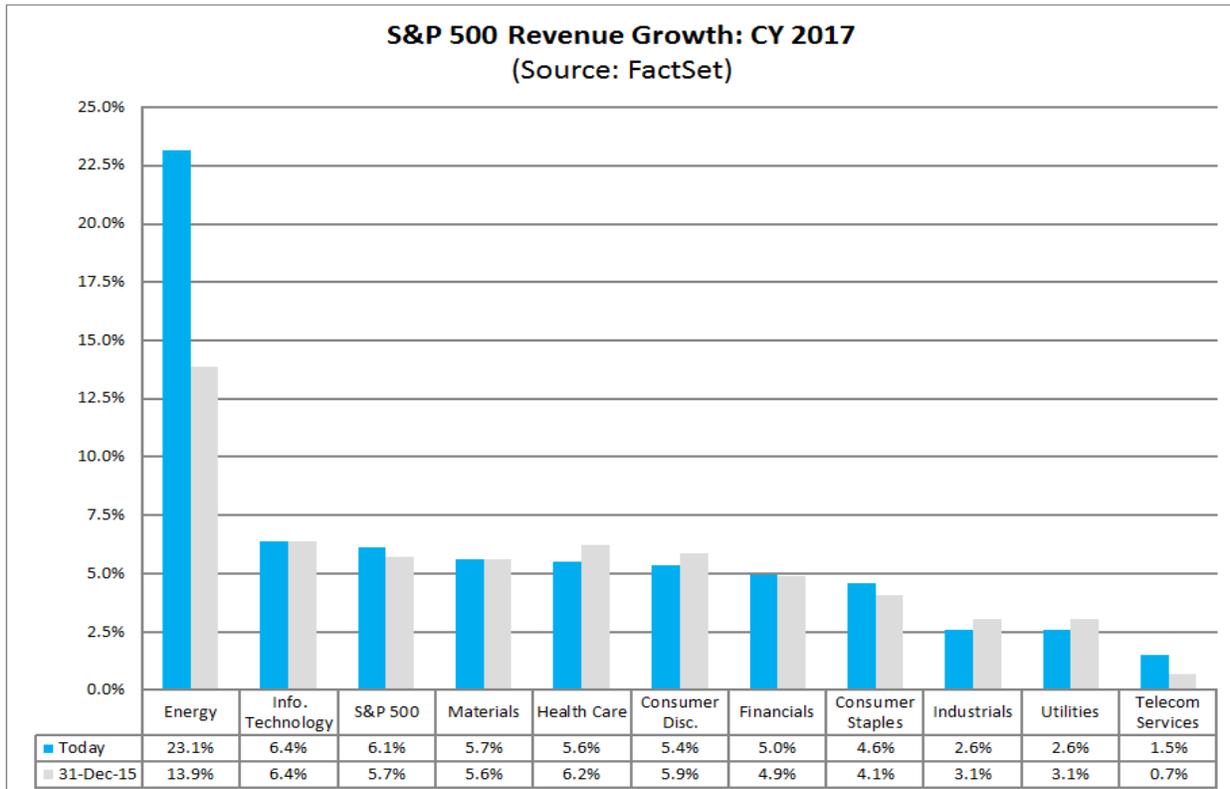
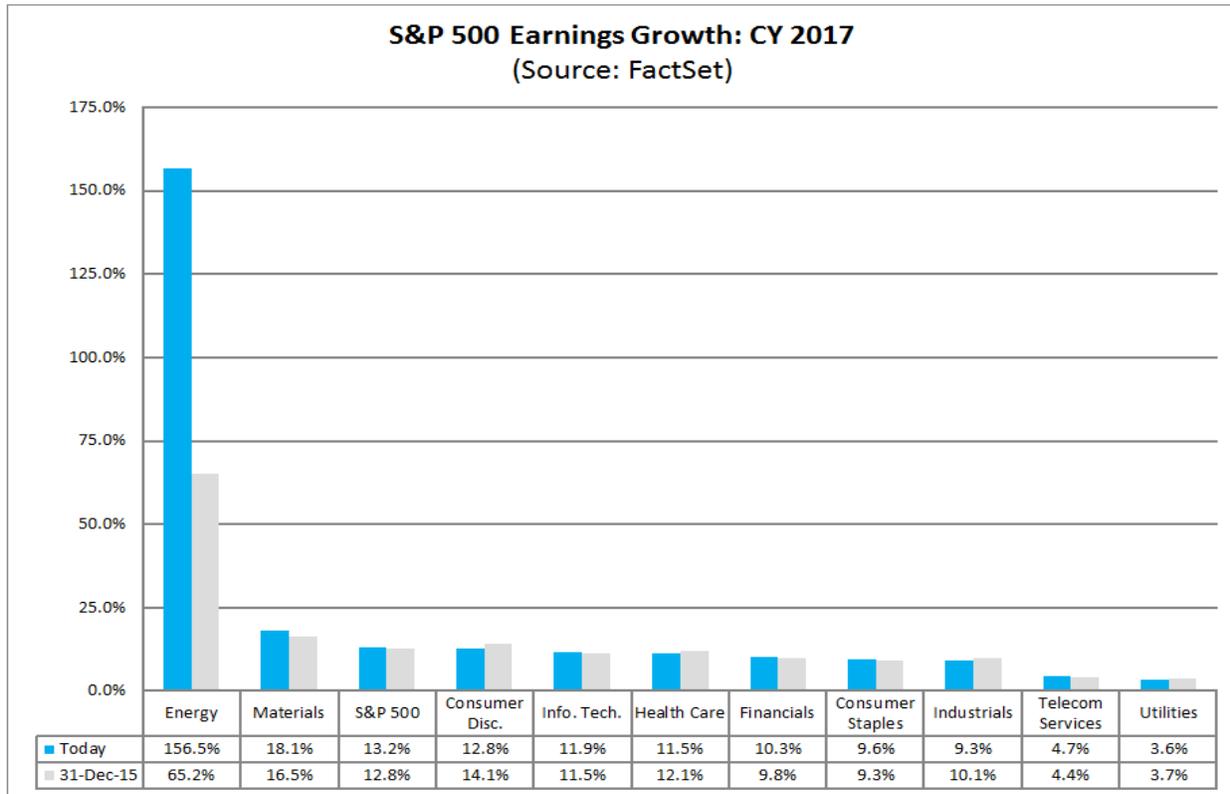
Q1 2016: Growth



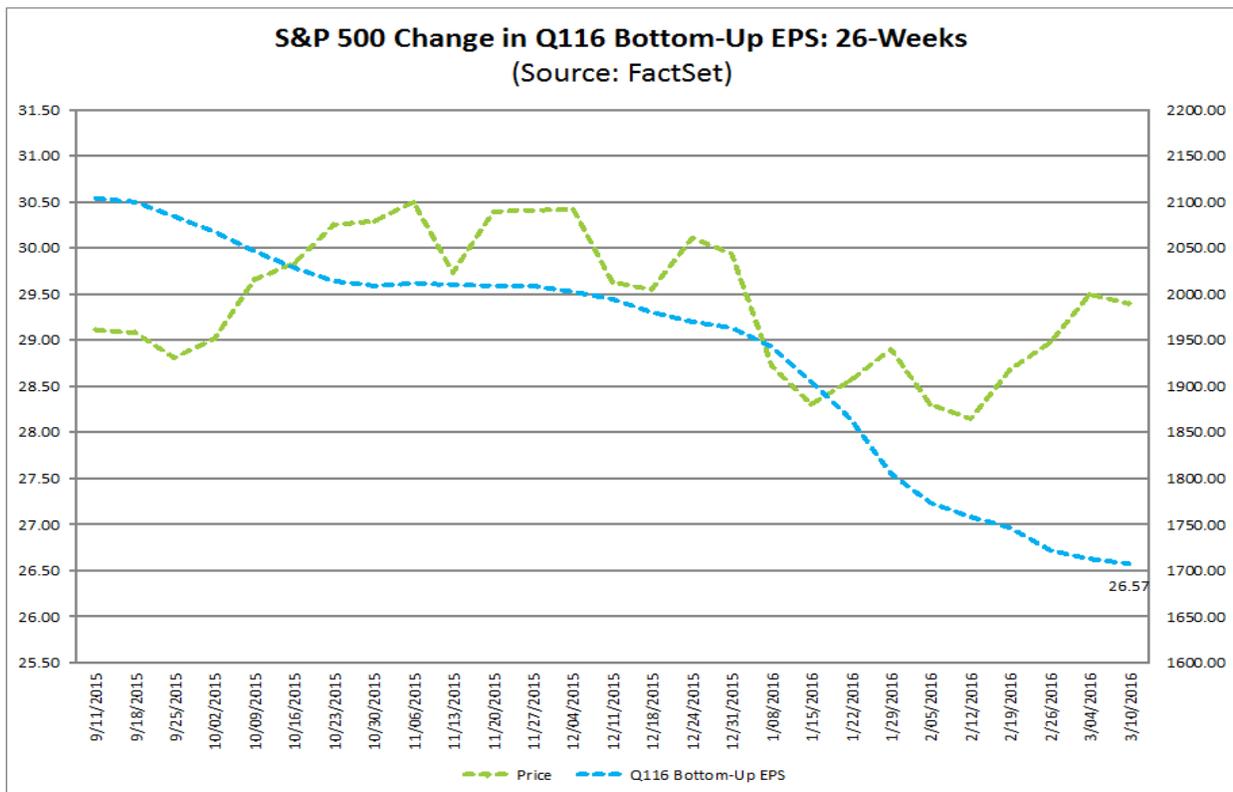
