

# **IT Services**

India

Sector View: Neutral NIFTY-50: 25,816 December 18, 2025

# ACN: Good quarter fails to translate into guidance raise

Accenture reported good 1QFY26 results with revenue growth of 5%, at the upper end of the guidance band. Against the backdrop of a strong quarter and reasonable deal wins, the lack of tightening of FY2026 guidance band was a tad disappointing. The company indicated that there is no change in the discretionary spending environment. Read-through for Indian IT—no uptick in discretionary spending (not a base case), implying reliance on transformation and cost take-out programs to drive growth.

#### 1QFY26-revenues at the top end of the guidance range once again

Accenture delivered revenue growth of 5% in c/c, at the top end of the 1-5% guided range. The growth included  $\sim$ 1% contribution from acquisitions. Revenue growth was led by financial services (+12% yoy in c/c) and CMT (+8%), while health and public services underperformed (-1%). Among geos, Americas and Europe grew 4% each, while APAC grew 9%. Growth in managed services (7%) outpaced consulting (3%) once again, aided by healthy growth in technology managed services. Clients continue to prioritize efficiency and resilience, leading to larger managed services contracts.

#### No change in revenue growth outlook, a tad surprising

One would have expected a tightening of the beginning-of-the-year revenue growth guidance range of 2-5% (1.5% inorganic contribution), noting (1) a strong 1QFY26, (2) steady growth of 10% yoy in bookings to US\$20.9 bn and (3) a lower impact of DOGE on the US federal business assumed after 1QFY26 at 1% versus 1-1.5% at the beginning of the year. The lack of change captures a cautious approach and a lack of meaningful change in the demand environment in the past three months. The revenue growth outlook for 2QFY26 stands at 1-5%. Adjusted EBIT margin guidance for FY2026 stands at 15.7-15.9%, implying a 10-30 bps expansion. Adjusted EPS guidance of US\$13.52-13.9 (+5-8%) stays unchanged, while GAAP EPS guidance has been cut a tad due to higher business-optimization costs.

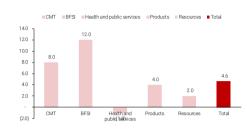
# Powering ahead in GenAl services

Accenture reported US\$2.2 bn of GenAl bookings, growing 22% qoq and 76% yoy. The growth accelerated after a sharp slowdown in 3QFY25. GenAl revenue growth was strong on a qoq basis at 22% to US\$1.1 bn. The company will stop disclosing GenAl bookings and revenues separately.

### Read-through for Indian IT-no discretionary recovery and large deal focus

Discretionary spending remains unchanged, with no visible near-term rebound. Accenture indicated that client conversations continue to reflect caution amid macro uncertainty. While not our base case, a discretionary recovery would have provided further confidence to our 150-200 bps higher growth assumption for FY2027 across our coverage universe. Large-scale transformation programs and cost take-outs remain client priorities, with each deal competed aggressively by global peers, including Accenture. An increase in the number of such deals is critical to support the acceleration in industry growth.

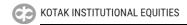
#### Company data and valuation summary



Source: Bloomberg, Company data, Kotak Institutional Equities estimates

Prices in this report are based on the market close of December 18, 2025

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After the recent rally, risk-reward is more balanced. TechM, Coforge and Hexaware are our key picks. TCS' execution is improving and remains our BUY-rated stock. Infosys is also a good pick, though one has to contend with the usual 2H weakness.

#### GenAl-separating from the pack

The GenAl momentum continues. Over the past nine quarters, about 100 incremental clients per quarter have initiated advanced Al projects, taking the total to ~1,300 clients out of 9,000. Most engagements are still in foundational stages because successful Al deployment requires data readiness, security and process redesign before scaling. Accenture noted that one in two advanced Al projects leads to a data program, underscoring that building a strong digital core is essential for success.

