

Numis Smaller Companies Index

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2 October 2012

Numis Smaller Companies Index

Q3 2012 Review

UK Smaller Companies have registered another strong quarter, outperforming the overall UK market by almost 5%. Year to date outperformance is a very impressive 14%. Over the last five years the Numis index has outperformed by a little over 3% per annum, despite the economic downturn. Underneath the headline index performance, Smallcap Value appears to have staged something of a recovery after a poor few years, up 6% relative to Smallcap Growth for the year to date.

- Numis Smaller Companies Index: The Numis Smaller Companies Index (formerly the RBS Hoare Govett Smaller Companies Index) is compiled by Professor Paul Marsh and Professor Elroy Dimson of London Business School. The index was first published in 1987, with a back-history dating from 1955. The primary index covers over 800 companies which make up the bottom 10% of the UK main listed market by value. Over 1955-2011 the Numis SC Index ex Investment Companies total return has beaten that of the FTSE All-Share by an average of 3.2% pa.
- Smaller company performance in 2012 YTD: The period from 2000-2011 was a strong one for small-caps, with the Numis SC ex IC index total return outperforming the FTSE All-Share by 3.4% pa. Looking more recently, 2011 was disappointing, down 5.6% relative to the market, after two years of strong outperformance. However UK small-caps have returned to form in 2012. The Numis SC ex IC index total return YTD has been 22.1%. This is 14.0% outperformance versus the FTSE All-Share, which produced a total return of 8.2%. After a strong Q1, Q2 was weaker, but Q3 saw a return to outperformance, up 4.8% relative.
- Style: We now provide style data on a monthly basis to Numis Smaller Company index users. For the past few years Growth has been in the ascendancy. However Value has seen a return to form in 2012. We estimate that Smallcap Value has outperformed Smallcap Growth by around 6% over the last 9 months, with most of that relative performance coming since the start of June.
- Valuation: At the end of September the Numis Smaller Companies index traded on a trailing PE relative to the FTSE All-Share of 124. Ostensibly this is close to the 30-year relative valuation high, and well ahead of the average PE relative over the last 30 years of 94. However we think that, significantly more than is usually the case, this reflects different sector weightings. We estimate that excluding Resources and Financials, the smaller company sector trades on a very similar multiple to the overall market. In absolute terms, the UK smaller company sector trailing PE of 13.6x is very close to its long-run historical average.
- **Rebalancing:** The Numis Smaller Companies index is rebalanced at the start of each calendar year. In this document we show the changes that would have happened had the rebalancing happened at the end of September.

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Smaller company performance

Having had a strong first half overall, UK smaller companies continued to outperform through Q3 2012. The Numis Smaller Companies Index excluding Investment Companies produced a total return of 9.5% in the third quarter, giving arithmetic outperformance compared to the FTSE All-Share index of 4.8%. Outperformance year-to-date has been 14.0%.

The table below shows the performance of various indices for each of the first three quarters of 2012, as well as for the year to date.

