4Q disappoints, Story intact

Equity | India | Computer Services 23 April 2007

Merrill Lynch

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Strong growth despite reduced estimates, Buy

We cut our FY08 earnings estimate by 16% to factor in disappointing 4Q services growth and delayed shipments in its 3G protocol stack deal with a global Tier one vendor. Maintain Buy on strong forecast EPS CAGR of 72% over FY07-09E, given improving product pipeline and resultant margin leverage in FY08e and FY09e. Based on rolled forward FY09 sum-of parts we are cutting our PO by 4% to Rs630.

4Q disappoints, but services should rebound in FY08

4Q PAT declined 1% gog, missing MLe by 18% due to disappointing flat revenue growth in services due to consolidation issues in the telecom OEM industry. Muted revenue growth and Rupee appreciation resulted in 200bps sequential decline in its services margin. With issues at telecom OEM clients likely to get resolved in the next couple of quarters and inorganic growth from Botnia, we forecast 34% FY08 growth. This is supported by the gross hiring target of 1000.

Product pipeline improves but could miss FY08 breakeven

Sasken further enhanced its product pipeline through its second multimedia (S series) win with a global tier one and breakthrough in E series deal with Lenovo. However, EBIT margins could continue to be negative during FY08 given likely delays in 3G protocol stack shipment, E series shipments & Rupee appreciation.

Valuations attractive though stock may languish near term

Our sum-of-parts based target price implies FY09E P/E of 14x, attractive given the strong forecast growth of 72% (FY07-09E). Significant expansion of management bandwidth also reflects confidence in business outlook. However we expect the stock to be rangebound until key product shipments start in 2H FY08.

Estimates (Mar)

2005A	2006A	2007E	2008E	2009E	
228	229	443	784	1,313	
7.69	10.01	14.94	26.43	44.29	
NA	30.3%	49.2%	77.0%	67.5%	
3.00	3.00	4.66	8.25	13.82	
(0.568)	(13.86)	(72.02)	0.472	34.82	
	228 7.69 NA 3.00	228 229 7.69 10.01 NA 30.3% 3.00 3.00	228 229 443 7.69 10.01 14.94 NA 30.3% 49.2% 3.00 3.00 4.66	228 229 443 784 7.69 10.01 14.94 26.43 NA 30.3% 49.2% 77.0% 3.00 3.00 4.66 8.25	228 229 443 784 1,313 7.69 10.01 14.94 26.43 44.29 NA 30.3% 49.2% 77.0% 67.5% 3.00 3.00 4.66 8.25 13.82

Valuation (Mar)

* For full definitions of iOmethod SM measures, see page 9

	2005A	2006A	2007E	2008E	2009E
P/E	68.37x	52.48x	35.18x	19.88x	11.86x
Dividend Yield	0.571%	0.571%	0.887%	1.57%	2.63%
EV / EBITDA*	43.76x	31.26x	20.51x	11.51x	7.40x
Free Cash Flow Yield*	-0.064%	-2.59%	-13.71%	0.090%	6.63%

Stock Data

Price	Rs525.40
Price Objective	Rs650.00 to Rs630.00
Date Established	23-Apr-2007
Investment Opinion	C-1-7
Volatility Risk	HIGH
52-Week Range	Rs240.15-Rs624.00
Mrkt Val / Shares Out (mn)	US\$359 / 28.5
Average Daily Volume	32,200
ML Symbol / Exchange	SKNCF / BSE
Bloomberg / Reuters	SACT IN / SKCT.BO
ROE (2007E)	11.0%
Net Dbt to Eqty (Mar-2006A)	-3.6%
Est. 5-Yr EPS / DPS Growth	25.0% / 25.0%
Free Float	73.0%



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iQprofile[™] Sasken Communication Technologies Ltd.

