J.P.Morgan

NanoString

1Q14 Review: Solid Quarter With 200+ nCounters Installed; Prosigna Ramp and 3rd Gen Launch In Focus

NanoString (NSTG) reported 1Q14 revenues of \$8.8M, which came in slightly above JPMe and consensus, while reiterating the 2014 outlook, with sales of \$45-50M range pointing to a back-end loaded year (pending a favorable MolDX reimbursement decision and potential inclusion in NCCN guidelines). We continue to see growth opportunities for U.S. Prosigna traction and nCounter system adoption, as well as margin expansion going forward and maintain our Overweight rating, while modest DCF adjustments result in our December 2014 PT going to \$20.

- Strong sales and instrument placements in the quarter. 1Q14 revenues of ~\$8.8M came in slightly better than JPMe/consensus of \$8.4M/\$8.6M, driven by strong instrument placements, surpassing the +200 installed base milestone. Instrument revenue in the quarter was \$3.4M (+110% y/y), including FLEX configurations on 40% of placements, while consumable revenue came in at \$4.8M (+29% y/y), as the company has maintained ~\$100K pull-through per system. Moving down the P&L, adjusted gross margins increased to 50.6% from 49.2% (vs. JPMe of 51.5%) as a ~10% increase in instrument revenues as a percent of total sales partially offset consumable margin improvement, while we continue to expect gross margin expansion, as the Prosigna ramp continues and consumables constitute a greater portion of mix over time. On the bottom line, adjusted EPS (-\$0.56) came in above JPMe (-\$0.92) and consensus (-\$0.75), due to higher gross margins and lower than expected R&D and SG&A expenses.
- Traction from U.S. Prosigna launch and products pipeline updates... During the quarter, Prosigna revenues reached ~\$61K, as six labs have now launched the assay, with another 13 having the enabled system installed and preparing to launch. The company placed three additional Prosigna enabled systems in the U.S., received orders for two more OUS, and on boarded ~15 sales reps during the quarter to accommodate growing demand. Turning to new products, NanoString also launched the nCounter Elements chemistry during the quarter, which allows translational researchers and clinical labs to independently develop custom multiplex assays. The company also launched the new PanCancer Pathways Panel, which allows researchers to investigate cancer biology across 770 different genes in all major cancer pathways. Management also noted on the call that the company is still on track to launch its 3rd generation benchtop system in 2H14.

Overweight

NSTG, NSTG US

Price: \$14.26

Price Target: \$20.00 Previous: \$22.00

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J.P. Morgan Securities LLC



	YTD	1m	3m	12m
Abs	10.0%	5.3%	54.2%	85.5%
Rel	9.1%	1.2%	49.8%	54.5%

NanoString Technologies, Inc. (NSTG;NSTG US)

FYE Dec	2013A	2014E (Prev)	2014E (Curr)	2015E (Prev)	2015E (Curr)
Revenue (\$ mn)					
Q1 (Mar)	6	8	9A	15	16
Q2 (Jun)	7	9	10	17	19
Q3 (Sep)	8	12	13	19	20
Q4 (Dec)	10	16	17	26	27
FY)	31	45	49	77	83

Company Data	
Price (\$)	14.26
Date Of Price	07-May-14
52-week Range (\$)	22.44-7.01
Market Cap (\$ mn)	142.60
Fiscal Year End	Dec
Shares O/S (mn)	10
Price Target (\$)	20.00
Price Target End Date	31-Dec-14

See page 8 for analyst certification and important disclosures.

