

Company

8 October 2009 | 23 pages

Indian Wireless

Earnings Take a Structural Hit, Could Be Knock-Out Blow for Some

- Reducing sector earnings, valuation targets We cut FY11E earnings for Bharti, RCOM and Idea by 17%, 27% and 70%, respectively, to factor in lower rev/min as the threat of incumbents retaliating has increased. We downgrade Bharti to Hold (from Buy) with TP of Rs370; and RCOM to Sell (from Hold) with TP of Rs210. Maintain Sell rating on Idea with TP of Rs55.
- Earnings growth may have to wait till FY12 Given that new tariffs stand to earn marginal EBITDA/min (if at all), the industry will be driven toward consolidation. Incumbents will gain as they win back MOUs from competition and as the residual elasticity (especially in NLD) manifests. But these changes will take time and will drive earnings only in FY12 (16-25% yoy).
- Bharti has little downside On stress-case assumptions, i.e., 25% decline in rev/min from current levels and only 2-4% MOU growth, Bharti is trading at 13.5x PER, a 10% discount to market multiple. This therefore poses little downside; the sharp sell-off over the last few trading sessions is probably a reflection of its wide holding rather than its relative fundamental standing.
- Operating/financial leverage could be back-breaking for RCOM/Idea In this environment, RCOM and Idea are most vulnerable (among the listed ops). High gearing and relatively lesser scale could constrain their capex (especially if MOUs spurt sharply post tariff cuts) and ability to participate in 3G. Implication for the new entrants is also quite obvious.
- Upside risks Higher than expected elasticity, delay in MNP, immediate M&A.

| | Rating | | Rating Target Price | | Current Year Earnings Estimates | | Next Year Earnings Estimates | |
|---------|--------|-----|---------------------|----------|------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|---------|
| Ticker | Old | New | Old | New | Old | New | Old | New |
| BRTI.B0 | 1L | 2L | Rs465.00 | Rs370.00 | Rs24.99 | Rs24.54 | Rs30.16 | Rs25.12 |
| IDEA.BO | 3M | 3M | Rs80.00 | Rs55.00 | Rs2.57 | Rs2.09 | Rs2.90 | Rs0.86 |
| RLCM.B0 | 2M | 3M | Rs310.00 | Rs210.00 | Rs22.60 | Rs18.96 | Rs24.43 | Rs17.90 |

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See Appendix A-1 for Analyst Certification and important disclosures.

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Revenue per min to decline faster

We have meaningfully revised our rev/min assumptions for all operators for FY11E. While the incumbents are likely to adopt a wait-and-watch approach initially to RCOM's new tariffs, they will have to eventually match these tariffs (directly or indirectly) given the high churn-environment in pre-paid and implementation of MNP over 3-6 months.

Tata DoCoMo's offer of 1p/sec and RCOM's offer of 50p/min work out to blended rev/min of 35-40p (excluding NLD/roaming/ILD). While it is a driver to our RPM changes, we maintain a premium to the incumbents given higher roaming, VAS and post-paid contribution. Given the lead taken by RCOM and Tata Docomo, we also maintain a 2p premium in RPM for Bharti/Idea over RCOM.

The MoU trend will follow the rev/min trend, i.e., RCOM benefits in FY10/11 given first-mover advantage as usage shifts from others' networks (till others react) as well as from some benefits of elasticity of usage, which should reappear after the aggressive tariff cuts. The GSM incumbents too are likely to benefit from the winning back of MOUs and/or elasticity as can be seen in our FY12E assumptions.

Figure 1. KPI revision

| | 1QFY10 | | FY10E | | | FY11E | | | FY12E | |
|--------------|--------|------|-------|--------|------|-------|--------|------|-------|--------|
| Bharti | | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change |
| MoU (mins) | 478 | 521 | 464 | -11.0% | 526 | 470 | -10.6% | 530 | 489 | -7.7% |
| Rev/min (Rs) | 0.58 | 0.50 | 0.52 | 2.6% | 0.46 | 0.44 | -4.3% | 0.43 | 0.42 | -2.0% |
| ARPU (Rs) | 280 | 263 | 240 | -8.7% | 243 | 208 | -14.5% | 228 | 206 | -9.5% |
| RCOM | | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change |
| MoU (mins) | 365 | 370 | 375 | 1.4% | 375 | 400 | 6.7% | 385 | 405 | 5.2% |
| Rev/min (Rs) | 0.58 | 0.55 | 0.51 | -7.3% | 0.50 | 0.42 | -16.0% | 0.48 | 0.40 | -16.0% |
| ARPU (Rs) | 210 | 204 | 191 | -6.0% | 188 | 168 | -10.4% | 183 | 162 | -11.6% |
| Idea | | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change |
| MoU (mins) | 399 | 421 | 384 | -8.9% | 425 | 391 | -8.0% | 427 | 409 | -4.4% |
| Rev/min (Rs) | 0.58 | 0.51 | 0.52 | 2.7% | 0.46 | 0.44 | -3.2% | 0.42 | 0.42 | -0.5% |
| ARPU (Rs) | 232 | 214 | 200 | -6.5% | 194 | 173 | -10.9% | 179 | 171 | -4.8% |

Source: Citi Investment Research and Analysis

Likely consolidation, the only silver lining

As has been highlighted below, the frontline GSM operators had a fixed cost/min of 24-27p/min in Q1FY10. The new rev/min trend of 35-40p/min can at best generate marginal EBITDA thus driving smaller-scale operators toward eventual consolidation. It could also impact scaling back of new entrant plans or force them to look at acquiring an existing operator.

0.27

0.26

0.25

0.24

0.23

Bharti Idea Vodafone

Figure 2. 1Q10 fixed cost/min – new entrants cannot match the incumbents' scale advantage

Source: Citi Investment Research and Analysis, Company data

Growth may have to wait till FY12E

Our assumptions result in a sharp cut in earnings in FY10-11E before normalizing from FY12E onwards, as elasticity and tariff stability (partly contingent on consolidation) come back.

The trend of earnings revision also highlights the advantages of scale and vulnerability of high financial and low operating leverage. While FY10-11E EBITDA has been downgraded by 10-20% across the 3 telcos, EPS downgrades have been sharper in the cases of RCOM/Idea as compared with Bharti.

