China / Hong Kong Company Update **HKT Trust**

Bloomberg: 6823 HK Equity | Reuters: 6823.HK

Refer to important disclosures at the end of this report

23DBS Group Research . Equity

BUY

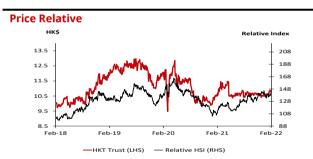
Last Traded Price (24 Feb 2022): HK\$10.70 (HSI : 22,902) Price Target 12-mth: HK\$13.30 (24% upside)

Analyst

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What's New

- FY21 results in line; AFF increased by 2.4% y-o-y
- Resilient local TSS and mobile businesses with 1% and 2% growth, respectively
- Mobile roaming shrinkage unlikely; 5G penetration to drive mobile ARPU recovery
- Maintain BUY for its attractive dividend yield of c.7%, with TP unchanged at HK\$13.3



Forecasts and Valuation

FY Dec (HK\$m)	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
Turnover	32,389	33,961	35,366	36,528
EBITDA	12,527	12,733	13,298	13,826
Pre-tax Profit	6,174	5,819	6,193	6,165
Net Profit	5,303	4,808	5,157	5,134
Net Profit Gth (Pre-ex) (%)	1.6	(9.3)	7.3	(0.5)
EPS (HK\$)	0.70	0.63	0.68	0.68
EPS Gth (%)	1.6	(9.3)	7.3	(0.5)
Diluted EPS (HK\$)	0.70	0.63	0.68	0.68
DPS (HK\$) BV Per Share (HK\$) PE (X) P/Cash Flow (X)	0.70 0.70 5.00 15.3 7.7	0.03 0.72 4.90 16.9 7.3	0.88 0.75 4.80 15.7 7.2	0.08 0.77 4.71 15.8 6.9
P/Free CF (X)	9.9	9.4	9.2	8.8
EV/EBITDA (X)	9.7	9.6	9.3	9.1
Net Div Yield (%)	6.6	6.7	7.0	7.2
P/Book Value (X)	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3
Net Debt/Equity (X)	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.3
ROAE(%) Earnings Rev (%): Consensus EPS (HK\$) Other Broker Recs:	14.0	12.8 B:9	14.0 (6) 0.71 S:0	14.2 (7) 0.71 H:2

Source of all data on this page: Company, DBS Bank (Hong Kong) Limited ("DBS HK"), Thomson Reuters

25 Feb 2022

Still a trusted pick

Investment Thesis

Attractive dividend yield of c.7% with steady AFF growth at an expected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of c.3% in FY21-FY23.

Further roaming revenue shrinkage unlikely. The COVID-19 outbreak has reduced the number of travellers. The roaming revenue only accounts for c.5% during the pandemic, vs. c.13% before COVID-19. Any roaming revenue recovery will be positive to AFF growth.

Expect higher 5G penetration to drive ARPU recovery. We forecast post-paid mobile ARPU to improve by 4% and 3% in FY22 and FY23, respectively.

Valuation:

Our TP of HK\$13.30 is based on a dividend discount model (DDM), assuming a 7.2% cost of equity.

Where we differ:

The market is concerned about the impact of lower IT spending in the enterprise market due to COVID-19. We believe that the impact is manageable, as demand for telecommunications services such as broadband is relatively stable.

Key Risks to Our View:

Irrational market competition. Hong Kong's mobile market is crowded with four major players. Irrational pricing may lead to a price war.

Interest rate upcycle. Any increase in interest rates will reduce the adjusted funds flow (AFF) and, therefore, dividend distribution.

At A Glance

Issued Capital (m shrs)	7,576
Mkt Cap (HK\$m/US\$m)	81,063 / 10,382
Major Shareholders (%)	
PCCW Ltd	51.9
Free Float (%)	48.1
3m Avg. Daily Val. (US\$m)	6.74
GICS Industry: Communication Services / Telecomm	unication Services







WHAT'S NEW

FY21 results in line; local business remained resilient

FY21 results highlights

Total revenue grew by 5% y-o-y to HK\$33,961m in FY21, mainly driven by strong demand for fixed broadband services, increasing 5G adoption, and a 51% growth in mobile product sales. Total revenue excluding mobile sales increased by 1% y-o-y, to HK\$30,031m.