Key Income Statement Data (Mar)	2005A	2006A	2007E	2008E	2009E
(Rs Millions)					
Sales	2,418	3,081	4,771	6,626	8,415
Gross Profit	1,109	1,193	1,796	2,663	3,732
Sell General & Admin Expense	(532)	(574)	(843)	(1,126)	(1,431)
Operating Profit	213	303	491	941	1,625
Net Interest & Other Income	32	63	53	24	(4)
Associates	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Pretax Income	245	365	543	965	1,621
Tax (expense) / Benefit	(17)	(69)	(101)	(182)	(308)
Net Income (Adjusted)	228	229	443	784	1,313
Average Fully Diluted Shares Outstanding	30	30	30	30	30
Key Cash Flow Statement Data					
Net Income (Reported)	228	297	443	784	1,313
Depreciation & Amortization	142	194	267	409	476
Change in Working Capital	(124)	(306)	142	(636)	(193
Deferred Taxation Charge	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/
Other Adjustments, Net	(17)	(101)	(281)	140	(153
Cash Flow from Operations	229	85	571	697	1,442
Capital Expenditure	(239)	(472)	(2,624)	(683)	(450
(Acquisition) / Disposal of Investments	23	(1,800)	1,497	0	(
Other Cash Inflow / (Outflow)	0	0	0	0	(
Cash Flow from Investing	(215)	(2,271)	(1,127)	(683)	(450
Shares Issue / (Repurchase)	105	2,291	0	0	. (
Cost of Dividends Paid	(43)	(58)	(151)	(268)	(449
Cash Flow from Financing	68	2,229	753	932	(449
Free Cash Flow	(10)	(387)	(2,053)	13	992
Net Debt	(94)	(140)	567	822	278
Change in Net Debt	(81)	(43)	707	255	(543)
Key Balance Sheet Data					
Property, Plant & Equipment	877	1,011	1,146	1,633	1,738
Other Non-Current Assets	6	2,008	2,559	2,448	2,344
Trade Receivables	541	653	1,108	1,542	1,82
Cash & Equivalents	109	151	349	1,294	1,838
Other Current Assets	239	419	755	533	533
Total Assets	1,772	4,243	5,917	7,451	8,27
Long-Term Debt	15	12	916	2,116	2,110
Other Non-Current Liabilities	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/
Short-Term Debt	NA	NA	NA	NA	N/
Other Current Liabilities	338	381	778	662	750
Total Liabilities	353	392	1,694	2,778	2,86
Total Equity	1,419	3,850	4,218	4,674	5,41
Total Equity & Liabilities	1,772	4,243	5,912	7,451	8,27
<i>iQmethod</i> [™] - Bus Performance*					
Return On Capital Employed	15.1%	11.2%	9.9%	13.2%	18.89
Return On Equity	17.8%	8.7%	11.0%	17.6%	26.0%
Operating Margin	8.8%	9.8%	10.3%	14.2%	19.3%
EBITDA Margin	14.7%	16.1%	15.9%	20.4%	25.0%
<i>iQmethod</i> [™] - Quality of Earnings*					
Cash Realization Ratio	1.0x	0.4x	1.3x	0.9x	1.1:
Asset Replacement Ratio	1.7x	2.6x	12.0x	2.2x	1.3
Tax Rate (Reported)	7.1%	18.8%	18.5%	18.8%	19.09
Net Debt-to-Equity Ratio	-6.6%	-3.6%	13.4%	17.6%	5.1%
Interest Cover	45.1x	NM	11.0x	21.4x	36.9
Key Metrics					

^{*} For full definitions of *iQmethod* SM measures, see page 9.

Company Description

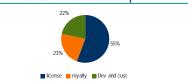
Incorporated in 1989, Sasken is a communication software company with a strong focus on the broadband and wireless software space. Its expertise lies in developing embedded communication software for companies across the communication value chain ie, network equipment manufacturers, semiconductor vendors and mobile terminal vendors. It follows a hybrid model, offering both products and services to telecom clients.

Chart 1: Revenue trends- services & products



Source: Company

Chart 2: Product revenues breakup



Source: Company

Stock Data

Price to Book Value 3.6x

4Q disappoints but story intact, Buy Maintain BUY on strong growth, despite reduced estimates

We are reducing FY08 EPS estimates by 13% to factor lower services revenue, shipment delays in its 3G protocol stack deal with a leading Global Tier one vendor & in its E series deal with Lenovo. We maintain our FY09 estimates, forecasting 2yr EPS CAGR of 72%

We retain our Buy rating given a strong earnings CAGR of 72% over FY07-09E, improving product pipeline (announced its second S series win with a Global Tier one), and likely positive margin swing in FY08e and FY09e.

