



## Featured Stock in August's Safest Dividend Yields Model Portfolio

Ten new stocks make our [Safest Dividend Yields Model Portfolio](#) this month, which was made available to members on August 20, 2021.

### Recap from July's Picks

On a price return basis, our Safest Dividend Yields Model Portfolio (+2.0%) outperformed the S&P 500 (+0.9%) by 1.1% from July 22, 2021 through August 18, 2021. On a total return basis, the Model Portfolio (+2.3%) outperformed the S&P 500 (+0.9%) by 1.4% over the same time. The best performing large cap stock was up 5% and the best performing small cap stock was up 10%. Overall, 11 out of the 18 Safest Dividend Yield stocks outperformed their respective benchmarks (S&P 500 and Russell 2000) from July 22, 2021 through August 18, 2021.

[Learn more about the best fundamental research](#)

More reliable & [proprietary](#) fundamental data, proven in [The Journal of Financial Economics](#), drives our research. Our proprietary [Robo-Analyst technology](#)<sup>1</sup> scales our forensic accounting expertise ([featured in Barron's](#)) across thousands of stocks<sup>2</sup> to produce an unrivaled database of fundamental data.

This Model Portfolio only includes stocks that earn an [Attractive or Very Attractive](#) rating, have positive free cash flow and [economic earnings](#), and offer a dividend yield greater than 3%. Companies with strong [free cash flow](#) provide higher quality and safer dividend yields because we know they have the cash to support the dividend. We think this portfolio provides a uniquely well-screened group of stocks that can help clients outperform.

### Featured Stock for August: MSC Industrial Direct Co, Inc. (MSM: \$85/share)

MSC Industrial Direct Co, Inc. (MSM) is the featured stock in August's Safest Dividend Yields Model Portfolio.

MSC Industrial Direct has grown revenue by 2% compounded annually and net operating profit after-tax ([NOPAT](#)) by 3% compounded annually over the past five years. MSC Industrial Direct NOPAT margin remained flat at 8% from 2015 to the trailing-twelve-month period (TTM) while its return on invested capital ([ROIC](#)) rose from 12% to 13% over the same time.

The firm's [economic earnings](#), or the true cash flows of the business, increased from \$143 million in 2015 to \$178 million over the TTM.

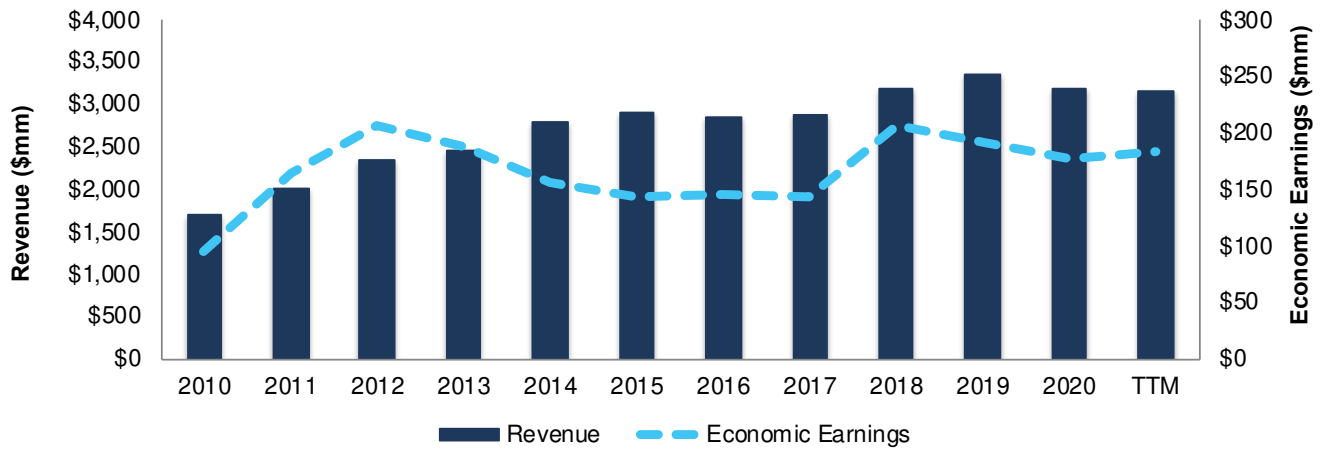
<sup>1</sup> Harvard Business School features our research automation technology in the case [Disrupting Fundamental Analysis with Robo-Analysts](#).

