# **QUESS CORP**

# Staffing business gains market leadership

India Equity Research | Business Services



EDELWEISS RATINGS

Quess Corp's (Quess) Q4FY18 earnings came largely in line with expectations, adjusted for one-time non-cash charge of INR390mn. For FY18, while top line grew 43% (~30% organic), EBITDA and PAT jumped 49% and 138%, respectively. In our view, the key highlight of FY18 was the company gaining market leadership in general staffing by adding ~43,000 employees (total 1,57,000 ). In addition to this boost in general staffing, the company continued to grow rapidly across segments, in line with our thesis that Quess is a play on all the key growth segments in the Indian business services sector. Retain 'BUY' with revised TP of INR1,315 (INR1,300 earlier) as we revise up FY19/20 PAT estimates 0.5% each to factor in FY18 numbers.

### Staffing booster in Q4FY18 gives market leadership

While the overall group's earnings were largely in line with consensus estimates (refer table inside), we believe the key highlight was Quess dislodging the previous market leader in general staffing and gaining leadership position. The company added 43k employees in its general staffing segment, taking its count to 157k. In our view, this run rate is likely to help Quess post ~25% sales growth in FY19 in general staffing. We also reiterate scale is the single most critical success enabler in staffing, and now the company should be able to leverage scale further. According to management, a sharpened focus and deeper mining in the BFSI segment accelerated growth in FY18.

#### Other segments continue to fire

Quess' technology/facility management (FM) segments also delivered strong growth in Q4FY18—up 74%/28% YoY. While the technology segment benefited from acquisition of Tata Business Services, FM business' growth was organic. We believe, full impact of these acquisitions and robust growth in the FM sector should lead to overall consolidated sales surging ~30%. Margin expansion will enable the company deliver ~38% PAT growth in FY19, in our view.

#### Outlook and valuations: Exposed to key growth areas; retain 'BUY'

We continue to value Quess on DCF basis and peg our revised target price at INR1,315 as we revise up FY19/20 PAT estimates 0.5% each to factor in FY18 numbers. We maintain 'BUY' and retain Quess as an integrated play on the Indian business services segment.

Financials								(INR mm)
Year to March	Q4FY18	Q4FY17	% change	Q3FY18	% change	FY18	FY19E	FY20E
Net rev. (INR mn)	18,908	12,395	52.5	15,840	19.4	61,673	79,988	80,569
EBITDA (INR mn)	1,093	703	55.4	909	20.3	3,544	5,073	4,795
Adj. PAT (INR mn)	758	333	127.2	610	24.2	3,098	4,291	3,283
Adj. Dil. EPS (INR)	5.2	2.3	127.2	4.1	24.2	21.1	29.2	22.3
Diluted P/E (x)							39.3	30.2
EV/EBITDA (x)							32.1	25.7
ROAE (%)							16.5	18.0

Absolute Rating	BUY
Investment Characteristics	Growth
MARKET DATA (R: , B: QUES.	S INI)
WANTE DATA (N. , D. QUES.	J 11V)
CMP	: INR 1,159
Target Price	: INR 1,315
52-week range (INR)	: 1,253 / 750
Share in issue (mn)	: 145.5
M cap (INR bn/USD mn)	: 169 / 2,515
Avg. Daily Vol. BSE/NSE ('000)	: 208.0

	Current	Q3FY18	Q2FY18
Promoters *	71.7	71.7	50.1
MF's, FI's & BKs	4.5	4.5	14.7
FII's	7.2	7.2	3.6
Others	16.6	16.6	31.6

NIL

#### **RELATIVE PERFORMANCE (%)**

\* Promoters pledged shares

(% of share in issue)

**SHARE HOLDING PATTERN (%)** 

	Sensex	Stock	Stock over Sensex
1 month	2.4	9.1	6.8
3 months	4.1	10.9	6.8
12 months	15.5	39.0	23.5

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**Table 1: Segment-wise quarterly performance** 

