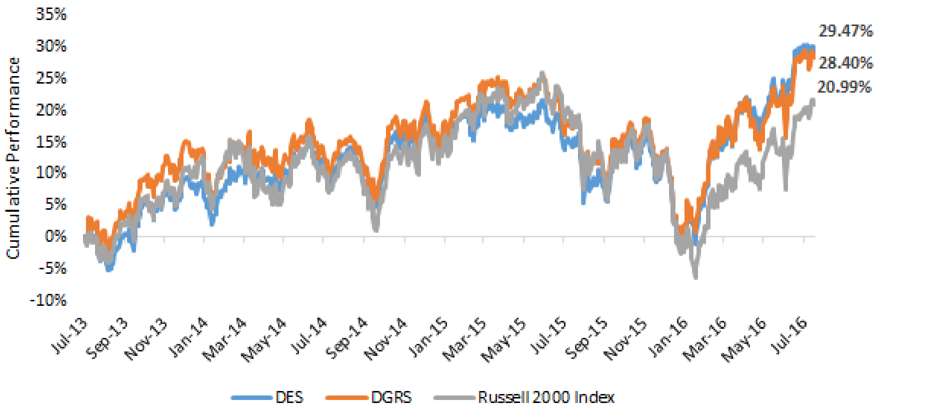
SMALL CAP DIVIDENDS AND QUALITY ADDING VALUE

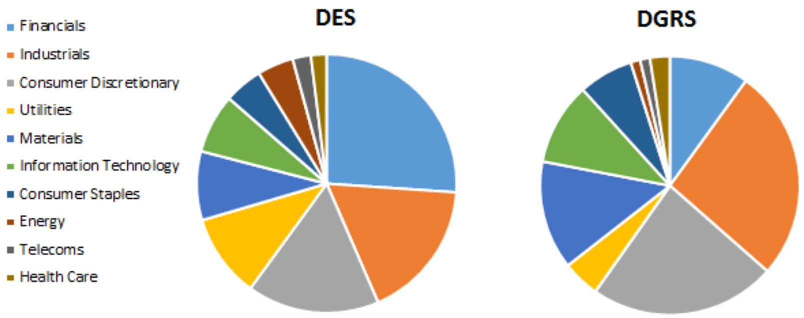
Jeremy Schwartz – Global Chief Investment Officer
08/26/2016

There are numerous dividend-focused exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and active managers. But how many small-cap dividend strategies for the U.S. market can you find? Very few, but WisdomTree has two unique strategies, both of which are creating value-added approaches over traditional small-cap benchmarks. When WisdomTree launched its first funds 10 years ago, we recognized the value of focusing on the size factor in building portfolios and were the first ETF issuer to build a robust family of global small-cap ETFs—including the first European, Japanese, emerging markets and developed international small-cap ETFs. For the U.S. markets, WisdomTree's two dividend-oriented small-cap strategies are: • **WisdomTree SmallCap Dividend Fund (DES)**: A broad cross-section of the dividend-paying small-cap market that recently passed 10 years of real-time results • **WisdomTree U.S. SmallCap Quality Dividend Growth Fund (DGRS)**: Focuses on the higher-quality growth segment of DES; this Fund recently passed its three-year anniversary in July Interestingly, despite their different focal points and segments of the dividend-paying market to which they provide exposure, both DES and DGRS outperformed the Russell 2000 Index by over 200 basis points (bps) per year over the three years since DGRS launched. Let's review the case for dividend-paying small



Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg, 7/25/13–8/10/16. Past performance is not indicative of future results. Index performance does not represent actual fund or portfolio performance. A fund or portfolio may differ significantly from the securities included in the index. Index performance assumes reinvestment of dividends but does not reflect any management fees, transaction costs or other expenses that would be incurred by a portfolio or fund, or brokerage commissions on transactions in fund shares. Such fees, expenses and commissions could reduce returns. Double-digit returns were achieved primarily during favorable market conditions. Investors should not expect that such favorable returns can be consistently achieved. A fund's performance, especially for very short time periods, should not be the sole factor in making your investment decision.

