ETF & Mutual Fund Rankings: Financials Sector

The Financials sector ranks second out of the 11 sectors as detailed in our 1Q18 Sector Ratings for ETFs and Mutual Funds report. Last quarter, the Financials sector ranked second as well. It gets our Attractive rating, which is based on an aggregation of ratings of 29 ETFs and 39 mutual funds in the Financials sector as of January 9, 2017. See a recap of our 4Q17 Sector Ratings here.

Figures 1 and 2 show the five best and worst rated ETFs and mutual funds in the sector. Not all Financials sector ETFs and mutual funds are created the same. The number of holdings varies widely (from 24 to 413). This variation creates drastically different investment implications and, therefore, ratings.

Investors seeking exposure to the Financials sector should buy one of the Attractive-or-better rated ETFs or mutual funds from Figures 1 and 2.

Our Robo-Analyst technology empowers our unique ETF and mutual fund rating methodology, which leverages our rigorous analysis of each fund's holdings.[1] We think advisors and investors focused on prudent investment decisions should include analysis of fund holdings in their research process for ETFs and mutual funds.

Figure 1: ETFs with the Best & Worst Ratings – Top 5

	Allocation of ETF Holdings			
Ticker	**Attractive-or-better Stocks**	**Neutral Stocks**	**Unattractive-or-worse Stocks**	**Predictive Rating**
Best ETFs				
XLF	11%	71%	16%	**Very Attractive**
FFTY	21%	36%	24%	**Very Attractive**
FNCL	13%	66%	19%	**Attractive**
VFH	13%	66%	20%	**Attractive**
IYG	10%	63%	26%	**Attractive**
Worst ETFs				
QABA	12%	50%	28%	**Attractive**
AIRR	7%	31%	53%	**Neutral**
KBE	8%	44%	46%	**Neutral**
KRE	7%	41%	48%	**Neutral**
KBWD	18%	33%	27%	**Unattractive**

* Best ETFs exclude ETFs with TNAs less than $100 million for inadequate liquidity.

Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

iShares Edge MSCI Multifactor Financials ETF (FNCF) is excluded from Figure 1 because its total net assets (TNA) are below $100 million and do not meet our liquidity minimums.

[1] Ernst & Young's recent white paper "Getting ROIC Right" proves the superiority of our holdings research and analytics.

Figure 2: Mutual Funds with the Best & Worst Ratings – Top 5

	Allocation of Mutual Fund Holdings			
Ticker	**Attractive-or-better Stocks**	**Neutral Stocks**	**Unattractive-or-worse Stocks**	**Predictive Rating**
Best Mutual Funds				
FSVLX	36%	41%	19%	**Very Attractive**
VFAIX	13%	66%	20%	**Attractive**
FSRBX	16%	53%	24%	**Attractive**
FIDSX	16%	48%	31%	**Attractive**
FFSIX	16%	48%	31%	**Attractive**
Worst Mutual Funds				
FIDBX	10%	35%	25%	**Unattractive**
FIDAX	10%	35%	25%	**Unattractive**
ADAFX	13%	37%	24%	**Very Unattractive**
SFPCX	14%	71%	12%	**Very Unattractive**
SFPAX	14%	71%	12%	**Very Unattractive**

* Best mutual funds exclude funds with TNAs less than $100 million for inadequate liquidity.

Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

Hennessy Large Cap Financial Fund (HILFX, HLFNX) and ICON Financial Fund (ICFSX) are excluded from Figure 2 because their total net assets (TNA) are below $100 million and do not meet our liquidity minimums.

Financial Select Sector SPDR Fund (XLF) is the top-rated Financials ETF and Fidelity Select Consumer Finance Portfolio (FSVLX) is the top-rated Financials mutual fund. Both earn a Very Attractive rating.

