V.S. Industry (VSI MK)

Slashed forecasts; downgrade to SELL

We slash FY24E/25E/26E earnings by -31%/-18%/-16% due to lowered sales projections from key customers, namely Customer X, Y, and for its ID operations. VSI highlighted soft orders from these customers in FY24E due to subdued consumer demand and inventory rationalization for Customer X. Our new target price (TP) of MYR0.71 (15x CY24E PER; -0.5SD 5Y mean), down from MYR0.83 (15x FY24E PER), reflects a discounted recovery path. We D/G the stock to SELL from HOLD following the earnings cut.

Key customers updates

In 4QCY23 (Oct-Dec), Customer X's orders sharply declined, impacting VSI's 1HFY24 (FYE Jul) performance. Management expects the weakness to remain in the near term. Despite this, VSI has bolstered its value chain with Customer X by introducing 3 new capabilities (liquid silicone rubber solution, dipping, and blistering) for internal and external sales. These additions aim to enhance long-term margins. Additionally, new model production for its US-based and coffee brewer customer is underway, and order flows from other customers remain on track.

Operational enhancement and streamlining efforts

VSI invested MYR30m in upgrading the recently acquired HTPW's machinery, expecting contributions from 2HCY24 onwards (currently undergoing the learning curve in launching new services). Separately, its HQ's first rooftop solar project has been successfully launched in 1QFY24, and VSI aims to expand rooftop solar to its other facilities (2-3 more projects in the pipeline). FY24E capex is budgeted at MYR60-80m, with half allocated for solar panel installations.

Cautious on its bumpy recovery

We remain cautious about VSI's outlook amid its bumpy recovery. Although continuous efforts have been made to secure new customers, better visibility is anticipated only towards the end of CY24. Global economic challenges pose a key risk to the group's near-term prospects.

FYE Jul (MYR m)	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
Revenue	3,914	4,600	4,203	4,944	5,498
EBITDA	335	394	386	500	573
Core net profit	206	195	160	246	301
Core FDEPS (sen)	4.9	4.7	3.9	5.8	6.6
Core FDEPS growth(%)	(30.8)	(4.7)	(16.2)	47.3	12.8
Net DPS (sen)	2.0	1.9	1.7	2.6	3.1
Core FD P/E (x)	20.5	19.0	19.9	13.5	12.0
P/BV (x)	1.8	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.1
Net dividend yield (%)	2.0	2.1	2.1	3.3	4.0
ROAE (%)	8.1	8.2	6.8	10.0	11.4
ROAA (%)	5.4	4.7	3.7	5.5	6.3
EV/EBITDA (x)	13.0	10.1	8.5	6.6	5.7
Net gearing (%) (incl perps)	13.8	15.5	5.1	6.2	4.2
Consensus net profit	-	-	198	244	298
MIBG vs. Consensus (%)	-	-	(18.9)	0.8	1.1

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SELL

Share Price

Previous Price

[Prior:HOLD]

	MYR 0.79
arget	MYR 0.71 (-7%)
Target	MYR 0.83

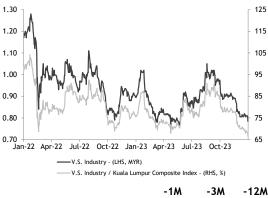
Company Description

VS Industry Bhd is the 26th largest EMS provider in the world by revenue, ranked according to Manufacturing Market Insider in 2020.

Statistics

Statistics	
52w high/low (MYR)	1.05/0.77
3m avg turnover (USDm)	0.8
Free float (%)	66.2
Issued shares (m)	3,880
Market capitalisation	MYR3.0B
	USD646M
Major shareholders:	
Kumpulan Wang Persaraan	9.1%
BEH KIM LING	7.6%
Employees Provident Fund	7.0%

Price Performance



	-1M	-3M	-12M
Absolute (%)	(5)	(18)	(12)
Relative to index (%)	(7)	(21)	(12)
Source: FactSet			



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Risk Rating & Score ¹	9.0
Score Momentum ²	-0.5
Last Updated	25 Sep 2023
Controversy Score ³	0
(Updated: 01 Jan 2000)	