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- Clinical validation update and reimbursement developments: Turning to clinical validation, NSTG has now been included in over 400 peer-reviewed publications generated by customers, including two new papers describing a performance of Prosigna published during the first quarter, which should support reimbursement and guideline inclusion. In addition, the company will also be featured in at least one oral presentation and three posters at ASCO in June, while its collaborators currently take two additional manuscripts through peer-review. On the call, management noted that reimbursement for genetic tests continues to be a gating factor for adoption in Europe and expects to continue reimbursement dialogues while its impact study in Germany should reach full enrollment by the end of the year, and the company launches a third study in the EU towards year-end. Finally on the reimbursement front, the company has submitted its application for inclusion in CMS's MolDX program and expects to receive a positive coverage decision as early as 3Q14.
- 2014 guidance reiterated; maintain Overweight rating. Management reiterated 2014 guidance for revenues in the range of \$45-50M (+43-59% y/y) and an operating loss of ~\$40-50M, which falls in the range of consensus estimates. The company continues to expect a backend loaded year as a result of the MolDX/guideline decisions in 2H14 which should bolster the U.S. Prosigna ramp. Gross margins are expected to be on the lower end of its original ~55-58% range, and operating expenses in the \$70-75M range should increase throughout the year accounting for new sales hires and investments in the bench-top system. We continue to see strong growth opportunities for NSTG and thus maintain our Overweight rating, while adjusting our DCF-based 2014 price target to \$20, based on modest changes to our model and DCF.

Figure 1: NSTG: 1Q14 Variance

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	1Q:	13A		1Q1	4E			10	14A		Vari	ance
	Act	ual	JPM Es	timate	Conse	ısus	Actu	ıal	Chan	ge y/y	vs.JP	PM Est.
	\$ M	%	\$ M	%	\$ M	%	\$ M	%	Δ\$	∆ margin	\$ M	%
Molecular Diagnostics	0.0		0.4				0.1				(0)	
Life Sciences	5.7		8.0				8.7				1	
Total Revenue	5.7		8.4		8.6		8.8		54.2%		0	
Gross Profit	2.8	49.2%	4.3	51.5%			4.4	50.6%	58.4%	135 bp	0	-91 bp
SG&A	(6.1)	107.9%	(13.7)	162.9%			(10.7)	122.0%	74.2%	1405 bp	3	-4095 bp
R&D	(3.1)	53.9%	(7.1)	83.9%			(4.7)	54.1%	54.7%	18 bp	2	-2982 bp
Operating Income	(6.4)	-112.6%	(16.5)	-195.4%			(11.0)	-125.5%	71.8%	-1287 bp	5	6995 bp
EBITDA	(6.0)	-105.4%	(16.1)	-190.9%			(10.6)	-121.4%	77.5%	-1597 bp	5	6947 bp
Pre tax Income	(3.4)		(16.4)				(10.5)		212.7%		6	
Income Tax	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%			0.0	0.0%		0 bp	0	0 bp
Adj. Net Income, excl. ESO	(5.5)	-96.3%	(15.8)	-186.8%			(9.5)	-108.0%	72.9%	-1172 bp	6	7884 bp
Diluted Shares	9.2	2M	17	.1			16.9	M	84	.2%	-0	.2M
GAAP EPS	(\$1.	.05)	(\$0.	.97)			(\$0.6	68)	-35	5.2%	\$0	0.29
Adjusted Diluted EPS (exl. ESO)	(\$0.	.60)	(\$0.	.92)	(\$0.7	5)	(\$0.5	56)	-6	.7%	\$0	0.36

FY14 Guidance [Reiterated]

Other Commentary

Revenue Guidance: \$45-50M

- Gross Margin: 55-58%
- Opex of \$70-75M, split 2/3 as SG&A, 1/3 as R&D
- Interest expense: \$~4M; SBC: \$4-5M; Capex: \$3-4M

Net loss Guidance: (\$40M)-(\$50M)

Source: J.P. Morgan estimates, Company data.

5 Additional Prosigna enabled placements in the quarter 40% of 1Q global nCounter installations were FLEX configurated +200 nCounter installed base and over 400 publications nCounter Elements and PanCancer Pathways Panel launched McKesson z-code and MAAA cpt-code for Prosigna issued

Investment Thesis, Valuation, and Risks

Investment Thesis

As a life science company moving into diagnostics, NSTG can leverage several trends, including a migration from analog to digital multiplex analysis, and the need for new clinically relevant content in areas like breast cancer analysis. With steady growth in the life science business today and FDA approval of the Prosigna Breast Cancer assay granted in 3Q13, we expect the company to outgrow peers, aided by an expanding installed base of nCounter systems, increased consumable pull-through and, ultimately, adoption and acceptance of Prosigna and other follow-on tests. Moreover, gross margins are poised to expand as high-margin consumables become a larger part of the Life Sciences revenue mix and Prosigna revenues begin to ramp following FDA approval. Reiterate Overweight.

