# **REDUCE** Persistent Systems

## Strong execution drives superior performance

Information Technology 
Management Meet Update 
March 11, 2024

We recently interacted with the management of PSYS, to comprehend the demand environment & business outlook. KTAs: Under the leadership of CEO Sandeep Kalra, PSYS has strengthened its sales focus, changed incentive models to identify large deals & inculcate long-range thinking, enhanced client mining efforts, expanded partnerships across major tech players, and bolstered capabilities in hyperscaler clouds, integration, salesforce and digital payments via strategic tuck-in acquisitions – this has helped PSYS deliver top-quartile growth. Despite a challenging demand scenario, PSYS is well-poised to sustain industry-leading growth momentum, on the back of strong execution, proactive deal pursuits, and ability to identify new growth avenues like PE channel (~60-65% of the pursuits are proactive), presence in high-growth areas, and limited exposure to legacy business. But the stock has seen a stellar run-up of over 26%/74%/361% in the last 3M/1Y/3Y, resp., and trades at ~45x/36x on FY25E/FY26E EPS (broadly similar to BBG consensus) which we find expensive. Current valuation requires flawless execution and sustained industry growth tailwinds, and leaves little room for error. We find the risk-reward unfavorable at the CMP and await a better entry point to turn constructive on the stock. We roll forward to Mar-26E; retain REDUCE with TP of Rs7,850 at 34x Mar-26E EPS.

#### Persistent Systems: Financial Snapshot (Consolidated)

Y/E Mar (Rs mn)	FY22	FY23	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
Revenue	57,107	83,506	98,254	115,955	137,233
EBITDA	9,730	15,191	17,011	21,522	26,262
Adj. PAT	6,904	9,211	10,913	14,211	17,716
Adj. EPS (Rs)	90.3	120.5	141.9	184.7	230.3
EBITDA margin (%)	17.0	18.2	17.3	18.6	19.1
EBITDA growth (%)	41.9	56.1	12.0	26.5	22.0
Adj. EPS growth (%)	53.2	33.4	17.7	30.2	24.7
RoE (%)	22.4	25.9	24.9	27.0	28.1
RoIC (%)	45.2	39.8	36.4	44.1	50.1
P/E (x)	91.2	68.3	58.0	44.6	35.8
EV/EBITDA (x)	63.3	40.7	36.2	28.3	22.9
P/B (x)	18.7	15.9	13.2	11.1	9.2
FCFF yield (%)	0.8	0.8	1.4	1.7	2.2

Source: Company, Emkay Research

# Demand scenario remains tough, but PSYS's proactive approach drives consistent performance

Management is seeing some green shoots in discretionary spending, but has indicated that the overall demand environment is not materially different versus the last few quarters. Strong execution, proactive deal pursuits, and success in large deals are driving healthy deal intake for the company. Deal intake TCV grew 15.3% YoY to USD1.8bn on TTM basis, on account of traction in the private equity (PE) channel and Company's proactive approach towards building the deal pipeline. PSYS works with 375 clients (over USD250k annualized revenue; ~47% of the clients boast of above-USD1mn revenue runrate), including 14 of the top-30 technology majors, 8 of the top-10 global banks, and 6 of the top-10 healthcare companies. Mgmt expects revenue growth to stay broad-based, led by Healthcare, and followed by Software, hi-tech & emerging industries, and by BFSI. Expansion into Europe (targets increasing revenue share to 12-15% from ~9% of revenue now), expanding new logos in focus verticals, cross-selling to existing accounts, deepening partnership with tech majors, and steady progress on large-deal wins would drive strong growth and consistency in operating performance over the next 3-5 years.

#### Private equity channel adds another growth avenue

PSYS has tapped the PE channel to add newer avenues of growth. As PE firms increasingly intensify investments in software companies, they are looking to maximize investment returns within a set timeframe, with revenue and profit growth being the focus. With over 30 years of software product engineering experience, PSYS brings the right expertise, operating models, and infrastructure that is required to aid PE firms in deriving value throughout the investment lifecycle. ISVs select PSYS to optimize their operations, while continuing to innovate on product development. PSYS serves 16 of the top-20 software players and has been involved in the engineering of more than 5,500 product-releases from ISVs in the past five years. The PE channel is scaling well for the company, and is on track to attain a USD100mn run-rate.