Business Model & Industry Issues

- VSI is Malaysia's leading integrated electronics manufacturing services (EMS) provider (ranked Global Top 50 for the past 15 years) with a proven track-record of manufacturing office and household electrical & electronic products for established global brand names.
- VSI's ESG rating has improved to the highest 4-star (representing the top 25% ESG ratings amongst PLCs in the FBM Emas Index) from 3-star in the recent F4GBM Index semi-annual review in June 2022. VSI is also a member of Responsible Business Alliance (RBA) since Dec 2018, having most of its facilities being RBA-compliant.
- In Feb 2022, VSI appointed PwC to conduct an independent third-party review of its labour practices. The review was completed in June 2022 with no evidence of systemic forced labour practices identified. Having said that, gaps and areas for improvement were highlighted to VSI, primarily relating to recruitment fees, overtime, accommodation and effective communication. VSI has acknowledged these matters and taken immediate remedial actions to rectify the issues.

Material E issues

- Most operational processes are ISO 14001:2015 certified the global industry standard benchmark for environmental management measures. VSI has also been a F4GBM index constituent since Jun 2018.
- <u>Waste management</u>: VSI handles all hazardous waste in accordance with Environmental Quality (Scheduled Wastes) Regulations 2005 and other relevant environmental-related legislation in the Environmental Quality Act 1974 (EQA 1974). The volume of recycled waste was up by 3.9% YoY in FY22 at 1,714 tonnes (vs. 1,650 tonnes in FY21).
- <u>Air pollution</u>: Chimney emission testing are done regularly. In FY22, periodic tests showed its emissions complied with the Environmental Quality (Clean Air) Regulations 1978 and Environmental Quality (Clean Air) Regulations 2014.
- <u>Water pollution</u>: VSI has set targets (above regulatory requirements) at each plant to minimise resource use. All plants have achieved targets in total consumption per unit produced in FY22.

Material S issues

- <u>Sustainable supply chain</u>: Has an established Supplier Code of Conduct in place, covering areas such as human rights, labour conditions, environmental impacts, anticorruptions, etc. In FY22, 63% of its procurement was from local suppliers (FY21: 57%).
- Occupational safety & health (OSH): VSI strives to minimise work-related accidents and injuries for its 9,805 strong workforce. In FY22, its employees Lost-Time Incident Rate (LTIR) improved to 14.27 from 15.68 in FY21, with zero fatality rate recorded during the year.
- <u>Employee diversity</u>: In FY22, VSI employed more women (52%) than men (48%), with 70% of its workforce under the age of 30. Also, estd total hours employees spent on training improved sharply to 1,400 hrs/yr from 475 hrs/yr in FY21.

Key G metrics and issues

- Independent Directors currently make up 45% of the Board (5 out of 11). Although the composition is in compliant with Bursa's Main Market Listing requirements, it fell short of the Malaysian Code on Corporate Governance (MCCG) practise of having ≥50% of the Board comprising of Independent members.
- Female representation on the Board is currently lacking at only 9% or 1 of the 11 Board members (vs. 30% as recommended by MCCG).
- None of the group's Independent Board members have served a consecutive term of 9 years.
- The positions of Chairman and Managing Director are held by different individuals. All 3 Board committees (Audit & Risk, Nomination, Remuneration) are chaired by and comprise solely of Independent Directors.
- Directors' remuneration is relatively high at 21.8% of FY22 net profit.
- KPMG has been the external auditor for more than 24 years since VSI was listed on the Main Market of Bursa Malaysia in 1998.
- The group has a 43.3% stake in a Hong Kong-listed subsidiary, V.S. International Group (1002 HK, Not Rated; listed on Main Board of HKSE in 2002). In 2017, VSI subscribed to its entire allotted portion of 200 million rights issue shares (totalling HKD46 million) with proceeds intended for debt repayment, to increase manufacturing capacity and for working capital.
- <u>Related-party transaction</u>: In Apr 2023, VSI purchased two parcels of land (including factory and office) for MYR6m from a company owned by two of its Executive Directors cum substantial shareholder. The property was valued by a registered professional valuer and was deemed to be fair and reasonable to the group.

<u>Risk Rating & Score</u> - derived by Sustainalytics and assesses the company's exposure to unmanaged ESG risks. Scores range between 0 - 50 in order of increasing severity with low/high scores & ratings representing negligible/significant risk to the company's enterprise value, respectively, from ESG-driven financial impacts. <u>Score</u> <u>Momentum</u> - indicates changes to the company's score since the last update - a <u>negative</u> integer indicates a company's improving risk score; a <u>positive</u> integer indicates a deterioration. <u>Controversy Score</u> - reported periodically by Sustainalytics in the event of material ESG-related incident(s), with the impact severity scores of these events ranging from Category 0-5 (0 - no reports; 1 - negligible risks; ...; 5 - poses serious risks & indicative of potential structural deficiencies at the company).