PowerShares KBW High Dividend Yield Financial Portfolio (KBWD) is the worst rated Financials ETF and Saratoga Advantage Trust: Financial Services Portfolio (SFPAX) is the worst rated Financials mutual fund. KBWD earns an Unattractive rating and SFPAX earns a Very Unattractive rating.

434 stocks of the 3000+ we cover are classified as Financials stocks.

The Danger Within

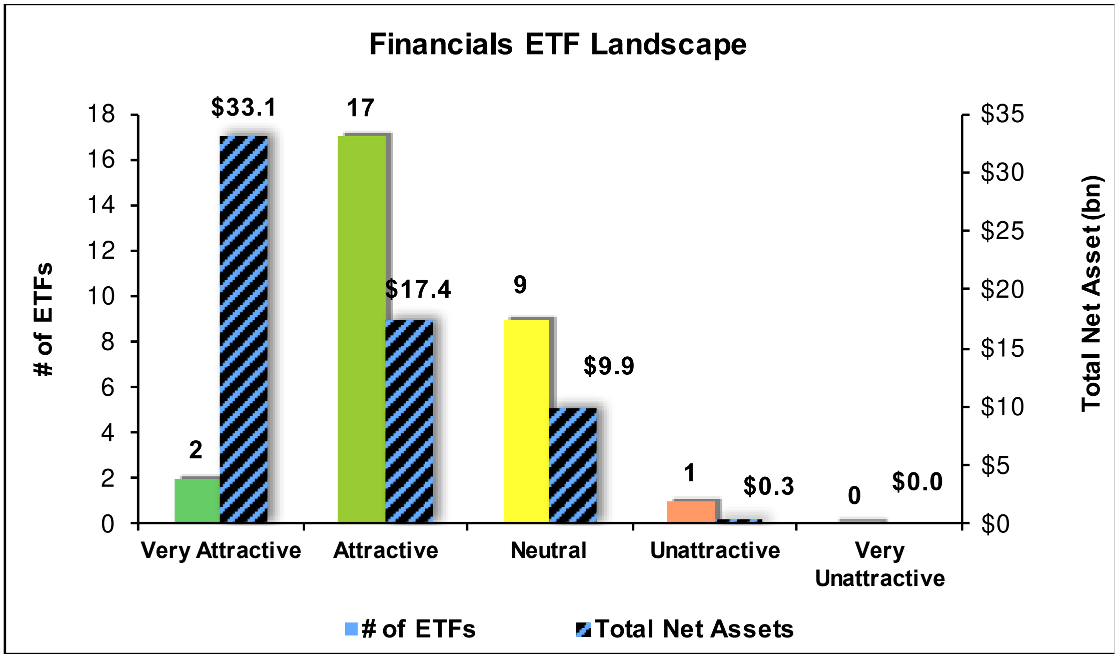
Buying a fund without analyzing its holdings is like buying a stock without analyzing its business and finances. Put another way, research on fund holdings is necessary due diligence because a fund's performance is only as good as its holdings' performance. Don't just take our word for it, see what Barron's says on this matter.

PERFORMANCE OF HOLDINGs = PERFORMANCE OF FUND

Analyzing each holding within funds is no small task. Our Robo-Analyst technology enables us to perform this diligence with scale and provide the research needed to fulfill the fiduciary duty of care. More of the biggest names in the financial industry (see At BlackRock, Machines Are Rising Over Managers to Pick Stocks) are now embracing technology to leverage machines in the investment research process. Technology may be the only solution to the dual mandate for research: cut costs and fulfill the fiduciary duty of care. Investors, clients, advisors and analysts deserve the latest in technology to get the diligence required to make prudent investment decisions.