Valuation

Our updated December 2014 price target of \$20 is derived using a 10-year DCF with a CAPM-derived WACC of 12.5% and a terminal growth of +1.5% (see Figure 3).

Risks to Rating and Price Target

Downside risks include: (1) market share gains for Prosigna in the diagnostics market are slower than anticipated; and (2) a lack of reimbursement at adequate levels or inclusion in guidelines which could negatively impact the market acceptance of Prosigna.

Figure 2: NSTG: Model

Income Statement		1QA	2QA	3QA	4QA		1QA	2QE	3QE	4QE			CAGR
USD\$M	2012A	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	2013A	Mar	Jun	Sep	Dec	2014E	2015E	10-15
Molecular Diagnostics	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	3	26	N/A
Life Sciences	23	6	7	8	10	31	9	9	12	15	45	57	37.2%
Total Revenue	23	6	7	8	10	31	9	10	13	17	49	83	47.8%
Gross Profit	11	3	4	5	5	16	4	6	7	10	27	53	82.6%
SG&A	(15)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(30)	(11)	(13)	(14)	(14)	(51)	(47)	42.3%
R&D	(12)	(3)	(4)	(4)	(5)	(15)	(5)	(6)	(6)	(5)	(23)	(27)	29.5%
EBITA (Operating Income)	(16)	(6)	(7)	(7)	(8)	(28)	(11)	(14)	(13)	(10)	(47)	(22)	N/A
EBITDA	(15)	(6)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(27)	(11)	(13)	(13)	(9)	(46)	(20)	N/A
Pre-Tax Income	(7)	(3)	(4)	(6)	(8)	(21)	(10)	(15)	(13)	(10)	(48)	(24)	
Income Taxes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Adjusted Net Income	(14)	(6)	(6)	(6)	(8)	(26)	(10)	(15)	(13)	(10)	(48)	(24)	N/A
Diluted Shares Outstanding	7.9	9.2	9.2	14.6	14.6	11.9	16.9	18.3	19.0	19.7	18.5	24.1	
Adjusted Diluted EPS (excludes ESO)	\$ (1.70)	\$ (0.60)	\$ (0.62)	\$ (0.42)	\$ (0.51)	\$ (2.08)	\$ (0.56)	\$ (0.75)	\$ (0.64)	\$ (0.46)	\$ (2.40)	\$ (0.93)	
Gross Margin	46.4%	49.2%	51.2%	54.9%	52.4%	52.2%	50.6%	55.5%	55.8%	56.8%	55.1%	63.9%	8.3%
change in gross margin (y/y, bp)	+137	+821	+730	+603	+209	+576	+135	+430	+86	+440	+291	+880	
SG&A	67.1%	107.9%	92.9%	95.2%	89.8%	95.3%	122.0%	127.9%	109.2%	82.3%	106.0%	56.7%	
R&D	51.2%	53.9%	50.2%	45.1%	44.6%	47.7%	54.1%	65.2%	46.1%	32.6%	46.8%	33.2%	
Operating Margin	-71.8%	-112.6%	-92.0%	-85.4%	-82.0%	-90.7%	-125.5%	-137.7%	-99.7%	-58.4%	-97.8%	-26.4%	16.8%
change in op margin (y/y, bp)	-1284	-3447	-3118	-1408	-411	-1894	-1287	-4577	-1425	+2367	-706	+7137	
EBITDA Margin	-63.6%	-105.4%	-85.9%	-81.2%	-78.8%	-85.9%	-121.4%	-133.7%	-97.5%	-56.1%	-94.9%	-23.9%	15.7%
Tax Rate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	
Profit Margin	-61.5%	-100.4%	-82.4%	-76.6%	-77.8%	-82.6%	-119.9%	-146.2%	-99.5%	-59.5%	-98.9%	-28.8%	23.4%
Reported Revenue Growth y/y	29.1%	26.1%	21.5%	39.0%	55.9%	36.7%	54.2%	37.7%	55.3%	66.2%	54.5%	70.4%	

Source: J.P. Morgan estimates, Company data.