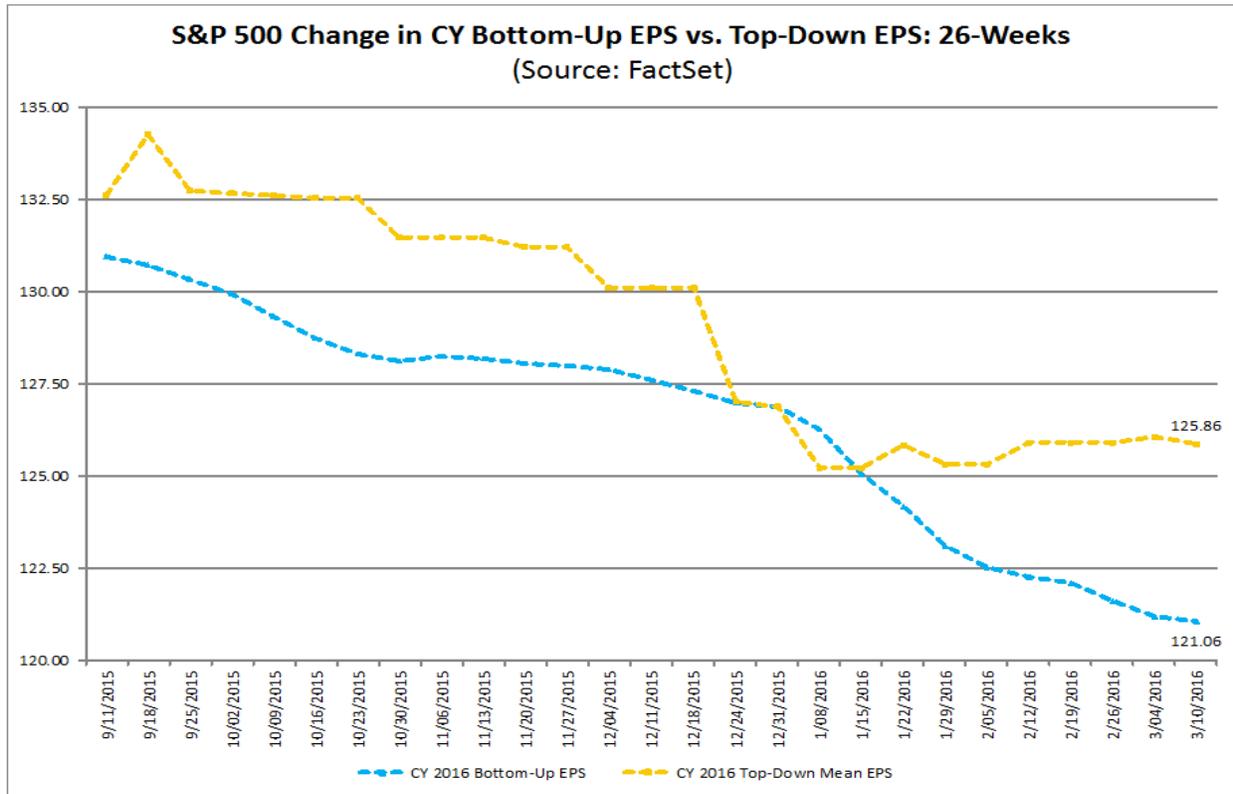
CY 2016: Growth



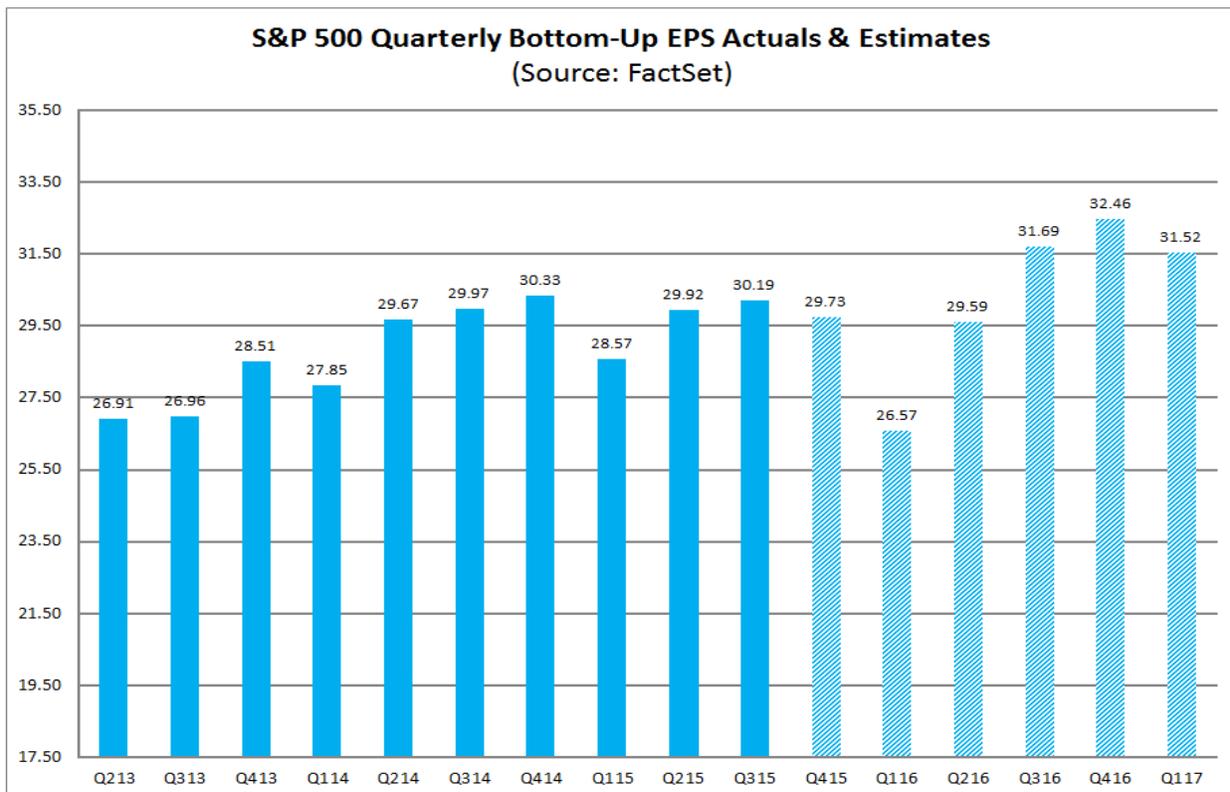
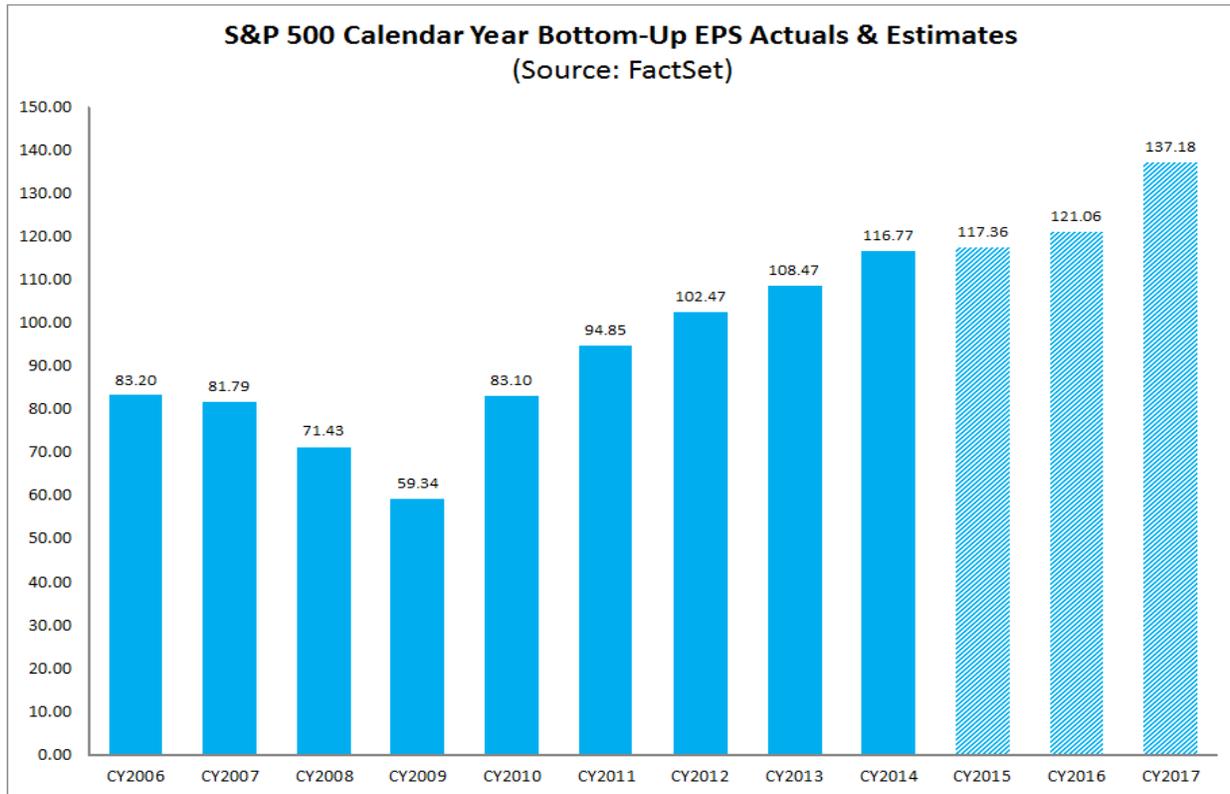
CY 2017: Growth



