News Release Archive

Q2 2021 S&P 500 Buybacks Approach Record Highs

S&P 500 quarterly buybacks approach $200 billion and are now 11% off their all-time high of $223 billion set in Q4 2018

NEW YORK, Sept. 23, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- S&P Dow Jones Indices ("S&P DJI") announced today preliminary S&P 500® stock buyback, or share repurchases, data for Q2 2021.

Historical data on S&P 500 buybacks are available at www.spdji.com/indices/equity/sp-500.

Key Takeaways:

- **Q2 2021 share repurchases were $198.8 billion,** increasing 11.6% from Q1 2021's $178.1 billion expenditure, and up 124.3% from Q2 2020's recent low of $88.7 billion.
- **294 companies reported buybacks of at least $5 million for the quarter**, down from 335 in Q1 2021, and up from 170 in Q2 2020; 360 issues did some buybacks for the quarter, compared to 289 in Q2 2020.
- **Buybacks remained top heavy with the top 20 issues accounting for 55.7% of Q2 2021 buybacks,** up from Q1 2021's 53.3%, down from the dominating 87.2% in Q2 2020, and up from the pre-COVID historical average of 44.5%.
- **For the 12-month June 2021 period, buybacks were $609.4 billion, a 22.1% increase from $499.2 billion in the 12-month March 2021 period**, and down 5.6% from $644.9 billion in the 12-month June 2020 period.
- **Buybacks are expected to continue at a higher level for 2021** as companies doing low-level buybacks (mostly for option coverage) increase their programs for share count reduction purchases. The impact of EPS is expected to grow slowly.
- **5.4% of companies reduced share counts used for EPS by at least 4% year-over-year,** down from Q1 2021's 5.8%, and down significantly from Q2 2020's 17.8% period (the recent high was in Q1 2016, at 28.2%).
- **S&P 500 Q2 2021 dividends decreased a tick by 0.4% to $123.4 billion** from Q1 2021's $123.9 billion and were 3.6% greater than the $119.0 billion in Q2 2020. For the 12-month June 2021 period, dividends were $484.5 billion, down 2.2% on an aggregate basis from prior period's $495.5 billion.
- **Total shareholder return of buybacks and dividends in Q2 2021 was $322.2 billion,** up 6.7% from Q1 2021's $302.0 billion and up 55.1% from Q2 2020's $207.7 billion (Q4 2018 holds the record, at $342.8 billion).
- **Total shareholder return for the 12-months June** 2021 increased to $1.09 trillion from March's $0.98 trillion and decreased from the 12-month June 2020's $1.14 trillion.

"Companies remain cautious with their buyback expenditures but have generally returned to the market to negate options and are starting to reduce share count in order to boost EPS, said **Howard Silverblatt, Senior Index Analyst at S&P Dow Jones Indices.** "For the quarter, 238 companies reduced their share counts from Q1 2021, up from the prior quarters 208 (90 in Q3 2020), but still far from the 322 in pre-COVID Q1 2020, as the year-over-year significant EPS boost remains historically few (3, compared to 96 in Q1 2020). Given strong earnings and cash-flow, high expenditures are expected to continue, with upward EPS impact increasing."

Remainder of 2021 Outlook:
Silverblatt added, "Companies appear willing to increase their expenditure, which is needed for the higher priced shares. Any significant or serious buyback tax consideration in Washington could bring accelerated buying near year-end as programs are being discussed this month, and would need to (legislatively) take shape in October. At this point a slight market downturn or correction could also see additional buying, as companies with strong (and expected strong) cash-flow stock up on shares. Given the current trend, 2021 should easily surpass 2019's pre-COVID mark of $729 billion (2020 fell to $520 billion) but be slightly shy (under 5%) of the 2018 record $806 billion – absent either a buying spree (which could set a record quarter or year) or a COVID inspired shutdown".

