

Hardware & Networking

HDD Update: Forecast Pricing Acceleration to Represent Upsides to Already High Bar of Buy-side Expectations; Still See Material Room for Both WDC and STX; Reiterate OW

2026 *Extel*

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We are raising our earnings forecasts for the HDD companies primarily led by a more positive view on pricing, and in turn the incremental margins the companies are expected to report in the coming quarters. While the companies have already turned a corner with both companies reporting y/y increases in pricing together for the first time in the March quarter, we expect to see the y/y price increases for the industry to accelerate in the coming quarters with sequential price increases sustaining in the low- to mid-single digit range and cumulatively supporting the acceleration in pricing. We expect the sustained improvement in pricing including the consistent improvements on a q/q basis to support q/q incremental margins to stay at elevated levels for both WDC and STX. Demand environment remains robust driven by 1) continued AI training and retraining, where hyperscalers keep generating and storing expanding datasets, 2) shift toward inferencing and agentic AI, which generates large volumes of new output data that gets stored and fed back into models, and 3) physical AI (e.g., robotics/autonomous systems) producing continuous video/sensor data and driving synthetic data generation. While LTA durations are potentially extending as customers are looking to drive supply assurance and visibility through multiple years, the LTAs are unlikely to inhibit the price increases, which are determined more on a 1-year basis in conjunction with order visibility from customers, and we expect the combination of strong demand as well the disciplined capacity approach with no expansion of unit capacity from either Western Digital or Seagate to help support a robust and expanding pricing environment for multiple years. We believe that pricing conditions are strengthening and increasingly decoupling from historical cyclical patterns, in our view supporting a pricing environment that is both durable and accelerating. Higher pricing forecasts are driving upside revisions to our outlook for revenues as well gross margins, together supporting a low-to-mid teens increase to our earnings outlook for FY27 for both Western Digital and Seagate - which is driving our Dec-26 PT to \$650 (vs. \$530 prior) for WDC shares and \$920 (vs. \$775 prior) for STX shares. On a fundamental basis, we estimate 90%+ earnings growth in FY27 and 55%+ earnings growth in FY28 leaving little to choose between the two companies that are both executing to the opportunity, although WDC's lower valuation multiple leaves more upside at this time on the WDC shares (33% upside from current levels) relative to STX (13% upside from current levels to our Dec-26 PT).

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Equity Ratings and Price Targets

Company	Ticker	Mkt Cap (\$ mn)	Price (\$)	Rating		Price Target			
				Cur	Prev	Cur	End Date	Prev	End Date
Seagate	STX US	186,045.70	815.99	OW	n/c	920.00	Dec-26	775.00	n/c
Western Digital	WDC US	188,684.60	490.09	OW	n/c	650.00	Dec-26	530.00	n/c

Source: Company data, Bloomberg Finance L.P., J.P. Morgan estimates. n/c = no change. All prices as of 10 Jun 26.

See page 9 for analyst certification and important disclosures.

- **Long-term demand visibility and capex discipline to support strong pricing trends.** Based on recent commentary from both HDD companies at industry conferences, the demand environment continues to be robust, along with long-term demand visibility via customer driven push towards LTAs, with some customers in some cases looking to sign LTAs extending up to 2032, driven by long-term planning from hyperscaler customers. Combined with continued industry discipline in terms of not adding unit capacity, this is helping to support a robust pricing environment, which as per management, is expected to remain strong for multiple years. We expect the pricing contribution to revenue growth to accelerate with the continued sequential price increases. In addition to accelerating price increases on a y/y basis, we continue to forecast Exabyte growth remaining at a 25%+ pace supporting upsides not only to sell-side consensus, but also to buy-side expectations for earnings revisions.
- **Raise revenue forecasts for both Western Digital and Seagate driven by an acceleration in pricing growth estimates.** We forecast accelerating pricing per EB over the next few quarters for Western Digital and Seagate, translating to - 1) Western Digital pricing increase of +7% y/y in FY26 (Jun-end), +11% in FY27 and 7% in FY28 (vs. +6%/+8%/+5% prior); 2) Seagate pricing growth of +1% y/y in FY26 (Jun-end), +10% in FY27 and 8% in FY28 (vs. 0%/+7%/+2% prior). The higher pricing forecasts are leading to strong revenue forecasts, with expectations for revenue growth exceeding 40% for both companies in FY27.
- **Incremental gross margins to sustain at an elevated pace on account of pricing tailwinds.** We expect the incremental margins on a q/q basis to sustain at elevated levels for both companies going forward, helped by the flow-through of the incremental pricing tailwinds continuing on a sequential basis, which leads us to raise our GM forecasts for both companies: FY27 GM of 58.6% for Western Digital (vs. 55.3% prior) and 54.5% for Seagate (vs. 51.6% prior).

