

Equities

29 September 2011 | 12 pages

Educomp Solutions (EDSO.BO)

Upgrade to Hold: Valuations Now Pricing in Lot of the Risk

- Company Update
- Rating Change
- Target Price Change
- Estimate Change

- **From ~50x 1-year forward to ~6x** — Educomp's stock has derated sharply over the years given: (a) Deteriorating balance sheet/return ratios; (b) Concerns in investors minds on change in SmartClass accounting/recognition; (c) Growth slowing on a bigger base. Valuations now look attractive on P/E (~7x FY12E) and reasonable at ~6x FY12E EV/EBITDA; however, the balance sheet is stretched and capex is still high. Given the leadership position and sharp fall in valuations, we upgrade to Hold/High Risk.
- **Leadership position across most segments** — Educomp commands a leadership position (in a highly fragmented market) in most of the segments it operates in. SmartClass continues to be a leader with significant share despite a lot of emerging competition while Educomp has ramped up K-12 business very well. Also, the business should be able to demonstrate some pricing power going forward.
- **Cashflow - when will it improve?** — Fast growth and a capex-intensive business implied cashflow issues. Changes in accounting/recognition have not helped. The K-12 business, a good annuity business, is a long gestation one. While its leadership position and good margins are a comfort, Educomp needs to demonstrate success of its asset-light strategy and manage capex/debt in a tough funding environment.
- **What will make us more constructive?** — (a) Educomp has significant cash-flow requirements (FCCB up for redemption in July 2012) – ability to monetize some of the assets at good valuations will be a positive; (b) Managing capex better – management talks of incremental expansion on asset-light strategy and capex of only ~Rs. 3-3.5bn in the next nine months – any visibility of that will be a positive.
- **Lower estimates/target price; Upgrade to Hold/High risk** — Educomp has underperformed the market by ~70% over the past two years on the back of concerns mentioned above. We trim our estimates further by ~1-18%, factoring in recent results and lower margins/higher interest costs. Our new target price is Rs. 278, implying ~6x Sept'12E EPS (implying ~6.5x FY12E EV/EBITDA) – upgrade to Hold/High risk.

Hold/High Risk	2H
<i>from Sell/Medium Risk</i>	
Price (28 Sep 11)	Rs228.00
Target price	Rs278.00
<i>from Rs540.00</i>	
Expected share price return	21.9%
Expected dividend yield	0.4%
Expected total return	22.4%
Market Cap	Rs21,890M US\$446M

Price Performance (RIC: EDSO.BO, BB: EDLS IN)



Statistical Abstract

Year to	Net Profit	Diluted EPS	EPS growth	P/E	P/B	ROE	Yield
31 Mar	(RsM)	(Rs)	(%)	(x)	(x)	(%)	(%)
2010A	2,759	27.88	85.7	8.2	1.3	26.7	1.2
2011A	3,367	32.66	17.1	7.0	1.0	17.6	0.5
2012E	3,400	33.42	2.3	6.8	0.9	14.5	0.4
2013E	3,679	36.16	8.2	6.3	0.8	13.7	0.4
2014E	4,572	44.94	24.3	5.1	0.7	14.8	0.4