TSS revenue decreased by 2% y-o-y to HK\$21,812m, with a 1% y-o-y growth in local TSS services and 8% y-o-y decline in international telecommunications services. TSS EBITDA margin expanded 1ppt to 39%.

Mobile service revenue increased by 1% y-o-y to HK\$7,818m, as a 2% increase in the local core business offset the decline of the roaming business. Mobile service EBITDA margin decreased by 1ppt to 60%. Mobile postpaid subs base increased 45k y-o-y, to 3,297k, with the churn rate reaching an all-time low of 0.7%. 5G customer base reached 680k as of Dec 2021, representing 21% of the post-paid subs base. Mobile post-paid exit ARPU increased by 2% y-o-y, to HK\$187 in 1H21 from HK\$184 in FY21, driven by 5G service plan uplift. Mobile product sales increased by 51% y-o-y, to HK\$3,930m in FY21.

Total EBITDA increased by 2% y-o-y, to HK\$12,733m, with EBITDA margin contracting 2ppts to 47%.

AFF increased by 2.4% y-o-y to HK\$5,513m, attributable to a 2% increase in EBITDA, reduction in net finance costs, and tax payment.

The company proposed a final dividend of HK\$0.3070 per share staple unit (SSU), adding to a full-year dividend of HK\$0.7277 per SSU, representing a full payout of AFF and translating to a c.7% yield.

Outlook

For the fixed-line business, we expect growth to remain steady at a low single-digit rate, driven by continued upgrades to FTTH services, expanding uptake of home Wi-Fi services, as well as accelerated enterprise digital transformation.

For the mobile business, the impact of COVID-19 has been longer than expected due to the outbreak of the COVID various variants and the fifth wave of COVID-19 in Hong Kong. We expect the mobile roaming business to remain sluggish, at least in 1H22, while further shrinkage is unlikely. Therefore, mobile ARPU will continue to recover, driven by higher 5G adoption. On average, upgrading to 5G services plans brings a HK\$70 ARPU uplift per subscriber. As of Jan 2022, the 5G penetration rate reached 23% for post-paid subscribers. Management expects the 5G penetration to reach at least 30% by FY22. We forecast mobile ARPU to improve by 3% each in FY22 and FY23.

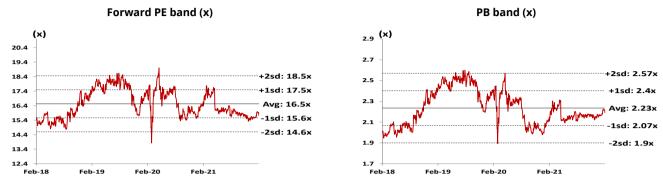
We have kept our AFF forecast largely unchanged. We forecast AFF growth to increase by 3% each for FY22 and FY23. The company offers an attractive dividend yield of c.7% with a c.3% dividend CAGR over FY21-FY23. We maintain our BUY call with the TP unchanged at HK\$13.30, for its attractive dividend yield. Our TP is based on the DDM, assuming a 7.2% cost of equity.

Company Background

HKT is an integrated telecom service provider in Hong Kong, with the largest market share in the fixed-line and mobile markets. The company's broadband services are provided via the brand "Netvigator" and its mobile services are provided via the brands "csl.", "1010", and "SUN Mobile". HKT is 52% owned by PCCW (8 HK).



