AEM Holdings (AEM SP) Still in the early innings

2H21 PATMI beat on stronger than expected ramp

2H21 PATMI of SGD29.5m (+47.5% YoY) was ahead of our and consensus estimates, driven by the stronger-than-expected ramp of new generation equipment for Intel. Our FY22-23E PATMI estimates are largely unchanged after tweaking forecasts. AEM continues to be a conviction pick in our SG tech coverage due to favourable cyclical and structural drivers. Maintain BUY with slightly higher TP of SGD6.34. (16x FY22E P/E).

Still see opportunity for positive guidance revisions

2H21 revenue grew 52.2% YoY to SGD245.3m, driven by the volume ramp of HDBI (high density burn-in) and HST (HDMx system test) test handlers for Intel. FY21 revenue was SGD565.5m (+9% YoY), surpassing guidance of SGD525-550m. Management has expressed confidence in i) achieving FY22E revenue guidance of SGD670-720m, based on current demand and supply side dynamics; and ii) maintaining the c.17% net margin levels achieved in 4Q21 - which should assuage investor concerns on margin erosion. Our current forecasts reflect the upper end of management's guidance, and imply a 17% net margin. As the year is still early, we still see opportunity for positive revenue guidance revisions, as this has been common historically.

Cyclical and structural drivers

2H21 results and industry fundamentals support our view that AEM is early in the current earnings cycle. We expect FY22E to be driven by i) continued ramp of HDBI and HST, as well as initial ramp from AMPS (asynchronous, modular, parallel, smart). FY23-24E drivers include i) Intel's capacity expansion (e.g. new Penang assembly and test plant expected to commence production in 2024); as well as ii) continued ramp for new AMPS customer(s). The rise in front-end capex should pave way for back-end capex, and we believe AEM should benefit from this with most of its customers.

Risks

In our view, key risks include unexpected worsening of supply-side problems due to Covid-19. Currently, we do not expect the Russian-Ukraine conflict to alter AEM's customers' capex plans. Longer-term, a risk to our view is if chip oversupply tempers customers' capacity addition plans.

FYE Dec (SGD m)	FY20A	FY21A	FY22E	FY23E	FY24E
Revenue	519	565	721	854	1,070
EBITDA	122	126	163	192	238
Core net profit	98	92	123	145	182
Core FDEPS (cts)	35.1	29.5	39.3	46.5	58.4
Core FDEPS growth(%)	80.9	(16.0)	33.4	18.1	25.6
Net DPS (cts)	9.0	7.6	9.9	11.7	14.7
Core FD P/E (x)	9.8	17.8	10.7	9.1	7.2
P/BV (x)	4.5	4.0	2.6	2.2	1.8
Net dividend yield (%)	2.6	1.4	2.4	2.8	3.5
ROAE (%)	56.4	30.0	27.3	26.4	27.1
ROAA (%)	34.6	17.6	16.4	16.9	17.7
EV/EBITDA (x)	6.7	11.0	6.8	5.0	3.5
Net gearing (%) (incl perps)	net cash				
Consensus net profit	-	-	124	137	na
MKE vs. Consensus (%)	-	-	(0.8)	5.4	na

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BUY

Share Price	SGD 4.21
12m Price Target	SGD 6.34 (+53%)
Previous Price Target	SGD 6.23

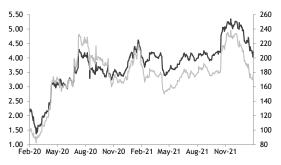
Company Description

AEM manufactures equipment used in the semiconductor back-end process

Statistics

52w high/low (SGD)	5.35/3.38
3m avg turnover (USDm)	9.9
Free float (%)	86.4
Issued shares (m)	312
Market capitalisation	SGD1.3B
	USD969M
Major shareholders:	
Temasek Holdings Pte Ltd. (Investment Ma	9.0%
Aberdeen Standard Investments (Asia) Ltd	6.0%
Employees Provident Fund	4.8%

Price Performance



AEM Holdings - (LHS, SGD) AEM Holdings / Straits Times Index - (RHS, %)

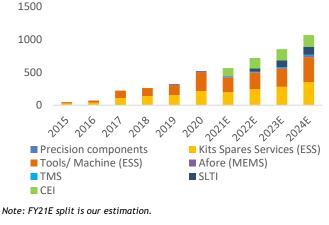
	-1M	-3M	-12M
Absolute (%)	(12)	(17)	3
Relative to index (%)	(13)	(19)	(7)
Source: FactSet			



Value Proposition

- Back-end test-equipment manufacturer that has codeveloped the HDMT handler for Intel.
- Leading-edge HDMT technology has helped its core customer achieve 2x savings in chip-testing costs.
- AEM provides strong synergies like field-service capabilities and manufacturing scale for the high-tech companies that it acquires.
- High single-customer and product risks.