Table 1. Smaller company index performance, Q1-Q3 2012

	% change (capital gains)			% change (total returns)				
	Q112	Q212	Q312	YTD	Q112	Q212	Q312	YTD
Numis SC Index (ex Inv Cos)	17.7	(6.6)	8.7	19.5	18.1	(5.6)	9.5	22.1
Numis SC Index (ex Inv Cos) rel All-Share	12.6	(2.9)	5.0	14.6	12.0	(2.9)	4.8	14.0
Numis SC + AIM (ex Inv Cos)	16.0	(8.3)	7.4	14.2	16.4	(7.5)	8.0	16.3
Numis SC + AIM (ex Inv Cos) rel All-Share	10.9	(4.6)	3.6	9.2	10.3	(4.9)	3.3	8.1
Numis SC Index (inc Inv Cos)	15.0	(6.1)	7.5	16.2	15.5	(5.1)	8.3	18.7
Numis SC + AIM (inc Inv Cos)	14.2	(7.6)	6.6	12.5	14.6	(6.8)	7.3	14.7
Numis 1000 Index (ex Inv Cos)	18.4	(7.0)	8.0	18.8	18.8	(5.9)	8.7	21.4
Numis 1000 Index (inc Inv Cos)	13.9	(6.2)	6.5	13.8	14.5	(5.2)	7.2	16.2
FTSE All-Share	5.1	(3.7)	3.7	4.9	6.1	(2.6)	4.7	8.2
FTSE 100	3.5	(3.4)	3.1	3.0	4.6	(2.3)	4.1	6.4
FTSE 250 (inc Inv Cos)	14.2	(5.3)	7.3	16.1	14.7	(4.2)	8.2	18.9
FTSE 250 (ex Inv Cos)	15.4	(5.4)	8.0	18.0	15.9	(4.2)	8.9	20.9
FTSE 350	4.9	(3.7)	3.6	4.7	5.9	(2.6)	4.6	7.9
FTSE SmallCap (inc Inv Cos)	14.3	(5.2)	8.0	17.0	14.8	(4.2)	8.6	19.3
FTSE SmallCap (ex Inv Cos)	17.7	(5.3)	10.4	23.0	18.2	(4.1)	11.0	25.9
FTSE Fledgling (inc Inv Cos)	12.3	(7.4)	5.9	10.1	12.8	(6.3)	6.6	12.6
FTSE Fledgling (ex Inv Cos)	15.0	(10.3)	5.5	8.7	15.3	(9.2)	6.2	11.2
FTSE AIM All-Share	14.7	(15.1)	4.5	1.8	14.8	(14.8)	4.7	2.4

Source: Numis Securities Research Department, Datastream

AIM continues to perform relatively less well than the main market listed companies. The FTSE AIM All-Share index produced a 4.7% total return in Q312 compared to the main Numis smaller companies index return of 9.5%. The Numis SC + AIM index (ex Inv Cos) total return was 8.0% in Q3, compared to the main listed Numis SC index total return of 9.5%. YTD the Numis SC + AIM index lags its main-listed sibling by almost 6%.

The first chart below shows the absolute performance of the primary Numis SC index, alongside the larger FTSE indices.

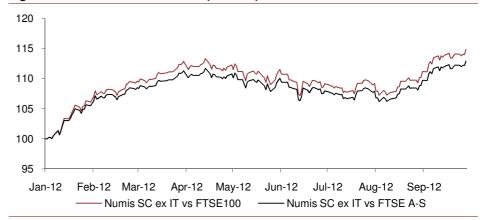
Figure 1. Total return YTD (indexed)



Source: Numis Securities Research Department, Datastream

The second chart shows the relative performance of the primary Numis SC index for the year to date, demonstrating that the recent robust performance has come mainly since the start of August.

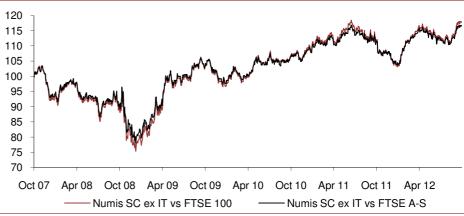
Figure 2. Relative total return YTD (indexed)



Source: Numis Securities Research Department, Datastream

In the third chart we show the relative performance of the key Numis SC index compared to these two larger company indices over the last five years. On a five year view smaller companies have outperformed the FTSE 100 by 18% in total returns terms, or 3.3% p.a. This 5-year annualised outperformance is almost identical to the annualised outperformance of the index over the full 57 year back-history up to the end of 2011, which stands at +3.2%.

Figure 3. Relative total return over 5 years (indexed)



Source: Numis Securities Research Department, Datastream



Possible index inclusions & exclusions

The Numis Smaller Companies Index is rebalanced at the end of each year. If the rebalancing were to have taken place at the end of September, the cut-off would have been just over £1.3bn.