Q2 2021 GICS® Sector Analysis:

Information Technology continued to lead and dominate in buybacks. In Q2 2021, IT's share was flat at 31.6% of all S&P 500 buybacks compared to Q1 2021, and was down from Q2 2020's 41.6%, as expenditures increased (11.4%) to $62.8 billion from the prior quarter's $56.4 billion and was 70.1% higher than the Q2 2020 expenditure of $36.9 billion. For the 12-month June 2021 period, the sector spent $224.9 billion, representing 36.9% of all S&P buybacks, up from the prior 12-month period of $197.7 billion, which represented 30.7% of all buybacks.

Financial buybacks increased 18.1%, spending $41.8 billion in Q2 2021 representing 21.0% of all buybacks, up from the Q1 2021 $35.4 billion, which accounted for 19.9% of the buybacks. Financial sector buybacks were 401% higher than the Q2 2020 $8.3 billion expenditure, when the Fed limited buybacks. For the 12-month period, the group spent $102.9 billion, down from the prior period of $153.0 billion.

Communication Services increased buyback expenditures 25.2% to $27.3 billion, from the prior quarter's $21.8 billion and a tick below Q2 2020's $27.6 billion. As a percentage of all buybacks, the sector increased to 13.7% of all buybacks from the prior 12.2%. The 12-month period was $82.9 billion, up from the prior 12-month expenditure of $72.3 billion, representing 13.6% of all buybacks, up from the prior period's 11.2%.

Issues:

The five issues with the highest total buybacks for Q1 2021 are:

- **Apple (AAPL)** continued to be the poster child for buybacks as it not only spent the most of any issue, but its Q2 2021 expenditure ranked second highest in S&P history. For the quarter, the company spent $25.6 billion, up 35.8% from Q1 2021's $18.8 billion and second only to its record $27.6 billion in Q4 2020. Apple holds 14 of the top 15 record quarters (QUALCOM holds #6, posted in Q3 2018, with $21.2 billion). For the 12-month period, Apple spent $89.7 billion on buybacks, up from the prior period's $76.0 billion. Over the five-year period, they have spent $334.1 billion and $467.2 billion over the ten-year period.
- **Alphabet (GOOG/L)** was next: $12.8 billion for Q2 2021, up from $11.4 billion in Q1 2021; the 12-month June 2021 expenditure was $40.0 billion versus $27.1 billion for the 12-months ending June 2020.
- **Facebook (FB)**: $8.4 billion for Q2 2021, up from $5.0 billion in Q1 2021; for the 12-months they spent $19.2 billion versus $7.7 billion.
- **Oracle (ORCL)**: $8.0 billion for Q2 2021, up from $4.1 billion in Q1 2021; for the 12-months they spent $21.6 billion versus $19.9 billion.
- **Microsoft (MSFT):** $7.2 billion for Q2 2021, up from $6.9 billion in Q1 2021; for the 12-month period it was $27.4 billion versus $23.0 billion.

For more information about S&P Dow Jones Indices, please visit www.spdji.com.

S&P Dow Jones Indices
S&P 500, $ U.S. BILLIONS **(preliminary in bold)**

PERIOD	MARKET VALUE $ BILLIONS	OPERATING EARNINGS $ BILLIONS	AS REPORTED EARNINGS $ BILLIONS	DIVIDENDS $ BILLIONS	BUYBACKS $ BILLIONS	DIVIDEND YIELD	BUYBACK YIELD	DIVIDEND & BUYBACK YIELD
12 Mo Jun,21	$36,324.74	**$1,476.85**	**$1,336.15**	$484.45	**$609.35**	1.33%	**1.68%**	**3.01%**
12 Mo Jun,20	$25,636.61	**$1,038.11**	$822.32	$495.49	$644.85	1.93%	2.52%	4.45%
2020	$31,658.70	$1,019.04	$784.12	$480.40	$519.69	1.52%	1.64%	3.16%
2019	$26,759.69	$1,304.76	$1,158.22	$485.48	$728.74	1.81%	2.72%	4.54%
2018	$21,026.90	$1,281.66	$1,119.43	$456.31	$806.41	2.17%	3.84%	6.01%