<sup>2</sup> See how our models overcome flaws in Bloomberg and Capital IQ's (SPGI) analytics in the [detailed appendix of this paper](#).



**Figure 1: MSC Industrial Direct's Revenue & Economic Earnings Since 2015**

### Consistent Economic Earnings



Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

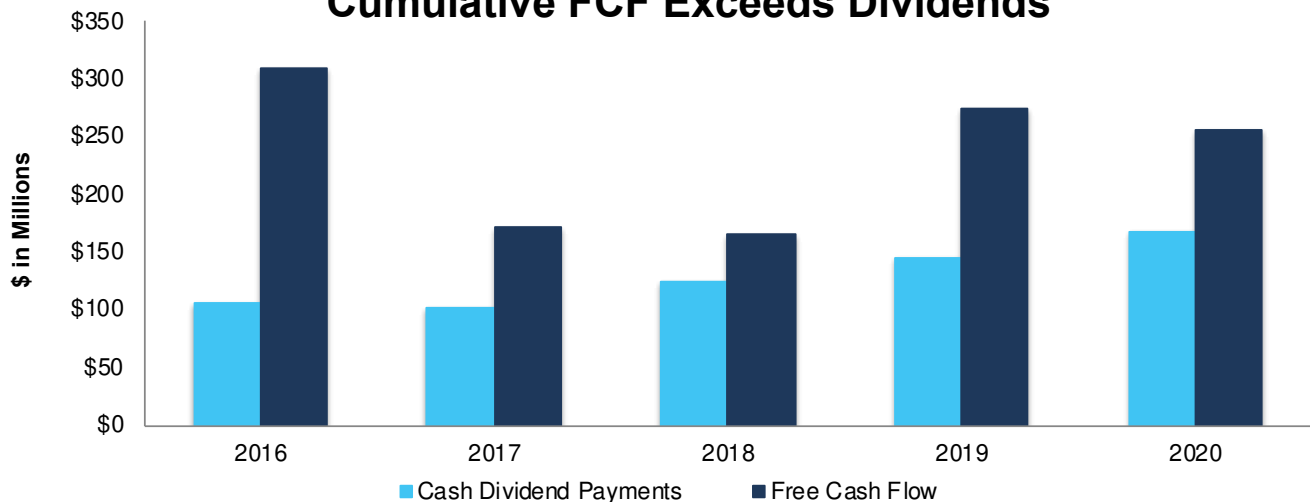
### Free Cash Flow Supports Dividend Payments

MSC Industrial Direct has paid a quarterly dividend since 2003, and its standard dividend in fiscal 2020 was \$3/share. The current quarterly dividend, when annualized provides a 3.6% dividend yield.

Since 2015, MSC Industrial Direct's cumulative [free cash flow](#) (FCF) easily covers its standard dividend payments. Over the past five years, MSC Industrial Direct generated \$1.2 billion (25% of current market cap) in FCF while paying \$646 million in dividends, per Figure 2.

**Figure 2: MSC Industrial Direct Co's FCF vs. Standard Dividends Since 2016**

### Cumulative FCF Exceeds Dividends



Sources: New Constructs, LLC and company filings

Companies with strong FCF provide higher quality dividend yields because we know the firm has the cash to support its dividend. On the other hand, dividends from companies with low or negative FCF cannot be trusted as much because the company may not be able to sustain paying dividends.

**MSM Is Undervalued**

At its current price of \$85/share, MSM has a price-to-economic book value ([PEBV](#)) ratio of 0.8. This ratio means the market expects MSC Industrial Direct's NOPAT to permanently decline by 20%. This expectation seems overly pessimistic given that MSC Industrial Direct Co has grown NOPAT by 6% compounded annually over the past decade and 9% compounded annually over the past two decades.

Even if MSC Industrial Direct Co's NOPAT margin remains at 8% (equal to TTM and lowest level in the last decade) and the firm's NOPAT grows by less than 1% compounded annually over the next decade, the stock is worth \$110/share today – a 29% upside. [See the math behind this reverse DCF scenario](#). Should the firm grow NOPAT more in line with historical growth rates, the stock has even more upside.