Table 2. Potential index inclusions (>£100m MV)

Company	Share Price (p)	Market Cap (£m)
PZ Cussons	300	1,286
Imagination Technologies	475	1,255
Carillion	271	1,166
FirstGroup	240	1,157
Ferrexpo	194	1,141
Lonmin	558	1,130
Playtech	370	1,070
Bwin.Party	104	845
BH Macro (Investment Company)	1,983	813
Carphone Warehouse	164	773
Bank of Georgia	1,272	457
RusPetro	107	357
NMC	181	336
Greencore	80	312
Bumi	150	271

Source: Numis Securities Research Department. Prices at 28 September 2012

In addition, United Drug's closure of its Irish listing from 3 October is expected to qualify the group for the Numis Index series at the next re-balancing (market capitalisation $\mathfrak{L}574m$).

Table 3. Potential index exclusions

Share price (p)	Market Cap (£m)
608	2,425
344	2,059
896	1,799
54	1,751
186	1,723
701	1,720
185	1,695
170	1,655
486	1,643
324	1,630
93	1,611
173	1,570
140	1,522
81	1,476
727	1,430
451	1,410
1,967	1,339
824	1,334
528	1,328
	608 344 896 54 186 701 185 170 486 324 93 173 140 81 727 451 1,967 824

Source: Numis Securities Research Department. Prices at 28 September 2012

Industry group performance

Rather than looking at the minutiae of performance for every different sector, we look at aggregate performance for seven industry groupings plus the rest. This helps to draw out the major themes without getting lost in too much detail. Performance by industry grouping is shown in the table below:

Table 4. Industry grouping total return within the Numis Smallcap Index

	Weighting			-	
(%)	(start of year)	Q112	Q212	Q312	YTD
Consumer Services	20	19	(3)	11	28
Financials	17	15	(4)	10	21
Support Services	14	21	(8)	9	22
Industrials (1)	12	18	(5)	9	22
Technology	8	28	0	12	43
Mining	7	5	(21)	0	(17)
Oil & Gas	6	24	(17)	13	16
Other	18	17	(1)	7	25
Index (ex Inv Cos)		18	(6)	9	22

⁽¹⁾ The ICB Industrials sector ex Support Services (includes Construction, Capital Goods and Industrial Transportation)
Source: Numis Securities Research Department

- Oils: The Oil & Gas sector was, by a whisker, the strongest performing major industry group in Q312 in the Numis SC Index. Ophir Energy remains the leading performance contributor to the Index overall during 2012. In Q312 Afren has been a particularly significant performer, but the other larger stocks in the sector have all performed well.
- **Technology:** The Technology sector has been the best performing industry group in the Numis Smallcap index YTD, up 43%. Following a robust H1 performance the sector was also one of the best performing in Q3. The strong performance year-to-date has been broadly spread across the larger stocks in the sector, helped by the take-overs of Logica and Misys early in the year, but also benefitting from the rises from the likes of Telecity, Aveva, Pace, CSR, and Micro Focus.
- **Mining:** The Mining sector has been the worst performer in each of the first three quarters of the year. Three of the five worst contributors to the overall Numis SC index performance come from the sector (Aquarius Platinum, New World Resources and Petropavlovsk) although poor Q312 sector performance was offset by a strong showing from Centamin.
- Consumer Services: Consumer Services (Retail, Media, Travel & Leisure) is the largest single industry group in the Numis SC index. Strong recent performances by Dunelm, Debenhams, UBM, and Mitchells & Butler have been particularly notable from this industry group, while Sports Direct's continuing strength puts the company in the top three for positive contribution for the overall index year to date.
- The Financials, Support Services and Industrials industry groups have performed very closely in line with the index both in Q312 as well as YTD.
- Within the Other category in the table above, the house builders have had a continued strong performance, with both Barratt and Taylor Wimpey among the top 10 overall performance contributors for the index. Healthcare lagged in Q3.