Source: Powered by dataCentral

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Fiscal year end 31-Mar	2010	2011	2012E	2013E	2014E
Valuation Ratios					
P/E adjusted (x)	8.2	7.0	6.8	6.3	5.1
EV/EBITDA adjusted (x)	5.7	5.4	5.1	4.1	3.6
P/BV (x)	1.3	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.7
Dividend yield (%)	1.2	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4
Per Share Data (Rs)					
EPS adjusted	27.88	32.66	33.42	36.16	44.94
EPS reported	27.88	32.66	33.42	36.16	44.94
BVPS	173.43	228.00	261.26	298.42	344.90
DPS	2.75	1.10	1.00	1.00	1.00
Profit & Loss (RsM)					
Net sales	10,395	13,509	17,170	22,023	26,715
Operating expenses	-6,690	-8,925	-11,563	-14,608	-17,829
EBIT	3,704	4,584	5,607	7,415	8,886
Net interest expense	-539	-962	-1,561	-2,604	-2,824
Non-operating/exceptionals	1,255	461	474	500	500
Pre-tax profit	4,421	4,083	4,520	5,311	6,562
Tax	-1,584	-678	-1,184	-1,824	-2,096
Extraord./Min.Int./Pref.div.	-78	-39	64	193	106
Reported net income	2,759	3,367	3,400	3,679	4,572
Adjusted earnings	2,759	3,367	3,400	3,679	4,572
Adjusted EBITDA	4,847	5,425	6,660	8,688	10,481
Growth Rates (%)					
Sales	63.2	30.0	27.1	28.3	21.3
EBIT adjusted	66.1	23.7	22.3	32.2	19.8
EBITDA adjusted	59.2	11.9	22.8	30.4	20.6
EPS adjusted	85.7	17.1	2.3	8.2	24.3
Cash Flow (RsM)					
Operating cash flow	851	2,260	4,678	5,427	7,101
Depreciation/amortization	1,142	841	1,053	1,273	1,594
Net working capital	-1,965	-2,609	-799	-1,436	-1,283
Investing cash flow	-7,028	-11,904	-6,366	-8,221	-8,491
Capital expenditure	-3,672	-7,972	-5,279	-6,117	-6,166
Acquisitions/disposals	0	0	0	0	0
Financing cash flow	12,210	6,285	2,888	1,888	1,888
Borrowings	1,583	3,895	3,000	2,000	2,000
Dividends paid	-213	-123	-112	-112	-112
Change in cash	6,034	-3,359	1,200	-906	498
Balance Sheet (RsM)					
Total assets	32,857	42,582	50,106	57,129	64,997
Cash & cash equivalent	7,887	4,489	5,752	5,038	5,643
Accounts receivable	5,530	6,255	7,292	9,051	10,613
Net fixed assets	10,656	17,787	22,013	26,858	31,430
Total liabilities	14,463	18,432	22,669	26,125	29,532
Accounts payable	0	0	0	0	0
Total Debt	10,478	14,373	17,373	19,373	21,373
Shareholders' funds	18,393	24,150	27,438	31,004	35,464
Profitability/Solvency Ratios (%)					
EBITDA margin adjusted	46.6	40.2	38.8	39.4	39.2
ROE adjusted	26.7	17.6	14.5	13.7	14.8
ROIC adjusted	13.1	14.6	12.5	13.6	14.4
Net debt to equity	14.1	40.9	42.4	46.2	44.4
Total debt to capital	36.3	37.3	38.8	38.5	37.6

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What catalysts would make us more constructive?

FCCB redemption in July 2012 and high debt

Educomp has significant cash-flow requirements (FCCB up for redemption in July 2012) in a high interest rate/tough funding environment. Cash could come in through:

- Equity dilution – while this will help funding concerns, it will lead to meaningful dilution if it happens at current prices
- Debt – addresses cashflow issues only for time being – no change to debt-equity
- Stake sell in one of the segments – getting in a private equity/strategic partner in any of the key businesses at a good valuation can be a catalyst.

However, given the tight market, the structure of the deal will be a key focus.

Managing capex/cash flows better is something to watch out for in the 2Q results. While management has been talking of asset-light strategy for K12 for some time, the capex has continued to remain very high - ~Rs. 2bn+ in 1QFY12. This has remained a concern for investors and this, coupled with high DSO's (190+ days in Q1), is a challenge. Management, in our recent interactions, has suggested that capex in the remaining nine months of FY12 is likely to be ~Rs. 3-3.5b – 2Q capex remains a key variable to monitor.

And what are the risks?