#### Aspires reaching USD2bn revenue by FY27, with margin expansion

PSYS aims to maintain its growth momentum and attain USD2bn revenue run-rate by FY27, implying ~18% CAGR in FY23-27. It expects organic rev. CAGR of ~16%, while it sees acquisitions contributing ~USD150mn. It targets to expand EBITM by 200-300bps, factoring-in SG&A leverage with scale (+100bps), higher utilization (+100bps), pyramid correction, automation, and moderation in amortization costs as a percent of revenue.



#### TARGET PRICE (Rs): 7,850

Target Price – 12M	Mar-25
Change in TP (%)	5.4
Current Reco.	REDUCE
Previous Reco.	REDUCE
Upside/(Downside) (%)	(4.7)
CMP (11-Mar-24) (Rs)	8,234.6
Stock Data	Ticker
52-week High (Rs)	8,980
52-week Low (Rs)	3,951
Shares outstanding (mn)	77.0
Market-cap (Rs bn)	634
Market-cap (USD mn)	7,663
Net-debt, FY24E (Rs mn)	-17,655
ADTV-3M (mn shares)	
ADTV-3M (Rs mn)	2,568.8
ADTV-3M (USD mn)	31.0
Free float (%)	66.0
Nifty-50	22,333
INR/USD	82.8
Shareholding, Dec-23	
Promoters (%)	31.1

# Yerice Performance (%) 1M 3M 12M Absolute (4.7) 26.2 73.7 Rel. to Nifty (7.3) 18.5 38.1

24.6/26.1

FPIs/MFs (%)



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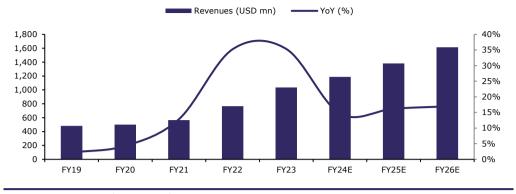
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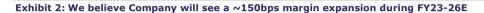
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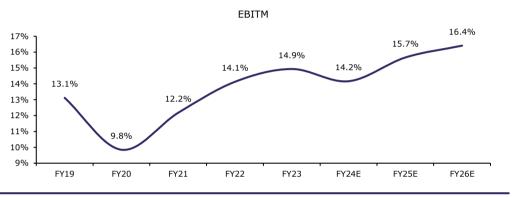
## **Story in Charts**

Exhibit 1: We expect revenue CAGR of ~16% over FY23-26E



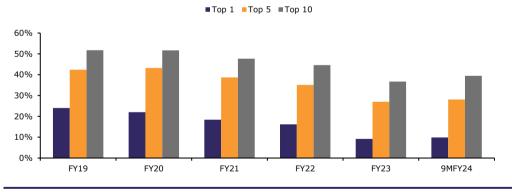
Source: Company, Emkay Research





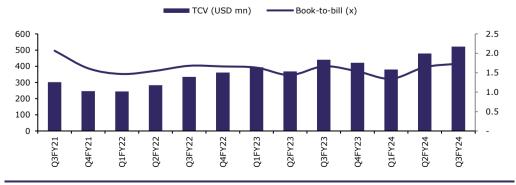
Source: Company, Emkay Research





Source: Company, Emkay Research

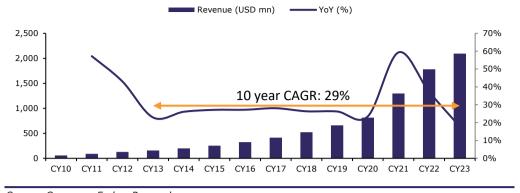
#### Exhibit 4: Deal intake TCV grew 15.3% YoY (TTM basis)



Source: Company, Emkay Research

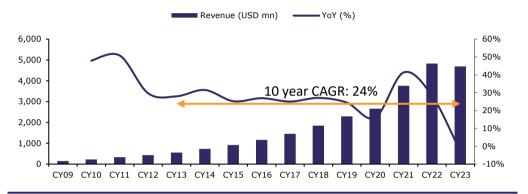
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Exhibit 5: Peer Globant's revenue CAGR stands at ~32% over the last 14 years