Figure 3. Earnings revisions

| | | FY10E | | | FY11E | | | FY12E | |
|-------------------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
| Bharti | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change |
| Wireless EBITDA | 106,530 | 100,724 | -5.5% | 123,085 | 98,750 | -19.8% | 130,940 | 123,550 | -5.6% |
| Consol EBITDA | 182,452 | 161,101 | -11.7% | 220,104 | 168,463 | -23.5% | 250,486 | 200,365 | -20.0% |
| EPS | 25.0 | 24.5 | -1.8% | 30.2 | 25.1 | -16.7% | 33.7 | 31.3 | -7.2% |
| RCOM | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change |
| Wireless EBITDA | 79,298 | 67,992 | -14.3% | 91,264 | 68,879 | -24.5% | 102,824 | 74,753 | -27.3% |
| Consol EBITDA | 108,951 | 97,645 | -10.4% | 129,888 | 105,042 | -19.1% | 145,630 | 115,590 | -20.6% |
| EPS | 22.6 | 19.0 | -16.1% | 24.4 | 17.9 | -26.7% | 28.6 | 20.8 | -27.3% |
| Idea | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change | Old | New | Change |
| Standalone EBITDA | 31,979 | 29,611 | -7.4% | 39,437 | 27,923 | -29.2% | 44,546 | 33,561 | -24.7% |
| Consol EBITDA | 34,868 | 32,500 | -6.8% | 43,137 | 31,623 | -26.7% | 48,753 | 37,768 | -22.5% |
| EPS | 2.6 | 2.1 | -18.6% | 2.9 | 0.9 | -70.2% | 3.1 | 1.6 | -48.7% |

Source: Citi Investment Research and Analysis

Valuations reflect changing business perception

We have revised our valuation methodology for Bharti from DCF to P/E as DCF focuses on back-ended returns while investors will be more concerned about the impact of the new tariffs on near-term earnings. As a result we now value Bharti's core business at Rs312 based on 14.0x FY11E P/E, i.e. at a 10% discount to the broad market given uncertainty over the next 12-18 months on earnings from high competition. Indus is valued at US\$11.4bn with Bharti's proportionate stake valued at Rs55/share.

Idea's new TP is Rs55 comprising core business valued at 6.1x FY11 EV/EBITDA, i.e., at a 10% discount to Bharti's imputed FY11E EV/EBITDA multiple. Idea's proportionate stake in Indus remains unchanged at Rs21/share as Indus' tenancy (and hence valuation) is relatively less reliant on non-JV operators compared to RTIL and third-party towercos.

RCOM's revised TP is at Rs210 and comprises core business value of Rs170/share, which similar to Idea, is valued at 6.1x FY11E EV/EBITDA. The towerco valued at Rs40/share is net of value generated from internal tenancy.

Figure 4. Target price breakdown

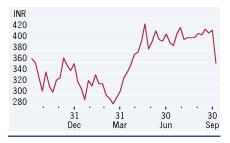
| | TP (Rs) | Core business value (Rs) | Towerco value (Rs) | Valuation methodology |
|--------|---------|--------------------------|--------------------|---|
| Bharti | 370 | 312 | 55 | 14.0x FY11E P/E at a 10% discount to market |
| ldea | 55 | 34 | 21 | 6.1x FY11E EV/EBITDA at a 10% disc to Bharti's imputed multiple |
| RCOM | 210 | 170 | 40 | 6.1x FY11E EV/EBITDA at a 10% disc to Bharti's imputed multiple |

Company Focus

Rating change ☑ Target price change ☑ Estimate change ☑

| Hold/Low Risk | 2L |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| from Buy/Low Risk | |
| Price (08 Oct 09) | Rs334.65 |
| Target price | Rs370.00 |
| from Rs465.00 | |
| Expected share price return | 10.6% |
| Expected dividend yield | 0.7% |
| Expected total return | 11.3% |
| Market Cap | Rs1,270,581M |
| | US\$27,236M |

Price Performance (RIC: BRTI.BO, BB: BHARTI IN)



Bharti Airtel (BRTI.BO)

Downgrade to Hold: Stock Factoring in Lower Tariffs but no Consolidation

- Downgrade to Hold, TP of Rs370 We reduce FY11E EPS by 17% as we factor in lower RPM & margins though MOUs could come back. Target of Rs370 is based on 14x core FY11E earnings (ex-Indus) of 22.3 (at 10% discount to market PER) plus Indus stake value of Rs55/share. Indus' valuation remains unchanged despite imminent consolidation its tenancy is relatively less reliant on non-JV operators compared with other operator owned/independent towercos; long-term tenancy for Indus is 2.4.
- Low downside, but stock could remain range-bound Our reduced RPM, down 25% from present level of 58p, factors in aggressive response by incumbents triggered by RCOM's new price offer. On stress-case earnings forecasts, the stock is trading at 13.5x FY11E (including Indus), which is at a 10% discount to market PER thus protecting downside. But meaningful upside from the present levels is contingent on (i) manifestation of elasticity coming back and (ii) tangible regulatory changes to facilitate M&A.
- Sell-off reflects wide stock holding rather than relative fundamental standing

 The stock was down 23% the past week on the concerns of the impact on profitability. Yet the company still remains best placed to weather the storm

 clean B/S, large scale and coverage relative to other listed and unlisted peers. We believe the market may be completely ignoring that the company is best positioned to bounce back in FY12E after meaningful consolidation and scaling back by the new entrants.
- Risks Downside risks comprise continued irrational pricing behavior

| Statistical Abstract | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|------|-----|------|-------|--|--|--|
| Year to | Net Profit | Diluted EPS | EPS growth | P/E | P/B | ROE | Yield | | | |
| 31 Mar | (RsM) | (Rs) | (%) | (x) | (x) | (%) | (%) | | | |
| 2008A | 67,008 | 17.65 | 57.2 | 19.0 | 5.7 | 37.4 | 0.0 | | | |
| 2009A | 84,700 | 22.31 | 26.4 | 15.0 | 4.2 | 32.2 | 0.3 | | | |
| 2010E | 93,179 | 24.54 | 10.0 | 13.6 | 3.3 | 27.0 | 0.7 | | | |
| 2011E | 95,358 | 25.12 | 2.3 | 13.3 | 2.7 | 22.4 | 1.1 | | | |
| 2012E | 118,756 | 31.28 | 24.5 | 10.7 | 2.3 | 23.2 | 1.9 | | | |
| Source: Power | ed by dataCentral | | | | | | - | | | |

