

# Company Flash

1 February 2008 | 6 pages

# Maruti Suzuki India (MRTI.BO)

# Buy: January Sales Muted; Up 4% YoY

- Jan Sales +4% YoY Domestic sales rose by a modest 2% YoY (+15% YTD) on account of a a) capacity constraints that will limit growth over the next six months, and b) a strong base effect which will be challenging till March 08. Exports up 50% YoY (YTD exports at 42,638 units) were boosted by strong sales in African and Latin American markets
- Segmental Analysis A2 sales were muted (+3% YoY) inspite of strong discounts offered in this month. A3 segment sales growth also moderated to 12% YoY. Management noted that retail demand was soft this month, as consumers deferred purchases on expectations of declining interest rates.
- Market Share Trends Maruti's domestic market share increased by 80 bps to 56.7% driven by a strong "push" with discounts and promotions on its new model launches. Maruti also announced that the Swift sedan (Esteem will be phased out) will be launched by mid March, which should help Maruti to improve its market share in the highly competitive A3 segment
- Price Hike Announcement Management suggested that Maruti will increase prices on all models by 2-3% by end of this month. The company has already increased prices on Swift by Rs 6000-12000 to pass on input cost pressures. Competitors like Hyundai have also indicated 2-3% price hikes in next few months. We reckon that as competitive intensity builds up in 2HFY09 manufacturers will offer discounts to regain market shares
- **Maintain Buy** Risks are: a) tapering volume growth, b) margin pressure

Buy/Low Risk	1L
Price (01 Feb 08)	Rs858.00
Target price	Rs1,012.00
Expected share price return	17.9%
Expected dividend yield	0.8%
Expected total return	18.7%
Market Cap	Rs247,885M
	US\$6,311M

#### Price Performance (RIC: MRTI.BO, BB: MSIL IN)



Figure	1	Maruti _	lanuary	2002	2alc2

	Jan-08	% chg	% chg	FY08 YTD	% chg
	Nos	YoY	over Dec	(Nos)	YoY
A1 (M800)	5,470	(22.1)	(23.9)	57,455	-14.4
C (Omni, Versa)	8,861	16.5	10.3	74,420	12.1
A2 (Alto, Wagon-R, Zen, Swift)	45,957	2.7	16.1	413,352	18.0
A3 (Baleno, Esteem)	2,939	12.4	(10.7)	39,841	56.3
MUV (Gypsy, Vitara)	232	-15.0	(25.4)	3,024	16.8
Total Domestic	63,459	1.9	8.7	588,092	14.9
Exports	4,648	50.3	13.0	42,638	51.3
Overall	68,107	4.2	8.9	630,730	16.8
Source: Company					

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

Jamshed Dadabhoy<sup>1</sup> +91-22-6631-9883 jamshed.dadabhoy@citi.com Hitesh Goel<sup>1</sup> hitesh.goel@citi.com

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Figure 2. Maruti - Domestic Volumes (3mma) and Growth

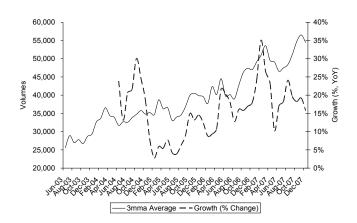
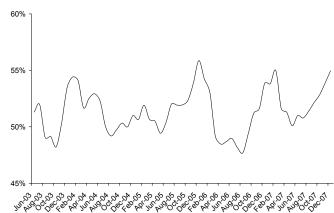


Figure 3. Maruti – Domestic Market Share (3mma), %



Source: Company Reports, SIAM

Note: Volumes on LHS, Growth (%) on RHS, Data is till Dec 07

Source: Company Reports, SIAM Note: Data is till Dec 07

# Maruti Suzuki India

## **Company description**

Maruti is a subsidiary of Suzuki Motor Corp (holds a 54% equity stake). The government of India remains a significant equity stakeholder (10%). With its early-mover advantage in the Indian market, Maruti retains a dominant market share despite increasing competition.

## **Investment strategy**

We rate the stock as Buy/Low Risk (1L). The Indian car market is on a structural growth path (estimated CAGR of 15% over the medium term), driven by low penetration levels, improved demographics and infrastructure, tax cuts and availability of consumer finance at relatively moderate interest rates. Despite the presence of most global majors, Maruti has managed to remain the dominant India player. Its competitive advantage stems from an early start, a balanced product portfolio targeted at the sweet spot of the market, its having the largest distribution and service network, and its consistently high quality ratings. While competitive pressures increase, we expect market share erosion to be gradual and growth in absolute terms to be robust for Maruti. We estimate earnings growth and cash earnings growth of 13% and 15% CAGR respectively over FY08-10, driven by unit sales CAGR of 17%. We expect margins to remain under pressure due to higher input costs and a shift in product mix toward exports (which are lower margin).

#### **Valuation**

Our 12-month target price of Rs1,012 is based on 11x P/CEPS FY09E. We believe the multiple compares favorably with the cash earnings CAGR of c15% over FY08-10E. At our target price, the stock would trade at the midpoint of the

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current trading band. Maruti has a relatively short trading history. Our multiple of 11x is at a marginal discount to the 11.4x trailing 2-year average - but merited, since competitive intensity will escalate, and the macro economic environment is less conducive to growth (interest rates today are higher than the past 3-4 years, which could affect growth across the car industry, given that 70-80% of vehicles are bought with finance). We prefer price/cash earnings as a valuation metric for the automobile sector, given the relatively high capital intensity (both on capacity and product development) of the business. At our target price, MUL would trade at an imputed P/E multiple of 13x on FY09E earnings and 12x on FY10 estimates - marginally higher than the trailing 12-month mean P/E.

#### **Risks**

We rate Maruti as Low Risk based on our quantitative risk-rating system, which tracks 260-day historical share price volatility. Risks that could prevent the stock from reaching our target price and rating include: (1) sales of passenger vehicles are sensitive to economic variables - an appreciable rise in interest rates could impact volumes growth across the auto sector; (2) revised emission and safety norms could bring cost pressures; and (3) competitive pressures in the Indian market continue to increase, which could impact margins over the longer term.

# **Appendix A-1**

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Covered

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