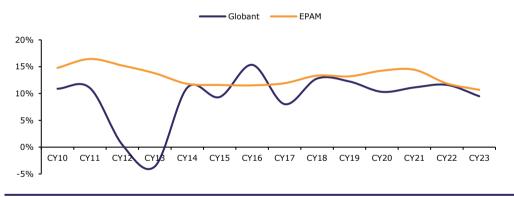
Source: Company, Emkay Research

#### Exhibit 6: Peer EPAM's revenue grew ~27% during the last 15 years



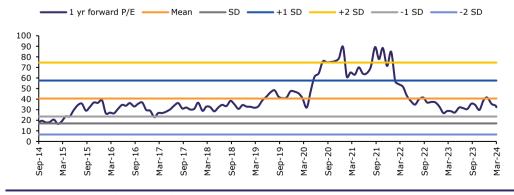
Source: Company, Emkay Research

#### Exhibit 7: EBITM trajectory of Globant and EPAM for the last 14 years



Source: Company, Emkay Research

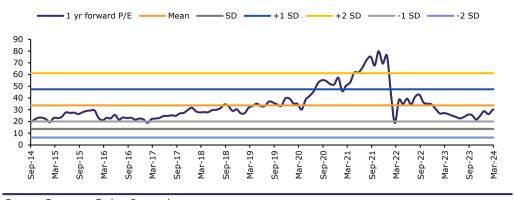
#### Exhibit 8: Globant - One-year forward P/E trading closer to its mean



Source: Company, Emkay Research

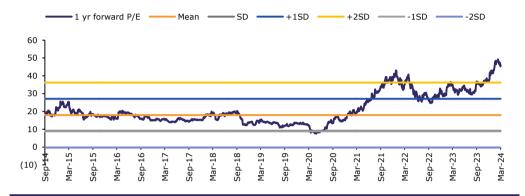
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Exhibit 9: EPAM – One-year forward P/E trading a tad below its mean



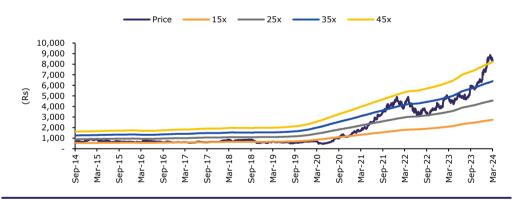
Source: Company, Emkay Research

#### Exhibit 10: PSYS – One-year forward P/E currently trading above the +2SD level



Source: Company, Emkay Research





Source: Company, Emkay Research

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### **Persistent Systems: Consolidated Financials and Valuations**

Profit & Loss					
Y/E Mar (Rs mn)	FY22	FY23	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
Revenue	57,107	83,506	98,254	115,955	137,233
Revenue growth (%)	36.4	46.2	17.7	18.0	18.4
EBITDA	9,730	15,191	17,011	21,522	26,262
EBITDA growth (%)	41.9	56.1	12.0	26.5	22.0
Depreciation & Amortization	1,660	2,719	3,094	3,361	3,744
EBIT	8,070	12,472	13,917	18,161	22,518
EBIT growth (%)	58.2	54.6	11.6	30.5	24.0
Other operating income	0	0	0	0	0
Other income	1,291	706	1,300	1,366	1,686
Financial expense	118	473	493	451	423
РВТ	9,243	12,705	14,724	19,075	23,780
Extraordinary items	0	(297)	0	0	0
Taxes	2,339	3,198	3,811	4,864	6,064
Minority interest	0	0	0	0	0
Income from JV/Associates	0	0	0	0	0
Reported PAT	6,904	9,211	10,913	14,211	17,716
PAT growth (%)	53.2	33.4	18.5	30.2	24.7
Adjusted PAT	6,904	9,211	10,913	14,211	17,716
Diluted EPS (Rs)	90.3	120.5	141.9	184.7	230.3
Diluted EPS growth (%)	53.2	33.4	17.7	30.2	24.7
DPS (Rs)	31.0	50.0	51.0	65.0	77.0
Dividend payout (%)	34.3	41.5	35.9	35.2	33.4
EBITDA margin (%)	17.0	18.2	17.3	18.6	19.1
EBIT margin (%)	14.1	14.9	14.2	15.7	16.4
Effective tax rate (%)	25.3	25.2	25.9	25.5	25.5
NOPLAT (pre-IndAS)	6,028	9,333	10,315	13,530	16,776
Shares outstanding (mn)	76.4	76.4	76.9	76.9	76.9

