



Earnings Distortion Scorecard: Week of 3/2/20-3/6/20

For the week of 3/2/20-3/6/20, we focus on the [Earnings Distortion Scores](#) (as featured on [CNBC Squawk Box](#)) for 19 companies.

Our proprietary measure of [earnings distortion](#) leverages cutting-edge ML technology featured in [Core Earnings: New Data & Evidence](#). This paper empirically concludes that our adjusted core earnings is superior to:

1. “Street Earnings” from Refinitiv’s IBES, owned by Blackstone (BX) and Thomson Reuters (TRI), and
2. “Income Before Special Items” from Compustat, owned by S&P Global (SPGI)

Get the best fundamental research

The paper also shows that investors with [better earnings](#) research have a clear advantage in predicting:

1. Future earnings (Section 3.4)
2. Future stock prices (Section 4.3)

Our Earnings Distortion Scores¹ empower investors to make smarter investments with superior data as well as defend against management efforts to obfuscate financial performance. The aggregate level of earnings distortion recently reached [levels not seen since right before the tech bubble](#) and the financial crisis.

Weekly Earnings Distortion Insights

Figure 1 contains the 15 largest (by market cap) companies that earn a “Strong Beat”, “Beat”, “Miss”, or “Strong Miss” Earnings Distortion Score and are expected to report the week of March 2, 2020. These stocks are likely to beat/miss expectations.

Figure 1: Earnings Distortion Scorecard Highlights: Week of 3/2/20-3/6/20

Company	Ticker	EPS Estimate	Expected Earnings Date	Earnings Distortion Score
JOYY Inc.	YY	\$0.92	3/2/20	Strong Miss
Ross Stores Inc.	ROST	\$1.25	3/3/20	Miss
Ambarella Inc.	AMBA	\$0.11	3/3/20	Miss
Dollar Tree Inc.	DLTR	\$1.77	3/4/20	Strong Beat
American Eagle Outfitters Inc.	AEO	\$0.36	3/4/20	Miss
Marvell Technology Group Ltd	MRVL	\$0.17	3/4/20	Beat
Ciena Corp	CIEN	\$0.38	3/5/20	Beat
Costco Wholesale Corp	COST	\$2.06	3/5/20	Miss
Kroger Co.	KR	\$0.55	3/5/20	Miss
Burlington Stores Inc.	BURL	\$3.18	3/5/20	Miss
H & R Block Inc.	HRB	-\$0.59	3/5/20	Miss
National Beverage Corp	FIZZ	\$0.50	3/5/20	Miss
Methode Electronics	MEI	\$0.92	3/5/20	Miss
Navistar International Corp	NAV	-\$0.38	3/6/20	Beat
Middlesex Water	MSEX	\$0.41	3/6/20	Miss

Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

¹ Note that Earnings Distortion scores are also available to clients of our website.



The appendix shows the Earnings Distortion Scores for all the S&P 500 companies, plus those with market caps greater than \$10 billion, that are expected to report the week of March 2, 2020.

Details: KR’s Earnings Distortion

Over the trailing twelve months (TTM), The Kroger Company (KR: \$29/share) had \$276 million in net earnings distortion that cause earnings to be overstated. Notable unusual income in KR’s filings include:

- [\\$1.8 billion](#) gain on sale related to the sale of Kroger’s convenience store business – Page 38 2019 10-K
- [\\$228 million](#) mark to market gain on Ocado securities – Page 38 2019 10-K
- [\\$176 million](#) gain on sale related to the sale of You Technology and Turkey Hill Dairy – Page 2 fiscal 1Q20 10-Q

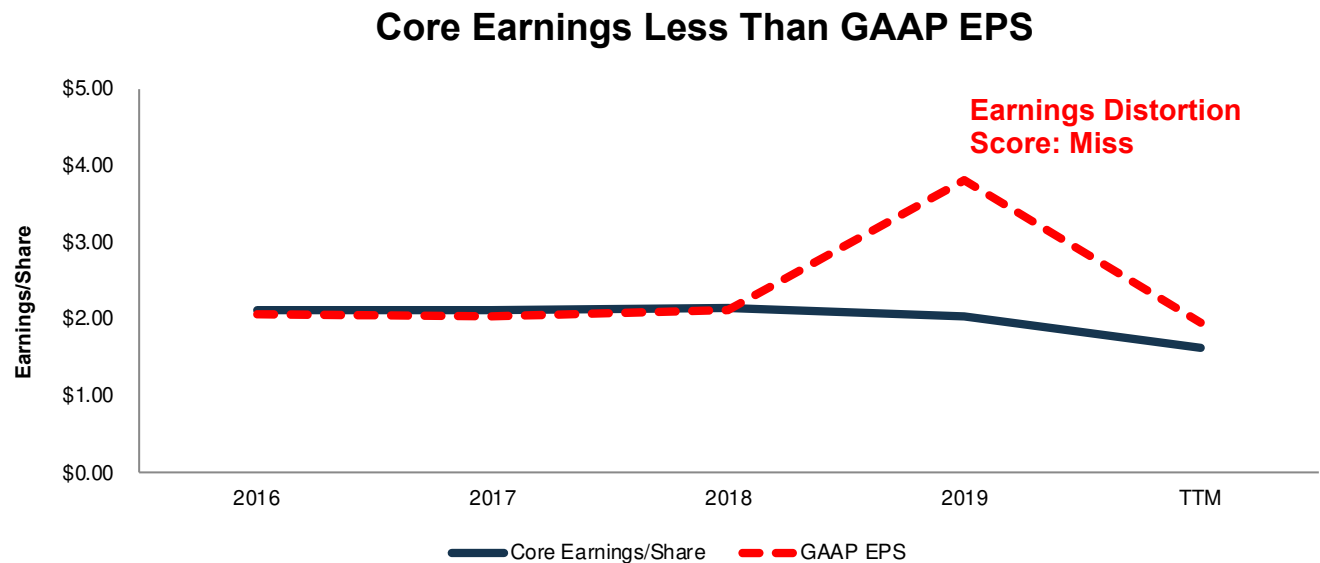
The unusual income items were partially offset by:

- [\\$155 million](#) charge for obligations related to withdrawal liabilities for local unions – Page 25 2019 10-K
- [\\$56 million](#) charge for asset impairments – Page 44 2019 10-K
- [\\$42 million](#) charge related to the impairment of financial instruments – Page 16 2019 10-K

In total, we identified \$0.34/share (17% of reported EPS) in net unusual gains in KR’s TTM GAAP results. After removing this earnings distortion from GAAP net income, we see that KR’s TTM core earnings of \$1.63/share are significantly less than GAAP EPS of \$1.97, per Figure 2.

With overstated earnings, and a “Miss” Earnings Distortion Score, KR is likely to miss consensus expectations.

Figure 2: KR Core Earnings Vs. GAAP: 2016 – TTM



Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

Figure 1 shows that KR is one of 11 companies that earn our “Miss” or “Strong Miss” rating for this week. Four companies earn our “Beat” or “Strong Beat” rating for this week.

How to Make Money with Earnings Distortion Data

“Trading strategies that exploit {adjustments provided by New Constructs} produce abnormal returns of 7-to-10% per year.” – Page 1 in [Core Earnings: New Data & Evidence](#)

In Section 4.3, professors from HBS & MIT Sloan present a long/short strategy that holds the stocks with the most understated EPS and shorts the stocks with the most overstated earnings.

This strategy produced abnormal returns of 7-to-10% a year. Click [here](#) for more details on our data offerings.

We Provide 100% Audit-ability & Transparency



Clients can audit all of the unusual items used in our calculations in the [Marked-Up Filings section](#) of each of our [Company Valuation models](#). We are 100% transparent about what goes into our research because we want investors to trust our work and see how much goes into building the best earnings quality and valuation models.

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

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Appendix: All Major Companies Expected to Report March 2-6

Figure 3 shows all the S&P 500 companies, plus those with market caps greater than \$10 billion, that are expected to report the week of March 2, 2020.

Figure 3: Earnings Distortion Scorecard: Week of 3/2/20-3/6/20

Company	Ticker	EPS Estimate	Expected Earnings Date	Earnings Distortion Score
Target Corp	TGT	\$1.70	3/3/20	In-line
Ross Stores Inc.	ROST	\$1.25	3/3/20	Miss
Cooper Companies Inc.	COO	\$2.72	3/3/20	In-line
Kohls Corp	KSS	\$1.96	3/3/20	In-line
Dollar Tree Inc.	DLTR	\$1.77	3/4/20	Strong Beat
Guidewire Software Inc.	GWRE	\$0.15	3/4/20	In-line
Costco Wholesale Corp	COST	\$2.06	3/5/20	Miss
Kroger Co.	KR	\$0.55	3/5/20	Miss
Marvell Technology Group	MRVL	\$0.17	3/5/20	Beat
Burlington Stores Inc.	BURL	\$3.18	3/5/20	Miss
H&R Block Inc.	HRB	-\$0.59	3/5/20	Miss

Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings



Footnotes adjustments matter. We are the ONLY source.

We provide ratings, models, reports & screeners on U.S. 3,000 stocks, 700 ETFs and 7,000 mutual funds.

HBS & MIT Sloan research reveals that:

- **Markets are inefficiently assessing earnings because no one reads the footnotes.**
- **Corporate managers hide gains/losses in footnotes to manage earnings.**
- **Our technology brings the material footnotes data to market for the first time ever.**

Combining human expertise with NLP/ML/AI technologies ([featured by Harvard Business School](#)), we shine a light in the dark corners (e.g. footnotes) of hundreds of thousands of financial filings to unearth critical details.

The HBS & MIT Sloan paper, [Core Earnings: New Data and Evidence](#), shows how our superior data drives uniquely comprehensive and independent debt and equity research.

This [paper](#) compares our analytics on a mega cap company to other major providers. The Appendix details exactly how we stack up.

Learn [more](#).

Quotes from HBS & MIT Sloan professors on our research:

Get better research:

“...the NC dataset provides a novel opportunity to study the properties of non-operating items disclosed in 10-Ks, and to examine the extent to which the market impounds their implications.” – page 20

Pick better stocks:

“Trading strategies that exploit cross-sectional differences in firms’ transitory earnings produce abnormal returns of 7-to-10% per year.” – Abstract

Avoid losses from using other firms’ data:

“...many of the income-statement-relevant quantitative disclosures collected by NC do not appear to be easily identifiable in Compustat...” – page 14

Build better models:

“Core Earnings [calculated using New Constructs’ novel dataset] provides predictive power for various measures of one-year-ahead performance...that is incremental to their current-period counterparts.” – page 4

Exploit market inefficiencies:

“These results ... suggest that the adjustments made by analysts and Compustat to better capture core earnings are incomplete. Moreover, the non-core items identified by NC produce a measure of core earnings that is incremental to alternative measures of operating performance in predicting an array of future income measures.” – page 26

Fulfill fiduciary duties:

“An appropriate measure of accounting performance for purposes of forecasting future performance requires detailed analysis of all quantitative performance disclosures detailed in the annual report, including those reported only in the footnotes and in the MD&A.” – page 33-34



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