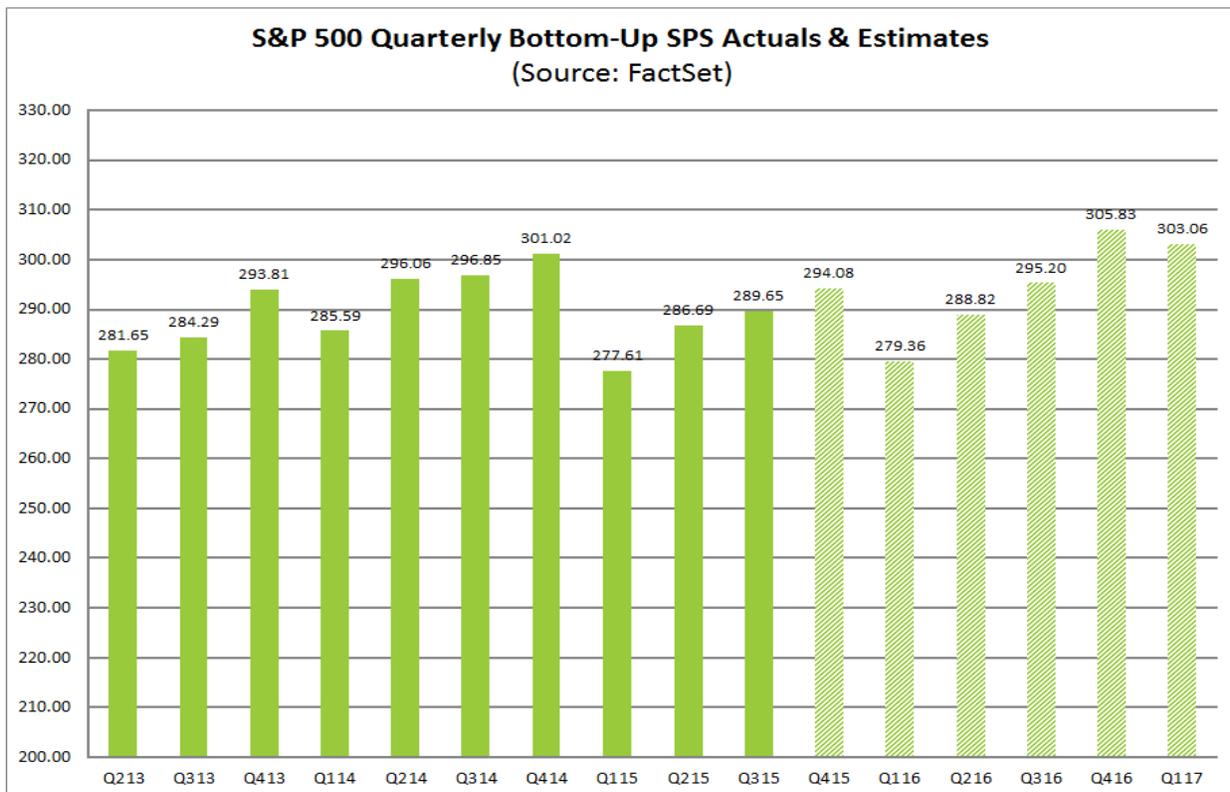
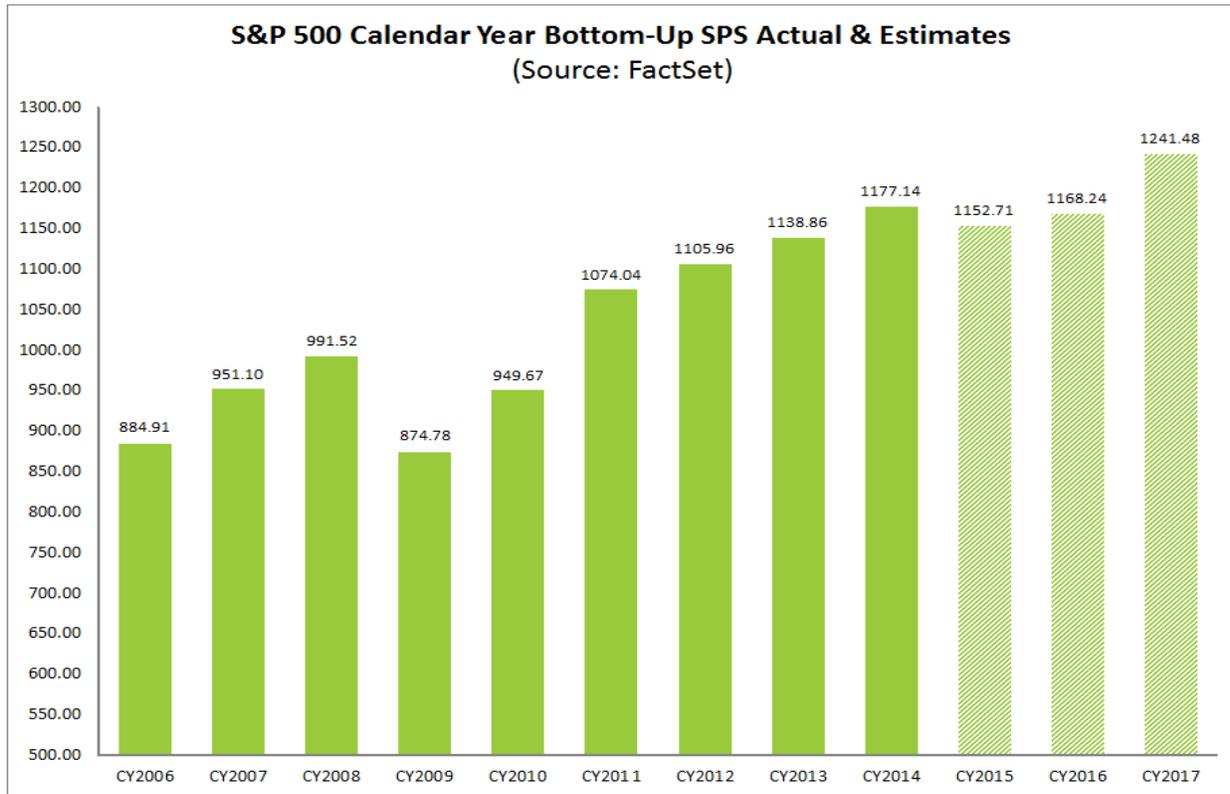
Bottom-Up EPS Estimates: Revisions