The key risks in our view are:

- High capex (and negative cashflow) in the coming quarters to continue – this will likely increase investor concerns.
- Balance sheet needs to improve – concerns will likely increase as we move closer to next year – the FCCB redemption is due in July 2012.
- Asset-light model in K12 proves difficult to ramp up – Educomp management wants to incrementally expand the K12 business in the asset-light model. Lack of visibility of the same could be a concern.

Which businesses could see some divestment?

Good portfolio of businesses – most leaders in their area – divestment at good valuations could be a big catalyst

Educomp has created a good portfolio of businesses, and part (or maybe all) of some businesses could be divested given the funding requirements. We believe a lot of the segments like High school, vocational, K-12, pre-school, IIT training etc. could be attractive for a PE/strategic investor. However, the valuations and structure of any deal remains another focus area.

- K-12 business - attractive business in the longer term given the annuity nature of business – however, gestation periods are long. The receivables today are due to the three-year moratorium before the payment for land starts (land is owned by EISML). Educomp management indicated that schools which are already more than three-years old have 35% ROCE - attractive by any standards.

- Pre-school is an attractive businesses given the demographic profile. Tree House, which listed recently, has a market Cap of ~Rs. 5.7bn (despite a lower number of schools). Eurokids had ~Rs. 445m of revenues in FY11. At the end of FY11, Educomp had 220 pre-schools under Roots to Wings and 579 preschools operational under Eurokids.

Trim estimates by ~1-18% due to lower margins and higher interest costs

Estimate change table

We trim our FY12 and FY13 EPS estimates by ~1-18% primarily due to lower margins and higher interest costs. Our topline estimate for FY12 at Rs. 17.2bn is in line with management's expectation of Rs. 17.6bn while our net profit estimate at ~Rs. 3.4bn is below Rs. 4bn guidance. However, the guidance included Rs. 600-750m in revenue and profits from a proposed stake sale of strategic investments, which are not factored in our estimates.

Figure 1. Estimate change table

FYE	Net Profit	EPS	%	DPS
31 Mar	(RsM)	(Rs)	chg	(Rs)
2012E	3,400	33.42	-0.9	1.00
Prev	3,549	33.73		1.20
2013E	3,679	36.16	-18.1	1.00
Prev	4,643	44.13		1.30
2014E	4,572	44.94	na	1.00
Prev	na	na		na

Source: Company Reports and CIRA Estimates

Valuations

Are investors no longer pricing growth?

No longer priced for big growth

If Educomp stops growing in FY13E, it should generate ~Rs. 6bn+ of EBITDA (assuming flat revenues and ~200bps margin decline yoy). If working capital remains stable and capex is minimal (given no growth), it implies valuations of ~6x EV/EBITDA, which is not pricing in lot of growth, as has been the case in the past.

Sharp derating has happened

From 50x + 1-year forward to ~8x 1-year forward

The 1-year forward P/E multiple has derated sharply from 50x a few years back to a current ~8x 1-year forward multiple. Over the last three years, the stock has traded between 6x -33x 1-year forward earnings.

Figure 2. 1-year forward P/E over last 3 years



Source: dataCentral, Company, CIRA

We now value the stock at 8x Sept'12E EPS

While the business can trade at ~10-12x 1-yr forward EPS eventually, we currently value at ~8x Sept'12E given the risks

With a PAT CAGR of ~5% expected over FY11-FY13E with ROE of ~18% (FY11), the growth and return ratios have fallen off very sharply. *Just to put this in perspective, the PAT CAGR over FY07-FY09 was ~123% with FY09 ROE of 38%.*

We believe Educomp could potentially trade at 10-15x 1-year forward earnings given that it is a good long-term business and Educomp is the only liquid way to play the Indian education story.