Style returns in smaller companies

In the past, Dimson & Marsh have produced data on style returns in their Annual Review. This data is now made available each month to index subscribers. Three sets of style performance are currently provided:

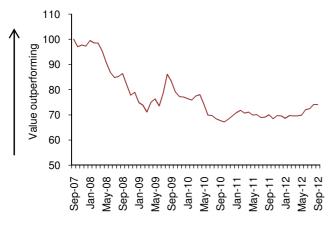
- Value: Value is measured by ranking stocks by their ratio of equity book value to market value. The 40% highest book-to-market group are measured as Value, and the 40% lowest as Growth. Since 1955 Value has outperformed growth (+4.5% pa 1955-2011), and while Value has also beaten Growth over 20 and 10 years, over the last five years and nine months (2007 to date) Growth has had a very strong run, outperforming Value by 7.3% pa.
- Size: In addition to the comparison of the overall bottom 10% of the market with the whole market, shown above, we also provide data on size performance within the Numis SC Index. We divide into smaller small (the 70% of the Numis SC by number with the lowest capitalisation) and larger small (the top 30%). Since 1955 smaller small companies have modestly outperformed larger small companies (+0.8% pa 1955-2011), although over the last 20 years the effect has been the reverse (-1.6% pa since 1990).
- Momentum: We produce two momentum measures. The primary measure that we focus on is "12-1-1". This involves ranking stocks by their returns over the past 12-months and defining winners as the top 20% of performers, and losers as the bottom 20%. The strategy is to then wait 1 month before investing for 1 month in the winners and losers, then to repeat the process, rebalancing each month. We also provide data on a "6-1-6" strategy (measure over 6 months, wait 1 month, hold for 6 months, rebalance every 6 months). Over the very long term, winners have very strongly outperformed losers, on average by 17% pa since 1955, using the 12-1-1 approach.

The charts below show these style effects over the last 5 years and the last 9 months.

Value versus Growth

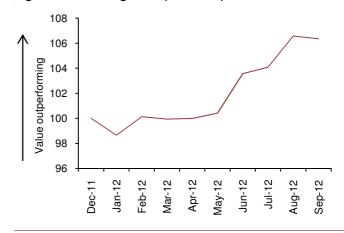
On a five year view Growth has significantly outperformed Value. However this statement now essentially depends on a very strong performance by Growth stocks in 2008. At the start of 2012 there were a few months of limited Value / Growth style effects, but the last few months have seen Value performing comparatively strongly. Year to date Value, as measured by companies on a low price-book, is ahead of Growth by over 6%.

Figure 4. Value vs growth (5 years)



Source: Numis Securities Research Department

Figure 5. Value vs growth (9 months)



Source: Numis Securities Research Department

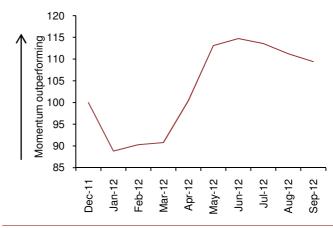
Momentum

Momentum (backing recent share price winners) performed very strongly in Q212. It was unusual to see momentum performing at the same time as value during that quarter. While value continued to outperform in Q312, as noted above, momentum has modestly underperformed in the quarter. As a result the combination of style factors in the last quarter has been more conventional.

Figure 6. Winners vs losers (5 years)



Figure 7. Winners vs losers (9 months)



Source: Numis Securities Research Department

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"Large small" versus "small small"

Looking at size effects within smaller companies, over 5 years "large small" has outperformed "small small". However through 2012 to date "small small" has outperformed larger small companies by around 3%. By the standards of historic style effects this is not a large movement.

Figure 8. "Large small" vs "small small" (5 years)

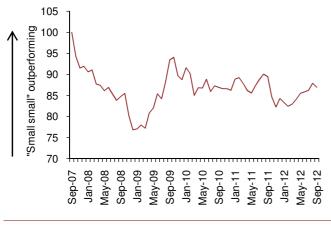
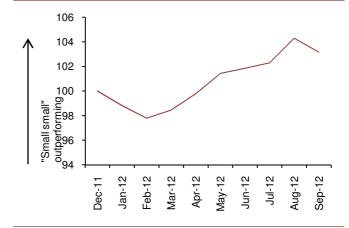


Figure 9. "Large small" vs "small small" (9 months)