06/30/2021 Prelim.	$36,325	**$439.79**	**$409.02**	$123.38	**$198.84**	1.33%	**1.68%**	**3.01%**
3/31/2021	$33,619	$401.19	$388.84	$123.91	$178.13	1.43%	1.48%	2.91%
12/31/2020	$31,659	$321.81	$265.00	$121.62	$130.59	1.53%	1.64%	3.17%
9/30/2020	$27,868	$314.06	$273.29	$115.54	$101.79	1.75%	2.05%	3.80%
6/30/2020	$25,637	$221.53	$147.44	$119.04	$88.66	1.93%	2.52%	4.45%
3/31/2020	$21,424	$161.64	$98.48	$126.98	$198.72	2.31%	3.37%	5.68%
12/31/2019	$26,760	$324.52	$294.29	$126.35	$181.58	1.81%	2.72%	4.54%
9/30/2019	$24,707	$330.42	$282.12	$123.12	$175.89	1.94%	3.12%	5.06%
6/28/2019	$24,423	$333.26	$290.00	$118.68	$165.46	1.93%	3.27%	5.20%
3/29/2019	$23,619	$316.56	$291.82	$117.33	$205.81	1.97%	3.49%	5.45%
12/31/2018	$21,027	$293.82	$242.91	$119.81	$222.98	2.17%	3.84%	6.01%
9/30/2018	$24,579	$349.04	$306.70	$115.72	$203.76	1.81%	2.93%	4.75%
6/30/2018	$23,036	$327.53	$288.55	$111.60	$190.62	1.89%	2.80%	4.69%
3/29/2018	$22,496	$311.26	$281.28	$109.18	$189.05	1.90%	2.56%	4.46%
12/29/2017	$22,821	$288.93	$230.12	$109.46	$136.97	1.84%	2.28%	4.12%
9/29/2017	$21,579	$268.35	$243.68	$105.45	$129.17	1.92%	2.40%	4.32%
6/30/2017	$20,762	$261.39	$231.40	$104.01	$120.11	1.96%	2.41%	4.37%
3/31/2017	$20,276	$247.32	$235.65	$100.86	$133.15	1.98%	2.51%	4.49%

S&P Dow Jones Indices
S&P 500 SECTOR BUYBACKS

SECTOR $ MILLIONS	**Q2,'21**	**Q1,'21**	**Q2,'20**	**12MoJun,'21**	**12MoJun,'20**	**5-YEARS**	**10-YEARS**	**Q4,'18 (high)**	**Q2,'20 (recent low)**
Consumer Discretionary	$19,193	$15,918	$1,317	$47,222	$52,395	$345,920	$736,375	$25,652	$1,317
Consumer Staples	$8,912	$9,631	$1,514	$31,494	$23,730	$176,415	$401,610	$9,588	$1,514
Energy	$1,615	$488	$60	$2,502	$13,826	$70,661	$231,764	$8,698	$60
Financials	$41,777	$35,389	$8,346	$102,868	$153,005	$663,043	$1,019,885	$45,641	$8,346
Healthcare	$17,754	$20,394	$10,706	$60,717	$67,562	$391,754	$729,644	$31,336	$10,706
Industrials	$14,894	$13,545	$1,816	$39,116	$46,951	$282,299	$584,563	$23,026	$1,816
Information Technology	$62,758	$56,360	$36,900	$224,930	$197,712	$997,899	$1,606,547	$61,298	$36,900
Materials	$4,624	$4,065	$184	$12,067	$13,252	$57,483	$125,292	$5,857	$184
Real Estate	$42	$427	$204	$1,606	$2,791	$13,732	$13,732	$1,480	$204
Communication Services	$27,268	$21,781	$27,548	$82,946	$72,264	$189,725	$226,287	$9,556	$27,548
Utilities	$7	$135	$67	$3,887	$1,365	$9,846	$17,893	$850	$67
TOTAL	**$198,843**	**$178,133**	**$88,661**	**$609,355**	**$644,852**	**$3,198,777**	**$5,693,591**	**$222,980**	**$88,661**