| Fiscal year end 31-Mar | 2008 | 2009 | 2010E | 2011E | 2012E |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Valuation Ratios | | | | | |
| P/E adjusted (x) | 19.0 | 15.0 | 13.6 | 13.3 | 10.7 |
| EV/EBITDA adjusted (x) | 11.6 | 8.9 | 8.3 | 7.6 | 6.0 |
| P/BV (x) | 5.7 | 4.2 | 3.3 | 2.7 | 2.3 |
| Dividend yield (%) | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.7 | 1.1 | 1.9 |
| Per Share Data (Rs) | | | | | |
| EPS adjusted | 17.65 | 22.31 | 24.54 | 25.12 | 31.28 |
| EPS reported | 17.65 | 22.31 | 24.54 | 25.12 | 31.28 |
| BVPS | 58.64 | 80.06 | 101.85 | 122.69 | 146.83 |
| DPS | 0.00 | 1.00 | 2.45 | 3.80 | 6.35 |
| Profit & Loss (RsM) | | | | | |
| Net sales | 270,250 | 369,616 | 387,705 | 433,326 | 499,677 |
| Operating expenses | -193,796 | -265,518 | -280,812 | -326,915 | -368,123 |
| EBIT | 76,454 | 104,098 | 106,894 | 106,411 | 131,554 |
| Net interest expense | -2,341 | -11,613 | -5,427 | -2,618 | 1,110 |
| Non-operating/exceptionals | 2,423 | 589 | 6,182 | 10,722 | 17,214 |
| Pre-tax profit | 76,536 | 93,074 | 107,648 | 114,515 | 149,878 |
| Tax | -8,378 | -6,615 | -13,994 | -18,322 | -29,976 |
| Extraord./Min.Int./Pref.div. | -1,150 | -1,759 | -475 | -834 | -1,147 |
| Reported net income | 67,008 | 84,700 | 93,179 | 95,358 | 118,756 |
| Adjusted earnings Adjusted EBITDA | 67,008 113,225 | 84,700 150,086 | 93,179 161,101 | 95,358 168,463 | 118,756 200,365 |
| • | 113,223 | 130,000 | 101,101 | 100,403 | 200,303 |
| Growth Rates (%) | 45.0 | 20.0 | 4.0 | 11.0 | 15.0 |
| Sales | 45.9 55.1 | 36.8 36.2 | 4.9 2.7 | 11.8 -0.5 | 15.3 23.6 |
| EBIT adjusted EBITDA adjusted | 52.7 | 30.2 32.6 | 7.3 | -0.5 4.6 | 23.6 18.9 |
| EPS adjusted | 57.2 | 26.4 | 10.0 | 2.3 | 24.5 |
| Cash Flow (RsM) | 07.2 | 20.1 | 10.0 | 2.0 | 21.0 |
| Operating cash flow | 128,958 | 140,432 | 137,496 | 153,477 | 161,363 |
| Depreciation/amortization | 36,771 | 45,988 | 54,207 | 62,052 | 68,811 |
| Net working capital | 17,127 | 1,404 | -7,006 | 3,336 | -9,026 |
| Investing cash flow | -100,950 | -143,340 | -83,510 | -76,399 | -59,794 |
| Capital expenditure | -99,109 | -146,406 | -87,187 | -82,084 | -68,609 |
| Acquisitions/disposals | -2,578 | 2,066 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Financing cash flow | 61,983 | 7,230 | -29,568 | -34,534 | -39,825 |
| Borrowings | 44,602 | 3,795 | -10,000 | -10,000 | -5,000 |
| Dividends paid | 0 | 0 | -10,464 | -16,230 | -27,121 |
| Change in cash | 89,991 | 4,321 | 24,418 | 42,545 | 61,743 |
| Balance Sheet (RsM) | | | | | |
| Total assets | 469,872 | 596,391 | 674,490 | 751,399 | 834,247 |
| Cash & cash equivalent | 54,863 | 49,070 | 73,488 | 116,033 | 177,776 |
| Accounts receivable | 28,062 | 28,528 | 34,033 | 33,422 | 33,535 |
| Net fixed assets | 353,654 | 449,499 | 485,083 | 505,115 | 504,913 |
| Total liabilities | 244,274 | 281,742 | 276,651 | 273,598 | 263,665 |
| Accounts payable | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Debt | 97,063 | 118,800 | 108,800 | 98,800 | 93,800 |
| Shareholders' funds | 225,598 | 314,649 | 397,839 | 477,801 | 570,583 |
| Profitability/Solvency Ratios (%) | _ | _ | _ | _, | |
| EBITDA margin adjusted | 41.9 | 40.6 | 41.6 | 38.9 | 40.1 |
| ROE adjusted | 37.4 | 32.2 | 27.0 | 22.4 | 23.2 |
| ROIC adjusted | 28.9 | 28.9 | 22.4 | 19.8 | 22.2 |
| Net debt to equity | 18.7 | 22.2 | 8.9 | -3.6 17.1 | -14.7 |
| Total debt to capital | 30.1 | 27.4 | 21.5 | 17.1 | 14.1 |

For further data queries on Citi's full coverage universe please contact CIR Data Services Asia Pacific at CIRDataServicesAsiaPacific@citi.com or +852-2501-2791



Figure 1. Income Statement (Rs m)

| Year to Mar | 2009 | 2010E | 2011E | 2012E |
|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Mobile | 303,104 | 318,468 | 354,063 | 417,655 |
| Fixed | 33,603 | 35,260 | 37,671 | 40,244 |
| Long Distance | 67,937 | 68,786 | 75,149 | 78,531 |
| Enterprise | 16,945 | 20,334 | 22,367 | 24,604 |
| Towerco | 27,933 | 34,994 | 41,218 | 44,750 |
| Eliminations | (79,907) | (90,137) | (97,143) | (106,106) |
| Total Revenues | 369,616 | 387,705 | 433,326 | 499,677 |
| Reported EBITDA | 150,086 | 161,101 | 168,463 | 200,365 |
| EBITDA margins % | 40.6% | 41.6% | 38.9% | 40.1% |
| Mobile % | 30.9% | 31.6% | 27.9% | 29.6% |
| Fixed % | 42.0% | 42.9% | 42.7% | 42.2% |
| Long Distance % | 44.5% | 42.5% | 41.9% | 41.3% |
| Enterprise % | 44.3% | 44.9% | 45.0% | 45.3% |
| Towerco % | 37.0% | 42.0% | 47.0% | 51.0% |
| Net finance costs | (11,613) | (5,427) | (2,618) | 1,110 |
| Depreciation | (43,690) | (51,970) | (59,939) | (66,815) |
| Amortization | (2,298) | (2,237) | (2,113) | (1,996) |
| Operating profits | 92,485 | 101,466 | 103,793 | 132,664 |
| Other income | 1,522 | - | - | - |
| EBT pre exceptionals | 94,007 | 101,466 | 103,793 | 132,664 |
| Share of profits in JV | (713) | 6,182 | 10,722 | 17,214 |
| Non recurring items | (220) | - | - | - |
| PBT | 93,074 | 107,648 | 114,515 | 149,878 |
| Tax | (6,615) | (13,994) | (18,322) | (29,976) |
| Rate(%) | 7.1% | 13.0% | 16.0% | 20.0% |
| PAT | 86,459 | 93,654 | 96,192 | 119,902 |
| Minority interest | (1,759) | (475) | (834) | (1,147) |
| Profit/ (loss) for the year | 84,700 | 93,179 | 95,358 | 118,756 |
| Outstanding shares | 3,796 | 3,796 | 3,796 | 3,796 |
| Consolidated EPS | 22.3 | 24.5 | 25.1 | 31.3 |