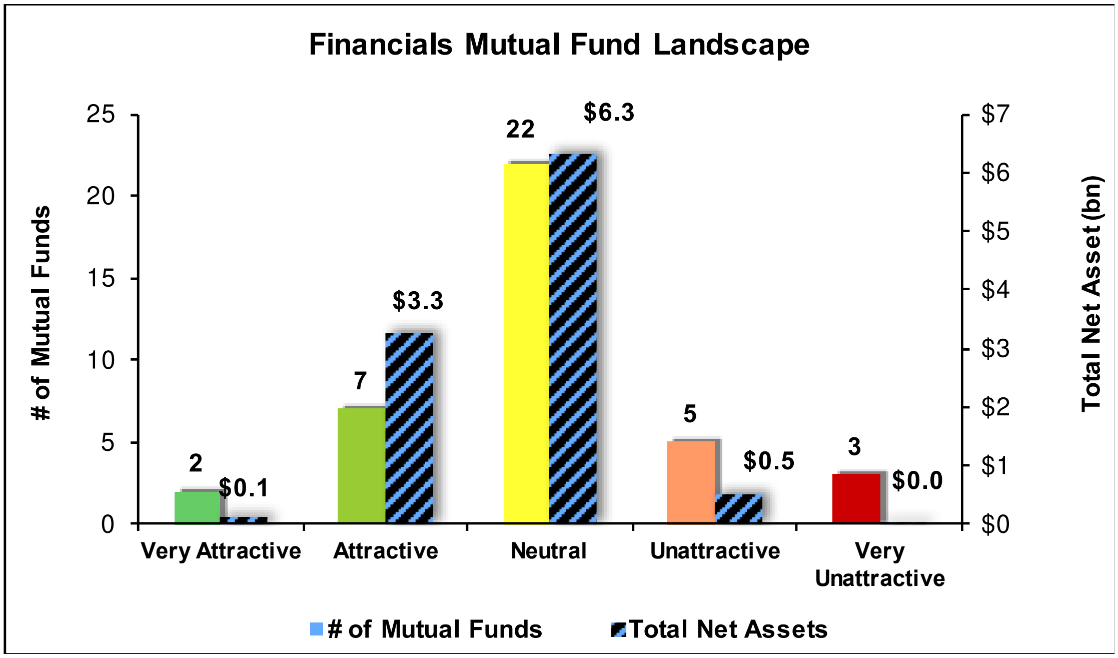
Figures 3 and 4 show the rating landscape of all Financials ETFs and mutual funds.

Figure 3: Separating the Best ETFs From the Worst ETFs



Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

Figure 4: Separating the Best Mutual Funds from the Worst Mutual Funds



Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

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Disclosure: David Trainer, Pete Apockotos, and Kyle Guske II receive no compensation to write about any specific stock, sector or theme.

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Ratings & screeners on 3000 stocks, 450 ETFs and 7000 mutual funds help you make prudent investment decisions.

New Constructs leverages the latest in machine learning to analyze structured and unstructured financial data with unrivaled speed and accuracy. The firm's forensic accounting experts work alongside engineers to develop proprietary NLP libraries and financial models. Our investment ratings are based on the best fundamental data in the business for stocks, ETFs and mutual funds. Clients include many of the top hedge funds, mutual funds and wealth management firms. David Trainer, the firm's CEO, is regularly featured in the media as a thought leader on the fiduciary duty of care, earnings quality, valuation and investment strategy.

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1. **Comprehensive** - All relevant publicly-available (e.g. 10-Ks and 10-Qs) information has been diligently reviewed, including footnotes and the management discussion & analysis (MD&A).
2. **Un-conflicted** - Clients deserve unbiased research.
3. **Transparent** - Advisors should be able to show how the analysis was performed and the data behind it.
4. **Relevant** - Empirical evidence must provide tangible, quantifiable correlation to stock, ETF or mutual fund performance.

Value Investing 2.0: Diligence Matters: Technology is Key to Value Investing With Scale

Accounting data is only the beginning of fundamental research. It must be translated into economic earnings to truly understand profitability and valuation. This translation requires deep analysis of footnotes and the MD&A, a process that our robo-analyst technology empowers us to perform for thousands of stocks, ETFs and mutual funds.

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