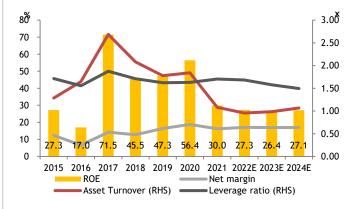


Source: Company, Maybank IBG Research

Financial Metrics

- Over time, we expect increasing contributions from non-Intel revenue sources.
- AEM is not a capex-intensive company. Improved cash-flow from 2016 levels has allowed AEM to pursue highly synergistic acquisitions.
- Training a batch of engineers during pre-production ramp up could take 5-6 months. During such time, staff costs could be elevated and profitability could temporarily decline.
- Adopted 25% dividend payout ratio policy in 2017.

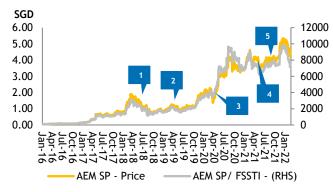
DuPont ROE



Source: Company, Maybank IBG Research

Price Drivers

Historical share price trend



Source: Company, Maybank IBG Research

- 1. Novo Tellus distributes AEM shares in-specie to investors; Core customer announces 10nm delay.
- 2. AEM's core customer denies rumours from tech-blog SemiAccurate that its 10nm process was cancelled.
- 3. Through 2020, AEM announced several positive guidance revisions, catalysing rallies
- 4. Announced FY21 revenue guidance of SGD460-520m, which the market perceived as a disappointment.
- 5. Announced placement to Temasek.

Swing Factors

Upside

- Revenue expansion from securing new customers or wallet expansion/increased orders from existing customers.
- Synergistic and accretive acquisitions.
- Positive customer-related news flow that could catalyse improved orders for AEM, such as capacity expansion or launch of new chips.

Downside

- Order cancellation, delays and earnings misses.
- Emerging technology from rivals that could erode AEM's competitive position with customer(s).
- Erosion in the competitive advantages of the core customer as a result of company specific or industry related developments.

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Risk Rating & Score ¹	23.1 (Medium)
Score Momentum ²	NA
Last Updated	11 November 2020
Controversy Score ³ (Updated: 9 Feb 2019)	0 - No Reported Incident

Business Model & Industry Issues

- As an equipment maker, AEM is inherently exposed to environmental, workplace safety, and socio-economic risks. AEM has had
 zero incidences of environmental non-compliance, as well as zero substantiated cases of corruption and legal compliance issues
 in 2020.
- From an environmental and social perspective, AEM screens all of its suppliers. AEM constantly strives to be more efficient with electricity usage, and ensures employees are well trained and remunerated fairly.
- AEM is recognised for good transparency with shareholders, while still being able to balance business requirements (e.g. respecting non-disclosure agreements).
- AEM has several new products in the pipeline and it is engaging customers for more. In our view, this is the key for economic sustainability, as well as for development of its own employees.

Material E issues

- AEM's environmental exposure is through energy, water and inputs (fabricated parts and electronics).
- AEM adheres to all National Environment Agency laws and regulations and has not had incidences of environmental non-compliance over the past 10 years.
- Emissions intensity ratio improved to 0.007588 MT/SGD'000 in 2020 (FY19: 0.010349)
- AEM screens suppliers for negative environmental and social impacts, including pollutions, biodiversity loss, global warming, incidences of child labour, breaches of customer privacy, and more. All eight key fabrication suppliers and 23 key standard part suppliers were found to have no negative environmental or social impacts.

Material S issues

- AEM values talent retention. One approach is through wages. In Malaysia, where around a-third of production takes place, AEM's entry wage for production workers have been higher than the minimum wage at least since 2017, to retain employees. Entry wages are also higher than minimum wages in the US and China.
- Workforce diversity. AEM is an equal-opportunities employer. Management are hired from local communities and consists of various nationalities. 86% of management are local across AEM's footprint globally.
- Workplace safety. AEM trains its employees on health and safety work practices. In 2018, there was 1 minor injury.
- In 2020, average training per employee was 8.6 hours, or 5016 hours in total, to equip staff with skills across technical, project management and software domains.
- Females comprise 22 of the total work force, and 19-25% of new hires since 2017.