Source: Citi Investment Research and Analysis, Company data

| Figure 2. Balance Sheet (Rs m) | | | | |
|--|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| As of March | 2009 | 2010E | 2011E | 2012E |
| SOURCE OF FUNDS | | | | |
| Shareholders funds | 303,945 | 386,660 | 465,788 | 557,423 |
| Share capital | 18,982 | 18,982 | 18,982 | 18,982 |
| Additional capital | 74,299 | 74,299 | 74,299 | 74,299 |
| Reserve and surplus | 210,663 | 293,378 | 372,506 | 464,141 |
| Loan funds | 118,800 | 108,800 | 98,800 | 93,800 |
| Minority interest | 10,704 | 11,179 | 12,014 | 13,160 |
| Other non current liabilities | 10,564 | 11,093 | 11,093 | 11,093 |
| Total Liability | 444,014 | 517,732 | 587,694 | 675,476 |
| APPLICATION OF FUNDS | | | | |
| Intangibles | 40,364 | 38,126 | 36,013 | 34,016 |
| Net PP&E block | 373,998 | 411,818 | 433,964 | 435,758 |
| Capital WIP | 35,138 | 35,138 | 35,138 | 35,138 |
| Total net assets | 449,499 | 485,083 | 505,115 | 504,913 |
| Investments | 128 | 6,309 | 17,032 | 34,245 |
| Deferred tax asset (net) | 1,254 | 1,254 | 1,254 | 1,254 |
| Current assets | | | | |
| Inventories | 963 | 1,190 | 2,024 | 2,619 |
| Sundry debtors | 28,528 | 34,033 | 33,422 | 33,535 |
| Cash and bank balances | 49,070 | 73,488 | 116,033 | 177,776 |
| Other current assets, loans and advances | 56,708 | 62,378 | 65,497 | 68,772 |
| Less: current liabilities and provision | ns | | | |
| Current liabilities | 152,377 | 156,758 | 163,705 | 158,772 |
| Provisions | - | - | - | - |
| Total current liabilities | 152,377 | 156,758 | 163,705 | 158,772 |
| Net current assets | (17,109) | 14,331 | 53,271 | 123,930 |
| Other Non current assets | 10,242 | 10,754 | 11,023 | 11,133 |
| Total Assets | 444,014 | 517,731 | 587,694 | 675,475 |
| Source: Citi Investment Research an | d Analysis, Compa | ny data | | |

Company Focus

Target price change ☑ Estimate change ☑

| Sell/Medium Risk | 3 M |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Price (08 Oct 09) | Rs62.50 |
| Target price | Rs55.00 |
| from Rs80.00 | |
| Expected share price return | -12.0% |
| Expected dividend yield | 0.0% |
| Expected total return | -12.0% |
| Market Cap | Rs193,756M |
| | US\$4,153M |



IDEA Cellular (IDEA.BO) Maintain Sell

- TP reduced on rising threat to match RCOM's tariffs New TP at Rs55/share is based on core business at Rs34/share (Rs59 earlier) and Idea's 16% stake in Indus at Rs21/share. The core business is valued at 6.1x FY11E EV/EBITDA at a 10% discount to Bharti's imputed multiple. Towerco value remains unchanged despite greater probability of consolidation now as Indus' tenancy is relatively less reliant on non-JV operators compared with other operator owned/independent towercos.
- Earnings take a hit The tariff war initiated by RCOM leaves Idea most vulnerable among the listed incumbents given 1) higher operating leverage from a smaller scale and 2) high proportion of new circle launches, which have yet to stabilize. Our FY10-11E EBITDA as a result is lowered by 7-27%, though the downgrade is far sharper at the PAT level (20-70%).
- M&A premium surfacing again? The low tariffs resulting in only marginal EBITDA/min generation will drive smaller-scale operators/new launches toward consolidation. Upside risks to our target price include faster-than-expected M&A activity, which we believe is 12-15 months away, with Idea possibly as one of the acquisition targets.
- Maintain Sell We believe Idea's current valuation of 9.2x FY11E EV/EBITDA is rich at a 25% premium to Bharti. The new rev/min trend is likely to constrain its capex decisions, especially if MoUs spurt post tariff cuts, and also its ability to participate in 3G.

| Year to | Net Profit | Diluted EPS | EPS growth | P/E | P/B | ROE | Yield |
|---------|------------|-------------|------------|------|-----|------|-------|
| 31 Mar | (RsM) | (Rs) | (%) | (x) | (x) | (%) | (%) |
| 2008A | 10,423 | 3.96 | 104.2 | 15.8 | 4.6 | 36.4 | 0.0 |
| 2009A | 8,756 | 2.68 | -32.2 | 23.3 | 1.7 | 11.4 | 0.0 |
| 2010E | 6,834 | 2.09 | -21.9 | 29.9 | 1.6 | 5.6 | 0.0 |
| 2011E | 2,818 | 0.86 | -58.8 | 72.5 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 0.0 |
| 2012E | 5,150 | 1.58 | 82.8 | 39.6 | 1.5 | 3.9 | 0.0 |

