REDUCE TCI Express

Weak print; volume recovery imperative



Logistics > Result Update > May 31, 2025

TCI Express (TCIE) continues to face industry-level headwinds impacting both, SME and institutional customers, and resulting in Q4 revenue declining 3% YoY. Per the management, FY25 EBITDA margin has contracted owing to i) inflationary pressures in toll and labor charges, ii) lower network utilization owing to weak volume, and iii) investment in new services. While the management is taking corrective steps and has given guidance for volume growth of 7-8%, we expect a muted 4% volume trajectory over FY25-28 owing to elevated competitive intensity and the challenging external environment. TCIE's investment in automation, while being beneficial in the long term, would keep return ratios and margins under pressure, especially given the current tepid environment, in our view. Baking in the Q4 miss, we cut our EBITDA/PAT estimates by 5% each for FY26. We retain REDUCE with unchanged Mar-26E TP of Rs650 (DCF methodology), implying FY27E EV/EBITDA of 14x and P/E of 22x.

Challenging environment

TCIE reported revenue decline of 3% YoY in Q4FY25. SME contributed 48% of the revenue, with big customers contributing the balance. Volume declined 1% YoY – the sixth consecutive quarter of decline; blended realizations were down 2% YoY. Owing to the dip in revenue, gross margin continued to contract (down by 330bps YoY) as truck utilizations slipped further (82.5% vs 83.5% in Mar-25). EBITDA margin decreased by ~560bps YoY to 8.5% YoY, due to contraction in gross margin, exacerbated by negative operating leverage (6%/15% YoY increase in employee costs and SG&A expenses). Other income increased 2x YoY, negating the increase in depreciation (22% YoY). PAT declined 39% YoY. Capex spend for the year stood at Rs444mn on account of branch additions and construction of sorting centers. The company announced final dividend of Rs2/share.

Call highlights

1) The management gave guidance for volume growth of 7-8% and revenue growth of 10-12% (aided by price hike) for FY26, with higher focus on high-yield business and improving utilization (particularly in East India). 2) The management alluded to margins having bottomed out; it expects recovery in coming quarters which would lead to margin expansion of 150-200bps in FY26 on the back of its cost rationalization initiatives and planned price hikes. 3) TCIE is planning to build a network of 10 automated centers by CY30, to benefit from material cost savings. It is on track to add 2 centers – at Kolkata and Ahmedabad, by FY27. 4) The company plans to add 80 branches in FY26 (will aid 2-3% volume growth), divided equally between surface and rail. 5) The management does not intend to focus on e-commerce due to poor profitability and targets increasing its SME mix back to 50% (from 48% currently), as it hopes for a gradual recovery in this space.

TCI Express: Financial Snapshot (Consolidated)							
Y/E March (Rs mn)	FY24	FY25	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E		
Revenue	12,538	12,083	12,477	13,100	13,893		
EBITDA	1,872	1,247	1,465	1,618	1,754		
Adj. PAT	1,317	858	971	1,108	1,240		
Adj. EPS (Rs)	34.3	22.4	25.3	28.9	32.3		
EBITDA margin (%)	14.9	10.3	11.7	12.4	12.6		
EBITDA growth (%)	(3.7)	(33.4)	17.5	10.4	8.4		
Adj. EPS growth (%)	(5.6)	(34.9)	13.2	14.1	11.9		
RoE (%)	20.3	11.7	12.2	12.7	12.9		
RoIC (%)	24.3	13.4	14.8	14.5	14.6		
P/E (x)	22.2	34.0	30.1	26.3	23.5		
EV/EBITDA (x)	15.0	22.5	19.2	17.4	16.0		
P/B (x)	4.1	3.8	3.5	3.2	2.9		
FCFF yield (%)	3.1	3.0	0.2	1.0	2.7		

Source: Company, Emkay Research

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CMP (Rs): 761 | TP (Rs): 650

2M		Mar-26			
%)		-			
		REDUCE			
		REDUCE			
Upside/(Downside) (%)					
	тс	IEXP IN			
Rs)		1,283			
Rs)		580			
ding (mn)		38.4			
bn)		29			
D mn)		341			
Net-debt, FY26E (Rs mn)					
hares)		0			
in)		25.5			
mn)		0.3			
		0.0			
		24,750.7			
		85.6			
Mar-25					
		69.5			
		0.8/9.6			
nce					
	3M	12M			
12.8	12.1	(24.9)			
	Rs) Rs) ding (mn) bn) D mn) E (Rs mn) thares) in) mn) Mar-25	%) de) (%) TC Rs) Rs) ding (mn) bn) D mn) E (Rs mn) thares) in) mn) Mar-25 nce 1M 3M			