Historical PE and PB band



Source: Thomson Reuters, DBS HK

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Key Assumptions

FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
Fixed-line sub growth (%)	(1.3)	(2.9)	(3.1)	(1.5)	(1.5)
Broadband sub growth (%)	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.7	0.7
Mobile sub growth (%)	8.2	(1.6)	3.6	2.3	2.0
Mobile ARPU	156.0	139.0	139.0	143.0	147.0
EBITDA margin (%) Source: Company, DBS HK	38.7	38.7	37.5	37.6	37.9

Segmental Breakdown (HK\$m)

-					
FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
Revenues (HK\$ m)					
TSS	21,953	22,357	21,812	22,145	22,442
Mobile	11,814	10,366	11,748	12,196	12,600
PayTV	N/A	647	2,456	3,070	3,531
Other businesses	236	241	872	1,003	1,103
Eliminations	(900)	(1,222)	(2,927)	(3,048)	(3,148)
Total	33,103	32,389	33,961	35,366	36,528

Source: Company, DBS HK

Income Statement (HK\$m)

FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
Revenue	33,103	32,389	33,961	35,366	36,528
Cost of Goods Sold	(15,787)	(15,703)	(16,729)	(17,307)	(17,794)
Gross Profit	17,316	16,686	17,232	18,059	18,734
Other Opng (Exp)/Inc	(9,622)	(9,498)	(10,127)	(10,381)	(10,575)
Operating Profit	7,694	7,188	7,105	7,678	8,159
Other Non Opg (Exp)/Inc	3	361	(8)	0	0
Associates & JV Inc	(51)	(79)	(130)	(130)	(130)
Net Interest (Exp)/Inc	(1,372)	(1,296)	(1,148)	(1,354)	(1,864)
Dividend Income	0	0	0	0	0
Exceptional Gain/(Loss)	0	0	0	0	0
Pre-tax Profit	6,274	6,174	5,819	6,193	6,165
Тах	(1,037)	(855)	(997)	(1,022)	(1,017)
Minority Interest	(20)	(16)	(14)	(14)	(14)
Preference Dividend	0	0	0	0	0
Net Profit	5,217	5,303	4,808	5,157	5,134
Net Profit before Except.	5,217	5,303	4,808	5,157	5,134
EBITDA	12,817	12,527	12,733	13,298	13,826
Growth					
Revenue Gth (%)	(5.9)	(2.2)	4.9	4.1	3.3
EBITDA Gth (%)	2.1	(2.3)	1.6	4.4	4.0
Opg Profit Gth (%)	6.6	(6.6)	(1.2)	8.1	6.3
Net Profit Gth (%)	8.1	1.6	(9.3)	7.3	(0.5)
Margins & Ratio					
Gross Margins (%)	52.3	51.5	50.7	51.1	51.3
Opg Profit Margin (%)	23.2	22.2	20.9	21.7	22.3
Net Profit Margin (%)	15.8	16.4	14.2	14.6	14.1
ROAE (%)	13.8	14.0	12.8	14.0	14.2
ROA (%)	5.3	5.2	4.5	4.7	4.6
ROCE (%)	7.5	7.0	6.4	6.8	7.1
Div Payout Ratio (%)	102.2	100.7	112.9	110.4	113.9
Net Interest Cover (x)	5.6	5.5	6.2	5.7	4.4

Interim Income Statement (HK\$m)