Balance Sheet					
Y/E Mar (Rs mn)	FY22	FY23	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
Share capital	764	764	769	769	769
Reserves & Surplus	32,918	38,887	47,266	56,477	68,270
Net worth	33,682	39,651	48,035	57,246	69,039
Minority interests	0	0	0	0	0
Deferred tax liability (net)	(1,123)	(1,129)	(1,129)	(1,129)	(1,129)
Total debt	4,325	4,285	3,285	2,285	1,585
Total liabilities & equity	36,885	42,807	50,191	58,402	69,495
Net tangible fixed assets	2,918	4,860	4,444	4,396	4,361
Net intangible assets	8,270	9,171	4,901	3,943	2,965
Net ROU assets	1,358	2,198	2,689	2,823	2,983
Capital WIP	0	0	0	0	0
Goodwill	2,790	7,184	10,506	10,506	10,506
Investments [JV/Associates]	0	0	0	0	0
Cash & equivalents	17,369	15,428	20,940	26,271	34,609
Current assets (ex-cash)	19,242	26,059	28,474	32,596	37,551
Current Liab. & Prov.	16,133	22,256	22,062	22,433	23,779
NWC (ex-cash)	3,109	3,803	6,411	10,163	13,772
Total assets	36,885	42,807	50,191	58,402	69,495
Net debt	(13,044)	(11,143)	(17,655)	(23,986)	(33,024)
Capital employed	36,885	42,807	50,191	58,402	69,495
Invested capital	19,516	27,378	29,251	32,131	34,887
BVPS (Rs)	440.7	518.8	624.4	744.2	897.5
Net Debt/Equity (x)	(0.4)	(0.3)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.5)
Net Debt/EBITDA (x)	(1.3)	(0.7)	(1.0)	(1.1)	(1.3)
Interest coverage (x)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
RoCE (%)	29.3	33.1	32.7	36.0	37.8

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Cash flows					
Y/E Mar (Rs mn)	FY22	FY23	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
PBT	9,243	12,705	14,724	19,075	23,780
Others (non-cash items)	1,981	4,635	2,395	2,181	2,222
Taxes paid	(2,367)	(3,405)	(3,811)	(4,864)	(6,064)
Change in NWC	(407)	(4,377)	(802)	(1,751)	(2,109)
Operating cash flow	8,450	9,558	12,506	14,641	17,829
Capital expenditure	(3,808)	(4,321)	(4,164)	(4,490)	(4,390)
Acquisition of business	(6,154)	(4,311)	0	0	0
Interest & dividend income	719	539	699	1,180	1,522
Investing cash flow	(9,773)	(4,213)	(9,226)	(7,310)	3,132
Equity raised/(repaid)	0	0	1,395	0	0
Debt raised/(repaid)	4,161	(514)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(700)
Payment of lease liabilities	(351)	(545)	0	0	0
Interest paid	0	0	0	0	0
Dividend paid (incl tax)	(1,987)	(2,981)	(3,923)	(5,000)	(5,923)
Others	(351)	(545)	0	0	0
Financing cash flow	1,823	(4,039)	(3,529)	(6,000)	(6,623)
Net chg in Cash	499	1,305	(249)	1,331	14,338
OCF	8,450	9,558	12,506	14,641	17,829
Adj. OCF (w/o NWC chg.)	8,857	13,935	13,308	16,392	19,938
FCFF	4,642	5,237	8,341	10,151	13,439
FCFE	5,242	5,302	8,547	10,880	14,538
OCF/EBITDA (%)	86.8	62.9	73.5	68.0	67.9
FCFE/PAT (%)	75.9	57.6	78.3	76.6	82.1
FCFF/NOPLAT (%)	77.0	56.1	80.9	75.0	80.1

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Source: Company, Emkay Research