Based on rolled forward FY09E target multiples we are cutting our PO by 4%, to 630.

Attractive valuations, but could languish near term

We have used target EV/EBITDA as the key valuation parameter, using Subex as the key comp on the product side and leading mid-tier companies like Hexaware, MphasiS on the IT services side.

Our sum-of-the-parts valuation is at Rs632, which offers 20% upside potential from current levels.

Table 1: Sum-of-the-parts analysis

Software	FY09e
EV/ EBITDA multiple	9.5
EBITDA -IT	1692.2
EV Derived	16076.1
Products	
EV/ EBITDA multiple	7.0
EBITDA- Products	408.2
EV derived	2857.3
Total FV	18933.4
Market Capitalisation (Derived)	18734.2
Price / Share	632.0
Upside Potential	20%
Source: Merrill Lynch Estimates	

Product pipeline improves...

Additions to the product pipeline were encouraging, though likely shipment delays in a few deals could push out breakeven. Key updates on deal wins/shipment delays during the quarter are below, with a consolidated product pipeline in Table 3.

Table 2: What's new in the products business

Kev Positives

- First sign up of E series with Lenovo with high royalty/ low licensing mode
- Another win in its S series with a leading Tier one vendor
- Shipment commenced for another Japan Tier 1 in April
- Shipment to commence for S series from a Global Tier one in May

Key Negatives

- Delay in shipments in its M series deal by a quarter (from 2Q to Early 3QFY08)
- Delay in shipments in its E series (Likely in 3Q/4Q FY08)

Source: Company, Merrill Lynch

Table 3: Bulging product pipeline (April 07)

(p)	/			
Milestones	2.5 G	2.5 G	3G	3G
	E Series	M Series	M Series	S Series
				Another Tier one win
No of Platform Design-ins as of date	✓ First E series win	5	2	✓ 5 in 4Q vs 4 in 3Q.
No of Phone Models Shipped (as of dated)	None	None	None	✓ 4 in 4Q vs 3 in 3Q
No of Phone Models Shipped (Expected)	Shipment in 3Q/4Q FY08	Shipment in 2Q FY08	☑Global Tier 1 in 3Q FY08	Japan Tier 1- shipping
			Global Tier 2 in 3Q FY08	✓ Second Japan Tier 1 commenced shipping
				☑ Global Tier 1- to ship in May 07
				Wistron-1Q FY08

Source: Company

Note : ✓ represents new wins,

represents delays in shipments

... But could miss breakeven

With delay in shipments from global Tier One and high royalty bearing/low licensing deal from Lenovo, we believe Sasken could miss breakeven in its product business.

While we expect EBITDA from product business to be positive, EBIT margins (post depreciation, amortization) could still be negative during the year.

Cutting FY08 estimates

Services business drags

Management commented that budget decisions of a few of its Telecom Equipment clients got pushed to 4Q, due to merger related integration issues at the clients' end. This led to subdued (2% US\$) growth rates in IT services division.

With nearly 50% of IT services revenues from Telecom Equipment services and a few clients still evaluating offshore plans, we are cutting down our estimates for services business by 10% each for FY08E and FY09E. We expect services revenues to grow at a CAGR of 28% during FY07-09E as against our earlier estimate of 31% growth.

Table 4: Revised Estimates

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	Earlier	Revised	Variance (%)			Variance (%)	
	FY08	FY08		FY09	FY09		New
Sales	7,241	6,626	-8	8,911	8,415	-6	33%
EBITDA	1,644	1,351	-18	2,228	2,100	-6	67%
PAT	900	784	-13	1,329	1,313	-1	72%
EBITDA %	23	20		25	25		
EPS (Rs)	30	26		45	44		72%

Source: Merrill Lynch Estimates

Fund raising for capex delayed: Sasken expects capex of Rs 400-450mn for FY08, but highlighted that it is not likely to raise funds, as earlier planned. We believe this implies a shift in strategy from owned to leased property.

Our services growth assumption for FY08 is more than supported by the gross headcount addition target of 1000.