Investment Thesis, Valuation and Risks

Seagate (Overweight; Price Target: \$920.00)

Investment Thesis

We rate Seagate shares Overweight on account of a very attractive set up for the overall HDD industry, which is positioned to benefit from both strong demand stemming from hyperscaler capex plans as well as pricing tailwinds. STX is ahead in terms of technology transition and is already shipping next-generation HAMR based solutions to data center customers. Near- and medium-term fundamentals continue to improve as the industry is being disciplined in adding new capacity and focusing on profitable growth.

Valuation

We are increasing our Dec-26 price target to \$920 (vs. \$775 prior) based on a target multiple of 25x on our updated CY27E EPS forecast. We believe the target multiple is justified as it is well ahead of the historical multiple and largely in-line with the average multiple for AI-levered suppliers across our coverage, driven by robust demand from hyperscaler capex plans.

STX P/E-Based Price Target

\$ in mns, except per share amounts

	NTM Qtrs 1-4	2027E
JPM Net Income	5,850	8,526
JPM EPS	\$25.11	\$36.30
P/E Multiple	32x	
JPM P/E Multiple		25x
Implied Equity Value	186,046	216,976
Average Diluted Share Count	228	236
Implied Share Price	\$816.0	\$920
Current Value per Share	816.0	816.0
Upside vs. Current		13%
Memo:		
(-) Net Cash/(Debt)	(2,717)	6,531
Enterprise Value	188,763	210,445
JPM EBITDA	7,537	10,772
Implied EV/EBITDA	25.0x	19.5x

Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P. and J.P. Morgan estimates.

Risks to Rating and Price Target

Downside risks to our rating and price target include a slowdown in Cloud capex spending on AI infrastructure, which could present risk to demand growth forecasts for the HDD industry despite the current robust pipeline of investment announcements. Additionally, technology disruptions – including faster-than-expected migration to flash-based storage driven by narrowing cost differentials between HDDs and NAND, and greater progress on NAND density could present headwinds to our expectations for Seagate shares.