**Critical Details Found in Financial Filings by Our [Robo-Analyst Technology](#)**

Fact: we provide [superior fundamental data](#) and earnings models – unrivaled in the world.

Proof: [Core Earnings: New Data & Evidence](#), forthcoming in The Journal of Financial Economics.

Below are specifics on the adjustments we make based on Robo-Analyst findings in MSC Industrial Direct's 10-K and 10-Q:

Income Statement: we made \$42 million in adjustments with a net effect of removing \$21 million in [non-operating expenses](#) (1% of revenue). See all adjustments made to MSC Industrial Direct's income statement [here](#).

Balance Sheet: we made \$174 million in adjustments to calculate invested capital with a net increase of \$154 million. The most notable adjustment was \$21 million (1% of reported net assets) in [other comprehensive income](#). See all adjustments MSC Industrial Direct's balance sheet [here](#).

Valuation: we made \$936 million in adjustments with a net effect of decreasing shareholder value by \$936 million. Apart from [total debt](#), one of the most notable adjustments to shareholder value was \$110 million in [net deferred tax liability](#). This adjustment represents 2% of MSC Industrial Direct's market value. See all adjustments to MSC Industrial Direct's valuation [here](#).

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

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## *It's Official: We Offer the Best Fundamental Data in the World*

Many firms claim their research is superior, but none of them can prove it with independent studies from highly-respected institutions as we can. Three different papers from both the public and private sectors show:

1. Legacy fundamental datasets suffer from significant inaccuracies, omissions and biases.
2. Only our “novel database” enables investors to overcome these flaws and apply [reliable](#) fundamental data in their research.
3. Our proprietary measures of [Core Earnings](#) and [Earnings Distortion](#) materially improve stock picking and forecasting of profits.

### **Best Fundamental Data in the World**

Forthcoming in [The Journal of Financial Economics](#), a top peer-reviewed journal, [Core Earnings: New Data & Evidence](#) proves our Robo-Analyst technology overcomes material shortcomings in legacy firms' data collection processes to provide superior [fundamental data](#), [earnings](#) models, and [research](#). More [details](#).

Key quotes from the paper:

- “[New Constructs’] *Total Adjustments* differs significantly from the items identified and excluded from Compustat’s adjusted earnings measures. For example... 50% to 70% of the variation in *Total Adjustments* is not explained by S&P Global’s (*SPGI*) *Adjustments* individually.” – pp. 14, 1<sup>st</sup> para.
- “A final source of differences [between New Constructs’ and S&P Global’s data] is due to data collection oversights...we identified cases where Compustat did not collect information relating to firms’ income that is useful in assessing core earnings.” – pp. 16, 2<sup>nd</sup> para.

### **Superior Models**

A top accounting firm features the superiority of our ROIC, NOPAT and Invested Capital research to Capital IQ & Bloomberg’s in [Getting ROIC Right](#). See the [Appendix](#) for direct comparison details.

Key quotes from the paper:

- “...an accurate calculation of ROIC requires more diligence than often occurs in some of the common, off-the-shelf ROIC calculations. Only by scouring the footnotes and the MD&A [ as New Constructs does] can investors get an accurate calculation of ROIC.” – pp. 8, 5<sup>th</sup> para.
- “The majority of the difference...comes from New Constructs’ machine learning approach, which leverages technology to calculate ROIC by applying accounting adjustments that may be buried deeply in the footnotes across thousands of companies.” – pp. 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> para.

### **Superior Stock Ratings**

Robo-Analysts’ stock ratings outperform those from human analysts as shown in this [paper](#) from Indiana’s Kelley School of Business. Bloomberg features the paper [here](#).

Key quotes from the paper:

- “the portfolios formed following the buy recommendations of Robo-Analysts earn abnormal returns that are statistically and economically significant.” – pp. 6, 3<sup>rd</sup> para.
- “Our results ultimately suggest that Robo-Analysts are a valuable, alternative information intermediary to traditional sell-side analysts.” – pp. 20, 3<sup>rd</sup> para.

Our mission is to provide the best fundamental analysis of public and private businesses in the world and make it affordable for all investors, not just Wall Street insiders.

We believe every investor deserves to know the whole truth about the profitability and valuation of any company they consider for investment. More details on our cutting-edge technology and how we use it are [here](#).



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