Shipment delays in products to impact FY08

We have also reduced our FY08 revenue estimates on the product segment by 19% to factor in delay in shipments in M Series (3G deal with Tier one), Lenovo deal and rupee appreciation. Sasken product business remains more vulnerable to appreciating rupee as it has high exposure to dollar revenues and has negligible dollar exps.

4Q disappoints; Services, Rupee main culprit

Sasken's 4Q results fell short of our expectations. Revenues grew 3.3% qoq, lower than MLe by 9%; profit declined by 1.4%, lower than MLe by 18%.

Key disappointment centered around its services business, where revenue growth was flat and operating margins declined by 200 bps due to the Rupee and higher G&A.

Product business, however, improved, with revenue growth of 110% qoq and recovery in EBITDA margins.

Table 5: 4Q results analysis

Rs m	Q3FY07	Q4 FY07	QoQ	Q4FY06	YoY	MLe	Var%
Net Sales	1310	1354	3.3%	781	73.5%	1487	-8.9%
Cost of Revenues	827	828	0.2%	514	61.2%	911	-9.1%
% to net sales	63.1%	61.2%		65.8%		61.3%	
R&D	50	74	47.1%	22	232.0%	44	67.7%
SG&A	239	242	1.1%	139	73.3%	253	-4.4%
Total Expenditure	1,116	1,144	2.5%	675	69.4%	1208	-5.3%
EBITDA	194	210	8.2%	105	99.9%	278	-24.5%
EBITDA Margin %	14.8%	15.5%	4.7%	13.5%		18.7%	
Depreciation & Amortization	61	103	68.4%	48	112.0%	78	32.2%
EBIT	133	107	-19.3%	57	89.5%	201	-46.5%
EBIT Margin %	10.2%	7.9%	-21.9%	7.3%		13.5%	
Other Income	31	47	52.1%	17	175.9%	3	1359.4%
Interest	10	11	1.0%	0	2952.3%	24	-55.4%
PBT	154	144	-6.2%	73	96.3%	180	-20.0%
Tax	35	27	-22.6%	11	155.7%	38	-28.3%
PAT	119	117	-1.4%	63	86.3%	143	-17.8%
Recurring Profit	119	117	-1.4%	63	86.3%	143	-17.8%
			bps		bps		bps
EBITDA margin	14.8%	15.5%	70	13.5%	205	18.7%	-321
EBIT margin	10.2%	7.9%	-223	7.3%	67	13.5%	-557
PAT margin	9.1%	8.6%	-41	8.1%	60	9.6%	-94

Source: Company, Merrill Lynch

Financial Tables

Table 6: Profit and Loss statement

(Rs.mn)	FY05	FY06	FY07E	FY08E	FY09E
Revenues	2,418	3,081	4,771	6,626	8,415
Cost of Revenues	1,297	1,888	2,976	3,963	4,682
SG&A	532	574	843	1,126	1,431
Total Expenditure	1,829	2,462	3,818	5,089	6,113
EBITDA	355	497	758	1,351	2,100
less Depreciation	142	185	218	305	345
EBIT	213	303	491	941	1,625
Less Interest	5	1	45	44	44
PBT	245	365	543	965	1,621
Income Tax	17	69	101	182	308
Exceptional Items	0	68	0	0	0
Profit after tax	228	229	443	784	1,313
Profit after tax (adj)	228	297	443	784	1,313
Source: Company , Merrill Lynch					

Table 7: Balance Sheet

Table 7: Balance Sheet					
SOURCES OF FUNDS					
Share Capital	168	279	285	285	285
Share Application Money	3	0	0	0	0
Reserves and Surplus	1,248	3,571	3,933	4,389	5,125
Total Shareholders fund	1,419	3,850	4,218	4,674	5,410
Loan Funds					
Secured Loans	5	12	909	2,109	2,109
Unsecured Loans	10	0	7	7	7
Total Borrowings	15	12	916	2,116	2,116
Total Sources	1,434	3,862	5,134	6,790	7,526
APPLICATION OF FUNDS					
Fixed Assets					
Good Will	0	0	1,850	1,850	1,850
Gross Block	1,603	1,895	2,326	3,025	3,475
Net Block	870	977	1,095	1,599	1,703
Capital Work in Progress including capital advances	8	34	50	34	34
Total	877	1.011	2.996	3,483	3,588