A key highlight was the role of ecosystem partnerships. Management stated that 60% of 1QFY26 revenue came from work with its top 10 ecosystem partners, and this segment outpaced overall growth. These partnerships are critical because clients operate with a network of technology providers and expect Accenture to integrate these systems and deliver integrated outcomes. Beyond the top 10, Accenture is expanding relationships with emerging Al and data companies and making strategic acquisitions to strengthen capabilities. This approach positions Accenture as the orchestrator of complex ecosystems, which is increasingly important as clients pursue large-scale reinvention programs

#### Fixed price contribution to overall revenues increasing

 $\sim$  60% of revenues of Accenture are fixed price, up about 10 points over the past three years. The increase is a function of—(1) aggressive participation by Accenture in managed services programs at a time when discretionary spending is weak and (2) rising client interest in commercial structures tied directly to realized outcomes, although this remains a very modest share of revenues today.

#### Key highlights from earnings call

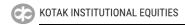
- Demand. There is not much change in the market and it is tough to point to a catalyst that would spur discretionary spending, as most industries are undergoing specific challenges. Expect discretionary spends to remain unchanged during the year. Clients continue to prioritize reinvention and transformational programs, which convert to revenues more slowly. Cloud, data and platform modernization remain foundational to every reinvention program. Security is among the fastest-growing businesses, growing at very strong double-digits during the quarter.
- ▶ Growth. Organic growth of 4% yoy in local currency, broad-based across business segments. Americas growth was led by banking and capital markets, industrials and software and platforms and partly offset by revenue decline in public services (200 bps impact on geo growth). EMEA growth was led by the UK and Italy among geos and banking & capital markets, insurance and life sciences. Asia Pacific outperformed, led by Japan and Australia regions and banking and capital markets, communications & media and public services.
- ▶ **Guidance.** The revenue growth outlook reflects a strong performance in 1Q, healthy bookings, a solid pipeline and demand evolution for the rest of the year.
- ▶ **Song.** Accenture Song grew at mid-single digits during the quarter.
- ▶ Commercial models. Increase in FPP revenue mix to 60% led by proven capabilities and delivering outcomes for clients. the commercial models will continue to evolve as the focus shifts toward more outcome-based engagements.
- ▶ Reskilling. Nearly reached the goal of having 80K AI & data professionals.
- Advanced AI. Increasing adoption across enterprises with bookings of US\$2.2 bn, up 76% yoy and revenues of US\$1.1 bn, up 120% yoy. The scale represents early leadership position in these services. Demand for AI is rapidly maturing and clients are looking for scaled and holistic AI adoption, making it tougher to differentiate the revenues linked to Advanced AI. The company has over 1.3k advanced AI clients to date and has deployed over 3k reusable agents. Most of the work currently has been in isolated areas and not across the enterprise. This is changing now and rewiring it across the enterprise will require significant efforts.
- ▶ **Headcount.** Expect to increase headcount in the US and Europe through the year.

- ▶ Use cases. Clients have moved from models to embedding solutions, which provide industry context.
- ▶ Partnerships. Work with a broad set of partners, many of which have specific functions in an enterprise context. Forming new partnerships with AI & data companies, in line with technology evolution and client requirements. Clients have an ecosystem of partners and Accenture's roles is to integrate and be among the leaders in working with relevant partners. Top 10 ecosystem partners contributed 60% of revenues and outpaced overall revenue growth. The AI partnerships will scale up with market and enterprise adoption.
- Pricing. There is improvement in several parts of the business with contract profitability improving, though these are early trends.
- ▶ Employee productivity. The differential in revenue and headcount will moderate in the upcoming quarters.
- ▶ M&A. Invested US\$374 mn across six acquisitions during the quarter. The company expects to invest US\$374 mn on M&A during the year. Acquisitions would contribute 150 bps to FY2026 revenue growth.
- ▶ Margin. Adjusted operating margin expanded by 30 bps yoy.
- ▶ **Bookings.** Overall book-to-bill of 1.1X with consulting book-to-bill of 1.0X and managed services at 1.2X.

