



Humans – Flawed decision makers

Despite the widespread adoption of the value investment philosophy, exponential growth in computing power, and easy access to financial data, value phenomena persist. It seems to defy logic. Why does an efficient market leave a free lunch on the table?

Answer to that is simple: Humans are flawed decision-makers, especially under Duress

Humans or analysts suffer from representative bias. They often extrapolate poor earnings performance too far into the future, assume a downward trend in stock prices will persist, or simply overreact to bad news, leading them to oversell stocks to the point that they are undervalued.

The reverse is also true, where a company delivering excellent earnings performance is extrapolated into the future, assuming this trend will continue. This results in stocks trading at exorbitant valuations, where stocks are de-rated if earnings fail to materialize.

Based on historical data, we have observed that companies trading at higher valuations tend to have a stronger track record of past growth, while companies trading at lower valuations tend to have a poorer track record of growth. Interestingly, as a group, companies at the lower end of the valuation curve tend to outperform those at the higher end. With this premise in mind, we have created this model.



Executive Summary

Purpose of the report: The purpose is to create a strategy that invests in stocks available at attractive valuations, showing consistent momentum, and generates attractive risk-adjusted returns purely based on quantitative parameters without any human intervention.

Why quantitative strategy?: In today's data-rich environment, sifting through the constant streams of information has become crucial to discern what's truly valuable and cut out the noise. However, due to inherent human biases, distinguishing between relevant information and irrelevant information has become exceedingly challenging. Ultimately, only a handful of factors significantly impact stock returns, and by focusing on key factors, achieving substantial outperformance becomes plausible.

Methodology: We created a Quantitative strategy and Backtested the portfolio of stocks with reasonable valuations and strong momentum from April 2013 to August 2024 (11.4 Years), using the Historical Nifty 500 as our starting universe. The steps involved in the selection of stocks have been highlighted here.

Key Findings: In the past 11+ years, this strategy has outperformed the Nifty 500, generating an alpha of 16.9% and delivering a 32.0% CAGR. It outperformed the benchmark in 10 out of 11 years and experienced a relatively low drawdown and standard deviation compared to the benchmark.



Executive Summary

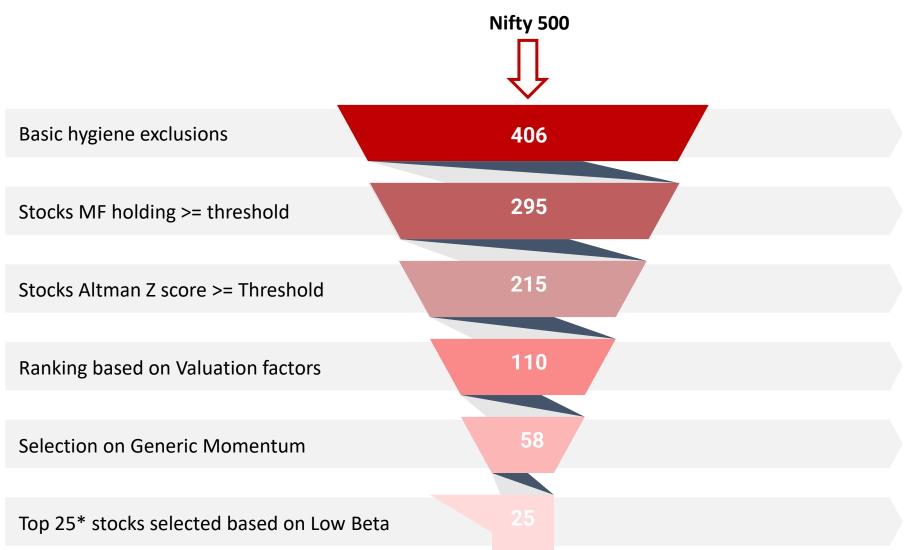
Conclusion: Value & Momentum are complementary strategies as Value & Momentum strategies tend to perform well at different times in the market cycle. Value strategies often do well in stable or declining markets, while Momentum strategies excel in trending markets. This negative correlation between the two strategies helps in smoothing out returns and reducing overall portfolio volatility.