Current Assets, Loans and Advances

Investments

Capitalised software product costs (net of amortization)

Inventories	2	33	8	33	33
Sundry Debtors	541	653	1,108	1,542	1,824
Cash and Bank Balances	109	151	349	1,294	1,838
Loans and Advances	237	385	747	500	500
Gross Current Assets	889	1,223	2,212	3,370	4,195

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368

6 1,865

228

368

124

368

Less: Current Liabilities and Provisions

Current Liabilities	254	266	502	547	636
Provisions	84	115	276	115	115
Total	338	381	776	662	750
Net Current Assets	551	842	1,436	2,708	3,444
Total Applications	1.434	3.862	5,134	6.790	7.526

Source: Company , Merrill Lynch

Table 8: Cash flow Statement

Tubio di Gusti fioti Giutofficiti					
A. Cash flow from operating activities:	FY05	FY06	FY07E	FY08E	FY09E
Net Profit before tax	245	298	543	965	1,621
Adjustments for:					
Depreciation	142	185	218	305	345
Operating profit before working capital changes	380	484	762	1,270	1,966
Adjustments for:					
(Increase)/decrease in Sundry Debtors	-196	-134	-455	-434	-281
(Increase)/decrease in Work in Progress	4	-32	0	0	0
(Increase)/decrease in Loans & Advances	-69	-142		-247	0
Increase/(decrease) in Current Liabilities and Provisions	137	1	236	45	89
Cash generated from operations	256	178	672	879	1,750
Direct taxes (paid) / refund received	-27	-94		-182	-308
Net cash from operating activities	229	85	571	697	1,442
B. Cash flow from investing activities:					
Purchase of fixed assets	-239	-331	-447	-683	-450
Acquisitions	0		-1,914	0	0
Capitalization of Software product development expenses	0	-141	-263	0	0
Treasury investments	0	-1,803			0
Net cash used in investing activities	-215	-2,271	-1,127	-683	-450
C. Cash flow from financing activities:					
Proceeds from issue of shares (includes share application money)	105	2.291	0	0	0
Dividend paid (inclusive of dividend tax)	-43	-58	-151	-268	-449
Borrowing	0	0	904	1,200	0
Net cash used in financing activities	68	2,229	753	932	-449
Net increase / (decrease) in Cash and Bank balances (A+B+C)	81	43	197	945	543
Cash and Bank balances at the beginning of the year	27	109	151	349	1,294
Cash and Bank balances at the beginning of the year	109	151	349	1,294	1,838
Free Cash Flow	-10		-2,053	1,2,74	992
Source: Company , Merrill Lynch	. •		_,	. •	

Table 9: Ratios

FY3/05	FY3/06	FY3/07E	FY3/08E	FY3/09E
2,418	3,081	4,771	6,626	8,415
54	70	104	149	195
45.5%	27.4%	54.8%	38.9%	27.0%
36%	42%	62%	92%	73%
7.7	7.7	14.9	26.4	44.3
24.2%	30.3%	49.2%	77.0%	67.5%
8.8%	9.8%	10.3%	14.2%	19.3%
9.4%	9.4%	9.2%	11.8%	15.5%
20.4%	9.5%	11.8%	18.8%	27.6%
56.0%	73.0%	81.0%	82.0%	82.0%
45	44	45	42	41
	2,418 54 45.5% 36% 7.7 24.2% 8.8% 9.4% 20.4% 56.0%	2,418 3,081 54 70 45.5% 27.4% 36% 42% 7.7 7.7 24.2% 30.3% 8.8% 9.8% 9.4% 9.4% 20.4% 9.5% 56.0% 73.0%	2,418 3,081 4,771 54 70 104 45.5% 27.4% 54.8% 36% 42% 62% 7.7 7.7 14.9 24.2% 30.3% 49.2% 8.8% 9.8% 10.3% 9.4% 9.4% 9.2% 20.4% 9.5% 11.8% 56.0% 73.0% 81.0%	2,418 3,081 4,771 6,626 54 70 104 149 45.5% 27.4% 54.8% 38.9% 36% 42% 62% 92% 7.7 7.7 14.9 26.4 24.2% 30.3% 49.2% 77.0% 8.8% 9.8% 10.3% 14.2% 9.4% 9.4% 9.2% 11.8% 20.4% 9.5% 11.8% 18.8% 56.0% 73.0% 81.0% 82.0%

Source: Company , Merrill Lynch



Price Objective Basis & Risk

Our PO of Rs 630 is based on sum-of-the parts valuation using an EV/EBITDA multiple of 9.5x for services and 7x for products on a FY09E basis. We believe this is fair, given mid tier services companies (Hexaware, MphasiS) trade at target EV/EBITDA of 8-10x on FY09E and product companies such as Subex at 7x.