Turnover rate per month was 0.9% a month, exceeding target of 1.5%. FY21 target is 1.25% a month. Turnover range was 1.1-2.1% in FY17-19.

Key G metrics and issues

- The board has seven directors, of which one is the executive chairman, four are independent directors (57%), and two are non-independent, non-executive. All the directors are male.
- The audit & risk management, remuneration, and nominating committees are chaired by independent directors. The strategy committee, which works with management on long-term strategic planning, is chaired by the executive chairman.
- Key management compensation (comprising the Board and senior management) accounted for 13% of staff costs in 2020 (2019:17%).
- In 2019, AEM won "Most Transparent Company Award, Technology" and was runner up for the "Singapore Corporate Governance Award" by SIAS. AEM regularly updates on its sales guidance and orders received and it's active in engaging with the investment community.
- Zero substantiated cases of corruption or legal compliance issues in 2020. There was one case of whistleblowing in 2020, but upon investigation, it was concluded to be unsubstantiated.

AEM was granted two patents in 2019, and the staff involved were rewarded. AEM views its considerable engineering development revenue as a positive sign of customer satisfaction and relationship.

<u>Raing & Score</u> - derived by Sustainalytics and assesses the company's exposure to unmanaged ESG risks. Scores range between 0 - 50 in order of increasing severity with low/high scores & ratings representing negligible/significant risk to the company's enterprise value, respectively, from ESG-driven financial impacts. <u>Score</u> <u>Momentum</u> - indicates changes to the company's score since the last update - a <u>negative</u> integer indicates a company's improving risk score; a <u>positive</u> integer indicates a deterioration. <u>Score</u> - reported periodically by Sustainalytics in the event of material ESG-related incident(s), with the impact severity scores of these events ranging from Category 0-5 (0 - no reports; 1 - negligible risks; ...; 5 - poses serious risks & indicative of potential structural deficiencies at the company).

Fig 1: Forecast changes

		FY22E			FY23E	
	New	Old	Chg (%)	New	Old	Chg (%)
Revenue (SGDm)	720.6	752.7	-4.3	853.7	854.0	0.0
EBIT (SGDm)	147.6	144.1	2.4	174.4	170.7	2.2
Core net profit (SGDm)	122.7	121.5	1.0	144.9	143.2	1.2
			Chg (ppt)			Chg (ppt)
EBIT margin	20.5%	19.2%	1.3	20.4%	20.0%	0.4
Net margin	17.0%	16.1%	0.9	17.0%	16.8%	0.2
Source: Maubank IBC Pasaarch						

Source: Maybank IBG Research

Fig 2: 2H21 summary

FYE Dec	2H21	2H20	1H21	YoY Chg	HoH Chg	FYE	FYA vs. FYE
	(SGD m)	(SGD m)	(SGD m)	(%)	(%)	SGDm	
Revenue	373.2	245.3	192.3	52.2	94.1	538.5	105
EBIT	75.4	46.4	36.5	62.3	106.6	96.6	116
EBITDA	84.1	48.6	42.3	73.1	98.9	105.3	120
Pretax profit	75.6	46.5	35.5	62.6	113.0	98.9	112
PATMI	62.4	42.3	29.6	47.4	111.1	82.0	112
Core PATMI	62.4	42.3	29.6	47.4	111.1	82.0	112

Source: Company, Maybank IBG Research

Fig 3: Structural drivers of system level test

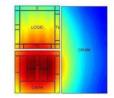
Industry innovations are challenging the industry's ability to provide an assurance of quality at the lowest cost possible