#### Revenue grew by 6.0% yoy (US\$ terms)

Exhibit 1: Accenture interim results, August fiscal year-ends (US\$ mn)

	1QFY25	4QFY25	1QFY26	% qoq	% yoy
Revenues	17,690	17,596	18,742	5.7	6.0
Cost of revenues	11,867	11,985	12,545	5.4	5.7
SG&A expenses	2,874	2,946	3,016	6.0	4.9
Business optimization costs	_	615	308		
EBIT	2,948	2,050	2,874	(3.7)	(2.5)
Other income	7	26	94		
PBT	2,955	2,075	2,968	0.6	0.4
Provision for taxes	639	625	726	2.6	13.6
PAT	2,316	1,450	2,242	(0.1)	(3.2)
Minority interest	37	36	30	(34.7)	(18.7)
PAT after minority interest	2,279	1,414	2,212	0.6	(3.0)
Margins (%)					
Gross margin	32.9	31.9	33.1		
SG&A (as % of sales)	16.2	16.7	16.1		
EBIT (GAAP)	16.7	11.6	15.3		
EBIT (non-GAAP)	16.7	15.1	17.0		
Net income	13.1	8.2	12.0		



#### Financial services (among verticals) and APAC (among geos) lead growth in 4QFY25

Exhibit 2: Revenue growth by segments and new bookings (Nov 2025 quarter)

	Revenues	Growth	ı (%)		
	(US\$ mn)	(pop)	(yoy)	(yoy) I/c	% of total
Total revenues	18,742	6.5	6.0	5.0	100.0
by geography					
Americas	9,080	3.1	4.0	4	50.0
EMEA	6,935	11.9	8.2	4	35.2
Asia Pacific	2,727	5.1	7.2	9	14.8
by verticals					
Communications & High Tech	3,102	5.0	8.6	8	16.8
Financial Services	3,602	8.6	13.7	12	18.8
Health & Public Services	3,797	6.5	(0.4)	(1)	20.3
Products	5,741	6.8	5.8	4	30.6
Resources	2,499	4.7	3.1	2	13.6
by service line					
Consulting	9,415	7.3	4.1	3	49.9
Managed services	9,328	5.7	7.9	7	50.1
New bookings (US\$ bn)					
Consulting	9.9	11.4	7.2		41.6
Managed services	11.1	(11.1)	16.7		58.4
Total	20.9	(1.7)	12.0	10.0	100.0

Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

# FY2026 revenue growth guidance retained at 2-5%

Exhibit 3: Trends in revenue growth guidance, %, 2007-26, August fiscal year-ends

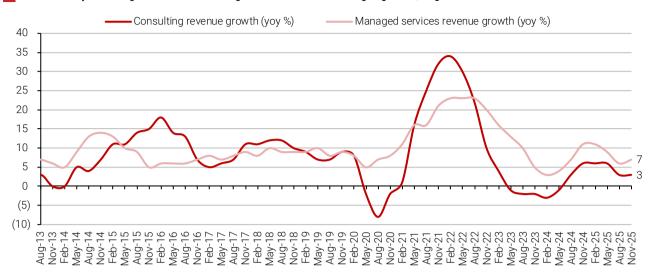
	Beginning of the year guidance (%)	Annual guidance post 1Q (%)	Annual guidance post 2Q (%)	Actual (%)	Organic growth (%)
FY2025-26	2-5	2-5			
FY2024-25	3-6	4-7	5-7	7	4
FY2023-24	2-5	2-5	1-3	2	(1)
FY2022-23	8-11	8-11	8-10	8	6
FY2021-22	12-15	19-22	24-26	26	21
FY2020-21	2-5	4-6	6.5-8.5	11	9
FY2019-20	5-8	6-8	3-6	4	2
FY2018-19	5-8	6-8	6.5-8.5	9	7
FY2017-18	5-8	6-8	7-9	11	8
FY2016-17	5-8	5-8	6-8	7	5
FY2015-16	5-8	6-9	8-10	11	9
FY2014-15	4-7	5-8	8-10	11	10
FY2013-14	2-6	2-6	3-6	5	3
FY2012-13	5-8	5-8	5-8 (lower half)	4	
FY2011-12	7-10	7-10	10-12	11	
FY2010-11	7-10	8-11	11-14	15	
FY2009-10	(3)-1	(3)-1	(3)-1 (lower half)	(2)	
FY2008-09	9-12	6-10	0-4	_	
FY2007-08	9-12	9-12	9-12	11	

Notes:

(a) FY2025-26 growth guidance incudes 1% impact from ramp-down in US Federal business.