	Q4FY18	Q4FY17	YoY % change	Q3FY18	QoQ % change
People & Services segment					
Revenues	8,399	6,080	38.1	7,356	14.2
EBIT	377	298	26.5	352	7.0
(% margin)	4.5	4.9		4.8	
<b>Global Technology Solution</b>	s segment				
Revenues	6,081	3,496	73.9	4,803	26.6
EBIT	385	216	78.6	310	24.2
(% margin)	6.3	6.2		6.5	
Integrated Facility Manage	ment Segr	ment			
Revenues	2,891	2,250	28.5	2,634	9.8
EBIT	187	136	38.0	177	6.0
(% margin)	6.5	6.0		6.7	
Industrials - Segment					
Revenues	1,303	569	129.0	1,046	24.5
EBIT	49	27	79.4	38	27.0
(% margin)	3.7	4.8		3.7	

Source: Company information

Financial snapshot - (Consolidated)								(INR mn)
Year to March	Q4FY18	Q4FY17	% change	Q3FY18	% change	FY18	FY19E	FY20E
Revenues	18,908	12,395	52.5	15,840	19.4	61,673	79,988	80,569
Employee Exp + other COGS	15,554	10,517	47.9	13,480	15.4	52,215	67,300	65,717
Gross Profit	3,353	1,878	78.5	2,360	42.1	9,457	12,688	14,852
Others	2,260	1,175	92.3	1,450	55.8	5,914	7,615	10,057
Total expenditure	17,814	11,692	52.4	14,930	19.3	58,129	74,915	75,774
EBITDA	1,093	703	55.4	909	20.3	3,544	5,073	4,795
Depreciation	285	131	116.6	183	55.5	747	574	657
EBIT	809	572	41.4	726	11.4	2,796	4,499	4,138
Interest	252	166	52.0	177		755	918	730
Other income	240	30	698.5	126	90.5	569	931	313
Profit Before Tax	797	436	82.6	675	18.0	2,611	4,511	3,722
Less: Provision for Tax	31	100	(68.8)	74	(58.1)	(483)	90	439
Less: Minority Interest	0	0		0		0	150	0
Add: Share of profit from associates	(8)	(3)		9		4	20	0
Reported Profit	758	333	127.2	610	24.2	3,098	4,291	3,283
Adjusted Profit	758	333	127.2	610	24.2	3,098	4,291	3,283
Equity capital (FV INR 10)	1,455	1,455		1,455		1,455	1,455	1,455
No. of Diluted shares outstanding (mn)	147	147		147		147	147	147
Adjusted Diluted EPS	5.2	2.3	127.2	4.1	24.2	21.1	29.2	22.3
P/E (x)							39.3	30.2
EV/EBITDA (x)							32.1	25.7
ROAE(%)							16.5	18.0
As % of net revenues								
Raw material	82.3	84.8		85.1		84.7	84.1	81.6
Staff expenses	17.7	15.2		14.9		15.3	15.9	18.4
Other expenses	12.0	9.5		9.2		9.6	9.5	12.5
EBITDA	5.8	5.7		5.7		5.7	6.3	6.0
Net profit	4.0	2.7		3.9		5.0	5.4	4.1

Edelweiss Securities Limit

#### **Company Description**

Quess Corp (Quess), India's leading integrated business services provider, was established in 2007. Headquartered in Bengaluru, the company has pan-India presence with 65 offices across 34 cities along with overseas footprint in North America, the Middle East and South-East Asia. Quess operates in nine countries - USA, Canada, Sri Lanka, UAE, India, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam. The company serves over 1,700 plus customers across five segments namely, industrials, integrated facility management, people & services, global technology solutions and internet business. Quess employs over 2,50,000 personnel (including Terrier Security Services). The company currently has seven ISO certified lines of businesses.

#### **Investment Theme**

We expect 15% plus sales CAGR in all four of Quess's verticals driven by both organic and inorganic growth. The company enjoys huge advantage of scale in general staffing in India (largest in India with 150k associates & ~41% of group sales) as we believe that the larger players benefit from both market share gains and higher margins. Further, Quess's presence in specialised staffing (31% of sales) should lead to improved margin profile going forward. Facility management is a high growth sector and the company is focusing on ramping this up sharply (~16% of sales). We believe Quess has an eclectic portfolio of services that offers an attractive growth mix. The company's three areas of exposure, viz., general staffing, specialised staffing and facility management are expected to almost triple by FY25, in our view, led by strong domestic structural drivers. Ergo, Quess is an exciting integrated play on the burgeoning growth opportunity in business services in India.