FY Dec	2H2019	1H2020	2H2020	1H2021	2H2021
Revenue	17,994	14,606	17,783	15,643	18,318
Cost of Goods Sold	(8,837)	(6,941)	(8,762)	(7,550)	(9,179)
Gross Profit	9,157	7,665	9,021	8,093	9,139
Other Oper. (Exp)/Inc	(4,826)	(4,608)	(4,890)	(5,127)	(5,000)
Operating Profit	4,331	3,057	4,131	2,966	4,139
Other Non Opg (Exp)/Inc	2	(50)	411	0	(8)
Associates & JV Inc	(28)	(30)	(49)	(63)	(67)
Net Interest (Exp)/Inc	(710)	(658)	(638)	(561)	(587)
Exceptional Gain/(Loss)	0	0	0	0	C
Pre-tax Profit	3,595	2,319	3,855	2,342	3,477
Тах	(528)	(414)	(441)	(434)	(563)
Minority Interest	(12)	(7)	(9)	(8)	(6)
Net Profit	3,055	1,898	3,405	1,900	2,908
Net profit bef Except.	3,055	1,898	3,405	1,900	2,908
Growth					
Revenue Gth (%)	(0.9)	(3.3)	(1.2)	7.1	3.0
Opg Profit Gth (%)	1.3	(9.1)	(4.6)	(3.0)	0.2
Net Profit Gth (%)	3.3	(12.2)	11.5	0.1	(14.6)
Margins					
Gross Margins (%)	50.9	52.5	50.7	51.7	49.9
Opg Profit Margins (%)	24.1	20.9	23.2	19.0	22.6
Net Profit Margins (%)	17.0	13.0	19.1	12.1	15.9
Source: Company, DBS HK					
Balance Sheet (HK\$m)					
FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
Net Fixed Assets	22,392	24,221	25,387	26,669	27,827
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Net Fixed Assets	22,392	24,221	25,387	26,669	27,827
Invts in Associates & JVs	852	813	915	900	885
Other LT Assets	66,604	68,400	72,175	72,221	72,619
Cash & ST Invts	2,417	2,092	2,411	2,711	2,830
Inventory	803	820	1,218	1,258	1,295
Debtors	3,600	3,253	3,953	4,117	4,103
Other Current Assets	3,101	3,572	3,553	3,574	3,596
Total Assets	99,769	103,171	109,612	111,450	113,155
ST Debt	0	1,552	61	61	61
Creditors	2,342	3,945	5,250	5,690	5,850
Other Current Liab	10,749	9,872	10,892	10,892	10,892
LT Debt	40,358	40,719	43,628	45,628	47,628
Other LT Liabilities	8,350	9,183	12,584	12,759	12,926
Shareholder's Equity	37,912	37,838	37,141	36,350	35,714
Minority Interests	58	62	56	70	84
Total Cap. & Liab.	99,769	103,171	109,612	111,450	113,155
Non-Cash Wkg. Capital	(5,587)	(6,172)	(7,418)	(7,633)	(7,748)
Non-Cash Wkg. Capital Net Cash/(Debt)	(5,587) (37,941)	(6,172) (40,179)	(7,418) (41,278)	(7,633) (42,978)	(7,748) (44,859)
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Net Cash/(Debt)	(37,941)	(40,179)	(41,278)	(42,978)	(44,859)
Net Cash/(Debt) Debtors Turn (avg days)	(37,941) 40.4	(40,179) 38.6	(41,278) 38.7	(42,978) 41.6	(44,859) 41.1
Net Cash/(Debt) Debtors Turn (avg days) Creditors Turn (avg days)	(37,941) 40.4 70.6	(40,179) 38.6 110.7	(41,278) 38.7 152.7	(42,978) 41.6 172.8	(44,859) 41.1 175.6
Net Cash/(Debt) Debtors Turn (avg days) Creditors Turn (avg days) Inventory Turn (avg days)	(37,941) 40.4 70.6 32.2	(40,179) 38.6 110.7 28.6	(41,278) 38.7 152.7 33.8	(42,978) 41.6 172.8 39.1	(44,859) 41.1 175.6 38.8
Net Cash/(Debt) Debtors Turn (avg days) Creditors Turn (avg days) Inventory Turn (avg days) Asset Turnover (x)	(37,941) 40.4 70.6 32.2 0.3	(40,179) 38.6 110.7 28.6 0.3	(41,278) 38.7 152.7 33.8 0.3	(42,978) 41.6 172.8 39.1 0.3	(44,859) 41.1 175.6 38.8 0.3
Net Cash/(Debt) Debtors Turn (avg days) Creditors Turn (avg days) Inventory Turn (avg days) Asset Turnover (x) Current Ratio (x)	(37,941) 40.4 70.6 32.2 0.3 0.8	(40,179) 38.6 110.7 28.6 0.3 0.6	(41,278) 38.7 152.7 33.8 0.3 0.7	(42,978) 41.6 172.8 39.1 0.3 0.7	(44,859) 41.1 175.6 38.8 0.3 0.7
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Net Cash/(Debt) Debtors Turn (avg days) Creditors Turn (avg days) Inventory Turn (avg days) Asset Turnover (x) Current Ratio (x) Quick Ratio (x) Net Debt/Equity (X) Net Debt/Equity ex MI (X)	(37,941) 40.4 70.6 32.2 0.3 0.8 0.5 1.0 1.0	(40,179) 38.6 110.7 28.6 0.3 0.6 0.3 1.1 1.1	(41,278) 38.7 152.7 33.8 0.3 0.7 0.4 1.1 1.1	(42,978) 41.6 172.8 39.1 0.3 0.7 0.4 1.2 1.2	(44,859) 41.1 175.6 38.8 0.3 0.7 0.4 1.3 1.3
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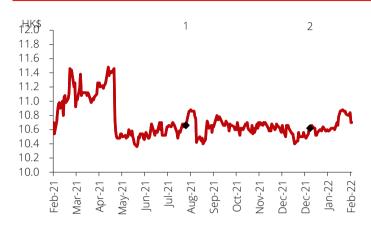
Cash Flow Statement (HK\$m)