| Fiscal year end 31-Mar | 2008 | 2009 | 2010E | 2011E | 2012E |
|---|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Valuation Ratios | | | | | |
| P/E adjusted (x) | 15.8 | 23.3 | 29.9 | 72.5 | 39.6 |
| EV/EBITDA adjusted (x) | 10.4 | 8.7 | 7.8 | 8.7 | 7.4 |
| P/BV (x) | 4.6 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.5 |
| Dividend yield (%) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Per Share Data (Rs) | | | | | |
| EPS adjusted | 3.96 | 2.68 | 2.09 | 0.86 | 1.58 |
| EPS reported | 3.96 | 2.68 | 2.09 | 0.86 | 1.58 |
| BVPS | 13.45 | 36.38 | 38.47 | 39.33 | 40.91 |
| DPS | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Profit & Loss (RsM) | | | | | |
| Net sales | 67,200 | 102,722 | 127,161 | 146,684 | 168,298 |
| Operating expenses | -53,450 | -88,969 | -115,304 | -139,450 | -157,845 |
| EBIT | 13,750 | 13,753 | 11,856 | 7,234 | 10,453 |
| Net interest expense | -2,776 | -4,586 | -4,737 | -4,299 | -5,088 |
| Non-operating/exceptionals | 175 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pre-tax profit | 11,148 | 9,167 | 7,119 | 2,935 | 5,365 |
| Tax | -725 | -412 | -285 | -117 | -215 |
| Extraord./Min.Int./Pref.div. Reported net income | 0 10,423 | 0 8,756 | 0 6,834 | 0 2,818 | 0 5,150 |
| Adjusted earnings | 10,423 | 8,756 | 6,834 | 2, 818 | 5,150 |
| Adjusted EBITDA | 22,518 | 28,001 | 32,500 | 31,623 | 37,768 |
| Growth Rates (%) | 22,310 | 20,001 | 32,300 | 01,020 | 37,700 |
| Sales | 53.9 | 52.9 | 23.8 | 15.4 | 14.7 |
| EBIT adjusted | 73.3 | 0.0 | -13.8 | -39.0 | 44.5 |
| EBITDA adjusted | 53.7 | 24.3 | 16.1 | -2.7 | 19.4 |
| EPS adjusted | 104.2 | -32.2 | -21.9 | -58.8 | 82.8 |
| Cash Flow (RsM) | | | | | |
| Operating cash flow | 24,036 | 20,616 | 24,978 | 27,900 | 35,746 |
| Depreciation/amortization | 8,768 | 14,248 | 20,644 | 24,388 | 27,315 |
| Net working capital | 2,221 | -6,973 | -7,238 | -3,605 | -1,807 |
| Investing cash flow | -59,768 | -53,472 | -42,666 | -30,413 | -25,464 |
| Capital expenditure | -55,726 | -61,536 | -47,641 | -36,572 | -30,834 |
| Acquisitions/disposals | -4,965 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Financing cash flow | 15,661 | 108,832 | 8,906 | -10,458 | -10,458 |
| Borrowings | 16,991 | 46,952 | 18,619 | 0 | 0 |
| Dividends paid | 0 | 01 500 | 0 702 | 0 | 0 |
| Change in cash | -20,071 | 81,566 | -8,782 | -12,971 | -176 |
| Balance Sheet (RsM) | | | | | |
| Total assets | 128,283 | 288,689 | 307,798 | 308,221 | 312,192 |
| Cash & cash equivalent | 4,975 | 66,590 | 57,808 | 44,838 | 44,661 |
| Accounts receivable | 1,986 | 3,698 | 2,475 | 2,408 | 2,432 |
| Net fixed assets | 89,270 | 151,878 | 180,929 | 195,165 | 200,738 |
| Total liabilities | 92,837 | 169,862 | 182,136 | 179,741 | 178,563 |
| Accounts payable Total Debt | 17,599 65,154 | 0 112,106 | 0 130,725 | 0 130,725 | 0 130,725 |
| Shareholders' funds | 35,446 | 118,828 | 130,723 1 25,662 | 130,723 128,480 | 133,630 |
| Profitability/Solvency Ratios (%) | | · · | | | |
| EBITDA margin adjusted | 33.5 | 27.3 | 25.6 | 21.6 | 22.4 |
| ROE adjusted | 36.4 | 11.4 | 5.6 | 2.2 | 3.9 |
| ROIC adjusted | 18.9 | 9.4 | 5.5 | 3.0 | 4.2 |
| Net debt to equity | 169.8 | 38.3 | 58.0 | 66.8 | 64.4 |
| Total debt to capital | 64.8 | 48.5 | 51.0 | 50.4 | 49.5 |
| | | | | | |

For further data queries on Citi's full coverage universe please contact CIR Data Services Asia Pacific at CIRDataServicesAsiaPacific@citi.com or +852-2501-2791



| Year to Mar | 2009 | 2010E | 2011E | 2012E |
|-------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Total revenues | 102,722 | 127,161 | 146,684 | 168,298 |
| Reported EBITDA | 28,001 | 32,500 | 31,623 | 37,768 |
| EBITDA margins % | 27.3% | 25.6% | 21.6% | 22.4% |
| Interest & Fin Charges | (7,090) | (9,713) | (10,458) | (10,458) |
| Other Income | 2,505 | 4,976 | 6,159 | 5,370 |
| Depreciation and amortisation | (14,248) | (20,644) | (24,388) | (27,315) |
| PBT | 9,167 | 7,119 | 2,935 | 5,365 |
| Provision for Tax | (412) | (285) | (117) | (215) |
| Effective tax rate (%) | 4.5% | 4.0% | 4.0% | 4.0% |
| PAT | 8,756 | 6,834 | 2,818 | 5,150 |
| Basic & Diluted EPS | 2.7 | 2.1 | 0.9 | 1.6 |

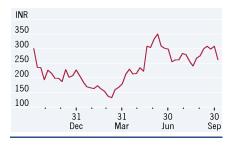
| As of March | 2009 | 2010E | 2011E | 2012E |
|----------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Shareholders Funds | 118,828 | 125,662 | 128,480 | 133,630 |
| Equity Share Capital | 32,664 | 32,664 | 32,664 | 32,664 |
| Reserves & Surplus | 91,487 | 91,487 | 91,487 | 91,487 |
| General Reserves | (5,324) | 1,511 | 4,329 | 9,479 |
| Direct addition to ABTL's equity | 26,880 | 26,880 | 26,880 | 26,880 |
| Loan Funds | 112,106 | 130,725 | 130,725 | 130,725 |
| Current Liabilities & Provisions | 29,958 | 23,613 | 21,218 | 20,040 |
| Deferred Tax Liabilities | 918 | 918 | 918 | 918 |
| Total | 288,689 | 307,798 | 308,221 | 312,192 |
| Application of Funds | | | | |
| Fixed Assets | 173,108 | 200,105 | 212,288 | 215,808 |
| Goodwill on Consolidation | 22,522 | 22,522 | 22,522 | 22,522 |
| Non Compete fees | 5,440 | 5,440 | 5,440 | 5,440 |
| Current Assets | 87,024 | 79,135 | 67,374 | 67,827 |
| Inventories | 359 | 409 | 460 | 511 |
| Sundry Debtors | 3,698 | 2,475 | 2,408 | 2,432 |
| Cash & Bank | 66,590 | 57,808 | 44,838 | 44,661 |
| Other Current Assets | 651 | 716 | 752 | 789 |
| Loans & Advances | 15,726 | 17,726 | 18,916 | 19,433 |
| Misc expenditure | 596 | 596 | 596 | 596 |
| Total | 288,689 | 307,798 | 308,221 | 312,192 |

Company Focus

Rating change ☑ Target price change ☑ Estimate change ☑

| Sell/Medium Risk | 3 M |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| from Hold/Medium Risk | |
| Price (08 Oct 09) | Rs246.30 |
| Target price | Rs210.00 |
| from Rs310.00 | |
| Expected share price return | -14.7% |
| Expected dividend yield | 0.6% |
| Expected total return | -14.1% |
| Market Cap | Rs508,370M |
| | US\$10,898M |

Price Performance (RIC: RLCM.BO, BB: RCOM IN)