Valuations and key R	atios				
Y/E Mar	FY22	FY23	FY24E	FY25E	FY26E
P/E (x)	91.2	68.3	58.0	44.6	35.8
P/CE(x)	73.5	51.5	45.2	36.0	29.5
P/B (x)	18.7	15.9	13.2	11.1	9.2
EV/Sales (x)	10.8	7.4	6.3	5.3	4.4
EV/EBITDA (x)	63.3	40.7	36.2	28.3	22.9
EV/EBIT(x)	76.4	49.6	44.2	33.6	26.7
EV/IC (x)	31.6	22.6	21.1	19.0	17.2
FCFF yield (%)	0.8	0.8	1.4	1.7	2.2
FCFE yield (%)	0.8	0.8	1.3	1.7	2.3
Dividend yield (%)	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.9
DuPont-RoE split					
Net profit margin (%)	12.1	11.4	11.1	12.3	12.9
Total asset turnover (x)	1.8	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
Assets/Equity (x)	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0
RoE (%)	22.4	25.9	24.9	27.0	28.1
DuPont-RoIC					
NOPLAT margin (%)	10.6	11.2	10.5	11.7	12.2
IC turnover (x)	5.3	4.3	3.6	3.5	3.8
RoIC (%)	45.2	39.8	36.4	44.1	50.1
Operating metrics					
Core NWC days	19.9	16.6	23.8	32.0	36.6
Total NWC days	19.9	16.6	23.8	32.0	36.6
Fixed asset turnover	2.5	2.7	3.0	3.4	3.8
Opex-to-revenue (%)	83.0	81.8	82.7	81.4	80.9

Source: Company, Emkay Research

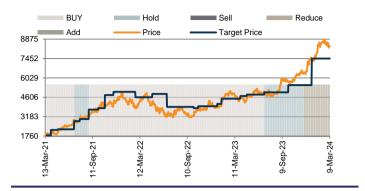
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#### **RECOMMENDATION HISTORY - DETAILS**

Date	Closing Price (INR)	TP (INR)	Rating	Analyst
01-Mar-24	8,599	7,450	Reduce	Dipeshkumar Mehta
23-Jan-24	8,254	7,450	Reduce	Dipeshkumar Mehta
31-Dec-23	7,389	7,450	Reduce	Dipeshkumar Mehta
30-Nov-23	6,400	5,500	Reduce	Dipeshkumar Mehta
20-Oct-23	5,907	5,500	Hold	Dipeshkumar Mehta
02-Oct-23	5,797	5,500	Hold	Dipeshkumar Mehta
21-Jul-23	4,750	4,970	Hold	Dipeshkumar Mehta
02-Jul-23	5,011	4,970	Hold	Dipeshkumar Mehta
26-Apr-23	4,472	4,800	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
01-Apr-23	4,610	4,700	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
19-Jan-23	4,258	4,500	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
02-Jan-23	4,028	4,125	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
21-Oct-22	3,666	3,950	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
04-Oct-22	3,299	3,800	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
22-Jul-22	3,633	3,900	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
23-Jun-22	3,368	3,900	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
28-Apr-22	4,309	4,850	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
01-Apr-22	4,723	4,600	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
15-Mar-22	4,327	4,600	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
22-Feb-22	3,927	4,600	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
11-Feb-22	4,196	5,000	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
22-Jan-22	4,302	5,000	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
01-Jan-22	4,904	5,000	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
30-Nov-21	4,139	5,000	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
28-Oct-21	3,989	4,770	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
02-Oct-21	3,643	3,800	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
30-Sep-21	3,716	3,700	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
13-Sep-21	3,588	3,700	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
27-Aug-21	3,254	3,700	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
24-Jul-21	3,039	3,000	Hold	Dipeshkumar Mehta
02-Jul-21	2,930	2,850	Hold	Dipeshkumar Mehta
30-Apr-21	2,038	2,250	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
05-Apr-21	1,959	2,200	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
04-Apr-21	1,953	2,200	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta
18-Mar-21	1,849	1,800	Buy	Dipeshkumar Mehta

Source: Company, Emkay Research

#### **RECOMMENDATION HISTORY - TREND**



Source: Company, Bloomberg, Emkay Research

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