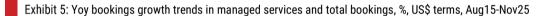
#### Managed services continues to outpace consulting

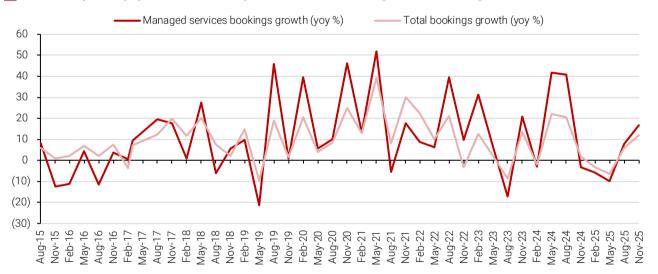
### Exhibit 4: Yoy revenue growth trends in managed services and consulting segments, Aug13-Nov25



Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

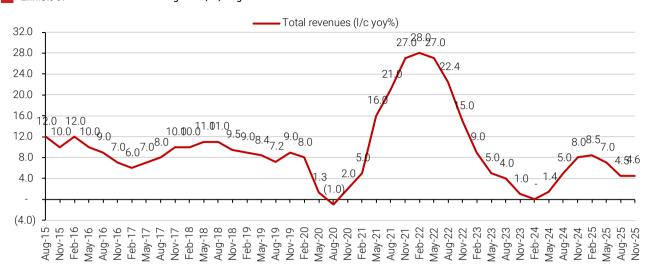
# Deal signing trajectory has been volatile on quarterly basis





#### Revenue growth stable at 4.6%, including 100 bps impact from Federal business

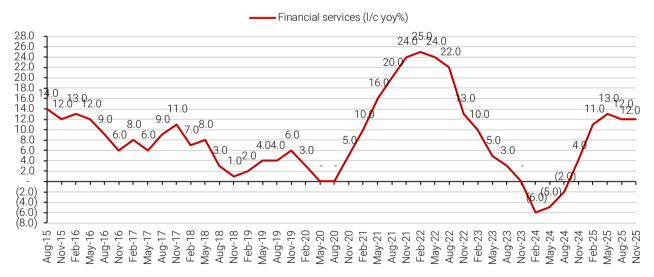
#### Exhibit 6: Trend in total revenue growth, %, Aug15-Nov25



Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

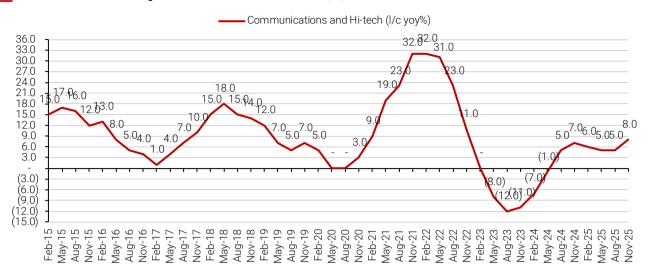
# Revenue growth remains strong in financial services at 12% yoy

Exhibit 7: Trend in revenue growth in financial services, %, Aug15-Nov25



#### Revenue growth improves to 8% yoy in telecom and hi-tech

### Exhibit 8: Trend in revenue growth in communications and hi-tech, %, Feb15-Nov25



Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

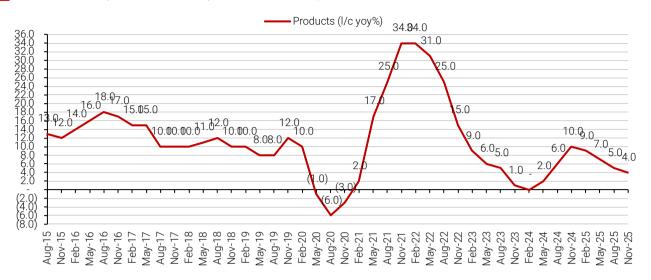
#### Revenue growth declines in health and public services due to revenue decline in Federal business