Rel. to Nifty



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(31.7)

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Particulars (Rs mn)	Q4FY24	Q3FY25	Q4FY25	YoY	QoQ	FY24	FY25	YoY
Net sales	3,171	2,965	3,073	-3.1%	3.6%	12,538	12,083	-3.6%
Operating expenses	(2,723)	(2,676)	(2,810)	3.2%	5.0%	-10,666	-10,836	1.6%
Freight, handling, and service costs	2,170	2,130	2,205	1.6%	3.5%	8,586	8,621	0.4%
Employee costs	336	354	357	6.4%	0.9%	1,339	1,410	5.3%
Other operating expenses	217	191	249	14.5%	29.9%	741	805	8.5%
Others								
EBITDA	448	289	263	-41%	-9%	1,872	1,247	-33%
Margin	14.1%	9.8%	8.5%	-40%	-12%	14.9%	10.3%	
Depreciation	(49)	(53)	(59)	22%	12%	-190	-216	14%
EBIT	400	236	203	-49%	-14%	1,683	1,031	-39%
Other Income	19	26	61	218%	139%	72	135	88%
Interest	(4)	(3)	(5)	18%	81%	-15	-13	-10%
Extra ordinary items								
PBT	415	259	260	-37%	0%	1,740	1,152	-34%
Tax	(99)	(67)	(66)	-33%	-1%	-423	-294	-31%
PAT	316	192	194	-39%	1%	1,317	858	-35%
Adj PAT	316	192	194	-39%	1%	1,317	858	-35%
EPS (Rs)	8.2	5.0	5.0	-39%	1%	34	22	-35%
(%)	Q4FY24	Q3FY25	Q4FY25	YoY (bps)	QoQ (bps)	FY24	FY25	YoY (bps)
Gross margin	31.6%	28.1%	28.3%	-331	12	31.5%	28.6%	-288
EBITDAM	14.1%	9.8%	8.5%	-559	-120	14.9%	10.3%	-462
EBITM	12.6%	8.0%	6.6%	-599	-134	13.4%	8.5%	-489
EBTM	13.1%	8.7%	8.5%	-463	-28	13.9%	9.5%	-434
PATM	10.0%	6.5%	6.3%	-366	-17	10.5%	7.1%	-340
Effective Tax rate	23.9%	26.0%	25.5%	164	-43	24.3%	25.5%	121

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 2: Actuals vs estimates (Q4FY25)						
(Rs mn)	Actual	Estimate	Consensus	nsensus Variation		
		(Emkay)	estimate			
			(Bloomberg)	Emkay	Consensus	
Revenue	3,073	3,123	3,098	-2%	-1%	
EBITDA	263	325	331	-19%	-21%	
EBITDA margin	9%	10%	11%	-185 bps	-213 bps	
PAT	194	215	223	-10%	-13%	

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Exhibit 3: Change in estimates

Particulars (Rs mn)		FY26E			FY27E			FY28E	
	Old	New	Change	Old	New	Change	Old	New	Change
Revenue	12,435	12,477	0.3%	13,057	13,100	0.3%	NA	13,893	NA
EBITDA	1,534	1,465	-4.5%	1,659	1,618	-2.5%	NA	1,754	NA
EBITDA margin (%)	12.3	11.7	-59 bps	12.7	12.4	-36 bps	NA	12.6	NA
PAT	1,023	971	-5.1%	1,130	1,108	-2.0%	NA	1,240	NA

Source: Company, Emkay Research

(Rs mn)	FY24	FY25	FY26E	FY27E	FY30E	FY35E
Revenue	12,538	12,083	12,477	13,100	15,923	21,642
NOPAT	1,274	768	909	1,002	1,104	3,233
Non-cash items	190	216	245	277	338	189
Change in WC	(174)	76	(52)	75	(87)	(60)
Capex	(461)	(444)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(500)	(411)
FCFF	829	616	102	354	855	2,951
WACC	12.0%					
Terminal growth	4%					
PV of CFs (FY24-35E)	16,316					
PV of terminal value	8,619					
Total EV	24,936					
Less net debt	(1,475)					
Total equity value	26,411					
Total no of shares (mn)	38					
Target price/share – Mar-26E (Rs)	650					