Increased Complexity: SW + HW Advanced Packaging



Thermal Challenges

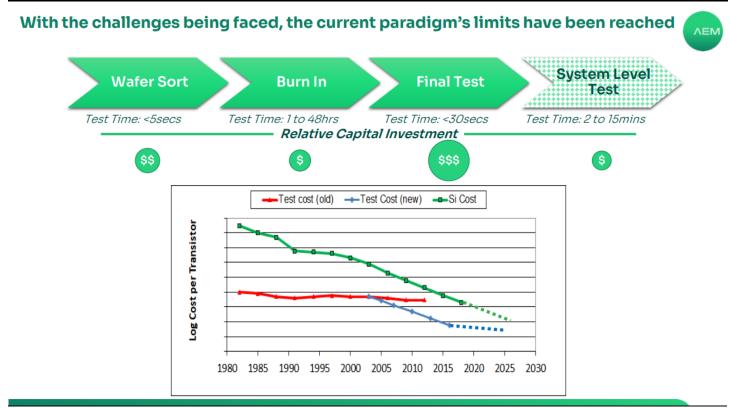


Application Specificity Driving Increased Pace of Innovation



Source: AEM

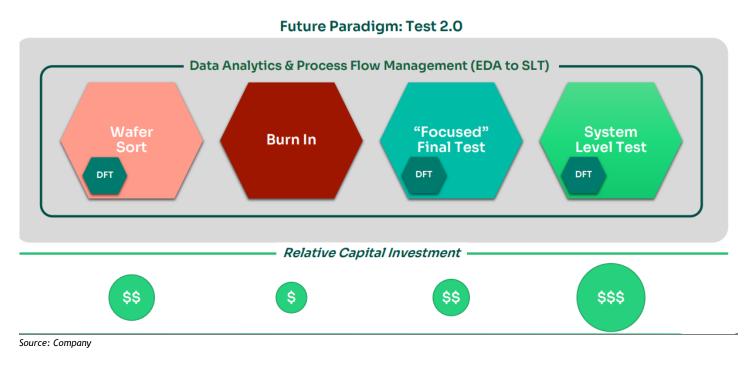
Fig 4: Historically, much of test dollars were focused on final test. System level test is advantageous in helping drive test cost per transistor lower.



Source: Company

Fig 5: AEM's vision of Test 2.0 sees test dollars shifting in favour of system level test to drive better test economics.

AEM's Test 2.0 vision leverages data with intelligent automation and application specific solutions to reset the cost of test curve across backend test



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FYE 31 Dec	FY20A	FY21A	FY22E	FY23E	FY24E
Key Metrics					
P/E (reported) (x)	8.4	13.0	10.6	9.0	7.2
Core P/E (x)	9.7	16.6	10.6	9.0	7.2
Core FD P/E (x)	9.8	17.8	10.7	9.1	7.2
P/BV (x)	4.5	4.0	2.6	2.2	1.8
P/NTA (x)	4.5	4.0	2.6	2.2	1.8
Net dividend yield (%)	2.6	1.4	2.4	2.8	3.5
FCF yield (%)	8.0	nm	7.6	13.1	14.2
EV/EBITDA (x)	6.7	11.0	6.8	5.0	3.5
EV/EBIT (x)	7.2	12.4	7.5	5.5	3.8
INCOME STATEMENT (SGD m)					
Revenue	519.0	565.5	720.6	853.7	1,069.8
EBITDA	121.6	126.3	163.1	191.6	237.9
Depreciation	(8.4)	(14.5)	(15.5)	(17.1)	(18.7)
Amortisation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(18.7) 0.0
	113.2	111.8	147.6		219.2
EBIT				174.4	
Net interest income /(exp)	0.4	(1.3)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.9)
Associates & JV Exceptionals	0.2	0.6	1.0	1.0	1.0
Exceptionals Other protections	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other pretax income	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pretax profit	113.8	111.1	147.8	174.6	219.3
Income tax	(16.2)	(19.1)	(25.1)	(29.7)	(37.3)
Minorities	0.0	(0.1)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Discontinued operations	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Reported net profit	97.6	92.0	122.7	144.9	182.0
Core net profit	97.6	92.0	122.7	144.9	182.0
BALANCE SHEET (SGD m)					
Cash & Short Term Investments	134.8	216.2	283.7	418.7	559.2
Accounts receivable	47.6	127.9	148.5	155.6	166.8
Inventory	79.7	204.9	191.9	215.5	255.8
Property, Plant & Equip (net)	8.1	26.1	20.6	11.5	0.8
Intangible assets	56.2	96.9	96.9	96.9	96.9
Investment in Associates & JVs	4.7	15.9	16.9	17.9	18.9
Other assets	4.5	22.6	22.6	22.6	22.6
Total assets	335.5	710.5	781.0	938.6	1,120.9
ST interest bearing debt	0.0	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5
Accounts payable	83.7	181.0	176.1	225.0	269.8
LT interest bearing debt	0.0	60.8	60.5	60.5	61.5
Other liabilities	40.0	46.0	29.0	29.0	29.0
Total Liabilities	124.1	308.0	286.5	335.4	381.2
Shareholders Equity	211.4	402.5	494.5	603.2	739.7
Minority Interest	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total shareholder equity	211.4	402.5	494.5	603.2	739.7
Total liabilities and equity	335.5	710.5	781.0	938.6	1,120.9
CASH FLOW (SGD m)	112 0	111 4	1 47 0	174 4	240.2
Pretax profit	113.8	111.1	147.8	174.6	219.3
Depreciation & amortisation	8.4	14.5	15.5	17.1	18.7
Adj net interest (income)/exp	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Change in working capital	(27.2)	(98.8)	(28.7)	18.2	(6.8)
Cash taxes paid	(8.8)	(14.1)	(25.1)	(29.7)	(37.3)
Other operating cash flow	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Cash flow from operations	86.0	12.1	108.4	179.3	193.0
Capex	(10.2)	(32.5)	(10.0)	(8.0)	(8.0)
Free cash flow	75.9	(20.4)	98.4	171.3	185.0
Dividends paid	(22.2)	(23.5)	(30.7)	(36.2)	(45.5)
Equity raised / (purchased)	4.9	136.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Change in Debt	0.0	81.3	(0.3)	0.0	1.0
Other invest/financing cash flow	(31.5)	(97.5)	0.0	0.0	0.0
Effect of exch rate changes	0.0	5.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Net cash flow	27.1	81.4	67.5	135.0	140.5