Exhibit 9: Quarterly annualized voluntary attrition trends, %, Feb15-Nov25



#### Revenue growth decelerates to 4% yoy in products

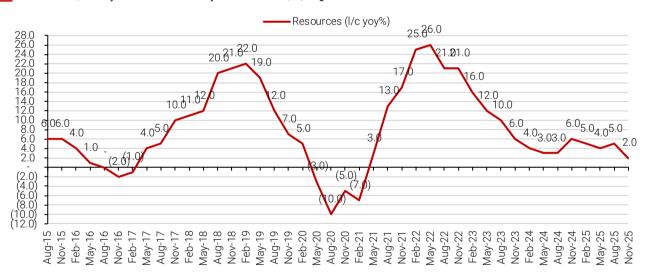
### Exhibit 10: Quarterly annualized voluntary attrition trends, %, Aug15-Nov25



Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

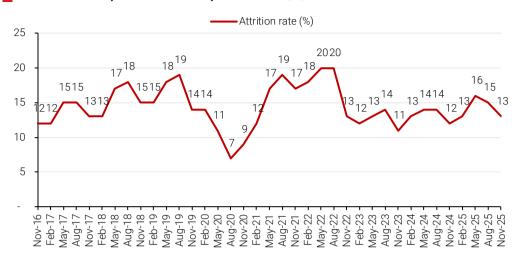
#### Revenue growth slows down to 2% in resources

### Exhibit 11: Quarterly annualized voluntary attrition trends, %, Aug16-Nov25



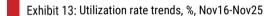
#### Quarterly annualized voluntary attrition declined 200 bps to 13% on qoq basis

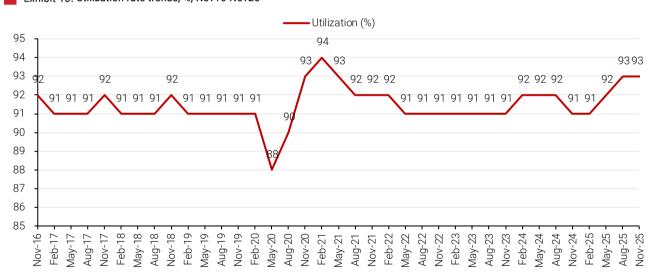
### Exhibit 12: Quarterly annualized voluntary attrition trends, %, Nov16-Nov25



Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

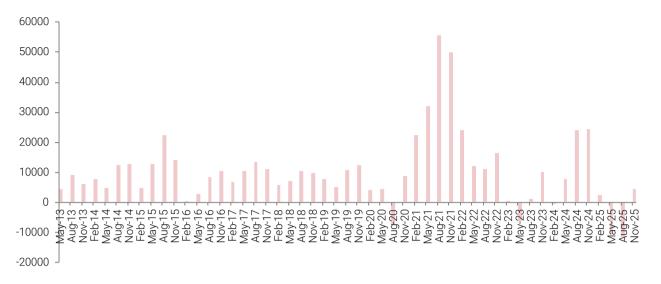
#### Utilization rate stable at 93% on sequential basis





#### Net headcount increased by 0.6% on goq basis

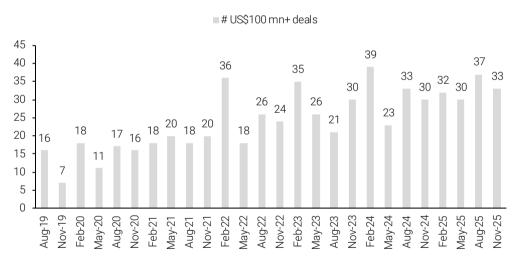
# Exhibit 14: Net headcount changes trends, May13-Nov25 (#)



Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

# Accenture won 33 US\$100 mn+ deals in 1QFY26

### Exhibit 15: Trend in number of bookings in excess of US\$100 mn, Aug19-Nov25





#### Accenture won US\$2.2 bn deal TCV related to generative AI in 1QFY26

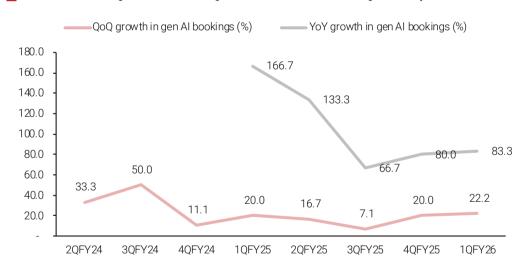
Exhibit 16: Trend in generative Al bookings, US\$ mn, FY2023-1QFY26, August fiscal year-ends



Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

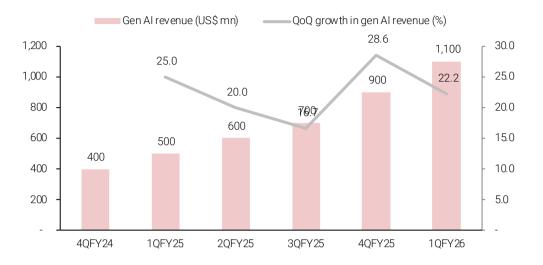
# Sequential and yoy growth in GenAl bookings accelerated in 1QFY26

Exhibit 17: Trend in generative AI bookings, US\$ mn, 2QFY24-1QFY26, August fiscal year-ends



#### Accenture reported US\$1.1 bn revenue in 1QFY26, contributed by GenAl

# Exhibit 18: Trend in generative AI bookings, US\$ mn, 4QFY24-1QFY26, August fiscal year-ends

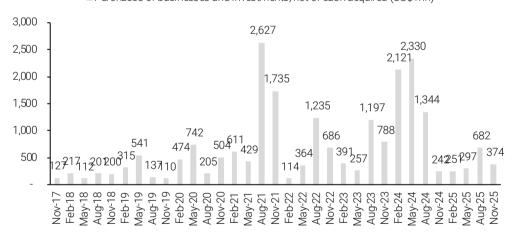


Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

#### Acquisition spend of US\$374 mn in 1QFY26

Exhibit 19: Trend in cash outflows for M&A, US\$ mn, Nov17-Nov25

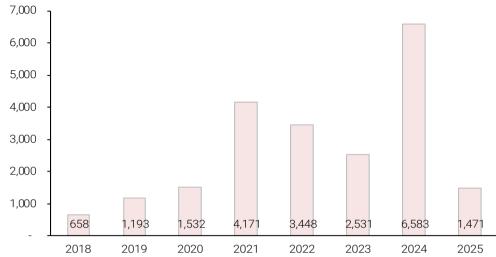
■ Purchases of businesses and investments, net of cash acquired (US\$ mn)



#### **Acquisition spends moderated in FY2025**

Exhibit 20: Trend in cash outflows for M&A, US\$ mn, 2018-25, August fiscal year-ends

Purchases of businesses and investments, net of cash acquired (US\$ mn)



Source: Company, Kotak Institutional Equities

# Indian Tier-1 IT trades at 20-24X FY2027E PE

Exhibit 21: Kotak Institutional Equities: valuation summary of key Indian technology companies