Source: Company, Emkay Research

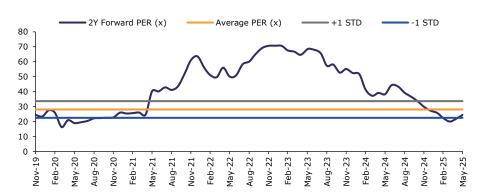


Exhibit 5: TCIE is trading at -1SD long-term historical average PER

Source: Company, Emkay Research

TCI Express: Consolidated Financials and Valuations

Profit & Loss					
Y/E March (Rs mn)	FY24	FY25	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
Revenue	12,538	12,083	12,477	13,100	13,893
Revenue growth (%)	1.0	(3.6)	3.3	5.0	6.1
EBITDA	1,872	1,247	1,465	1,618	1,754
EBITDA growth (%)	(3.7)	(33.4)	17.5	10.4	8.4
Depreciation & Amortization	190	216	245	277	300
EBIT	1,683	1,031	1,220	1,341	1,455
EBIT growth (%)	(6.1)	(38.8)	18.4	9.9	8.5
Other operating income	-	-	-	-	-
Other income	72	135	100	150	217
Financial expense	15	13	20	8	8
РВТ	1,740	1,152	1,300	1,483	1,664
Extraordinary items	0	0	0	0	0
Taxes	423	294	329	375	424
Minority interest	0	0	0	0	0
Income from JV/Associates	0	0	0	0	0
Reported PAT	1,317	858	971	1,108	1,240
PAT growth (%)	(5.4)	(34.9)	13.2	14.1	11.9
Adjusted PAT	1,317	858	971	1,108	1,240
Diluted EPS (Rs)	34.3	22.4	25.3	28.9	32.3
Diluted EPS growth (%)	(5.6)	(34.9)	13.2	14.1	11.9
DPS (Rs)	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Dividend payout (%)	23.3	35.8	31.6	27.7	24.7
EBITDA margin (%)	14.9	10.3	11.7	12.4	12.6
EBIT margin (%)	13.4	8.5	9.8	10.2	10.5
Effective tax rate (%)	24.3	25.5	25.3	25.3	25.5
NOPLAT (pre-IndAS)	1,274	768	911	1,002	1,084
Shares outstanding (mn)	38	38	38	38	38

Balance Sheet					
Y/E March (Rs mn)	FY24	FY25	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
Share capital	77	77	77	77	77
Reserves & Surplus	6,963	7,567	8,232	9,032	9,96
Net worth	7,040	7,644	8,308	9,109	10,042
Minority interests	-	-	-	-	
Non-current liab. & prov.	135	148	148	148	14
Total debt	30	0	0	0	(
Total liabilities & equity	7,280	7,891	8,555	9,356	10,289
Net tangible fixed assets	4,185	4,279	5,065	5,814	6,03
Net intangible assets	46	45	45	45	4
Net ROU assets	287	296	281	274	27
Capital WIP	161	203	203	203	20
Goodwill	-	-	-	-	
Investments [JV/Associates]	-	-	-	-	
Cash & equivalents	1,104	1,635	1,475	1,611	2,28
Current assets (ex-cash)	2,722	2,729	2,691	2,659	2,75
Current Liab. & Prov.	1,225	1,296	1,207	1,250	1,30
NWC (ex-cash)	1,498	1,433	1,484	1,409	1,449
Total assets	7,279	7,891	8,555	9,356	10,28
Net debt	(1,075)	(1,635)	(1,475)	(1,611)	(2,285
Capital employed	7,280	7,891	8,555	9,356	10,28
Invested capital	5,728	5,756	6,594	7,268	7,52
BVPS (Rs)	183.6	199.3	216.6	237.5	261.
Net Debt/Equity (x)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2)	(0.2
Net Debt/EBITDA (x)	(0.6)	(1.3)	(1.0)	(1.0)	(1.3
Interest coverage (x)	119.3	87.6	66.0	189.0	212.
RoCE (%)	26.9	15.8	16.5	17.1	17.