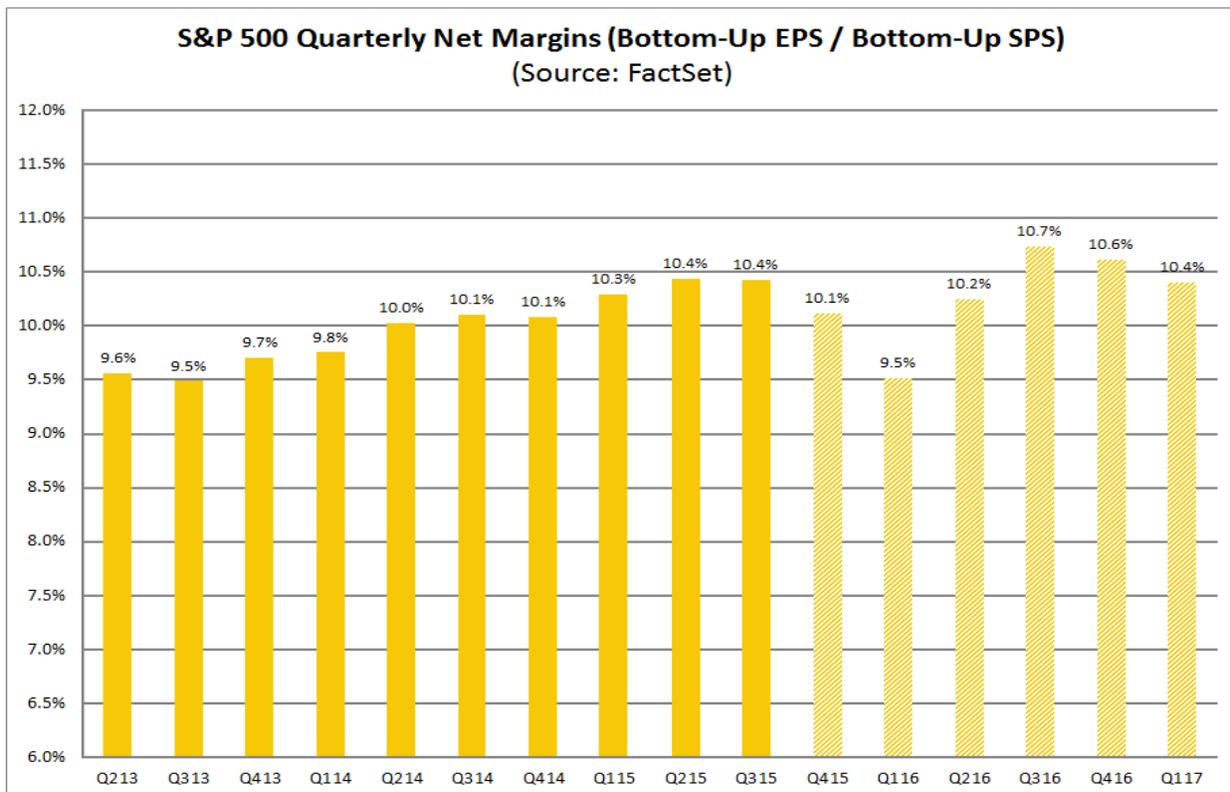
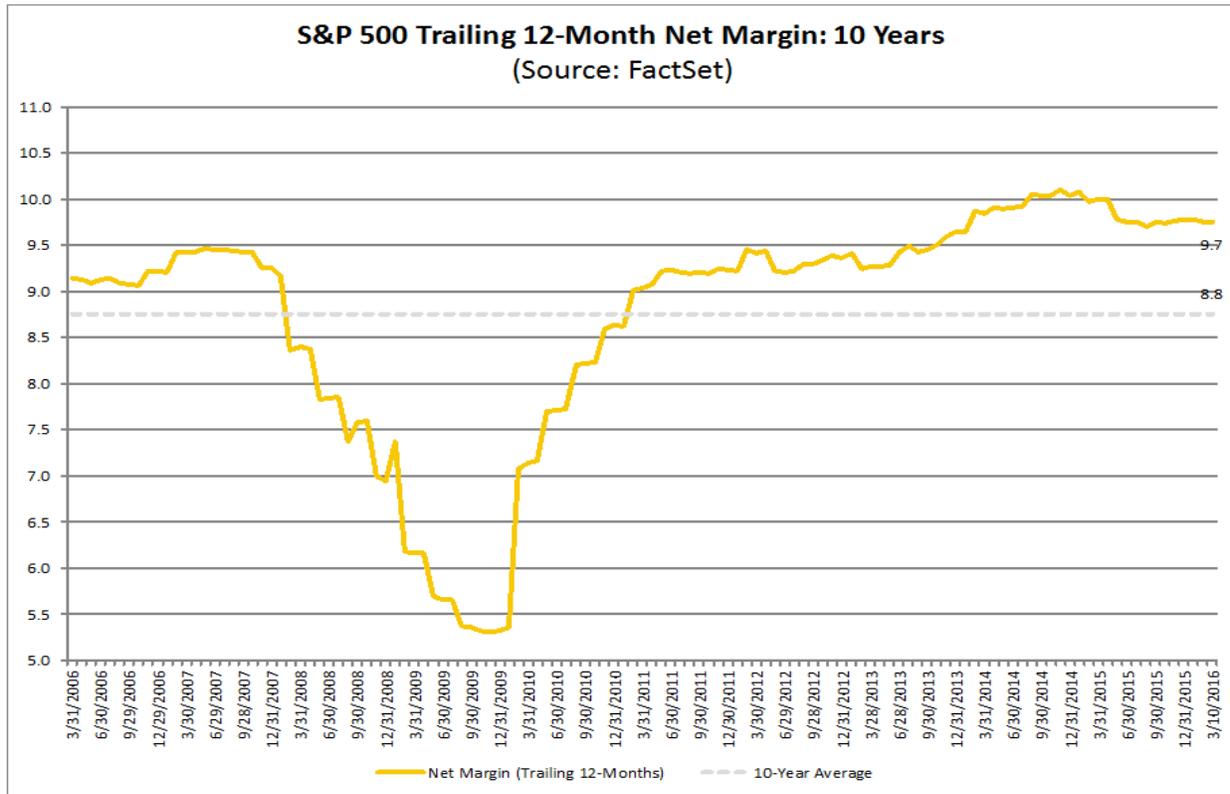
Bottom-Up EPS: Current & Historical



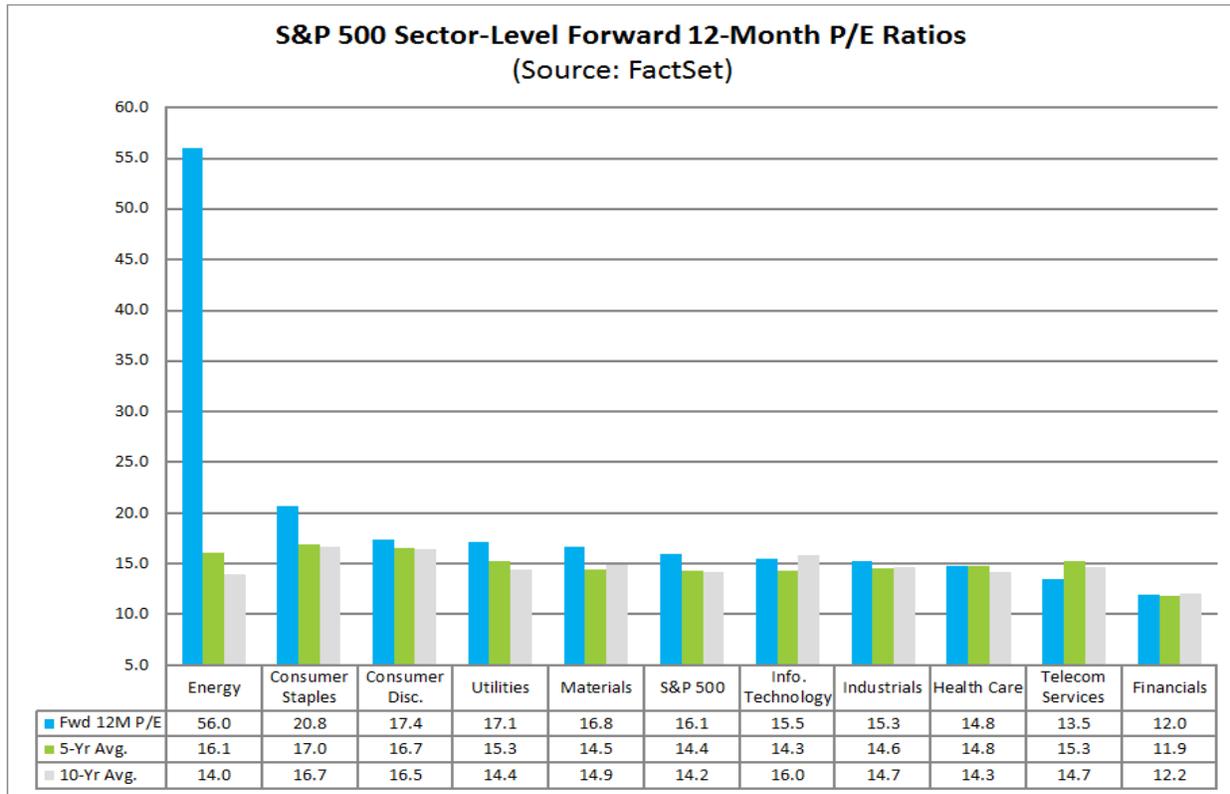