SECTOR BUYBACK MAKEUP %	**Q2,'21**	**Q1,'21**	**Q2,'20**	**12MoJun,'21**	**12MoJun,'20**	**5-YEARS**	**10-YEARS**	**Q4,'18**	**Q2,'20**
Consumer Discretionary	9.65%	8.94%	1.49%	7.75%	8.13%	10.81%	12.93%	11.50%	1.49%
Consumer Staples	4.48%	5.41%	1.71%	5.17%	3.68%	5.52%	7.05%	4.30%	1.71%
Energy	0.81%	0.27%	0.07%	0.41%	2.14%	2.21%	4.07%	3.90%	0.07%
Financials	21.01%	19.87%	9.41%	16.88%	23.73%	20.73%	17.91%	20.47%	9.41%
Healthcare	8.93%	11.45%	12.07%	9.96%	10.48%	12.25%	12.82%	14.05%	12.07%
Industrials	7.49%	7.60%	2.05%	6.42%	7.28%	8.83%	10.27%	10.33%	2.05%
Information Technology	31.56%	31.64%	41.62%	36.91%	30.66%	31.20%	28.22%	27.49%	41.62%
Materials	2.33%	2.28%	0.21%	1.98%	2.06%	1.80%	2.20%	2.63%	0.21%
Real Estate	0.02%	0.24%	0.23%	0.26%	0.43%	0.43%	0.24%	0.66%	0.23%
Communication Services	13.71%	12.23%	31.07%	13.61%	11.21%	5.93%	3.97%	4.29%	31.07%
Utilities	0.00%	0.08%	0.08%	0.64%	0.21%	0.31%	0.31%	0.38%	0.08%
TOTAL	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

S&P Dow Jones Indices
S&P 500 20 LARGEST Q2 2021 BUYBACKS, $ MILLIONS

Company	**Ticker**	**Sector**	**Q2 2021 Buybacks $ Million**	**Q1 2021 Buybacks $ Million**	**Q2 20220 Buybacks $ Million**	**12-Months Jun,'21 $ Million**	**12-Months Jun,'20 $ Million**	**5-Year Buybacks $ Million**	**10-Year Buybacks $ Million**	**Indicated Dividend $ Million**
Apple	AAPL	Information Technology	$25,595	$18,847	$17,559	$89,665	$76,040	$334,058	$467,234	$15,622
Alphabet	GOOGL	Communication Services	$12,796	$11,395	$6,852	$39,992	$27,142	$87,657	$93,218	$0
Facebook	FB	Communication Services	$8,434	$5,016	$2,122	$19,224	$7,724	$51,140	$54,965	$0
Oracle	ORCL	Information Technology	$8,045	$4,073	$5,346	$21,600	$19,905	$93,845	$139,165	$5,859
Microsoft	MSFT	Information Technology	$7,177	$6,930	$5,791	$27,385	$22,968	$92,405	$140,522	$16,871
JPMorgan Chase	JPM	Financials	$6,194	$4,806	$0	$11,000	$20,217	$81,457	$108,099	$10,898
Berkshire Hathaway	BRK.B	Financials	$5,980	$6,580	$4,998	$30,527	$9,456	$43,462	$43,529	$0
Bank of America	BAC	Financials	$4,209	$3,470	$286	$8,056	$22,022	$78,485	$88,137	$8,180
Charter Communications	CHTR	Communication Services	$3,516	$3,652	$1,155	$14,878	$8,579	$42,835	$43,543	$0
Union Pacific	UNP	Industrials	$3,138	$1,347	$0	$5,234	$4,631	$28,085	$40,529	$2,843
Lowe's Companies	LOW	Consumer Discretionary	$3,136	$3,038	$0	$10,179	$2,509	$22,828	$41,719	$2,262
Home Depot	HD	Consumer Discretionary	$3,117	$3,788	$0	$6,905	$5,137	$37,063	$67,253	$7,018
Morgan Stanley)	MS	Financials	$3,018	$2,582	$28	$5,680	$4,855	$25,606	$32,404	$6,512
Procter & Gamble	PG	Consumer Staples	$3,000	$3,001	$0	$11,009	$7,405	$34,124	$56,896	$8,520
Citigroup	C	Financials	$2,912	$1,793	$1	$4,709	$8,310	$52,829	$64,891	$4,217
Walmart	WMT	Consumer Staples	$2,391	$2,809	$0	$7,102	$2,733	$32,694	$56,646	$12,581
HCA Healthcare	HCA	Health Care	$2,287	$1,527	$0	$3,814	$952	$9,760	$17,768	$829
Visa	V	Information Technology	$2,202	$1,719	$1,072	$7,395	$8,862	$38,786	$58,130	$2,166
Chubb	CB	Financials	$1,921	$519	$10	$2,630	$1,122	$6,338	$8,950	$1,439
Mastercard	MA	Information Technology	$1,715	$1,477	$10	$6,291	$4,321	$24,986	$38,059	$1,944
Top 20			**$110,783**	**$88,369**	**$45,230**	**$333,275**	**$264,890**	**$1,218,443**	**$1,661,657**	**$107,759**
S&P 500			**$198,843**	**$178,133**	**$88,661**	**$609,355**	**$644,852**	**$3,198,777**	**$5,693,591**	**$554,230**
Top 20 % of S&P 500			**55.71%**	**49.61%**	**51.01%**	**54.69%**	**41.08%**	**38.09%**	**29.18%**	**19.44%**