Cash Flow Statement (HK\$m)					
FY Dec	2019A	2020A	2021A	2022F	2023F
Pre-Tax Profit	6,274	6,174	5,819	6,193	6,165
Dep. & Amort.	5,121	5,341	5,741	5,751	5,797
Tax Paid	(185)	(516)	(602)	(617)	(614)
Assoc. & JV Inc/(loss)	51	79	15	15	15
(Pft)/ Loss on disposal of FAs	0	0	0	0	0
Chg in Wkg. Cap.	(1,794)	(1,717)	(1,074)	(1,515)	(1,621)
Other Operating CF	1,617	1,179	1,185	1,402	1,932
Net Operating CF	11,084	10,540	11,084	11,229	11,674
Capital Exp. (net)	(2,642)	(2,377)	(2,450)	(2,450)	(2,450)
Other Invts. (net)	(2,487)	(2,391)	(1,964)	(1,964)	(1,964)
Invts in Assoc. & JV	(277)	(70)	0	0	0
Div from Assoc & JV	0	0	0	0	0
Other Investing CF	(32)	(1,781)	0	276	0
Net Investing CF	(5,438)	(6,619)	(4,414)	(4,138)	(4,414)
Div Paid	(5,238)	(5,336)	(5,383)	(5,949)	(5,769)
Chg in Gross Debt	378	1,818	1,678	2,000	2,000
Capital Issues	0	48	0	0	0
Other Financing CF	(887)	(809)	(2,647)	(2,842)	(3,372)
Net Financing CF	(5,747)	(4,279)	(6,351)	(6,791)	(7,141)
Currency Adjustments	(16)	33	0	0	0
Chg in Cash	(117)	(325)	319	300	119
Opg CFPS (HK\$)	1.70	1.62	1.60	1.68	1.75
Free CFPS (HK\$)	1.12	1.08	1.14	1.16	1.22

Source: Company, DBS HK

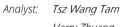


Target Price & Ratings History



S.N	o. Date	Closing Price	12-mth Target Price	Rating
1:	6-Aug-21	HK\$10.64	HK\$13.70	Buy
2:	5-Jan-22	HK\$10.64	HK\$13.30	Buy

Source: DBS HK



Harry Zhuang

Live more, Bank less

DBS HK recommendations are based on an Absolute Total Return* Rating system, defined as follows:

STRONG BUY (>20% total return over the next 3 months, with identifiable share price catalysts within this time frame)

BUY (>15% total return over the next 12 months for small caps, >10% for large caps)

HOLD (-10% to +15% total return over the next 12 months for small caps, -10% to +10% for large caps)

FULLY VALUED (negative total return, i.e., > -10% over the next 12 months)

SELL (negative total return of > -20% over the next 3 months, with identifiable share price catalysts within this time frame)

*Share price appreciation + dividends

Completed Date: 25 Feb 2022 08:29:38 (HKT) Dissemination Date: 25 Feb 2022 10:57:29 (HKT)

Sources for all charts and tables are DBS HK unless otherwise specified.

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