Seagate Summary Table

\$ in Millions, except Earnings Per Share Data

	2024	1Q25	2Q25	3Q25	4Q25	2025	1Q26	2Q26	3Q26	4Q26E	2026E	2027E	2028E
Revenue	6,551	2,168	2,325	2,160	2,444	9,097	2,629	2,825	3,112	3,553	12,119	17,302	23,735
% chg y/y	-11.3%	49.1%	49.5%	30.5%	29.5%	38.9%	21.3%	21.5%	44.1%	45.4%	33.2%	42.8%	37.2%
Gross Margin	25.5%	33.3%	35.5%	36.2%	37.9%	35.8%	40.1%	42.2%	47.0%	50.9%	45.5%	54.5%	59.7%
Opex	993	281	287	274	286	1,128	291	290	296	295	1,172	1,217	1,238
as % of sales	15.2%	13.0%	12.3%	12.7%	11.7%	12.4%	11.1%	10.3%	9.5%	8.3%	9.7%	7.0%	5.2%
Operating Income (COI)	677	442	538	507	640	2,127	763	901	1,167	1,514	4,345	8,214	12,931
operating margin	10.3%	20.4%	23.1%	23.5%	26.2%	23.4%	29.0%	31.9%	37.5%	42.6%	35.8%	47.5%	54.5%
Net Income	272	337	433	407	556	1,733	583	702	934	1,212	3,431	6,707	10,722
Diluted EPS	\$1.29	\$1.58	\$2.03	\$1.90	\$2.59	\$8.11	\$2.61	\$3.11	\$4.10	\$5.25	\$15.12	\$28.70	\$45.40
Diluted Shares (avg.)	211	213	213	214	215	214	223	226	228	231	227	234	236
Cash	1,358	1,239	1,238	814	891	891	1,112	1,046	1,146	1,485	1,485	6,328	14,784
Debt	5,674	5,676	5,679	5,146	4,995	4,995	4,994	4,499	3,863	3,465	3,465	3,465	3,465
Net Debt	4,316	4,437	4,441	4,332	4,104	4,104	3,882	3,453	2,717	1,980	1,980	(2,863)	(11,319)
Net Leverage	4.1x	3.2x	2.5x	2.1x	1.7x	1.7x	1.4x	1.1x	0.7x	0.4x	0.4x	-0.3x	-0.8x
Operating Cash Flow	918	95	221	259	508	1,083	532	723	1,114	1,057	3,426	6,368	10,297
Capital Expenditures	(254)	(68)	(71)	(43)	(83)	(265)	(105)	(116)	(161)	(142)	(524)	(692)	(949)
Free Cash Flow	664	27	150	216	425	818	427	607	953	915	2,902	5,676	9,347
Share repurchases	0	0	0	0	0	0	(29)	0	(30)	(10)	(69)	(160)	(200)

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

Investment Thesis, Valuation and Risks

Western Digital (Overweight; Price Target: \$650.00)

Investment Thesis

We rate Western Digital shares Overweight driven primarily by the opportunity for significant upside to consensus estimates, with the HDD industry positioned to benefit from both strong demand stemming from hyperscaler capex plans as well as pricing tailwinds. WDC is a powerhouse in storage, with its portfolio comprising next-generation HDD solutions that are addressing the growing data storage requirements at data center/cloud/AI infrastructure customers. Near- and medium-term fundamentals continue to improve as the industry is being disciplined in adding new capacity and focusing on profitable growth.

Valuation

We are increasing our Dec-26 price target to \$650 (vs. \$530 prior) based on valuing our updated CY27E EPS on a target P/E multiple of 25x, which is largely in-line with the target multiple for the key peer STX - and is well ahead of the historical multiple given robust HDD storage demand across data centers.

WDC P/E-Based Price Target

\$ in Millions, except per share amounts

	NTM Qtrs 1-4	2027E
JPM Net Income	6,642	9,851
JPM EPS	\$17.27	\$25.70
P/E Multiple	28x	
JPM P/E Multiple		25x
Implied Equity Value	188,685	248,730
Average Diluted Share Count	385	383
Implied Share Price	\$490	\$650
Current Value per Share	\$490.09	\$490.09
Upside vs. Current		33%
<u>Memo:</u>		
(-) Net Cash/(Debt)	469	7,348
Enterprise Value	188,216	241,381
JPM EBITDA	8,473	12,436
Implied EV/EBITDA	22.2x	19.4x

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

Risks to Rating and Price Target

Downside risks to our rating and price target include a slowdown in Cloud capex spending on AI infrastructure, which could present risk to demand growth forecasts for the HDD industry despite the current robust pipeline of investment announcements. Additionally, technology disruptions – including faster-than-expected migration to flash-based storage driven by narrowing cost differentials between HDDs and NAND, as well as greater progress on NAND density – could present headwinds to our expectations for WDC shares.