Gross values are not adjusted for float

S&P Dow Jones Indices
S&P 500 Q2 2021 Buyback Report

SECTOR	DIVIDEND YIELD	BUYBACK YIELD	COMBINED YIELD
Consumer Discretionary	**0.63%**	**1.03%**	**1.66%**
Consumer Staples	**3.29%**	**1.44%**	**4.73%**
Energy	**4.79%**	**0.27%**	**5.06%**
Financials	**2.01%**	**2.45%**	**4.46%**
HealthCare	**1.52%**	**1.18%**	**2.69%**
Industrials	**1.51%**	**1.27%**	**2.77%**
Information Technology	**0.87%**	**2.10%**	**2.97%**
Materials	**1.93%**	**1.26%**	**3.19%**
Real Estate	**2.42%**	**0.14%**	**2.56%**
Communications Services	**0.95%**	**2.34%**	**3.28%**
Utilities	**2.99%**	**0.40%**	**3.39%**
S&P 500	**1.48%**	**1.63%**	**3.11%**

Uses full values (unadjusted for float)
Dividends based on indicated; buybacks based on the last 12-months ending Q2,'21

Share Count Changes

(Y/Y diluted shares used for EPS)	>=4%	<=-4%
Q2 2021	**0**	**5.4%**
Q1 2021	**10.40%**	**5.80%**
Q4 2020	**9.02%**	**6.01%**
Q3 2020	**8.62%**	**9.62%**
Q2 2020	**8.60%**	**17.80%**
Q1 2020	**8.00%**	**19.60%**
Q4 2019	**7.63%**	**20.68%**
Q3 2019	**8.62%**	**22.85%**
Q2 2019	**7.98%**	**24.15%**
Q1 2019	**8.03%**	**24.90%**
Q4 2018	**8.45%**	**18.71%**
Q3 2018	**6.43%**	**17.67%**
Q2 2018	**6.20%**	**15.60%**

ABOUT S&P DOW JONES INDICES

S&P Dow Jones Indices is the largest global resource for essential index-based concepts, data and research, and home to iconic financial market indicators, such as the S&P 500® and the Dow Jones Industrial Average®. More assets are invested in products based on our indices than products based on indices from any other provider in the world. Since Charles Dow invented the first index in 1884, S&P DJI has been innovating and developing indices across the spectrum of asset classes helping to define the way investors measure and trade the markets.

S&P Dow Jones Indices is a division of S&P Global (NYSE: SPGI), which provides essential intelligence for individuals, companies, and governments to make decisions with confidence. For more information, visit: www.spdji.com.

SOURCE S&P Dow Jones Indices

For further information: S&P DJI, Ray McConville, Americas Communications, (+1) 212 438 1678, raymond.mcconville@spglobal.com; INDEX INVESTMENT STRATEGY: Howard Silverblatt, Senior Index Analyst, (+1) 973 769 2306, howard.silverblatt@spglobal.com

---

https://press.spglobal.com/2021-09-23-Q2-2021-S-P-500-Buybacks-Approach-Record-Highs