#### **Key Risks**

- We expect sector headcount for flexi-staffing to grow by at least 11-12% annually.
   Quess, being a market leader, should be able to deliver at least this level of growth which is also our base case headcount assumption. Any shortfall in this will pose downside risk to our estimates and target price.
- Inability of the company to consistently improve margins will pose a downside risk to our investment thesis.
- Higher than expected competitive pressure leading to lower headcount growth or loss of market share is a downside risk.
- Any unreasonable acquisition or failure to efficiently manage any acquired business could pose downside risks.

# **Financial Statements**

Key assumptions				
Year to March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	FY20E
Macro				
GDP(Y-o-Y %)	6.6	6.5	7.1	7.6
Inflation (Avg)	4.5	3.8	4.5	5.0
Reporate (exit rate)	6.3	6.0	6.0	6.5
USD/INR (Avg)	67.1	64.5	66.0	66.0
Segmental sales growth (%)				
P&S	20.3	22.7	28.1	10.0
GTS	28.4	57.9	39.5	14.3
IFM	51.2	82.7	17.4	16.2
Industrial AM	16.8	65.1	35.0	10.0
Segmental EBITDA margin (%)				
P&S	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7
GTS	7.8	7.2	7.3	7.3
IFM	6.0	7.3	7.3	7.3
Industrial AM	8.4	5.1	4.6	4.6
Cost and financial assumptions				
Gross margins (%)	14.1	15.3	15.9	16.1
Opex (%)	8.6	9.6	9.5	9.3
EBITDA margins (%)	5.5	5.7	6.3	6.8
Capex (INR mn)	(1,312)	(5,292)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Net borrowings (INR mn)	2,814	(677)	(6,183)	(12,425)
Receivable (days)	39	42	48	51
Inventory (days)	23	20	22	22
Payable (days)	371	290	437	524
Cash conversion cycle (days)	(310)	(228)	(367)	(451)

Income statement				(INR mn)
Year to March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	FY20E
Net revenues	43,149	61,673	79,988	90,163
Raw material costs	714	1,422	1,422	1,422
Employee expenses	36,339	50,793	65,878	74,257
Gross profit	6,096	9,457	12,688	14,483
Other expenses	3,717	5,914	7,615	8,383
Operating expenses	3,717	5,914	7,615	8,383
Total expenditure	4,431	7,336	9,037	9,805
EBITDA	2,379	3,544	5,073	6,100
Depreciation & amortisation	333	747	574	654
EBIT	2,046	2,796	4,499	5,446
Less: Interest Expense	479	755	918	846
Add: Other income	154	569	931	1,318
Profit before tax	1722	2611	4511	5918
Provision for tax	504	(483)	90	178
Less: Minority Interest	-	-	150	180
Add: Share of profit from assoc.	1	4	20	20
Add: Exceptional Items	-	-	-	-
Reported Profit	1,219	3,098	4,291	5,581
Adjusted Profit	1,219	3,098	4,291	5,581
No. of Shares outstanding (mn)	126.8	145.5	145.5	145.5
Adjusted Basic EPS	9.61	21.3	29.5	38.4
No. of dil. Sh. outstanding (mn)	124.7	147.0	147.0	147.0
Adjusted Diluted EPS	9.6	21.3	29.5	38.4
Adjusted Cash EPS	14	19	33	42
Dividend per share (DPS)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Dividend Payout Ratio (%)	-	-	-	-

## Common size metrics (% net revenues)

Year to March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	FY20E
Gross margin	14.1	15.3	15.9	16.1
Operating expenses	8.6	9.6	9.5	9.3
EBITDA margins	5.5	5.7	6.3	6.8
EBIT margin	4.7	4.5	5.6	6.0
Interest	1.1	1.2	1.1	0.9
Net profit margin	2.8	5.0	5.6	6.4