Western Digital Summary Table

\$ in Millions, except Earnings Per Share Data

	2024	1Q25	2Q25	3Q25	4Q25	2025	1Q26	2Q26	3Q26	4Q26E	2026E	1Q27E	2Q27E	3Q27E	4Q27E	2027E	1Q28E	2Q28E	3Q28E	4Q28E	2028E
Revenue	13,003	4,095	4,285	2,294	2,605	13,279	2,818	3,017	3,337	3,783	12,955	4,121	4,368	4,716	5,288	18,492	5,711	6,017	6,261	7,034	25,023
Gross Margin	22.8%	38.5%	35.9%	40.1%	41.3%	38.5%	43.9%	46.1%	50.5%	53.4%	48.9%	55.0%	56.2%	59.8%	62.2%	58.6%	62.0%	62.6%	64.0%	65.8%	63.7%
Opex	2,448	691	674	324	345	2,034	381	372	397	390	1,540	396	395	398	402	1,591	401	406	407	415	1,629
as % of sales	18.8%	16.9%	15.7%	14.1%	13.2%	15.3%	13.5%	12.3%	11.9%	10.3%	11.9%	9.6%	9.0%	8.5%	7.6%	8.6%	7.0%	6.8%	6.5%	5.9%	6.5%
Operating Income (COI)	512	884	864	596	732	3,076	856	1,019	1,287	1,630	4,792	1,871	2,061	2,423	2,888	9,242	3,137	3,363	3,603	4,214	14,317
operating margin	3.9%	21.6%	20.2%	26.0%	28.1%	23.2%	30.4%	33.8%	38.6%	43.1%	37.0%	45.4%	47.2%	51.4%	54.6%	50.0%	54.9%	55.9%	57.5%	59.9%	57.2%
Net Income	(98)	634	633	487	600	2,354	655	807	1,048	1,361	3,871	1,554	1,712	2,015	2,403	7,685	2,616	2,816	3,009	3,517	11,958
Diluted EPS	-\$0.29	\$1.78	\$1.77	\$1.36	\$1.66	\$6.57	\$1.78	\$2.13	\$2.72	\$3.53	\$10.20	\$4.04	\$4.45	\$5.25	\$6.27	\$20.00	\$6.83	\$7.36	\$7.87	\$9.20	\$31.25
Diluted Shares (avg.)	333	357	357	358	362	359	369	378	385	385	379	385	384	384	383	384	383	383	382	382	383
Cash	1,879	1,705	2,291	3,477	2,114	2,114	2,048	1,975	2,050	2,317	2,317	2,827	3,537	4,476	5,680	5,680	7,181	8,929	10,895	13,071	13,071
Debt	7,434	7,400	7,366	7,333	4,711	4,711	4,683	4,655	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581	1,581
Net Debt	5,555	5,695	5,075	3,856	2,597	2,597	2,635	2,680	(469)	(736)	(736)	(1,246)	(1,956)	(2,895)	(4,099)	(4,099)	(5,600)	(7,348)	(9,314)	(11,490)	(11,490)
Net Leverage	5.1x	2.4x	1.5x	1.1x	0.7x	0.7x	0.8x	0.7x	-0.1x	-0.1x	-0.1x	-0.2x	-0.3x	-0.3x	-0.4x	-0.4x	-0.5x	-0.6x	-0.7x	-0.8x	-0.8x
Operating Cash Flow	(294)	34	403	508	746	1,691	672	745	1,123	1,189	3,729	1,447	1,657	1,902	2,191	7,197	2,507	2,767	2,995	3,239	11,508
Capital Expenditures	(292)	(95)	(113)	(128)	(71)	(407)	(73)	(92)	(145)	(164)	(474)	(179)	(190)	(205)	(230)	(804)	(248)	(261)	(272)	(306)	(1,087)
Free Cash Flow	(586)	(61)	290	380	675	1,284	599	653	978	1,025	3,255	1,268	1,467	1,697	1,961	6,393	2,259	2,506	2,723	2,933	10,421
Share repurchases	0	0	0	0	(149)	(149)	(553)	(615)	(752)	(700)	(2,620)	(700)	(700)	(700)	(700)	(2,800)	(700)	(700)	(700)	(700)	(2,800)