Assumptions:

- **Nifty 500:** Nifty 500 as the starting universe has been considered. This universe includes de-listed, amalgamated companies as well to remove survivorship bias in the universe. Further, the Nifty 500 as of April of every year is considered for an entire year.
- Lag Effect: It bakes in a 7-month lag to the Financial Year ending and a 2-month lag to the Quarter ending. For example, March 2022 year-ending numbers are announced somewhere by May 2022 end, but they are incorporated in our model (just for the purpose of backtesting) until October '22.
- **Return Computation:** In return computation, monthly rebalance is assumed. And at every rebalance, portfolio wt. is reset to equal wt. Return computation does not include dividends.
- **Data cleaning:** Companies that have not reported their year ending for more than 2 years have been removed from the backtest, checked at the end of every month
- Data Source: Ace Equity, NSE



Selection & Filtration Criteria





Basic Hygiene Exclusions

From our starting universe of Nifty 500, we have made certain basic exclusions

- 1. Excluded companies where the latest 3 years of financials are not available.
- 2. Excluded companies in the **BFSI sector** from the universe.
- 3. Excluded companies whose total assets and sales in the latest and previous years were less than Rs. 10 Cr.

Our starting universe performance post these exclusions are:

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	Nifty 500 Index	Nifty 500 (Starting Universe)
# of Stocks	500	406
CAGR	15.1%	17.8%
Drawdown %	-27.2%	-47.4%
Standard Deviation	15.9%	22.1%
Sharpe	0.70	0.53
Calmar	0.55	0.37

Performance is for the period Apr'13 – Aug'24 in this report

In the latest list of Nifty 500 constituents, the Mcap of the 500th company is Rs. 4,908 Cr

Explanation

- **Drawdown %:** It is maximum % fall in portfolio value from highest value to lowest value during certain period. Lower the number, better it is.
- **Standard Deviation:** It measures the volatility of portfolio returns, as to how much the returns of a portfolio can vary from its average over time. It is also called measure of risk in the portfolio. Lower the number, better it is.
- Sharpe Ratio: It tells you how much excess of risk free returns (CAGR) have been generated for every unit of risk (Standard Deviation). Higher the number, better it is.
- Calmar Ratio: It tell you how much returns (CAGR) has been generated for every unit of risk (Drawdown). Higher the number, better it is.



Mutual Fund Holding >= Threshold (Mutual Fund Holding Rule)

Purpose: We aim to exclude those companies from the universe exhibiting poor governance or facing specific challenges initially identified through qualitative assessments

Rationale: Mutual Funds are smart money, and they exit at the first sign of trouble; taking a clue from the smart money; we have created a model that can dynamically react on softer aspects which gets captured in numbers later, but smart money exits first.

Specifics: We exclude those companies that have low mutual Fund holding in their shareholding pattern

We examined the outcomes at various Mutual Fund holding levels before selecting relevant threshold.

Companies with MF holding in Top 90 percentile are included in the universe

This gives a sense of cut off MF threshold for making it to the list

	Low MF ownership								High MF ownership
Rules	Threshold		<i></i> _						Threshold
Rules	MF Holding Top 90	MF Holding Top 80	MF Holding Top 70	MF Holding Top 60	MF Holding Top 50	MF Holding Top 40	MF Holding Top 30	MF Holding Top 20	MF Holding Top 10
``	Percentile included								
# of Companies	390	338	295	254	214	172	132	91	49
CAGR	17.8%	19.8%	19.9%	20.6%	20.6%	21.2%	21.6%	22.5%	23.7%
DD%	-46.8%	-41.5%	-40.7%	-40.2%	-40.7%	-40.8%	-41.4%	-44.1%	-45.4%
Std Dev	21.8%	20.8%	20.5%	20.4%	20.5%	20.5%	20.9%	21.2%	22.7%
Sharpe	0.54	0.67	0.68	0.71	0.71	0.74	0.75	0.78	0.78
Calmar	0.38	0.48	0.49	0.51	0.51	0.52	0.52	0.51	0.52
Average Mcap	30,466	33,032	32,166	29,645	25,306	23,647	20,406	17,913	14,586
Last 12Months MF Threshold	0.68	2.64	4.41	6.33	8.24	10.23	12.64	15.07	19.12