	18-Dec-25		Mkt c	ap.		EPS (Rs)			P/E (X) EV		EV/	EBITDA (X)		RoE (%)				
Company	Price (Rs)	Rating	(Rs m)	(US\$ m)	2026E	2027E	2028E	2026E	2027E	2028E	2026E	2027E	2028E	2026E	2027E	2028E		
Coforge	1,855	BUY	621,166	6,881	42.1	54.6	64.1	44.1	34.0	28.9	21.3	17.7	15.1	20.9	25.2	27.4		
Cyient	1,141	REDUCE	126,801	1,405	54.3	68.4	78.8	21.0	16.7	14.5	10.7	8.7	7.5	10.2	12.1	13.1		
eClerx Services	4,468	REDUCE	212,911	2,359	144.8	167.2	191.3	30.9	26.7	23.4	18.5	15.9	13.7	26.2	25.2	25.6		
Firstsource Solutions	342	REDUCE	238,615	2,643	10.7	12.9	15.6	31.9	26.5	21.9	16.0	14.1	12.2	17.6	18.9	20.2		
HCL Technologies	1,661	REDUCE	4,508,483	49,943	65.2	70.8	76.5	25.5	23.5	21.7	15.5	14.5	13.4	24.9	25.5	25.7		
Hexaware Technologies	757	BUY	462,753	5,126	23.4	26.6	31.1	32.4	28.5	24.3	21.6	17.6	14.9	25.2	25.6	26.7		
Indegene	536	BUY	128,714	1,426	18.1	21.3	26.5	29.5	25.1	20.2	17.7	14.3	11.3	15.6	16.1	17.3		
Infosys	1,627	BUY	6,758,743	74,870	68.2	73.1	80.2	23.8	22.2	20.3	15.4	14.4	13.1	28.5	28.9	30.3		
KPIT Technologies	1,161	SELL	318,226	3,525	27.3	33.5	40.8	42.6	34.6	28.4	23.0	19.3	16.2	23.6	24.8	25.8		
L&T Technology Services	4,563	REDUCE	483,597	5,357	126.2	143.1	171.9	36.1	31.9	26.5	22.5	19.6	16.5	20.3	21.0	22.3		
LTIMindtree	6,245	REDUCE	1,851,575	20,511	185.4	203.9	226.1	33.7	30.6	27.6	22.6	20.4	18.3	22.7	22.4	22.4		
Mphasis	2,886	REDUCE	549,929	6,092	100.8	112.5	126.8	28.6	25.6	22.8	17.9	16.1	14.4	19.2	20.1	21.0		
Persistent Systems	6,324	SELL	997,611	11,051	117.0	135.0	160.4	54.1	46.9	39.4	36.8	31.3	26.7	26.5	25.7	25.9		
RateGain	662	SELL	78,169	866	18.0	21.9	25.7	36.8	30.3	25.7	26.3	15.9	13.9	11.9	12.6	12.9		
Sagility	51	BUY	238,467	2,642	2.2	2.4	2.9	23.5	20.9	17.5	14.0	12.1	10.2	11.7	12.2	13.6		
Tata Elxsi	5,014	SELL	312,317	3,460	100.4	128.9	151.1	49.9	38.9	33.2	36.1	27.3	22.9	21.1	24.9	26.3		
Tata Technologies	643	SELL	260,913	2,890	16.6	19.4	22.7	38.8	33.2	28.3	27.9	23.8	20.4	18.0	19.2	20.3		
TCS	3,281	BUY	11,870,222	131,492	145.3	151.7	164.7	22.6	21.6	19.9	15.9	15.0	13.8	52.1	50.1	49.9		
Tech Mahindra	1,606	BUY	1,420,568	15,736	57.6	76.2	87.0	27.9	21.1	18.5	15.4	12.6	11.1	18.4	23.4	25.4		
Wipro	264	SELL	2,766,816	30,649	13.0	13.6	14.2	20.3	19.5	18.6	13.0	12.2	11.5	16.0	16.0	15.9		