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	Quant	itative Parameters (Score: 37)			
	Particulars	Unit	FY20	FY21	FY22	VMS (FY21)
	Scope 1 emissions	tCO2e	442	447	455	68,061
	Scope 2 emissions	tCO2e	29,895	24,835	27,321	65,952
	Total	tCO2e	30,337	25,282	27,776	134,013
	Scope 3 emissions	tCO2e	N/A	N/A	17,549	N/A
Е	Total	tCO2e	-	-	45,325	-
	Emissions Intensity	kg CO2e/kg/unit	0.075	0.048	0.079	28.4
	Electricity consumption intensity	MWh	51,103	42,453	46,703	115,676
	Total Hazardous Waste Disposal	tonnes	1089	585	692	121
	Total water consumption	m3	245,752	216,091	349,613	685
	Cases of enviornmental non-compliance	number	N/A	N/A	2	0
	% of women in workforce	%	57.0%	52.0%	52.0%	55.1%
	% of women in the mgmt role	%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total training hours	hrs/yr/emp	1.5	1.0	1.0	34.0
S	Lost-time incident rate	number	29.90	15.68	14.27	0.70
	Employee turnover rate	%	-	54%	41%	N/A
	Local suppliers	%	57%	57%	63%	N/A
	Investment in CSR initiatives	MYR '000	106	79	232	29
	BOD's remuneration as % of reported net profit	%	24.6%	14.8%	21.8%	0.3%
	Independent directors (tenure <10 years)	%	33.3%	40.0%	45.0%	75.0%
G	Women directors as a % of the board	%	11.1%	10.0%	9.1%	38.0%
	% of profits returned to shareholders	%	40.6%	45.4%	45.8%	70.0%
	Total corruption and bribery cases	number	0	0	0	0
	lotal corruption and bridery cases	number	0	0	0	

Qualitative Parameters (Score: 67)

a) Is there an ESG policy in place and whether there is a standalone ESG committee or is it part of Risk committee? Yes - it has an established sustainability framework. The Board oversees the development and adoption of sustainability strategies which is executed by a sustainability working group led by the Operations Director.

b) Are the senior management's salaries linked to fulfiling ESG targets?

No.

c) Does the company has human rights violation policies in place?

Yes.

d) Is the company involved in any major adverse controversies relating to labor, corruption and bribery, environmental hazards? No.

e) Does the company have a mechanism to capture Scope 3 emissions - which parameters are captured?

Yes - it calculates GHG emissions from point-to-point air travel as well as employees' daily commute to work.

f) What are the 2-3 key carbon mitigation/water/waste management strategies adopted by the company?

VSI launched a resource-efficiency pilot program at one of its plants in FY22. The program monitors daily lighting energy usage and switches off lights when there is no production. Heavy machinery is operated or replaced at night to avoid peak demand. Air conditioning is set to 25°C except in specific areas, such as the Clean Room. Energy efficiency targets have been established for the plant.

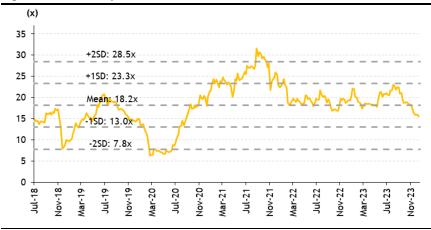
	Target (Score: 83)	
Particulars	Target	Achieved
Electricity consumption/unit	<7.09 kW/unit/mth	Yes
Water consumption/unit	<0.03 m3/unit/mth	No
Scheduled waste/unit	<0.0033 kg/unit/mth	Yes
Hazardous waste disposal	<2,842 kg	Yes
Net zero/carbon emission reduction targets	N/Å	N/A
Cases of corruption and fines for unethical practices	N/A	Yes
Electricity consumption/unit	<7.09 kW/unit/mth	Yes
	Impact	
	ŇA	

Overall Score: 56

As per our ESG matrix, VSI has an overall score of 56.