As we become more selective in our criteria, the number of stocks we consider naturally decreases. Interestingly, we've noticed that risk-adjusted returns, as measured by the Sharpe ratio, are higher when we use more stringent criteria. To balance risk-adjusted returns with the number of stocks for further analysis, we've chosen a threshold at the top 70th percentile. This threshold allows us to maintain a reasonable number of stocks while optimizing for risk-adjusted returns. Additionally, it enables us to focus on larger market capitalization companies.



Statistics post Mutual Fund Holding Rule

	Nifty 500 Index	Nifty 500 (excl BFSI)	Post MF Rule
# of Stocks	500	406	295
CAGR	15.1%	17.8%	19.9%
Drawdown %	-27.2%	-47.4%	-40.7%
Standard Deviation	15.9%	22.1%	20.5%
Sharpe	0.70	0.53	0.68
Calmar	0.55	0.37	0.49
Average Mcap		29,647	32,166



Altman Z Score >= Threshold (Altman Z score Rule)

Purpose: To reduce risk and remove companies with high leverage or under financial stress

Rationale: Despite implementing MF rule, there might still be instances of companies facing challenges such as high leverage coupled with poor earnings or financial stress. To address this issue, we incorporated Altman's Z score, a metric that gauges the likelihood of a business facing bankruptcy within the next two years.

Specifics: We exclude the bottom 30 percentile of companies with the worst Altman Z score

To confirm this hypothesis, let's look at the stats of the portfolio at different thresholds.

	Low Altman Z score	-			High Altman Z score	
Rules		Altman Z Score Top 70 Percentile included	Altman Z Score Top 50 Percentile included	Altman Z Score Top 30 Percentile included		
# of Companies	274	215	155	96	36	
CAGR	20.4%	21.0%	20.8%	20.3%	15.2%	
DD%	-38.3%	-30.0%	-25.7%	-21.6%	-23.8%	Significant improvement in risk
Std Dev	19.8%	18.2%	17.1%	16.2%	16.1%	metrics
Sharpe	0.73	0.82	0.86	0.88	0.57	metrics
Calmar	0.53	0.70	0.81	0.94	0.64	
Average Mcap	32,076	30,246	34,050	40,732	55,586	
- •						
Last 12Months Z Score Threshold	2.20		6.70	10.37	18.21	

The data clearly demonstrates that both return and standard deviation have improved at a higher threshold compared to lower ones. One major improvement in stats by the introduction of Altman's Z score is the substantial reduction in drawdowns and standard deviation.



Statistics post Mutual Fund Holding and Altman's Z score rule

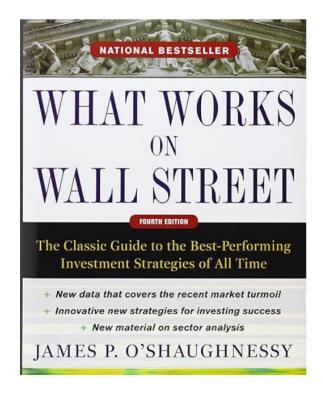
	Nifty 500 Index	Nifty 500 (excl BFSI)	Post MF Rule	Post Altman's Z Score Rule
# of Stocks	500	406	295	215
CAGR	15.6%	17.8%	19.9%	21.0%
Drawdown %	-27.2%	-47.4%	-40.7%	-30.0%
Standard Deviation	15.8%	22.1%	20.5%	18.2%
Sharpe	0.74	0.53	0.68	0.82
Calmar	0.57	0.37	0.49	0.70
Average Mcap		29,647	32,166	30,246

Now that we have cleaned the universe for stocks with red flags, we can move towards our main strategy



Trending Value

Drawing inspiration from James P. O'Shaughnessy's influential book, "What Works on Wall Street," published in 1997, one strategy he explored is 'Trending Value.' This approach cleverly combines the value factor with the momentum factor. Over a 45-year period, the 'Trending Value' strategy has delivered an impressive CAGR of 21.1%, significantly outperforming the S&P 500, which achieved a CAGR of 6.2% during the same timeframe.