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Cash flows					
Y/E March (Rs mn)	FY24	FY25	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
PBT (ex-other income)	1,668	1,017	1,200	1,333	1,447
Others (non-cash items)	-	-	-	-	-
Taxes paid	(423)	(294)	(329)	(375)	(424)
Change in NWC	(165)	78	(52)	75	(40)
Operating cash flow	1,360	1,184	1,084	1,318	1,290
Capital expenditure	(500)	(352)	(1,032)	(1,026)	(520)
Acquisition of business	0	0	0	0	0
Interest & dividend income	41	12	100	150	217
Investing cash flow	(2,066)	(1,808)	183	(568)	133
Equity raised/(repaid)	-	-	0	0	0
Debt raised/(repaid)	22	(30)	0	0	0
Payment of lease liabilities	(3)	14	15	8	1
Interest paid	(15)	(13)	(20)	(8)	(8)
Dividend paid (incl tax)	(307)	(307)	(307)	(307)	(307)
Others	(584)	(614)	(614)	(614)	(614)
Financing cash flow	(886)	(950)	(926)	(921)	(928)
Net chg in Cash	(1,592)	(1,574)	341	(171)	495
OCF	1,360	1,184	1,084	1,318	1,290
Adj. OCF (w/o NWC chg.)	1,525	1,106	1,136	1,243	1,330
FCFF	860	832	53	292	770
FCFE	887	831	133	434	980
OCF/EBITDA (%)	72.6	95.0	74.0	81.5	73.5
FCFE/PAT (%)	67.3	96.8	13.7	39.2	79.0
FCFF/NOPLAT (%)	67.5	108.4	5.8	29.2	71.1

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Valuations and key Ratios Y/E March FY24 FY25 FY26E FY27E FY28E P/E (x) 22.2 34.0 30.1 23.5 26.3 EV/CE(x) 4.0 3.7 3.4 3.1 2.8 P/B (x) 4.1 3.8 3.5 3.2 2.9 2.2 2.3 2.3 2.1 2.0 EV/Sales (x) EV/EBITDA (x) 15.0 22.5 19.2 17.4 16.0 EV/EBIT(x) 16.7 27.3 23.0 21.0 19.3 EV/IC (x) 4.9 4.9 4.3 3.9 3.7 FCFF yield (%) 3.1 0.2 3.0 1.0 2.7 FCFE yield (%) 3,035.2 2.844.5 454.3 1,487.4 3.354.3 Dividend yield (%) 1.11.11.1 1.1 1.1DuPont-RoE split Net profit margin (%) 10.5 7.1 7.8 8.5 8.9 Total asset turnover (x) 1.9 1.7 1.6 1.5 1.5 Assets/Equity (x) 1.0 1.0 1.0 1.0 1.0 RoE (%) 20.3 11.7 12.2 12.7 12.9 DuPont-RoIC NOPLAT margin (%) 7.8 10.2 6.4 7.3 7.6 2.1 2.0 IC turnover (x) 2.4 1.9 1.9 RoIC (%) 24.3 13.4 14.8 14.5 14.6 **Operating metrics** Core NWC days 43.3 39.3 38.1 43.6 43.4 Total NWC days 43.6 43.4 39.3 43.3 38.1 Fixed asset turnover 2.8 2.4 2.2 1.9 1.8 Opex-to-revenue (%) 16.6 18.3 18.0 18.1 18.4

Source: Company, Emkay Research

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RECOMMENDATION HISTORY – DETAILS

Date	Closing Price (INR)	TP (INR)	Rating	Analyst
08-Apr-25	633	650	Reduce	Anshul Agrawal
06-Feb-25	798	875	Add	Anshul Agrawal
30-Oct-24	977	1,150	Add	Anshul Agrawal
08-Oct-24	1,036	1,150	Add	Anshul Agrawal
21-Sep-24	1,099	1,150	Add	Anshul Agrawal
13-Aug-24	1,129	1,100	Add	Anshul Agrawal
07-Jul-24	1,236	1,150	Add	Anshul Agrawal
10-May-24	1,100	1,150	Add	Anshul Agrawal
08-Apr-24	1,096	1,250	Add	Anshul Agrawal
12-Feb-24	1,277	1,400	Add	Anshul Agrawal
07-Jan-24	1,407	1,550	Add	Anshul Agrawal
01-Dec-23	1,404	1,550	Add	Anshul Agrawal

Source: Company, Emkay Research

RECOMMENDATION HISTORY - TREND



Source: Company, Bloomberg, Emkay Research

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