ESG score	Weights	Scores	Final Score
Quantitative	50%	37	18
Qualitative	25%	67	17
Target	25%	83	21
Total			56

Figure 1: VSI's one-year forward PER at 15.6x now



Source: Bloomberg, Maybank IBG Research



Figure 2: VSI's one-year forward PBV at 1.2x now

Source: Bloomberg, Maybank IBG Research

Risk statement

There are several risk factors that may impact our earnings estimates, target price and rating for VSI. Key risks include: (i) weaker-than-expected consumer demand for VSI's assembled products (due to a weakening economic outlook); (ii) lowerthan-expected margins (resulting from decreased productivity/efficiencies and costs inflation); and (iii) persistent operational disruptions from labour issues and/or components shortage. Positive catalysts include: (i) new customer acquisition; (ii) new models win from existing customers, leading to increased production volume and utilisation rates; (iii) successful vertical integration/service expansion to enhance margins; and (iv) successful costs savings or higher-thanexpected costs past through.

Appendix I

Methodology of our proprietary ESG scoring methodology. We evaluate the ESG ratings based on quantitative, qualitative and ESG targets. We assign a score for each of these three parameters. The overall rating is based on the weighted average of the scores: quantitative (50%), qualitative (25%) and ESG target (25%). For the quantitative, qualitative and ESG target, the sub-parameters are assigned a score - '0' for data not available, '+1' for improving trajectory, positive change, 'Yes', better than peers or a positive number if historical is not available and '-1' for declining trajectory, negative change, 'No', lower than peers or a negative number. The total of the scores of all the sub-parameters is divided by the total number of sub-parameters is the score of each of the three parameters. The sub-parameters may be different for different industries depending on the key areas to monitor for each industry. A company should achieve a minimum score of 50 for an average ESG rating.

FYE 31 Jul	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E	FY26
Key Metrics					
P/E (reported) (x)	27.5	18.5	18.8	12.2	10.
Core P/E (x)	18.7	17.6	18.8	12.2	10.
Core FD P/E (x)	20.5	19.0	19.9	13.5	12.
P/BV (x)	1.8	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.
P/NTA (x)	1.8	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.
Net dividend yield (%)	2.0	2.1	2.1	3.3	4.
FCF yield (%)	2.0 nm	0.6	11.4	3.0	6.
EV/EBITDA (x)	13.0	10.1	8.5	6.6	5.
EV/EBIT (x)	20.2	14.5	13.6	9.2	J. 7.
	20.2	14.5	15.0	7.2	7.
INCOME STATEMENT (MYR m)					
Revenue	3,914.1	4,599.8	4,202.8	4,943.5	5,497.
BITDA	334.7	393.9	385.9	500.0	573.
Depreciation	(118.7)	(120.1)	(143.3)	(138.1)	(133.4
Amortisation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.
EBIT	216.0	273.8	242.6	361.9	439.
Net interest income /(exp)	(9.7)	(29.7)	(31.7)	(30.3)	(30.5
Associates & JV	(0.5)	(29.7)	(31.7)	(30.3)	(50.5
	(0.3)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.
Other pretax income Protax profit					
Pretax profit	205.8	245.6	212.5	333.1	410.
ncome tax	(54.4)	(71.2)	(61.6)	(96.6)	(119.1
Ainorities	19.4	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.
Discontinued operations	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.
Reported net profit	170.8	183.9	160.4	246.1	301.
Core net profit	206.0	195.4	160.4	246.1	301.
BALANCE SHEET (MYR m)					
Cash & Short Term Investments	278.6	323.8	543.8	508.1	555.
Accounts receivable	1,092.3	1,283.6	1,172.8	1,379.5	1,534.
	925.0	1,096.6	1,000.1	1,168.4	1,294.
nventory	925.0	0.0	0.0	-	-
Reinsurance assets				0.0	0.
Property, Plant & Equip (net)	1,214.5	1,194.4	1,151.1	1,112.0	1,077.
ntangible assets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.
nvestment in Associates & JVs	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.
Other assets	469.8	439.0	437.3	431.6	425.
Fotal assets	3,980.2	4,337.4	4,305.2	4,599.5	4,887.
T interest bearing debt	478.6	478.6	478.6	478.6	478.
Accounts payable	860.3	1,019.9	930.2	1,086.6	1,203.
nsurance contract liabilities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.
T interest bearing debt	125.2	225.2	196.2	196.2	196.
Other liabilities	155.0	155.0	155.0	155.0	155.
Fotal Liabilities	1,619.2	1,878.8	1,760.1	1,916.6	2,033.
Shareholders Equity	2,190.3	2,297.4	2,393.7	2,540.8	2,721.
Minority Interest	170.7	161.2	151.7	142.3	132.
Fotal shareholder equity	2,361.0	2,458.6	2,545.5	2,683.1	2,854.
Fotal liabilities and equity	3,980.2	4,337.4	4,305.6	4,599.7	4,887.
CASH FLOW (MYR m)	205.0		242 5		110
Pretax profit	205.8	245.6	212.5	333.1	410.
Depreciation & amortisation	118.7	120.1	143.3	138.1	133.
Adj net interest (income)/exp	9.7	29.7	31.7	30.3	30.
Change in working capital	(109.2)	(201.4)	119.6	(215.0)	(160.)
Cash taxes paid	(54.4)	(71.2)	(61.6)	(96.6)	(119.
Other operating cash flow	0.5	(1.5)	(1.5)	(1.5)	(1.
Cash flow from operations	171.0	121.2	444.0	188.4	293
Capex	(207.6)	(100.0)	(100.0)	(99.0)	(99.
ree cash flow	(36.6)	21.2	344.0	89.4	194
Dividends paid	(84.0)	(73.6)	(64.1)	(98.4)	(120.
quity raised / (purchased)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.
Change in Debt	0.0	100.0	(29.0)	0.0	0.
Other invest/financing cash flow	(8.5)	(32.2)	(30.7)		(26.)
•				(26.7)	
Effect of exch rate changes	47.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.
Net cash flow	(82.0)	15.5	220.1	(35.7)	47.