This strategy essentially aims to find the cheapest stocks available in the market that are also showing strong price momentum.



Finding Value

To find the value stocks, we will **rank all the stocks (215)** in the universe post Altman Z score on the basis of the **following valuation metrics**:

- Price to Earnings
- Price to Book
- Price to CFO (3 Yrs cumulative)
- EV to Sales
- EV EBITDA

Rank is computed for each of these valuation metrics and then combined rank is computed. Lower this rank, better it is.

Lower the better

Example:

	Price to Earnings Rank	Price to Book Rank	Price to CFO Rank	Price to Sales Rank	EV EBITDA Rank	Combined Rank	Stock A will be
Stock A	5	15	3	2	25	5+15+3+2+25= 50	selected as it has ranked the
Stock B	10	4	20	10	17	10+4+20+10+17 =61	lowest

This represents that stock A is ranked 5^{th} out of 215 stocks based on PE multiple. The same for other parameters.

Let's check this hypothesis with data. We will compare the performance of the top and bottom halves of the universe by above rank. 12



Ranking based on Valuation Factors

	Bottom 50 percentile stocks (Inexpensive Stocks)	Top 50 percentile stocks (Expensive Stocks)
# of Stocks	110	107
CAGR	23.1%	18.9%
Drawdown %	-36.7%	-22.5%
Standard Deviation	19.9%	17.4%
Sharpe	0.86	0.74
Calmar	0.63	0.84
Average Mcap	27,935	32,838

Value strategies generally tend to be more volatile. But when we balance it with momentum stocks, numbers drastically improve.



Selection on Generic Momentum

Once the undervalued stocks are selected, we will rank them based on their price momentum over the past 12 months.

To compute momentum, we essentially consider the prior month's closing price and the 12-month prior closing price.

Let's examine the data to determine if momentum is indeed adding value.

We have divided the value universe into 5 buckets, ranging from the highest to the lowest momentum stocks in the last 12 months.

	Lowest Momentum				Highest Momentum
	Stocks				Stocks
# of Companies	22	22	22	22	22
CAGR	14.8%	17.2%	20.7%	25.7%	36.3%
DD%	-47.8%	-46.9%	-43.9%	-33.0%	-23.9%
Std Dev	24.2%	21.7%	20.0%	18.6%	20.8%
Sharpe	0.37	0.51	0.74	1.06	1.45
Calmar	0.31	0.37	0.47	0.78	1.52
Average Mcap	22,275	26,507	33,482	31,459	26,213

As is clearly evident, stocks with the highest momentum have delivered higher returns with lower drawdowns and volatility. Essentially, the risk-adjusted returns for higher momentum stocks are much better than those for lower momentum stocks.

The issue of higher drawdowns and volatility, typically associated with the value universe, has been effectively addressed by incorporating momentum.

For further analysis, we will be selecting the top 50 percentile of stocks based on momentum.



Statistics post Value and Generic Momentum

	Nifty 500 Index	Nifty 500 (excl BFSI)	Post MF Rule	Post Altman's Z Score Rule	Value Universe	Generic Momentum
# of Stocks	500	406	295	215	110	58
CAGR	15.6%	17.8%	19.9%	21.0%	23.1%	28.7%
Drawdown %	-27.2%	-47.4%	-40.7%	-30.0%	-36.7%	-28.3%
Standard Deviation	15.8%	22.1%	20.5%	18.2%	19.9%	19.1%
Sharpe	0.74	0.53	0.68	0.82	0.86	1.19
Calmar	0.57	0.37	0.49	0.70	0.63	1.02
Average Mcap		29,647	32,166	30,246	27,935	29,598



Momentum Path Matters

For instance, a stock could qualify for our universe by delivering no returns for 11 months and then achieving all its returns in the final month.