FYE 31 Dec	FY20A	FY21A	FY22E	FY23E	FY24E
Key Ratios					
Growth ratios (%)					
Revenue growth	60.6	9.0	27.4	18.5	25.3
EBITDA growth	74.9	3.9	29.1	17.5	24.2
EBIT growth	77.9	(1.2)	32.0	18.2	25.6
Pretax growth	78.1	(2.3)	33.0	18.1	25.6
Reported net profit growth	84.3	(5.8)	33.4	18.1	25.6
Core net profit growth	84.3	(5.8)	33.4	18.1	25.6
Profitability ratios (%)					
EBITDA margin	23.4	22.3	22.6	22.4	22.2
EBIT margin	21.8	19.8	20.5	20.4	20.5
Pretax profit margin	21.9	19.7	20.5	20.5	20.5
Payout ratio	25.4	23.9	25.0	25.0	25.0
DuPont analysis					
Net profit margin (%)	18.8	16.3	17.0	17.0	17.0
Revenue/Assets (x)	1.5	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0
Assets/Equity (x)	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.
ROAE (%)	56.4	30.0	27.3	26.4	27.
ROAA (%)	34.6	17.6	16.4	16.9	17.
Liquidity & Efficiency					
Cash conversion cycle	16.2	65.3	83.8	66.1	48.
Days receivable outstanding	26.2	55.9	69.0	64.1	54.3
Days inventory outstanding	70.2	135.2	147.9	128.2	118.4
Days payables outstanding	80.3	125.8	133.2	126.2	124.
Dividend cover (x)	3.9	4.2	4.0	4.0	4.0
Current ratio (x)	2.4	2.3	2.9	3.0	3.2
Leverage & Expense Analysis					
Asset/Liability (x)	2.7	2.3	2.7	2.8	2.9
Net gearing (%) (incl perps)	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cas
Net gearing (%) (excl. perps)	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cash	net cas
Net interest cover (x)	na	84.4	nm	nm	nn
Debt/EBITDA (x)	0.0	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.
Capex/revenue (%)	2.0	5.7	1.4	0.9	0.
Net debt/ (net cash)	(134.8)	(134.9)	(202.7)	(337.7)	(477.2

Source: Company; Maybank

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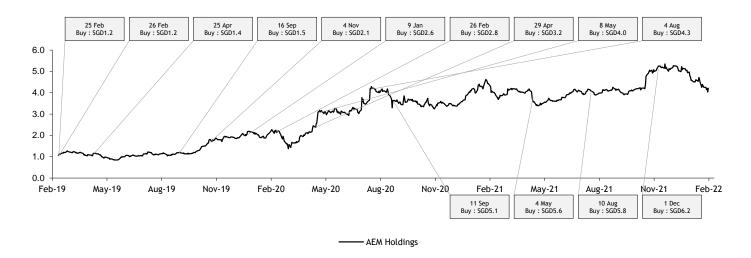
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