However, there are lot of risks associated at this point, including (a) balance sheet/cash flow challenges – with the FCCB due mid of 2012; (b) Contingent liabilities on books of Rs. 6.65 b (corporate guarantee given to bank for secured loan to third party) – although risks are low given management's indication that schools have paid on time in the past; (c) Asset-light model on K12 needs to be proven and capex needs to come down over next couple of quarters to give investors comfort. While the asset-light model is proven, achieving most of incremental expansion in the asset-light model still needs to be demonstrated.

Given the above, we value the stock currently at 8x Sept'12E EPS, which is reasonable in our view, given the risks in the business.

Quants View – Contrarian

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Data as of: 23-Sep-11

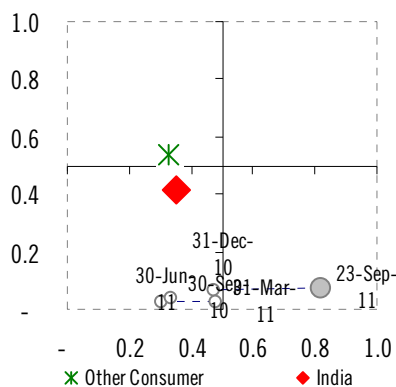
Radar Screen Quadrant Definitions

Glamor Poor relative value but superior relative momentum	Attractive Superior relative value and superior relative momentum
Unattractive Poor relative value and poor relative momentum	Contrarian Superior relative value but poor relative momentum

Educomp Solutions currently lies in the Extreme corner of the Contrarian quadrant of our Value-Momentum map with relatively weak momentum but strong value scores. The stock has moved from the Unattractive quadrant to the Contrarian quadrant in the past three months indicating improving valuations though momentum remains weak - possibly as a result of improving earnings revisions. Compared to its peers in the Other Consumer sector, Educomp Solutions fares better on the valuation metric but worse on the momentum metric. Similarly, compared to its peers in its home market of India, Educomp Solutions fares better on the valuation metric but worse on the momentum metric.

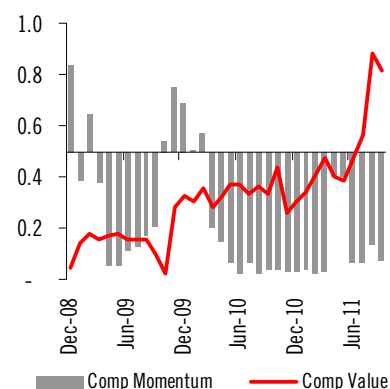
From a macro perspective, Educomp Solutions has a high Beta to the region so is likely to rise (or fall) faster than the region. It is also likely to benefit from falling Commodity (ex-oil) prices, falling EM yields, and a weaker US dollar.

Figure 3. Radar Quadrant Chart History



Source: CIRA

Figure 4. Radar Valuation and Momentum Scores



Source: CIRA

Figure 5. Radar Model Inputs

IBES EPS (Actual and Estimates)

FY(-2)	15.36	Implied Trend Growth (%)	22.53
FY(-1)	27.32	Trailing PE (x)	6.10
FY0	32.86	Implied Cost of Debt (%)	6.69
FY1	35.62	Standardised MCap	(0.26)
FY2	46.80		

Note: Standardised MCap calculated as a Z score - (mkt cap - mean)/std dev - capped at 3

Source: Citi Investment Research and Analysis, Worldscope, I/B/E/S

Figure 6. Stock Performance Sensitivity to Key Macro Factors

Region	1.48	Commodity ex Oil	(0.49)
Local Market	1.23	Rising Oil Prices	0.06
Sector	(0.18)	Rising Asian IR's	0.13
Growth Outperforms Value	0.64	Rising EM Yields	(0.49)
Small Caps Outperform Large Caps	(0.14)	Weaker US\$ (vs Asia)	3.02
Widening US Credit Spreads	(0.23)	Weaker ¥ (vs US\$)	0.06

Source: Citi Investment Research and Analysis

Educomp Solutions

Company description

Educomp is one of India's largest listed educational service providers focused on the K-12 space (both IT and IT-enabled education). Based in New Delhi, the company operates across various metros and mini metros for private schools and partners various state governments for IT education. It has three primary business segments: (1) SmartClass is an online learning aid targeted towards private educational institutes; (2) ICT is targeted towards government-aided schools for IT infrastructure and training; and (3) K-12 schools, pre-schools and high schools. Apart from these key segments, the company is also into other initiatives like (1) vocational training; (2) online tutoring; and (3) Professional Development instructor-led training targeted at school teachers.