Research by Wesley Gray and Jack Vogel, in their book "Quantitative Momentum," suggests that if you have to choose between two stocks that have delivered the same returns in the past, you should opt for the one with a smoother price trend rather than a more volatile one.

Extract from their book:

Humans suffer from "limited attention", which means that our cognitive resources are limited, and our brains will focus on processing the information that is more relevant or demanding at a given point in time. Determining what is most relevant turns out to be a challenging question. Psychology research has found that dramatic changes in the environment, as opposed to small changes attract more cognitive resources, all else being equal.

Hence, a series of frequent gradual changes attracts less attention than infrequent dramatic changes. Investors, therefore, underreact to continuous information.



Momentum Path Matters

We have selected stock Beta to filter out volatile stocks from the universe. For computing a stock's beta, we consider its latest 240 trading days (the last one year).

Let's look at universe post Generic Momentum performance at different Beta ranges.

We have sorted this universe in 5 buckets based on Beta volatility.

	Low Beta Stocks				► High Beta Stocks
# of Companies	12	11	11	11	11
CAGR	33.0%	31.0%	26.0%	22.6%	29.5%
DD%	-24.8%	-27.6%	-39.4%	-41.6%	-26.5%
Std Dev	16.9%	19.0%	21.1%	23.7%	24.3%
Sharpe	1.60	1.32	0.95	0.70	0.97
Calmar	1.33	1.13	0.66	0.54	1.11
Average Mcap	29,501	33,175	32,593	28,632	24,984

As is clearly evident, stocks with low beta delivered better risk-adjusted returns than stocks with higher beta.

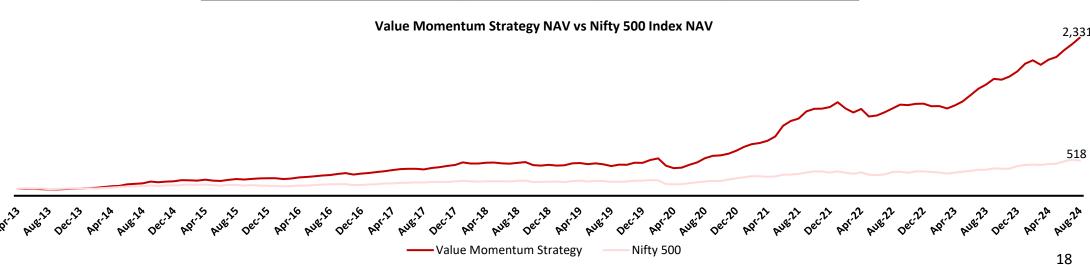
From the universe of stocks filtered by Generic Momentum, we will select the top 25 stocks with the lowest beta. These top 25 stocks will form our final value momentum portfolio.



Value Momentum Model Performance

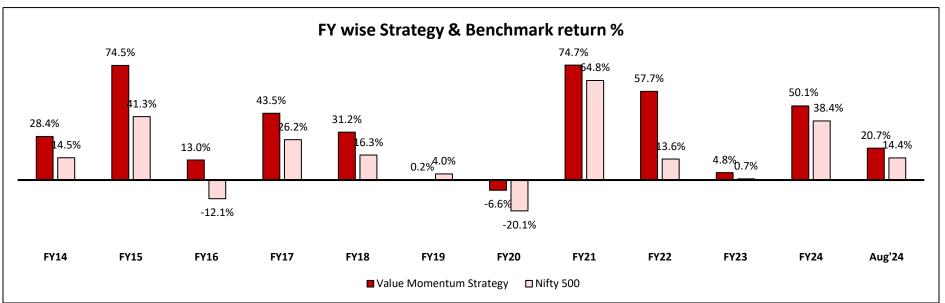
Here is the performance of those 25 stocks post all the filtration