Company-specific risks: Delays in product shipments, rising employee attrition, Rupee appreciation and possible risk of equity dilution to fund capex plans. Industry wide risks: Global slowdown in telecom and growing competition.

Analyst Certification

I, Pratish Krishnan, hereby certify that the views expressed in this research report accurately reflect my personal views about the subject securities and issuers. I also certify that no part of my compensation was, is, or will be, directly or indirectly, related to the specific recommendations or view expressed in this research report.

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Interest Expense



23 April 2007

iQmethod[™] Measures Definitions

Business Performance Numerator Denominator

Return On Capital Employed NOPAT = (EBIT + Interest Income) * (1 - Tax Rate) + Goodwill Total Assets - Current Liabilities + ST Debt + Accumulated Goodwill

Amortization Amortization

Net Income Shareholders' Equity

 Operating Margin
 Operating Profit
 Sales

 Earnings Growth
 Expected 5-Year CAGR From Latest Actual
 N/A

 Free Cash Flow
 Cash Flow From Operations – Total Capex
 N/A

Quality of Earnings

Return On Equity

 Cash Realization Ratio
 Cash Flow From Operations
 Net Income

 Asset Replacement Ratio
 Capex
 Depreciation

 Tax Rate
 Tax Charge
 Pre-Tax Income

 Net Debt-To-Equity Ratio
 Net Debt = Total Debt, Less Cash & Equivalents
 Total Equity

Interest Cover EBIT

Valuation Toolkit

Price / Earnings Ratio
Current Share Price
Diluted Earnings Per Share (Basis As Specified)
Price / Book Value
Current Share Price
Shareholders' Equity / Current Basic Shares

Dividend Yield Annualised Declared Cash Dividend Current Share Price

Free Cash Flow Yield Cash Flow From Operations – Total Capex Market Cap. = Current Share Price * Current Basic Shares

Enterprise Value / Sales EV = Current Share Price * Current Shares + Minority Equity + Net Debt + Sales

EV / EBITDA Enterprise Value Basic EBIT + Depreciation + Amortization

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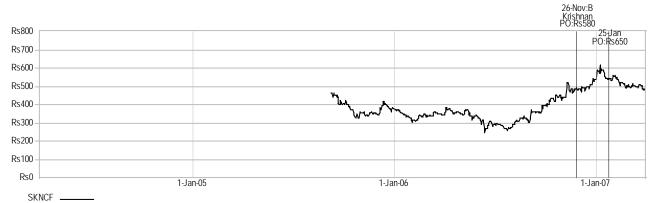
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SKNCF Price Chart



 $B: Buy, \ N: Neutral, \ S: Sell, \ PO: Price objective, \ NA: No longer valid$

The Investment Opinion System is contained at the end of the report under the heading "Fundamental Equity Opinion Key". Dark Grey shading indicates the security is restricted with the opinion suspended. Light Grey shading indicates the security is under review with the opinion withdrawn. Chart current as of March 31, 2007 or such later date as indicated.

Investment Rating Distribution: Technology Group (as of 31 Mar 2007)

investment Rating Distribution. I	cernology or oup (as c	71 31 Wai 2007)			
Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships*	Count	Percent
Buy	114	41.76%	Buy	21	20.39%
Neutral	146	53.48%	Neutral	31	22.79%
Sell	13	4.76%	Sell	1	9.09%
Investment Rating Distribution: G	lobal Group (as of 31 I	Mar 2007)			
Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships*	Count	Percent
Buy	1562	45.16%	Buy	415	30.09%
Neutral	1615	46.69%	Neutral	446	30.65%
Sell	282	8.15%	Sell	49	19.76%

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