FYE 31 Jul	FY22A	FY23A	FY24E	FY25E	FY26
Key Ratios					
Growth ratios (%)					
Revenue growth	(2.2)	17.5	(8.6)	17.6	11.2
EBITDA growth	(23.7)	17.7	(2.0)	29.6	14.6
EBIT growth	(35.9)	26.8	(11.4)	49.2	21.
Pretax growth	(37.5)	19.4	(13.5)	56.8	23.3
Reported net profit growth	(30.4)	7.7	(12.8)	53.4	22.4
Core net profit growth	(23.6)	(5.1)	(18.0)	53.4	22.4
Profitability ratios (%)					
EBITDA margin	8.6	8.6	9.2	10.1	10.4
EBIT margin	5.5	6.0	5.8	7.3	8.0
Pretax profit margin	5.3	5.3	5.1	6.7	7.5
Payout ratio	44.7	40.0	40.0	40.0	40.0
DuPont analysis					
Net profit margin (%)	4.4	4.0	3.8	5.0	5.5
Revenue/Assets (x)	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.1
Assets/Equity (x)	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8
ROAE (%)	8.1	8.2	6.8	10.0	11.4
ROAA (%)	5.4	4.7	3.7	5.5	6.3
Liquidity & Efficiency					
Cash conversion cycle	88.4	99.1	112.2	99.1	101.7
Days receivable outstanding	95.9	93.0	105.2	92.9	95.4
Days inventory outstanding	80.0	87.5	99.5	88.1	90.4
Days payables outstanding	87.5	81.4	92.6	82.0	84.0
Dividend cover (x)	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
Current ratio (x)	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.1
Leverage & Expense Analysis					
Asset/Liability (x)	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4
Net gearing (%) (incl perps)	13.8	15.5	5.1	6.2	4.2
Net gearing (%) (excl. perps)	13.8	15.5	5.1	6.2	4.2
Net interest cover (x)	22.3	9.2	7.7	11.9	14.4
Debt/EBITDA (x)	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.3	1.3
Capex/revenue (%)	5.3	2.2	2.4	2.0	1.6
Net debt/ (net cash)	325.2	380.0	131.0	166.7	119.0

Source: Company; Maybank IBG Research

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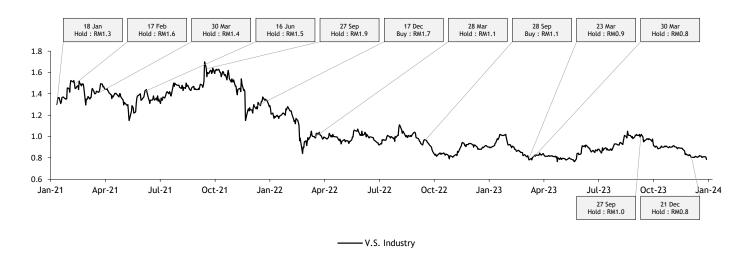
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