## Growth metrics (%)

Year to March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	FY20E
Revenues	25.6	42.9	29.7	12.7
EBITDA	57.5	48.9	43.2	20.2
PBT	50.1	51.6	72.8	31.2
Adjusted Profit	50.1	154.2	38.5	30.0
EPS	34.1	121.5	38.5	30.0

# **Business Services**

Balance sheet As on 31st March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	(INR mn) FY20E	Cash flow metrics Year to March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	FY20E
					Operating cash flow	736	1,092	6,493	6,770
Share capital	1,268	1,455	1,455	1,455	Financing cash flow	7,008	14,058	(2,118)	(2,046
Reserves & surplus	11,780	23,153	27,444	33,025	Investing cash flow	(5,758)	(6,697)	(69)	318
Shareholder equity	13,048	24,608	28,899	34,480	Net cash flow		, ,	` '	
Minority interest	9	16	166	346		1,986	8,454	4,306	5,042
Long term borrowings	2,744	2,686	2,486	2,286	Capex	(1,312)	(5,292)	(1,000)	
Short term borrowings	4,696	6,976	5,976	4,976	Dividends paid	-	-	-	-
Total Borrowings	7,440	9,662	8,462	7,262	Don Chalatta analas				
Long Term Liab. & Prov.	1,860	2,536	3,289	3,707	Profitability ratios	F)/4.7	EV4.0E	EV4.0E	EV20E
Deferred Tax Liability (net)	(401)	(1,556)	(1,556)	(1,556)	Year to March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	FY20E
Sources of funds	21,955	35,266	39,260	44,239	Gross profit margin	14.1	15.3	15.9	16.1
Gross Block	1,172	3,685	4,685	5,685	EBITDA margin	5.5	5.7	6.3	6.8
Net Block	560	2,325	2,750	3,097	Pre-tax Return on Capital Emplo	15.8	12.3	15.1	17.0
Capital work in progress	1,969	3,032	3,032	3,032	Return on Average Equity (ROAE	14.7	16.5	16.0	17.6
Intangible assets	9,264	10,981	10,981	10,981	ROA (%)	8.6	10.8	11.5	13.4
Total net fixed assets	11,793	16,338	16,763	17,110	Current ratio	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.5
Non current investments	776	888	888	888	Quick ratio	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.4
Cash and cash equivalents	4,626	10,339	14,645	19,687	Cash ratio	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.1
Inventories	71	85	85	85	Receivable turnover (x)	9.4	8.6	7.6	7.1
Sundry Debtors	5,094	9,207	11,941	13,460	Inventory turnover (x)	16.0	18.3	16.7	16.7
Loans & Advances	1,697	5,055	5,055	5,055	Payables turnover (x)	1.0	1.3	0.8	0.7
Other Current Assets	4,177	5,517	5,517	5,517	Receivables (days)	39	42	48	51
Total Current Assets (ex cash)	11,038	19,864	22,598	24,117	Inventory (days)	23	20	22	22
Trade payable	778	1,481	1,921	2,165	Payables (days)	371	290	437	524
Other Current Liab. & ST. Prov.	5,501	10,684	13,715	15,399	Cash conversion cycle (days)	(310)	(228)	(367)	(451
Total Current Liab. & Prov.	6,278	12,165	15,636	17,564	Net Debt/Equity	0.2	(0.0)	(0.2)	(0.4
Net Current Assets (ex cash)	4,760	7,699	6,962	6,553	Debt/EBITDA	3.1	2.7	1.7	1.2
Uses of funds	21,955	35,266	39,260	44,239	Adjusted debt/Equity (x)	0.6	0.4	0.3	0.2
Book Value per share (INR)	103	169	199	237	Long term debt / Capital emplo	12.5	7.6	6.3	5.2
					Total debt / Capital employed (	33.9	27.4	21.6	16.4
Free cash flow					Interest coverage (x)	4.3	3.7	4.9	6.4
Year to March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	FY20E					
Reported Profit	1,219	3,098	4,291	5,581	Operating ratios (x)				
Add: Depreciation	333	747	574	654	Year to March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	FY20E
Add:Interest	321	506	615	567	Total asset turnover	3.0	2.2	2.1	2.2
Add: Others	402	(3,799)	7,595	6,917	Fixed asset turnover	7.0	5.3	5.9	6.5
Gross cash flow	2,274	552	13,076	13,718	Equity turnover	5.2	3.3	3.0	2.8
Less: Changes in WC	1,538	(541)	6,583	6,948					
Operating cash flow	736	1,092	6,493	6,770	Valuation parameters				
Less: Capex	1,312	5,292	1,000	1,000	Year to March	FY17	FY18E	FY19E	FY20E
Free Cash Flow	(576)	(4,200)	5,493	5,770	Adjusted Diluted EPS (INR)	9.6	21.3	29.5	38.4
	(0.10)	(1)-00/	0,100	0,110	Y-o-Y growth (%)	34.1	121.5	38.5	30.0
					Adjusted Cash EPS (INR)	13.7	18.6	33.1	42.4
					Dil. Price to Earn. Ratio (P/E) (x)	120.7	54.5	39.3	30.2
					Price to Book Ratio (P/B) (x)	11.3	6.9	5.8	4.9
					Enterprise Value / Sales (x)	3.5	2.7	2.0	1.7
					Enterprise Value / EBITDA (x)	63.0	47.4	32.1	25.7
					Dividend Yield (%)				0.0
					Dividend field (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