Bottom-Up SPS: Current & Historical



Net Margins: Current & Historical

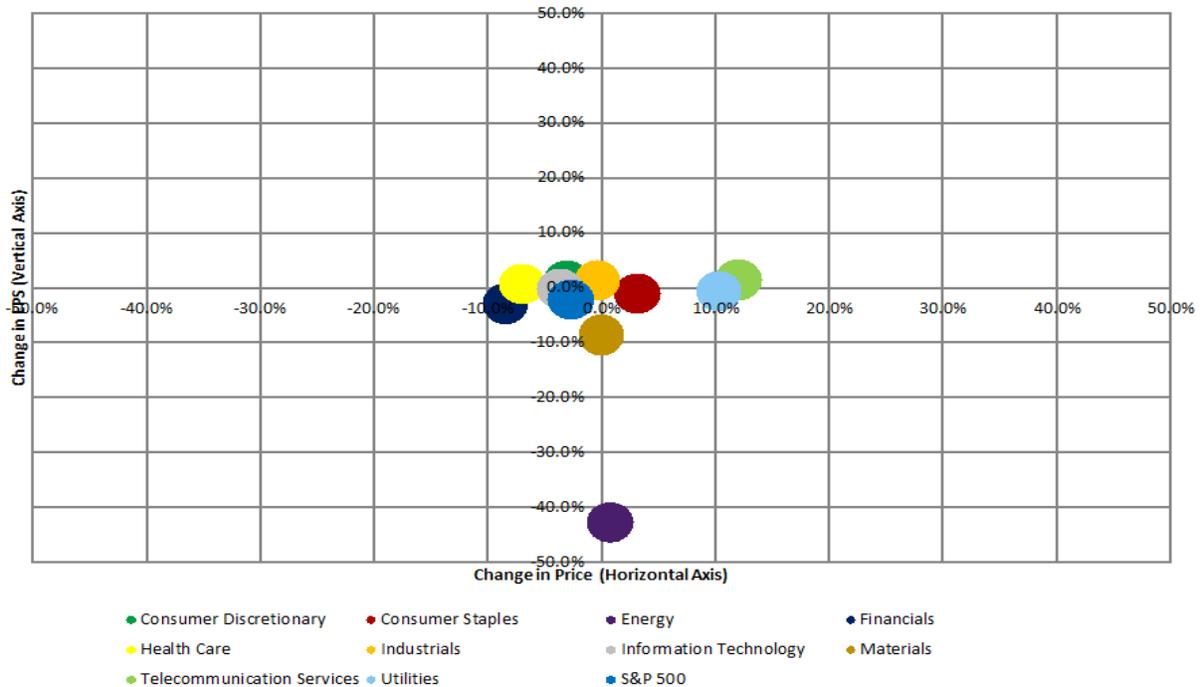


Forward 12M Price / Earnings Ratio: Sector Level