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

Seagate: Summary of Financials

Income Statement - Annual						Income Statement - Quarterly					
	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E		1Q26A	2Q26A	3Q26A	4Q26E	
Revenue	6,551	9,097	12,119	17,302	23,735	Revenue	2,629A	2,825A	3,112A	3,553	
COGS	(4,881)	(5,842)	(6,602)	(7,871)	(9,566)	COGS	(1,575)A	(1,634)A	(1,649)A	(1,744)	
Gross profit	1,670	3,255	5,516	9,431	14,169	Gross profit	1,054A	1,191A	1,463A	1,808	
SG&A	(339)	(404)	(409)	(404)	(384)	SG&A	(105)A	(103)A	(102)A	(99)	
Adj. EBITDA	1,041	2,349	4,611	8,573	13,426	Adj. EBITDA	831A	962A	1,231A	1,587	
D&A	(364)	(222)	(266)	(359)	(495)	D&A	(68)A	(61)A	(64)A	(73)	
Adj. EBIT	677	2,127	4,345	8,214	12,931	Adj. EBIT	763A	901A	1,167A	1,514	
Net Interest	-	-	-	-	-	Net Interest	-	-	-	-	
Adj. PBT	333	1,802	4,077	7,980	12,697	Adj. PBT	689A	831A	1,105A	1,452	
Tax	(61)	(69)	(645)	(1,273)	(1,975)	Tax	(106)A	(129)A	(171)A	(239)	
Minority Interest	-	-	-	-	-	Minority Interest	-	-	-	-	
Adj. Net Income	272	1,733	3,431	6,707	10,722	Adj. Net Income	583A	702A	934A	1,212	
Reported EPS	1.29	8.11	15.12	28.70	45.40	Reported EPS	2.61A	3.11A	4.10A	5.25	
Adj. EPS	1.29	8.11	15.12	28.70	45.40	Adj. EPS	2.61A	3.11A	4.10A	5.25	
DPS	-	-	-	-	-	DPS	-	-	-	-	
Payout ratio	-	-	-	-	-	Payout ratio	-	-	-	-	
Shares outstanding	211	214	227	234	236	Shares outstanding	223A	226A	228A	231	
Balance Sheet & CashFlow Statement						Ratio Analysis					
	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E		FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
Cash and cash equivalents	1,358	891	1,485	6,328	14,784	Gross margin	25.5%	35.8%	45.5%	54.5%	59.7%
Accounts receivable	429	959	1,394	1,931	2,655	EBITDA margin	15.9%	25.8%	38.0%	49.6%	56.6%
Inventories	1,239	1,440	1,655	1,985	2,446	EBIT margin	10.3%	23.4%	35.8%	47.5%	54.5%
Other current assets	306	363	484	690	947	Net profit margin	4.2%	19.0%	28.3%	38.8%	45.2%
Current assets	3,332	3,653	5,017	10,934	20,832	ROE	(20.2%)	(178.3%)	409.2%	132.4%	83.0%
PP&E	1,614	1,657	1,919	2,244	2,690	ROA	3.6%	22.0%	38.8%	52.4%	50.8%
LT investments	-	-	-	-	-	ROCE	13.1%	46.9%	72.1%	80.9%	66.6%
Other non current assets	2,793	2,713	2,742	2,742	2,742	SG&A/Sales	5.2%	4.4%	3.4%	2.3%	1.6%
Total assets	7,739	8,023	9,678	15,919	26,264	Net debt/equity	NM	NM	0.9	NM	NM
Short term borrowings	479	0	0	0	0	Net debt/EBITDA	4.1	1.7	0.4	NM	NM
Payables	1,786	1,604	1,843	2,211	2,725	P/E (x)	632.4	100.6	54.0	28.4	18.0
Other short term liabilities	834	1,044	1,149	1,149	1,149	P/BV (x)	NM	NM	83.9	23.2	10.4
Current liabilities	3,099	2,648	2,992	3,360	3,874	EV/EBITDA (x)	181.3	80.4	40.9	22.0	14.1
Long-term debt	5,195	4,995	3,465	3,465	3,465	Dividend Yield	-	-	-	-	-