Investment strategy

We rate Educomp shares Neutral/ High Risk (2H) given balance sheet challenges, despite valuations becoming reasonable following meaningful correction in the last few months. We forecast a top-line CAGR of ~28% and ~5% EPS CAGR over FY11-13E – topline growth is strong but higher interest costs are impacting profit growth. The company's ability to raise funds and success of the asset-light model in K-12 are the two positive catalysts to watch out for.

Valuation

We value Educomp shares at Rs278 based on 8x Sep'12E EPS. Due to a change in the business model of SmartClass and the balance sheet challenges, we think that the historical PEs (~6-33x in the last three years) are no longer relevant in valuing Educomp and use the 8x Sep'12 estimates. While we believe Educomp has potential to trade at higher multiples, in the near term investors are likely to be concerned about the balance sheet, contingent liabilities and success of the asset-light model in the K12 segment.

Risks

We rate Educomp shares High Risk, higher than the medium suggested by our quantitative risk-rating system, which tracks historical share price volatility, as we believe investors are likely to be worried about balance sheet challenges in a high interest rate environment. Key downside risks are (1) Continuation of high capex and negative free cash in the coming quarters; (2) Inability to raise funds; and (3) Inability to demonstrate success of asset light model in K12 business. Key upside risks include: (1) stake sale in one of the businesses at a good price and (2) improving cash flows in the coming quarters.

Appendix A-1

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Educomp Solutions (EDSO.BO)

Ratings and Target Price History Fundamental Research

Analyst: Surendra Goyal, CFA



Chart current as of 24 September 2011

	Date	Rating	Target Price	Closing Price
1	4-Nov-08	3H	*482.00	522.12
2	19-Jul-09	*3M	*750.00	806.61

	Date	Rating	Target Price	Closing Price
3	12-Nov-09	3M	*710.00	792.10
4	11-Aug-10	3M	*565.00	622.40

	Date	Rating	Target Price	Closing Price
5	22-Dec-10	3M	*540.00	516.90

* Indicates change

Rating/target price changes above reflect Eastern Standard Time

Educomp Solutions (EDSO.BO)

Ratings and Target Price History Best Ideas Research Relative Call (3 Month)

Analyst: Surendra Goyal, CFA

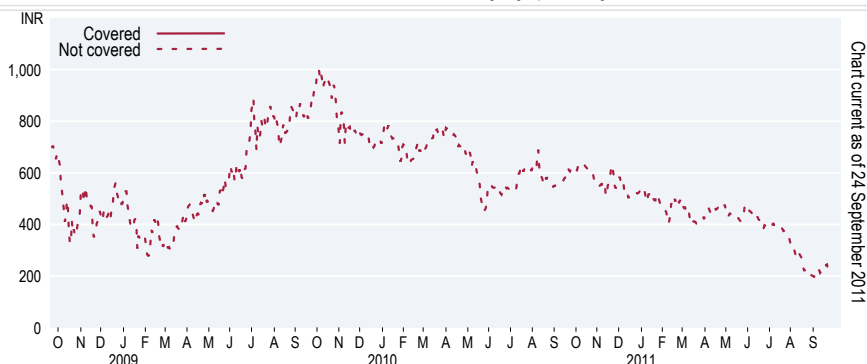


Chart current as of 24 September 2011

* Indicates change

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Data current as of 30 Jun 2011

	12 Month Rating			Relative Rating		
	Buy	Hold	Sell	Buy	Hold	Sell
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