Reliance Communications (RLCM.BO) Downgrade to Sell

- **Downgrade to Sell** RCOM's TP of Rs210 comprises core business valued at 6.1x FY11E EV/EBITDA; at a 10% discount to Bharti's imputed multiple. The value accretion from external towerco tenants is at Rs40/share. We downgrade RCOM to Sell given 1) high financial leverage that leaves it exposed if traffic does not materialize (possible if Bharti/Voda retaliate immediately); 2) RCOM is currently trading at a premium to Bharti and 3) towerco value vulnerable to industry consolidation.
- First-mover advantage reflects in usage but not profits— We have revised RCOM's FY10-11E usage up 1-7% to reflect some usage elasticity after the sharp tariff cut. The incumbents' likely wait-and-watch policy should help it garner some traffic. Yet FY10-11E EBITDA is cut by 10-19% given that new mins will earn sharply lower EBITDA. EPS is cut by 16-27% over the same time period. Upside risk to earnings is a spurt in usage, which given low network utilization, will come at marginal incremental opex/capex.
- **High financial leverage** RCOM's FY10E net debt is estimated at Rs312bn with FY10E net debt/EBITDA at 3.2x. The high leverage in our view leaves RCOM's B/S exposed in case the desired uptick in traffic does not fructify, thus constraining its capital raising plans and 3G bidding.
- Towerco value under cloud too Reliance Infratel is more dependent on new entrants for external tenancy compared with Indus and therefore is at higher risk from any industry consolidation or cutbacks. The sharp tariff cuts will force rethinking and pace of ramp-up of new entrants and hence their long-term viability as tenants (despite revenue protection clauses). We value the towerco at Rs40/share with downside risks from lower tenancy

| Statistical Abstract | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------|------------|------|-----|------|-------|--|
| Year to | Net Profit | Diluted EPS | EPS growth | P/E | P/B | ROE | Yield | |
| 31 Mar | (RsM) | (Rs) | (%) | (x) | (x) | (%) | (%) | |
| 2008A | 55,097 | 26.69 | 70.8 | 9.2 | 1.8 | 22.3 | 0.3 | |
| 2009A | 61,477 | 29.79 | 11.6 | 8.3 | 1.2 | 17.2 | 0.4 | |
| 2010E | 39,134 | 18.96 | -36.3 | 13.0 | 1.1 | 8.9 | 0.6 | |
| 2011E | 36,951 | 17.90 | -5.6 | 13.8 | 1.0 | 7.8 | 0.8 | |
| 2012E | 42,979 | 20.82 | 16.3 | 11.8 | 1.0 | 8.4 | 0.8 | |
| Source: Power | ed by dataCentral | | | | | | | |

| Fiscal year end 31-Mar | 2008 | 2009 | 2010E | 2011E | 2012E |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Valuation Ratios | | | | | |
| P/E adjusted (x) | 9.2 | 8.3 | 13.0 | 13.8 | 11.8 |
| EV/EBITDA adjusted (x) | 7.9 | 8.4 | 8.7 | 8.1 | 7.2 |
| P/BV (x) | 1.8 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| Dividend yield (%) | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| Per Share Data (Rs) | | | | | |
| EPS adjusted | 26.69 | 29.79 | 18.96 | 17.90 | 20.82 |
| EPS reported | 26.69 | 29.79 | 18.96 | 17.90 | 20.82 |
| BVPS | 140.63 | 204.85 | 222.12 | 237.77 | 256.35 |
| DPS | 0.75 | 1.00 | 1.50 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| Profit & Loss (RsM) | | | | | |
| Net sales | 190,678 | 229,411 | 250,510 | 289,679 | 321,283 |
| Operating expenses | -136,743 | -175,924 | -203,190 | -240,096 | -264,772 |
| EBIT | 53,935 | 53,487 | 47,320 | 49,583 | 56,510 |
| Net interest expense | 3,998 | 7,867 | -5,688 | -8,977 | -8,219 |
| Non-operating/exceptionals | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pre-tax profit | 57,933 | 61,354 | 41,632 | 40,606 | 48,291 |
| Tax | -2,836 | 123 | -2,498 | -3,655 | -5,312 |
| Extraord./Min.Int./Pref.div. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Reported net income | 55,097 | 61,477 | 39,134 | 36,951 | 42,979 |
| Adjusted earnings | 55,097 | 61,477 | 39,134 | 36,951 | 42,979 |
| Adjusted EBITDA | 81,989 | 92,875 | 97,645 | 105,042 | 115,590 |
| Growth Rates (%) | 01.0 | 00.0 | 0.0 | 15.0 | 10.0 |
| Sales | 31.8 | 20.3 | 9.2 | 15.6 | 10.9 |
| EBIT adjusted | 65.7 43.3 | -0.8 13.3 | -11.5 5.1 | 4.8 7.6 | 14.0 10.0 |
| EBITDA adjusted EPS adjusted | 43.3 70.8 | 13.3 | -36.3 | 7.6 -5.6 | 16.3 |
| Cash Flow (RsM) | 70.0 | 11.0 | -50.5 | -3.0 | 10.5 |
| | 100 200 | E0 7E0 | CO 701 | 100 270 | 02 604 |
| Operating cash flow Depreciation/amortization | 106,390 28,054 | 59,756 39,388 | 68,701 50,325 | 108,270 55,459 | 93,604 59,080 |
| Net working capital | 2,563 | -33,243 | -32,651 | 6,883 | -16,674 |
| Investing cash flow | - 212,034 | -255,510 | -84,201 | - 67,570 | -10,074 - 57,289 |
| Capital expenditure | -212,034 | -255,510 | -84,201 | -67,570 | -57,289 |
| Acquisitions/disposals | 0 | 0 | 0 1,201 | 07,070 | 07,200 |
| Financing cash flow | 86,190 | 138,951 | -6,999 | -13,621 | -12,863 |
| Borrowings | 83,834 | 133,406 | 8,378 | 0 | 0 |
| Dividends paid | -1,742 | -2,322 | -3,483 | -4,644 | -4,644 |
| Change in cash | -19,454 | -56,804 | -22,499 | 27,079 | 23,451 |
| Balance Sheet (RsM) | | | | | |
| Total assets | 774,593 | 1,022,070 | 1,033,768 | 1,082,295 | 1,108,438 |
| Cash & cash equivalent | 117,431 | 109,724 | 87,225 | 114,304 | 137,755 |
| Accounts receivable | 27,224 | 39,618 | 41,752 | 48,280 | 53,547 |
| Net fixed assets | 523,126 | 727,053 | 760,929 | 773,041 | 771,251 |
| Total liabilities | 460,021 | 592,718 | 568,764 | 584,984 | 572,791 |
| Accounts payable | 156,213 | 159,718 | 127,387 | 143,607 | 131,415 |
| Total Debt | 258,217 | 391,623 | 400,000 | 400,000 | 400,000 |
| Shareholders' funds | 314,573 | 429,352 | 465,003 | 497,311 | 535,646 |
| Profitability/Solvency Ratios (%) | | | | | |
| EBITDA margin adjusted | 43.0 | 40.5 | 39.0 | 36.3 | 36.0 |
| ROE adjusted | 22.3 | 17.2 | 8.9 | 7.8 | 8.4 |
| ROIC adjusted | 13.2 | 8.6 | 5.7 | 5.6 | 6.2 |
| Net debt to equity | 44.8 | 65.7 | 67.3 | 57.4 | 49.0 |
| Total debt to capital | 45.1 | 47.7 | 46.2 | 44.6 | 42.8 |
| | | | | | |