Other long term liabilities	936	833	1,091	1,091	1,091	Sales/Assets (x)	0.9	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.1
Total liabilities	9,230	8,476	7,548	7,916	8,430	Interest cover (x)	-	-	-	-	-
Shareholders' equity	(1,491)	(453)	2,130	8,004	17,835	Operating leverage	(566.7%)	551.1%	313.9%	208.3%	154.5%
Minority interests	-	-	-	-	-	Revenue y/y Growth	(11.3%)	38.9%	33.2%	42.8%	37.2%
Total liabilities & equity	7,739	8,023	9,678	15,919	26,264	EBITDA y/y Growth	6.9%	125.7%	96.3%	85.9%	56.6%
Net debt/(cash)	4,316	4,104	1,980	(2,863)	(11,319)	Tax rate	18.3%	3.8%	15.8%	16.0%	15.6%
Cash flow from operating activities	918	1,083	3,426	6,368	10,297	Adj. Net Income y/y Growth	580.6%	537.2%	98.0%	95.5%	59.8%
o/w Depreciation & amortization	264	251	281	367	503	EPS y/y Growth	571.0%	528.3%	86.5%	89.9%	58.2%
o/w Changes in working capital	386	(965)	(268)	(706)	(928)	DPS y/y Growth	-	-	-	-	-
Cash flow from investing activities	126	(276)	(511)	(692)	(949)						
o/w Capital expenditure	(254)	(265)	(524)	(692)	(949)						
as % of sales	3.9%	2.9%	4.3%	4.0%	4.0%						
Cash flow from financing activities	(473)	(1,274)	(2,321)	(833)	(891)						
o/w Dividends paid	(585)	(600)	(635)	(673)	(691)						
o/w Net debt issued/(repaid)	212	(678)	(1,540)	0	0						
o/w Share Repurchases	0	0	(69)	(160)	(200)						
Net change in cash	572	(467)	594	4,843	8,456						
Adj. Free cash flow to firm	664	818	2,902	5,676	9,347						

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

Note: \$ in millions (except per-share data). Fiscal year ends Jun. o/w - out of which

Western Digital: Summary of Financials

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Seagate (STX, STX US) Price Chart



Date	Rating	Price (\$)	Price Target (\$)
30-Mar-26	OW	380.07	525
16-Apr-26	OW	519.60	600
29-Apr-26	OW	579.03	775

Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P. and J.P. Morgan; price data adjusted for stock splits and dividends.
Initiated coverage Mar 30, 2026. All share prices are as of market close on the previous business day.

Western Digital (WDC, WDC US) Price Chart



Date	Rating	Price (\$)	Price Target (\$)
01-Aug-23	N	42.56	45
30-Oct-23	NR	38.97	--
01-May-25	OW	43.86	57
31-Jul-25	OW	71.43	94
31-Oct-25	OW	138.13	175
30-Jan-26	OW	278.41	320
21-Apr-26	OW	374.11	400
01-May-26	OW	434.52	530

Source: Bloomberg Finance L.P. and J.P. Morgan; price data adjusted for stock splits and dividends.
Initiated coverage Dec 17, 2013. All share prices are as of market close on the previous business day.

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Completed 10 Jun 2026 09:05 PM EDT

Disseminated 11 Jun 2026 06:00 AM EDT