	Fair	O/S shares	EPS CAGR (%)	EPS	growth (	%)	Net	Profit (Rs mn)		EB	ITDA (Rs mn)		5	Sales (Rs mr	ı)
Company	Value (Rs)	(mn)	2026-28E	2026E	2027E	2028E	2026E	2027E	2028E	2026E	2027E	2028E	2026E	2027E	2028E
Coforge	2,250	339	23.4	45.1	29.7	17.5	14,283	19,277	22,771	28,747	34,330	40,025	161,848	194,463	228,696
Cyient	1,200	111	20.5	(2.1)	25.9	15.3	6,033	7,593	8,756	10,378	12,628	14,577	73,638	80,991	91,656
eClerx Services	4,450	48	14.9	29.0	15.4	14.4	6,955	8,037	9,197	10,604	12,222	13,928	41,291	48,314	54,544
Firstsource Solutions	360	706	20.7	27.6	20.1	21.3	7,588	9,116	11,059	15,410	17,258	19,562	95,287	108,194	122,606
HCL Technologies	1,500	2,718	8.3	2.5	8.6	8.0	177,210	192,537	208,179	271,598	287,048	308,284	1,292,335	1,388,855	1,501,218
Hexaware Technologies	870	611	15.4	21.0	13.7	17.1	14,281	16,240	19,012	21,084	26,004	30,272	134,250	153,346	178,111
Indegene	680	241	20.9	6.6	17.5	24.4	4,382	5,148	6,403	6,547	7,940	9,585	34,797	42,235	49,334
Infosys	1,800	4,151	8.4	7.7	7.2	9.6	283,148	303,576	332,776	416,486	444,051	485,715	1,761,745	1,888,418	2,060,162
KPIT Technologies	1,050	274	22.4	(1.1)	22.9	21.9	7,462	9,167	11,176	13,667	15,977	18,535	64,918	75,386	87,534
L&T Technology Services	4,350	104	16.7	5.7	13.3	20.1	13,092	15,185	18,144	20,025	22,673	26,586	120,497	133,514	152,458
LTIMindtree	5,300	296	10.4	19.1	10.0	10.9	54,798	60,261	66,832	74,921	82,075	89,715	417,512	458,212	507,855
Mphasis	2,560	189	12.1	12.1	11.6	12.6	19,053	21,271	23,959	29,462	32,418	35,642	157,977	175,209	194,797
Persistent Systems	4,900	156	17.1	29.9	15.4	18.9	18,289	21,101	25,080	26,619	30,926	35,979	145,071	170,092	199,533
RateGain	600	119	19.7	2.2	21.6	17.8	2,136	2,587	3,048	3,180	5,120	5,577	18,233	29,363	31,660
Sagility	59	4,717	15.7	32.0	12.1	19.4	10,238	11,510	13,740	16,778	18,944	21,916	69,952	79,184	89,315
Tata Elxsi	4,000	62	22.7	(20.3)	28.4	17.3	6,254	8,028	9,414	8,033	10,527	12,437	37,258	42,142	48,695
Tata Technologies	450	406	17.0	(0.6)	16.9	17.1	6,731	7,866	9,209	8,649	10,019	11,498	52,890	57,153	64,331
TCS	3,550	3,619	6.4	8.3	4.4	8.5	525,838	548,948	595,797	711,061	750,531	812,730	2,642,165	2,817,288	3,031,281
Tech Mahindra	1,725	890	22.8	19.9	32.2	14.2	51,305	67,804	77,401	87,504	106,698	119,836	558,126	602,667	662,411
Wipro	230	10,483	4.4	3.7	4.3	4.4	136,194	142,252	148,554	181,411	190,276	197,449	918,840	968,572	1,010,200

Source: Kotak Institutional Equities estimates

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BUY. We expect this stock to deliver more than 15% returns over the next 12 months.

ADD. We expect this stock to deliver 5-15% returns over the next 12 months.

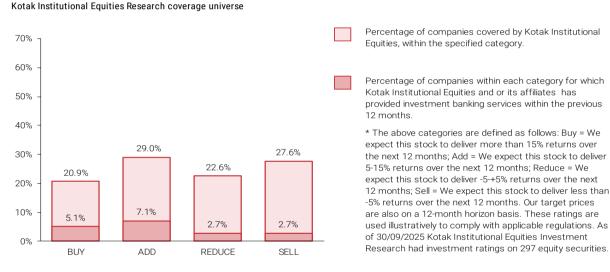
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SELL. We expect this stock to deliver <-5% returns over the next 12 months.

Our Fair Value estimates are also on a 12-month horizon basis.

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Source: Kotak Institutional Equities

As of September 30, 2025

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#### Corporate Office

Kotak Securities Ltd. 27 BKC, Plot No. C-27, "G Block" Bandra Kurla Complex, Bandra (E) Mumbai 400 051, India Tel: +91-22-43360000

#### Overseas Affiliates

Kotak Mahindra (UK) Ltd 8th Floor, Portsoken House 155-157 Minories, London EC3N 1LS Tel: +44-20-7977-6900

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Details of	Contact Person	Address	Contact No.	Email ID
Customer Care/ Complaints	Mr. Ritesh Shah	Kotak Towers, 8th Floor, Building No.21, Infinity Park, Off Western	18002099393	ks.escalation@kotak.com
Head of Customer Care	Mr. Tabrez Anwar	Express Highway, Malad (East), Mumbai, Maharashtra - 400097	022-42858208	ks.servicehead@kotak.com
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