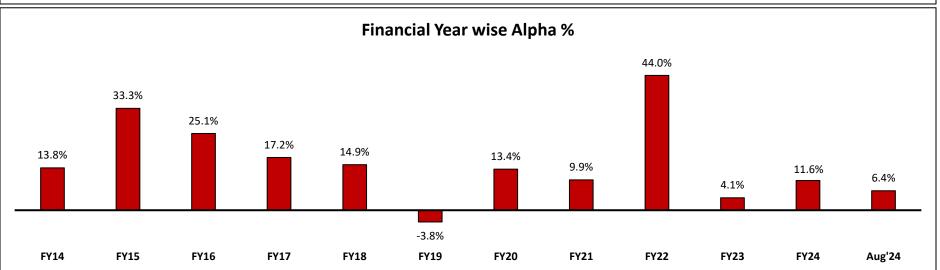
	Nifty 500 Index	Value Momentum Portfolio	Alpha over Nifty 500 Index
# of Stocks	500	25	
CAGR	15.6%	32.0%	+16.9%
Drawdown %	-27.2%	-25.9%	+1.3%
Standard Deviation	15.8%	17.1%	+1.2%
Sharpe	0.74	1.52	
Calmar	0.57	1.24	
Average Mcap		31,490	



KEYNOTE

Value Momentum Model Performance

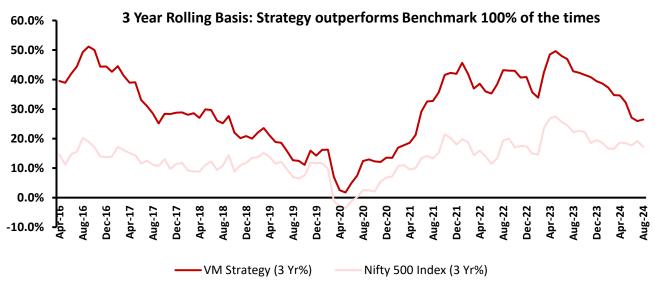




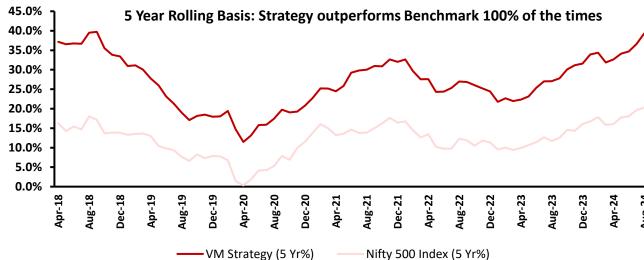
Strategy has managed to outperform the benchmark in all years except FY19



Rolling Performance



If you had invested in this strategy at any point in time, at the end of three years from your date of investment, you would have outperformed the market ~100% of the times.

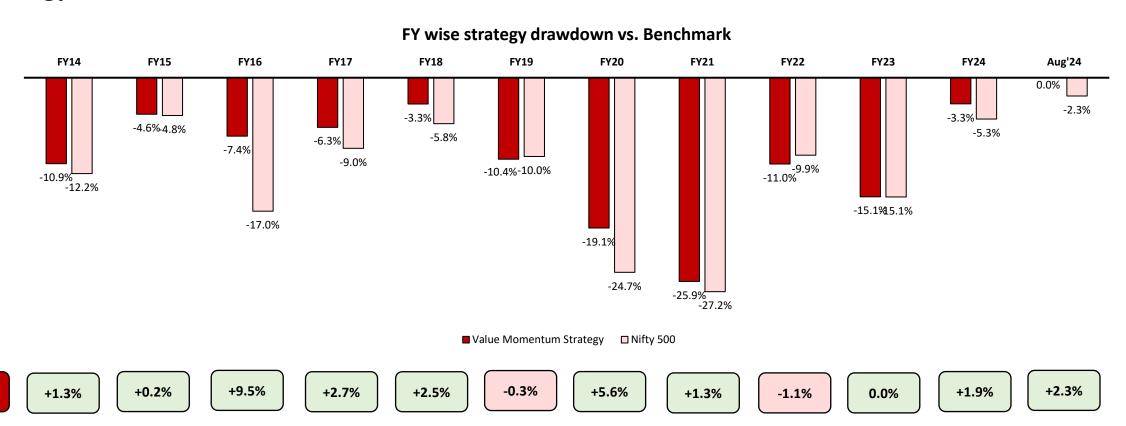


If you had invested in this strategy at any point in time, at the end of five years from your date of investment, you would have outperformed the market 100% of the times.