caps. Click here for standardized performance of DES. Click here for standardized performance of DGRS. **Dividends in Small Caps?** Many have ignored mid- and small-cap dividend opportunities. One explanation for this is that when one looks at market cap-weighted indexes and goes down in size from large to mid- to small caps, one tends to see dividend yields decrease from 2.1% to 1.7% to 1.5%, based on the S&P family of indexes on August 12.[1] The story completely reverses, though, when looking at a dividend-weighted index family. Shifting from a cap-weighted universe to a dividend universe, one increases the dividend yield moving from large caps to mid-caps to small caps. The dividend yields on a dividend-weighted Index from WisdomTree increased from 3.0% to 3.2% to 3.5% for the WisdomTree LargeCap Dividend Index, the WisdomTree MidCap Dividend Index and the WisdomTree SmallCap Dividend Index.[2] One explanation for this is that in a cap-weighted universe that includes non-dividend payers, there are more companies in "growth" stages that are using their capital to grow—or even just to break a profit, in many cases, for an index like the Russell 2000. We have recently discussed how the typical small-cap company in the Russell 2000 has been a serial share issuer, as 20% of the Russell 2000 tends to be allocated to unprofitable stocks that need to raise capital to fund their growth. This has led to as much as a 2% drag in terms of how much earnings have to grow just for the earnings per share growth over recent years. **Small-Cap Share Issuers versus Share Buybacks** One of the dynamics of selecting stocks with high return on equity (ROE) and return on assets (ROA) like DGRS does is that companies included tend to have greater profit levels that can be used for returning cash to shareholders via dividends and buybacks. While the Index that DGRS is designed to track has a dividend yield of 2.3%, still higher than the Russell 2000 and even the S&P 500 Index, it has a net buyback yield of +1.87%. This means companies in this Index are reducing shares outstanding, which is one factor that can lead to more positive *per share* dividend growth in the future. **Quality Approach: Less Utilities, REITs Compared to Small-Cap Dividend Payers** It is interesting that in 2016, both small-cap dividend payers and the quality small-cap dividend payers are outperforming the Russell 2000 by over 600 basis points. But they have done so with quite different sector and industry exposures. • For DES, the top sector exposure is Financials at 26%, with a large allocation to real estate investment trusts (REITs) (16% of DES). • DGRS had just 10% in Financials and less than 2% in REITs. • Utilities is another sector that was more prevalent in DES than DGRS. • DGRS tilts weight to Industrials, Consumer Discretionary and Technology



companies.

Sources: WisdomTree, Bloomberg as of 8/12/16. Subject to change.

Diversify Your Dividends with Small Caps One of the more popular active dividend-growth strategies in the market was recently closed to new investors. One benefit to utilizing an index-based approach is that the broad cross-section of companies included allows for great investment capacity. As investors re-examine how they obtain their dividend exposure in the growth side of the dividend market, we'd encourage them to consider small-cap dividend payers as an underowned segment that can help to diversify and provide differentiated exposure from other popular dividend strategies.

[1]Source: Bloomberg. [2]Sources: WisdomTree, FactSet as of 8/12/2016.

Important Risks Related to this Article

Dividends are not guaranteed, and a company currently paying dividends may cease paying dividends at any time.

There are risks associated with investing, including possible loss of principal. Funds focusing their investments on certain sectors and/or smaller companies increase their vulnerability to any single economic or regulatory development. This may result in greater share price volatility. Please read the Fund’s prospectus for specific details regarding the Fund’s risk profile.

For standardized performance and the most recent month-end performance click here NOTE, this material is intended for electronic use only. Individuals who intend to print and physically deliver to an investor must print the monthly performance report to accompany this blog.

For more investing insights, check out our Economic & Market Outlook

View the online version of this article here.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

U.S. investors only: Click here to obtain a WisdomTree ETF prospectus which contains investment objectives, risks, charges, expenses, and other information; read and consider carefully before investing.