For further data queries on Citi's full coverage universe please contact CIR Data Services Asia Pacific at CIRDataServicesAsiaPacific@citi.com or +852-2501-2791



| Figure 1. Income Statement (Rs m) | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|--|--|--|
| Year to Mar | FY09 | FY10E | FY11E | FY12E | | | | |
| Mobile | 173,677 | 188,089 | 207,155 | 227,213 | | | | |
| Global Business | 67,761 | 81,498 | 92,111 | 103,718 | | | | |
| Broadband | 25,243 | 29,743 | 32,680 | 33,972 | | | | |
| Others | 10,098 | 13,127 | 17,066 | 22,185 | | | | |
| Eliminations | (47,368) | (61,947) | (59,332) | (65,805) | | | | |
| Total revenues | 229,411 | 250,510 | 289,679 | 321,283 | | | | |
| Reported EBITDA | 92,875 | 97,645 | 105,042 | 115,590 | | | | |
| EBITDA margins % | 40.5% | 39.0% | 36.3% | 36.0% | | | | |
| Mobile % | 38.4% | 36.1% | 33.3% | 32.9% | | | | |
| Global Business % | 23.9% | 24.4% | 26.0% | 26.6% | | | | |
| Broadband % | 45.9% | 43.8% | 44.8% | 44.8% | | | | |
| Others % | -12.7% | -25.0% | -14.4% | -8.9% | | | | |
| Net Interest | 7,867 | (5,688) | (8,977) | (8,219) | | | | |
| Depreciation & Amortisation | (39,388) | (50,325) | (55,459) | (59,080) | | | | |
| PBT | 61,354 | 41,632 | 40,606 | 48,291 | | | | |
| Tax | 123 | (2,498) | (3,655) | (5,312) | | | | |

39,134

2,064

19.0

36,951

2,064

17.9

42,979

2,064

20.8

Source: Citi Investment Research and Analysis, Company data

61,477

2,064

29.8

| ı | Fimuro | 2 | Ra | ممددا | Sheet | /De m | ı١ |
|---|----------|----|-----|-------|--------|---------|----|
| ı | א ונועוד | ۷. | Dal | MIICE | 211661 | (RS III | ı, |

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Number of shares

| As of March | FY09 | FY10E | FY11E | FY12E |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Equity | 10,320 | 10,320 | 10,320 | 10,320 |
| Reserves and Surplus | 412,483 | 448,134 | 480,442 | 518,777 |
| Shareholders funds | 422,803 | 458,454 | 490,762 | 529,097 |
| Debt | 391,623 | 400,000 | 400,000 | 400,000 |
| Current Liabilities | 159,718 | 127,387 | 143,607 | 131,415 |
| Minority | 6,549 | 6,549 | 6,549 | 6,549 |
| Total Liabilities | 1,021,789 | 1,033,486 | 1,082,014 | 1,108,157 |
| | | | | |
| Fixed Assets | 755,101 | 922,399 | 989,969 | 1,047,258 |
| Accumulated Depreciation | (141, 144) | (191,469) | (246,928) | (306,007) |
| Net Fixed Assets | 613,957 | 730,929 | 743,041 | 741,251 |
| CWIP | 113,096 | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 |
| Goodwill | 52,215 | 52,215 | 52,215 | 52,215 |
| Investments | 2,762 | 2,762 | 2,762 | 2,762 |
| Deferred tax assets | (281) | (281) | (281) | (281) |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 109,724 | 87,225 | 114,304 | 137,755 |
| Current Assets | 130,316 | 130,636 | 139,973 | 144,455 |
| Inventories | 5,427 | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Debtors | 39,618 | 41,752 | 48,280 | 53,547 |
| Other Current Assets | 17,714 | 21,257 | 22,320 | 23,436 |
| Loans & Advances | 67,557 | 62,628 | 64,373 | 62,472 |
| Total Assets | 1,021,789 | 1,033,486 | 1,082,014 | 1,108,157 |

Source: Citi Investment Research and Analysis, Company data

Bharti Airtel

Company description

Bharti Airtel, through its group companies, provides cellular-phone services in all of India's 23 telecom circles. The group also provides fixed-line phone services, broadband, long-distance and enterprise services. It is listed on The Stock Exchange, Mumbai (BSE) and The National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSE). Major shareholders are Bharti Telecom, SingTel and Vodafone.

Investment strategy

We rate Bharti shares Hold/Low Risk (2L). We believe Bharti is best positioned to capture Indian wireless growth profitably. However, recent tariffs announced by new entrants and peers create a risk of aggressive retaliation by the incumbents. This reduces growth prospects in FY11, with the return to growth in FY12 contingent on consolidation and comeback of elasticity. Despite the concerns, Bharti remains best positioned to weather the storm given its operational strengths of scale and coverage and clean balance sheet. On the stress-case earnings estimates for FY11E (based on 25% RPM decline and moderate MOU growth), the stock is trading at PER of 14x, a 10% discount to the market. Though this limits downside, the stock will remain range-bound until clear signs emerge regarding (i) pickup in MOUs and/or (ii) industry consolidation.

Valuation

Our target price of Rs370 comprises (i) core business value of Rs312 based on PER of 14x FY11E (at 10% discount to market) on EPS (ex-Indus) of Rs22.3 and (ii) Indus stake vale of Rs55/share. We switch over to a PER valuation method as DCF is more back-ended and given the competitive concerns, investors are likely to focus more on near-term earning drivers. The core business value of Rs312 imputes a reasonable EV/EBITDA of 6.6x FY11E.

Risks

Our quantitative risk-rating system, which tracks 260-day share price volatility, rates Bharti shares as Low Risk. We are comfortable with this for the following reasons: 1) Bharti has a track record of profitability and execution; 2) strong balance sheet with low leverage levels (FY10 net debt/EBITDA at 0.2x); and 3) FCF positive in FY10E with major capex behind.

Downside risks include competition-led tariff pressures, excessive bidding for 3G and any adverse regulation. Upside risk could emerge from faster than expected consolidation and sharper than expected pullback in MOUs.

IDEA Cellular

Company description

Idea Cellular, a pure-play wireless provider, is the fifth-largest cellular operator in India. It has licenses to provide cellular-phone services in all of India's 22 telecom circles and an active presence in 14 of them. The company listed on the Indian bourse in March 2007 and is part of the Aditya Birla Group.

Investment strategy

We rate Idea Sell/Medium Risk. Inclusion in MSCI and relatively cleaner positioning (post Bharti's MTN agenda) could technically benefit Idea. However, smaller relative scale makes it more vulnerable if competition worsens further and makes too much of compromise on valuation risky. We believe that Idea's current valuation, at premium to Bharti, is rich and more than factors the technical benefit to Idea due to its pure-play positioning. Idea's B/S also remains exposed to 3G outgo especially with the delay in auction and improving credit markets.