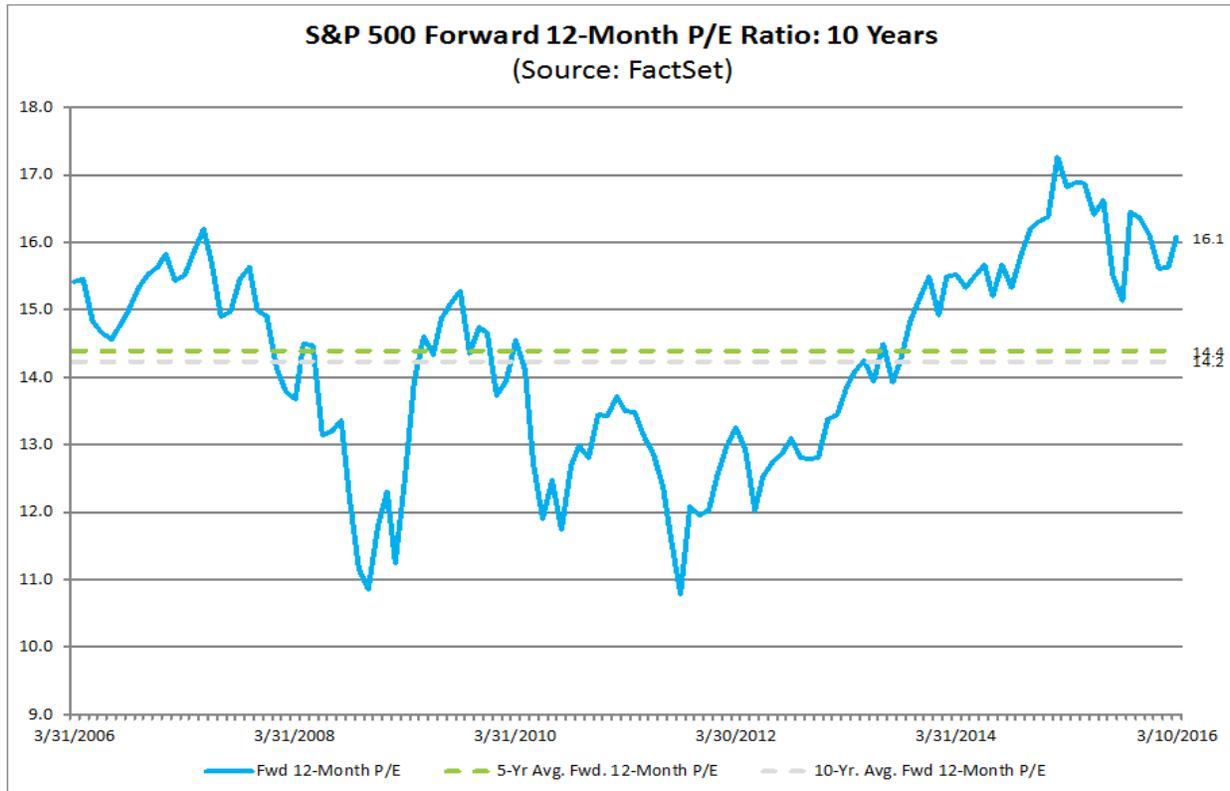
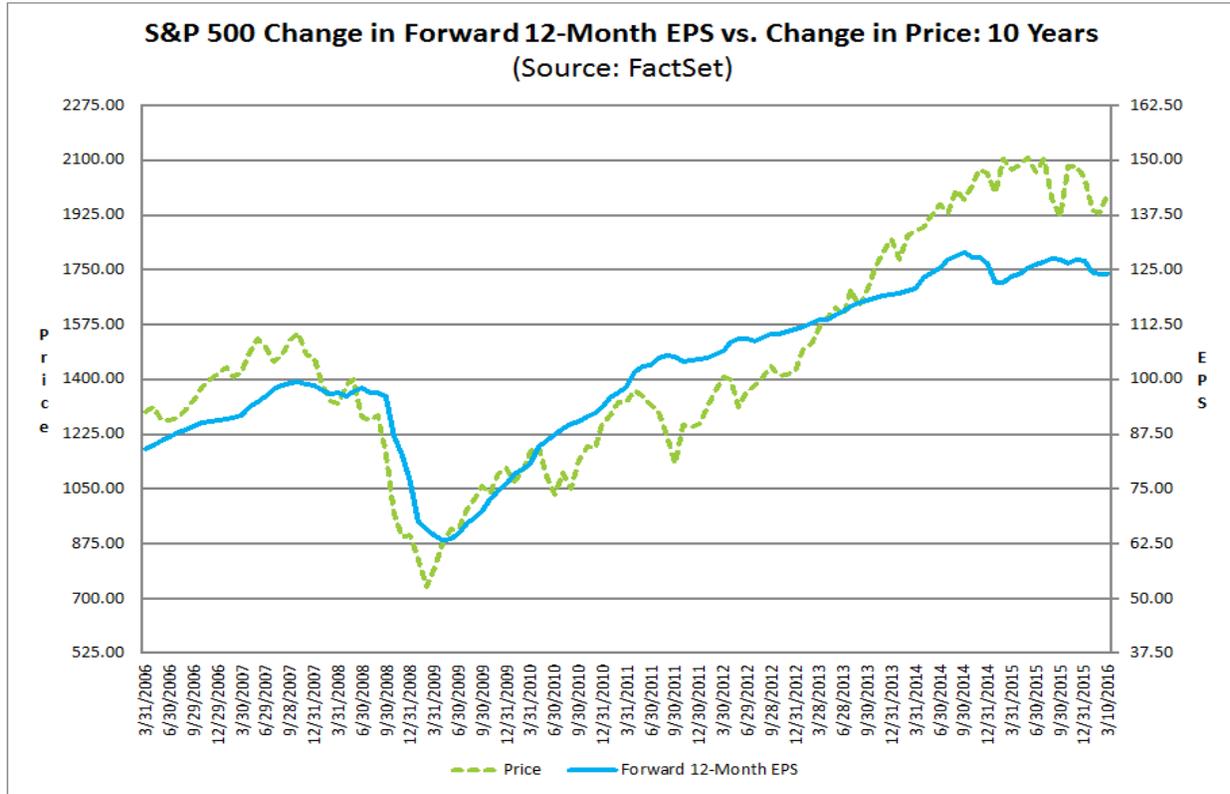


Sector-Level Change in Forward 12-Month EPS vs. Price: Since Dec. 31