Alpha



VM Strategy Drawdown



Strategy has experienced lower drawdown than benchmark in all the years except FY19 (-0.3%) & FY22 (-1.1%).



Top Winners and Losers

Top 20 Losers

Sr. No.	Company Name	Buy Date	Exit Date	Abs Ret%
1.	Greenply Industries Ltd.	Jan-18	Jul-18	-44.1
2.	Suprajit Engineering Ltd.	Feb-20	Apr-20	-37.3
3.	Cochin Shipyard Ltd.	Jul-19	Mar-20	-36.6
4.	Eveready Industries India Ltd.	Apr-18	Jun-18	-33.8
5.	The Ramco Cements Ltd.	May-13	Dec-13	-31.8
6.	Vardhman Textiles Ltd.	Mar-20	May-20	-31.6
7.	Shankara Building Products Ltd.	Mar-20	Apr-20	-31.4
8.	K.P.R. Mill Ltd.	Nov-19	Jul-20	-31.1
9.	Cipla Ltd.	Aug-18	Sep-19	-27.4
10.	CIE Automotive India Ltd.	Feb-19	Sep-19	-26.1
11.	Minda Corporation Ltd.	Apr-16	Jan-17	-24.9
12.	Gujarat State Petronet Ltd.	Sep-21	Mar-22	-24.9
13.	Endurance Technologies Ltd.	Nov-21	Feb-22	-23.9
14.	Persistent Systems Ltd.	Mar-18	Feb-19	-23.8
15.	SIS Ltd.	Mar-22	Feb-23	-23.7
16.	Mahanagar Gas Ltd.	Feb-20	Mar-20	-23.3
17.	Bayer CropScience Ltd.	Aug-22	Apr-23	-23.2
18.	Greaves Cotton Ltd.	Sep-18	Jan-19	-23.1
19.	Gujarat State Petronet Ltd.	Apr-13	Jun-13	-22.8
20.	Bharat Electronics Ltd.	Jun-13	Jan-14	-22.7

Top 20 Winners

Sr. No.	Company Name	Buy Date	Exit Date	Abs Ret%
1.	JB Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals Ltd.	May-19	Aug-21	423.1
2.	Mphasis Ltd.	Mar-20	Oct-21	385.2
3.	Persistent Systems Ltd.	Nov-19	Aug-21	377.1
4.	Aarti Industries Ltd.	Jul-13	Sep-14	276.4
5.	Indraprastha Gas Ltd.	Nov-14	Oct-17	250.2
6.	Laurus Labs Ltd.	Apr-20	Sep-20	234
7.	eClerx Services Ltd.	Aug-20	Jul-22	197.4
8.	Welspun Living Ltd.	Mar-14	Oct-14	191.8
9.	Cyient Ltd.	Apr-13	Dec-15	186.4
10.	Aarti Industries Ltd.	May-16	Feb-19	177.8
11.	Balkrishna Industries Ltd.	Nov-13	Apr-15	161.8
12.	KSB Ltd.	May-13	Jun-14	155.1
13.	Ajanta Pharma Ltd.	Mar-23	Aug-24	154
14.	Zydus Lifesciences Ltd.	Feb-23	Open	149.4
15.	Bajaj Auto Ltd.	Jul-22	Open	149.1
16.	Lupin Ltd.	Jun-23	Open	148.5
17.	Jyothy Labs Ltd.	Jun-22	Oct-23	147.5
18.	KPIT Technologies Ltd.	Nov-20	Jul-21	139.2
19.	KEI Industries Ltd.	Apr-21	Jan-22	135.7
20.	Balkrishna Industries Ltd.	Oct-16	Dec-17	131.6