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# **Additional Data**

## **Directors Data**

Ajit Isaac	Chairman and Managing Director	Pravir Kumar Vohra	Non-Executive, Independent Director
Subrata Kumar Nag	CEO and Executive Director	Revathy Ashok	Non-Executive, Independent Director
Madhavan Karunakaran Menon	Non-Executive Director	Pratip Chaudhuri	Non-Executive, Independent Director
Chandran Ratnaswami	Non-Executive Director	Sanjay Anandaram	Non-Executive, Independent Director

Auditors - BSR & Associates. LLP

\*as per last annual report

## **Fund holding**

	Perc. Holding		Perc. Holding
Sundaram Asset Management	1.92	Axis Asset Management	0.85
Steadview Capital	1.20	Wasatch Advisors	0.74
India Capital Fund Ltd	1.14	ICICI Prudential Life Insurance	0.48
ABSL Asset Management	1.06	Vanguard Group	0.48
Motilal Oswal Asset Management	1.04	Norges Bank	0.45

\*as per last available data

#### **Bulk Deals**

Data	Acquired / Seller	B/S	Qty Traded	Price
22/03/2018	Ramdas Pai	Sell	1000000	1023
22/03/2018	Memg Family Office	Buy	1000000	1023
31/01/2018	Sundaram Mutual Fund Sundaram Select Midcap	Buy	1535381	950
31/01/2018	Ramdas Madhava Pai	Sell	1863008	950.05
1/31/2018	Vasanthi Ramdas Pai	Sell	3158504	950.44

\*as per last available data

#### **Insider Trades**

Reporting Data	Acquired / Seller	B/S	Qty Traded
11/29/2017	Thomas Cook (India) Limited	Sell	750000
11/29/2017	Ajit Abraham Isaac	Sell	100000
11/28/2017	Thomas Cook (India) Limited	Sell	6750000
11/28/2017	Ajit Abraham Isaac	Sell	900000

\*in last one year

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## Coverage group(s) of stocks by primary analyst(s): Business Services

Quess Corp Ltd, Security and Intelligence Services India Ltd, TeamLease Services Ltd

Recent Research				
Date	Company	Title	Price (INR)	Recos
17-May-18	SIS India	Strong growth continues Result Update	.; 1379	Buy
23-Apr-18	India Business Services	The buzz is getting louder Sector Update	;	

Distribution of Ratings / Market Cap					
Edelweiss Research Coverage Universe					
		Buy	Hold	Reduce	Total
Rating Distribution * 1stocks under rev		161	67	11	240
	> 50bn	Bet	ween 10bn a	nd 50 bn	< 10bn
Market Cap (INR)	156		62		11

Rating Interpretation		
Rating	Expected to	
Buy	appreciate more than 15% over a 12-month period	
Hold	appreciate up to 15% over a 12-month period	
Reduce	depreciate more than 5% over a 12-month period	



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