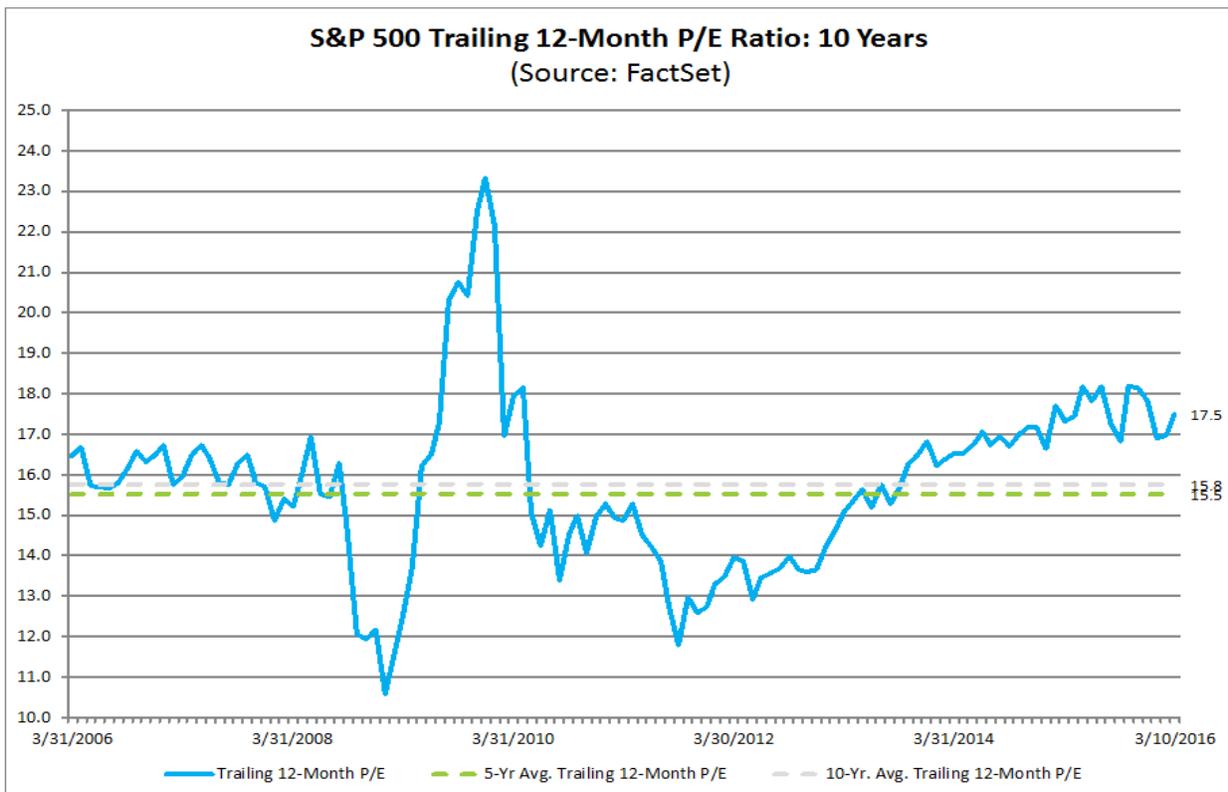
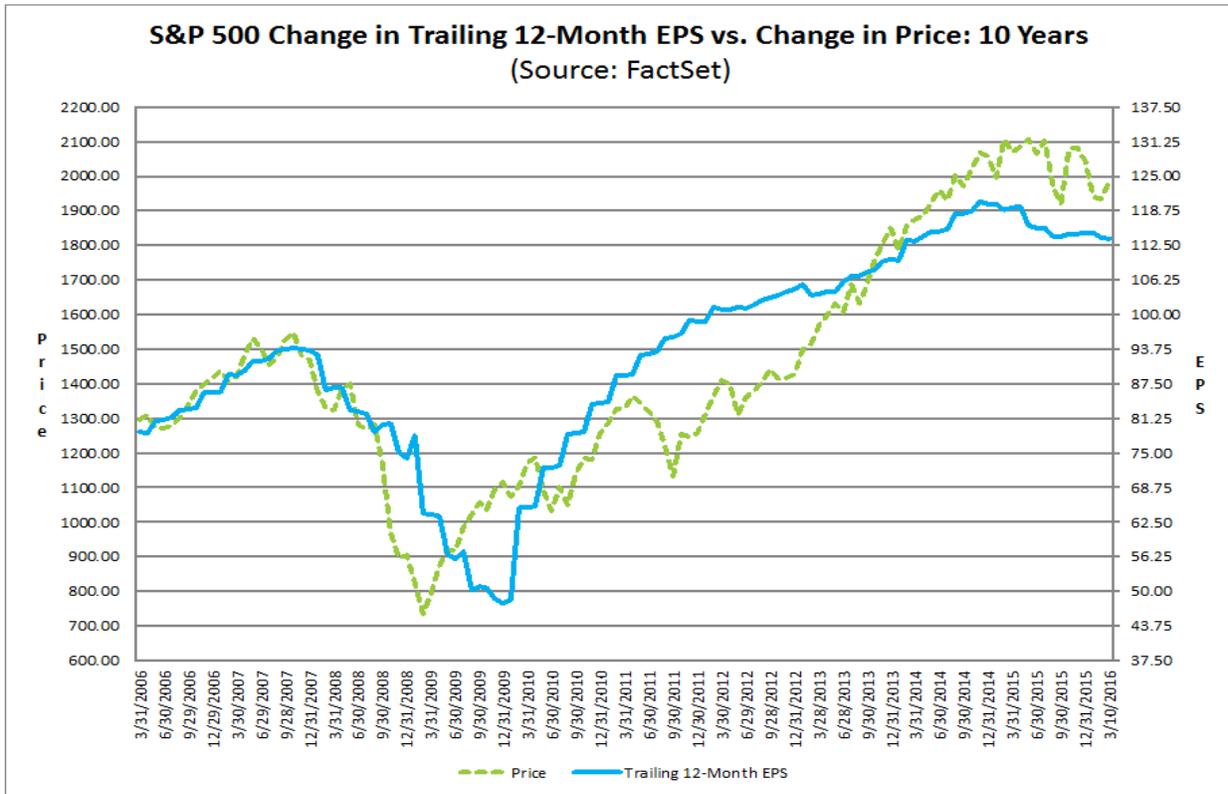
(Source: FactSet)



Forward 12M Price / Earnings Ratio: Long-Term Averages



Trailing 12M Price / Earnings Ratio: Long-Term Averages



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