Latest Portfolio as of August 2024

Rank	Company Name	NSE Sector	Market Cap (Rs. Cr)	MF Holding	Altman Z Score	PE	EV EBITDA	EV Sales	Price to Book	Price to CFO	Momentum %	Beta
1	Sun Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd.	Healthcare	417,880	12.8	16.7	39.6	30.7	8.4	6.2	24.4	40%	0.43
2	Ipca Laboratories Ltd.	Healthcare	34,226	28.5	6.5	53.0	26.4	4.4	4.4	19.6	39%	0.47
3	Fortis Healthcare Ltd.	Healthcare	39,420	26.5	5.8	61.8	30.3	5.7	4.6	20.5	55%	0.48
4	Lupin Ltd.	Healthcare	94,575	16.2	8.3	41.8	22.8	4.7	6.6	17.1	69%	0.50
5	Bajaj Auto Ltd.	Automobile and Auto Components	272,189	5.4	18.8	34.0	29.1	5.9	9.4	23.0	110%	0.56
6	Bayer CropScience Ltd.	Chemicals	27,966	9.6	5.5	42.0	31.7	5.4	9.8	17.9	40%	0.57
7	Hero MotoCorp Ltd.	Automobile and Auto Components	101,439	13.8	9.3	24.9	17.3	2.5	5.7	13.5	86%	0.58
8	Jyothy Labs Ltd.	Fast Moving Consumer Goods	19,862	13.8	14.2	53.0	39.3	6.9	11.0	25.3	56%	0.58
9	Alkem Laboratories Ltd.	Healthcare	67,944	14.7	13.9	31.2	27.5	5.3	6.3	18.7	42%	0.62
10	Sun TV Network Ltd.	Media, Entertainment & Publication	32,043	7.2	32.5	16.9	10.9	6.6	3.5	8.6	48%	0.64
11	eClerx Services Ltd.	Services	11,446	20.2	17.0	22.1	13.9	3.6	6.7	12.2	49%	0.66
12	Aurobindo Pharma Ltd.	Healthcare	89,045	19.2	6.1	24.4	14.2	3.0	3.0	18.5	58%	0.68
13	Zydus Lifesciences Ltd.	Healthcare	117,780	7.2	11.6	28.1	20.4	6.0	5.3	19.9	85%	0.72
14	Aegis Logistics Ltd.	Oil, Gas & Consumable Fuels	26,337	6.7	6.3	45.0	27.7	4.1	5.9	26.0	138%	0.73
15	Quess Corp Ltd.	Services	10,158	9.1	5.4	29.5	14.2	0.5	3.7	10.0	51%	0.73
16	Endurance Technologies Ltd.	Automobile and Auto Components	34,920	8.6	10.2	48.4	24.9	3.2	7.0	18.2	57%	0.75
17	Eicher Motors Ltd.	Automobile and Auto Components	129,720	7.6	17.9	31.0	29.0	7.8	7.2	19.8	46%	0.76
18	Escorts Kubota Ltd.	Capital Goods	40,437	8.6	14.4	38.4	32.0	4.2	4.4	32.2	54%	0.80
19	${\bf Crompton\ Greaves\ Consumer\ Electricals\ Ltd.}$	Consumer Durables	27,576	42.3	7.7	58.3	36.4	3.7	8.0	19.8	44%	0.82
20	Coromandel International Ltd.	Chemicals	49,697	15.3	7.8	34.1	21.1	2.2	5.3	24.6	50%	0.84
21	Finolex Cables Ltd.	Capital Goods	22,602	10.7	25.4	30.7	37.3	4.2	5.2	27.3	58%	0.92
22	Redington Ltd.	Services	15,639	12.0	5.3	12.9	9.4	0.2	2.0	40.3	39%	0.92
23	Vardhman Textiles Ltd.	Textiles	14,187	15.1	5.8	19.3	13.1	1.5	1.6	4.3	62%	0.93
24	Minda Corporation Ltd.	Automobile and Auto Components	12,213	16.8	7.9	49.6	22.7	2.5	6.2	18.1	63%	0.95
25	Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd.	Healthcare	42,080	10.9	5.3	78.1	33.7	3.8	4.3	24.3	77%	0.98
	Median		34,920	12.8	8.3	34.1	26.4	4.2	5.7	19.8	55%	0.72



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