There are risks involved with investing, including possible loss of principal. Foreign investing involves currency, political and economic risk. Funds focusing on a single country, sector and/or funds that emphasize investments in smaller companies may experience greater price volatility. Investments in emerging markets, currency, fixed income and alternative investments include additional risks. Please see prospectus for discussion of risks.

Past performance is not indicative of future results. This material contains the opinions of the author, which are subject to change, and should not to be considered or interpreted as a recommendation to participate in any particular trading strategy, or deemed to be an offer or sale of any investment product and it should not be relied on as such. There is no guarantee that any strategies discussed will work under all market conditions. This material represents an assessment of the market environment at a specific time and is not intended to be a forecast of future events or a guarantee of future results. This material should not be relied upon as research or investment advice regarding any security in particular. The user of this information assumes the entire risk of any use made of the information provided herein. Neither WisdomTree nor its affiliates, nor Foreside Fund Services, LLC, or its affiliates provide tax or legal advice. Investors seeking tax or legal advice should consult their tax or legal advisor. Unless expressly stated otherwise the opinions, interpretations or findings expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of WisdomTree or any of its affiliates.

The MSCI information may only be used for your internal use, may not be reproduced or re-disseminated in any form and may not be used as a basis for or component of any financial instruments or products or indexes. None of the MSCI information is intended to constitute investment advice or a recommendation to make (or refrain from making) any kind of investment decision and may not be relied on as such. Historical data and analysis should not be taken as an indication or guarantee of any future performance analysis, forecast or prediction. The MSCI information is provided on an "as is" basis and the user of this information assumes the entire risk of any use made of this information. MSCI, each of its affiliates and each entity involved in compiling, computing or creating any MSCI information (collectively, the "MSCI Parties") expressly disclaims all warranties. With respect to this information, in no event shall any MSCI Party have any liability for any direct, indirect, special, incidental, punitive, consequential (including loss profits) or any other damages (www.msci.com)

Jonathan Steinberg, Jeremy Schwartz, Rick Harper, Christopher Gannatti, Bradley Krom, Tripp Zimmerman, Michael Barrer, Anita Rausch, Kevin Flanagan, Brendan Loftus, Joseph Tenaglia, Jeff Weniger, Matt Wagner, Alejandro Saltiel, Ryan Krystopowicz, Jianing Wu, and Brian Manby are registered representatives of Foreside Fund Services, LLC.

WisdomTree Funds are distributed by Foreside Fund Services, LLC, in the U.S. only.

You cannot invest directly in an index.

DEFINITIONS

Active manager : Portfolio managers who run funds that attempt to outperform the market by selecting those securities they believe to be the best.

Size Factor : the average returns of small portfolios minus the average returns of the large portfolios after adjusting for growth or value tendencies.

Russell 2000 Index : Measures the performance of the small-cap segment of the U.S. equity universe. The Russell 2000 is a subset of the Russell 3000 Index representing approximately 10% of the total market capitalization of that index. It includes approximately 2000 of the smallest securities based on a combination of their market cap and current index membership.

Basis point : 1/100th of 1 percent.

Market capitalization-weighting : Market cap = share prices x number of shares outstanding. Firms with the highest values receive the highest weights in approaches designed to weight firms by market cap.

Dividend yield : A financial ratio that shows how much a company pays out in dividends each year relative to its share price.

Earnings per share : Total earnings divided by the number of shares outstanding. Measured as a percentage change as of the annual Index screening date compared to the prior 12 months. Higher values indicate greater growth orientation.

Return on Equity (ROE) : Measures a corporation's profitability by revealing how much profit a company generates with the money shareholders have invested.

Return on assets (ROA) : Firm profits (after accounting for all expenses) divided by the firm's total assets. Higher numbers indicate greater profits relative to the level of assets utilized to generate them.

S&P 500 Index : Market capitalization-weighted benchmark of 500 stocks selected by the Standard and Poor's Index Committee designed to represent the performance of the leading industries in the United States economy.

Real estate investment trust (REIT) : Investment structure containing a basket of different exposures to real estate, be it directly in properties or in mortgages. Returns predominantly relate to changes in property values and income from rental payments.