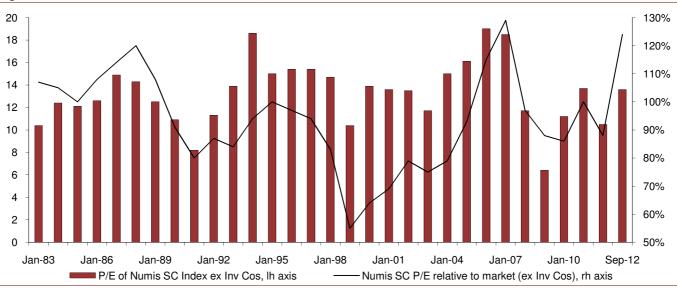


Source: Numis Securities Research Department

Smaller Company P/E Ratios

Following their strong performance in 2012 so far, smaller companies now trade on a relative trailing PE that is close to peak historic levels, as shown in the chart below.

Figure 10. P/E ratios for Numis SC ex Inv Cos, measured in absolute and relative terms



Source: Numis Securities Research Department

At the end of September the Numis SC Index trailing P/E was 13.6x. This compares to the market overall which we estimate stands on a trailing P/E of 11.0x. The P/E relative of 124% is approaching the relative high measured at the start of 2007. Does this historically high relative valuation bode poorly for the smaller company segment?

To an extent we caution that these valuation calculations are backward rather than forward-looking. In addition, the time series is influenced by the exclusion of loss-makers, or companies with very high P/E multiples, although we argue that including these companies would be more of a distortion than excluding them.

Perhaps more importantly, the relative valuation of the Numis Index compared to the market is currently more than normally heavily influenced by different sector weightings. Large integrated oil & gas companies, large mature mining companies, and banks make up over one-third of the overall market by market capitalisation, but barely figure in the smaller companies sector. Smaller companies are heavily overweight Support Services, Industrials, Technology, General Retail and Specialist Financials services companies:

- If the overall market was weighted the same as the Numis index by industry group, then the difference between the P/E of the market and the P/E of the smaller company sector falls to below 10%.
- Excluding Resources and Financials, smaller companies trade on a very similar multiple to the overall market, with the Oils sector providing most of this effect.
- Finally, looked at in absolute terms, the historical P/E of smaller companies is close to its long-term average. The current trailing P/E of 13.6x compares to an average over the prior 30 years of 13.3x.

In summary the valuation of smaller companies is not unusual. What *is* unusual is the trailing P/E of the UK market at 11.0x, compared to a 30-year average of 14.6x. This in turn in particular reflects, we think, investor scepticism about the sustainability and in some cases quality of earnings in the now very large Resources sector. Investors making a negative call on the smaller company sector as a result of overall relative valuations should be aware that they may more accurately be described as making a positive call on the Resources sector.



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Ratings Key

In making a recommendation the analyst should compare his target price with the actual share price and then make a recommendation derived from the percentage thus calculated.:

As from 14 February 2005, the formula is:				
Buy	> +20%			
Add	> +10% to +19.99%			
Hold	0% to +/-9.99%			
Reduce	-10% to -19.99%			
Sell	> -20%			

With effect from 9 February 2010 upon the initial establishment of a recommendation and target price for a company, an additional 10 % deviation in the price from the default bands set out above is permitted before the recommendation has to be changed in subsequently published research documents.

Distribution of Ratings

		US Requirement 01/07/11 - 30/06/12		UK Requirement 01/04/12 - 30/06/12		
	All Securities	Corporate Clients	All Securities	Corporate Clients		
Buy	44.3%	69.7%	51.8%	77.3%		
Add	21.6%	16.2%	17.3%	13.3%		
Hold	28.3%	14.1%	25.9%	9.3%		
Reduce	2.6%	0.0%	2.3%	0.0%		
Sell	3.2%	0.0%	2.7%	0.0%		
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%		
	recommendations last recommend research stock d	The above table shows the split of recommendations based on the last recommendation for each research stock during the last four calendar quarters.		recommendations during the last		

For the split of recommendations by sector for the period from 1 Jan 2011 to 31 Dec 2011, please contact the Research Department of Numis Securities Ltd.

services.