Valuation

Our target price of Rs55 is based on (i) core business value at Rs34/share based on 6.1x FY11E EV/EBITDA, at a 10% discount to Bharti's imputed EV/E plus (ii) Indus stake valued at Rs21/share. Given the industry-wide concerns on competition and the likely emergence of Idea as one of the potential acquisition candidates, we reduce the EV/E discount to Bharti from 15% to 10%. We believe some discount to Bharti is justified given 1) Idea's smaller scale makes it more vulnerable to worse-than-expected competitive intensity, 2) its B/S remains most at risk to an aggressive 3G bidding especially with delay in 3G auction and improving credit markets, and 3) our cautious stance on Idea's ability to generate positive NPV in the new circles.

Risks

We assign a Medium Risk rating to IDEA Cellular, as opposed to the High Risk assigned by our quant risk rating system due to: 1) Idea has demonstrated strong execution skills in new launches (Mumbai & Bihar) and operating leverage in the 11 old circles; 2) Risk of disruptive pricing from new entrants continues to decline; 3) Improving credit markets helped reduce concerns on the high-leverage balance sheets like Idea Cellular's. Upside risks to our target price include any move by Axiata to announce the tender offer, higher-than-expected market share gains, faster EBITDA breakeven in new circles and moderate 3G bidding. Several downside risks could impede the stock from reaching our target price. Operationally, higher-than-expected competition will impact Idea more than peers given its smaller scale. A prolonged EBITDA breakeven in new circles raises concerns on NPV accretion. In addition, the upcoming 3G auction carries an event risk of unduly straining the balance sheet (FY10E Net Debt/EBITDA already at 2.2x) if bidding is aggressive.

Reliance Communications

Company description

RCOM is an integrated player in the Indian telecoms sector. It was listed on the Indian stock exchanges following the de-merger of Reliance Industries. RCOM is the second-largest player in the mobile segment, has an 80,000km-long India-wide optic-fiber network and owns the FLAG submarine cable network. RCOM has three business units: 1) Wireless, which includes a nationwide wireless network on CDMA and GSM; 2) Global Business comprising wholesale voice and data; and 3) Broadband for both retail and enterprise.

Investment strategy

We rate RCOM Sell/Medium Risk. There have been early signs of success of RCOM's GSM foray as traffic growth has picked up and tariffs are stable. However, recent tariff cuts make it susceptible to EBITDA and earnings decline especially given the high leverage (Net Debt/EBITDA of 3.2x FY10E). Sustainability of the performance in the remainder of FY10 will be key especially as RCOM comes up against launches by some of the other new GSM entrants, who will be pursuing the same traffic initially. GSM should help RCOM gain revenue market share, but gains at the operating level will likely be offset by interest and depreciation arising from significant capex. Reliance Infratel has also been signing new tenants, although its dependence on upstarts for tenancy raises question marks on their viability given the worsening competitive scenario.

Valuation

Our target price of Rs210 comprises (i) core business value of Rs170 based on 6.1x FY11E EV/EBITDA, at 10% discount to Bharti's implied target multiple (ex- towerco) plus (ii) Infratel value accretion of Rs40 based on long-term tenancy of 2.3. We believe some discount to Bharti is justified on account of the inherent risks of dual network, higher leverage, stretched FCF breakeven, and lack of clarity and consistency on accounting policies (especially related to finance income). Our towerco net value accretion of Rs40 is based on following assumptions: 1) Long-term tenancy of 2.3 with captive tenancy of 1.6; 2) Capex recovery of 13%, 3) WACC of 11.3% and terminal growth rate of 3%; 4) Please note that the incremental value accretion to RCOM is calculated after netting off the contribution from the captive tenancy. Thus, it only reflects the value of the external revenues.

Risks

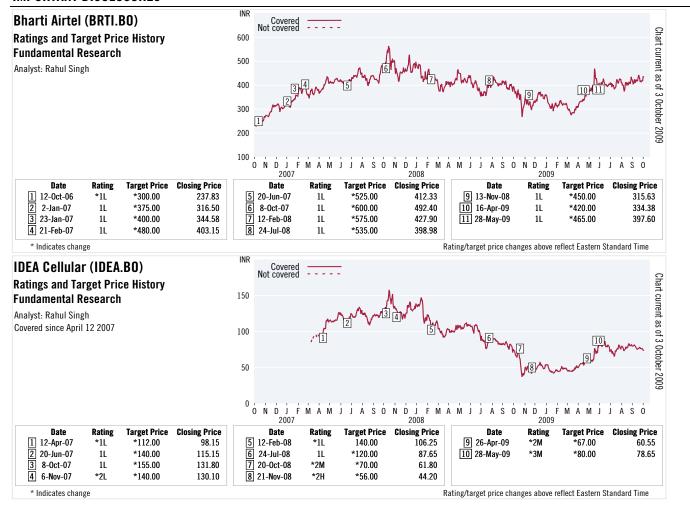
Our risk-rating system, which tracks 260-day share price volatility, assigns a High Risk rating to RCOM. We however assign Medium Risk rating given the improvement in the B/S and the credit markets. Upside risks to our target price include higher-than-expected market share gains in GSM and visibility on tenancy of RTIL with possible move towards value monetization. Easing of the macro credit environment and slower conversion of current liabilities to real debt would positively impact the earnings and sentiment on the stock.

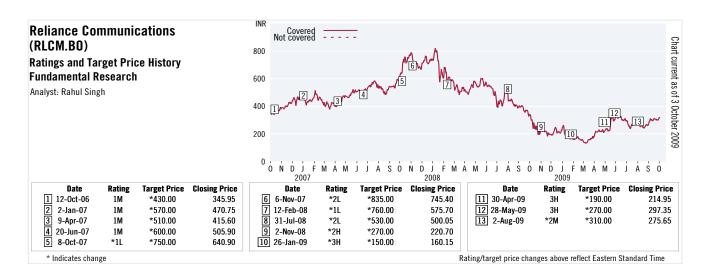
Appendix A-1

Analyst Certification

Each research analyst(s) principally responsible for the preparation and content of all or any identified portion of this research report hereby certifies that, with respect to each issuer or security or any identified portion of the report with respect to an issuer or security that the research analyst covers in this research report, all of the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect their personal views about those issuer(s) or securities. Each research analyst(s) also certify that no part of their compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the specific recommendation(s) or view(s) expressed by that research analyst in this research report.

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES





Rahul Singh, Analyst, holds a long position in the securities of Bharti Airtel.

Citigroup Global Markets Inc. or its affiliates has received compensation for investment banking services provided within the past 12 months from Bharti Airtel.

Citigroup Global Markets Inc. or an affiliate received compensation for products and services other than investment banking services from Bharti Airtel, IDEA Cellular, Reliance Communications in the past 12 months.

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