Figure 3: NSTG: DCF Analysis

Projected FY Ending Dec	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Revenue (\$M)	31	49	83	122	157	182	204	227	250	272	292	310
growth y/y		55%	70%	47%	29%	16%	12%	11%	10%	9%	7%	6%
EBIT (\$M)	(29)	(47)	(22)	1	24	45	62	78	92	106	118	129
EBIT margin	-92%	-98%	-26%	0%	15%	25%	30%	35%	37%	39%	40%	42%
Tax-affected EBIT (\$M)	(29)	(47)	(22)	1	24	29	41	51	60	69	77	84
Free Cash Flow	(32)	(54)	(29)	(7)	18	25	37	47	56	65	74	82
growth y/y						39%	46%	29%	19%	16%	13%	10%

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	Discounted			of Termi		٠. ,								•	alent Ter		
Discount Rate	Cash Flows (\$M)			Perpetua	al Growth	n Rate of	•		Enterp	rise Valu	ie (\$M)		EBI	TDA Mult	iple (for	ward 12 n	nos)
	2015-2024		0.5%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.5%	0.5%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.5%	0.5%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.5%
11.5%	93		297	313	330	349	370	389	405	423	442	463	3.1x	3.2x	3.4x	3.5x	3.7x
12.0%	88		273	287	302	319	338	362	375	391	407	426	2.9x	3.0x	3.1x	3.2x	3.4x
12.5%	84	+	252	265	278	293	309	336	349	362	377	393	2.7x	2.8x	2.9x	3.0x	3.1x
13.0%	80	•	233	244	256	269	283	313	324	336	349	363	2.5x	2.6x	2.7x	2.8x	2.9x
13.5%	76		216	226	236	248	260	292	302	312	324	337	2.3x	2.4x	2.5x	2.6x	2.7x
	Net Debt (Cash)													Ter	minal Va	lue	
	(\$M)			Equi	ty Value	(\$M)			Equity \	Value pe	r Share			as a % o	f Enterpri	ise Value	!
			0.5%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.5%	0.5%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.5%	0.5%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.5%
	(8)		397	413	430	449	471	\$21.52	\$22.37	\$23.31	\$24.35	\$25.50	76%	77%	78%	79%	80%
	(8)		369	383	398	415	434	\$20.01	\$20.76	\$21.58	\$22.49	\$23.49	76%	77%	77%	78%	79%
_	(8)		344	356	370	384	401	\$18.63	\$19.30	\$20.03	\$20.83	\$21.70	75%	76%	77%	78%	79%
	(8)		321	332	344	357	371	\$17.38	\$17.98	\$18.62	\$19.33	\$20.10	74%	75%	76%	77%	78%
	(8)		300	309	320	332	344	\$16.24	\$16.77	\$17.34	\$17.97	\$18.65	74%	75%	76%	76%	77%

Source: J.P. Morgan estimates, Company data.

NanoString: Summary of Financials

Income Statement - Annual	FY13A	FY14E	FY15E	FY16E	Income Statement - Quarterly	1Q14A	2Q14E	3Q14E	4Q14E
Revenues	31	49	83	122	Revenues	9A	10	13	17
Cost of products sold	(15)	(22)	(30)	(38)	Cost of products sold	(4)A	(4)	(6)	(7)
Gross profit	-	-	-	-	Gross profit	-	-	-	-
SG&A	(30)	(51)	(47)	(49)	SG&A	(11)A	(13)	(14)	(14)
R&D	(15)	(23)	(27)	(33)	R&D	(5)A	(6)	(6)	(5)
Operating income	(28)	(47)	(21)	1	Operating income	(11)A	(14)	(13)	(10)
EBITDA	(27)	(46)	(19)	5	EBITDA	(11)A	(13)	(13)	(9)
Net interest (income) / expense	(2)	(3)	(4)	(6)	Net interest (income) / expense	(1)A	(1)	(0)	(1)
Other income / (expense)	-	-	-	-	Other income / (expense)	-	-	-	-
Income taxes	0	0	0	0	Income taxes	0A	0	0	0
Net income	(39)	(49)	(24)	(4)	Net income	(11)A	(13)	(11)	(8)
Diluted shares outstanding	-	-	-	-	Diluted shares outstanding	-	-	-	-
Diluted EPS	-	-	-	-	Diluted EPS	-	-	-	-
Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Data	FY13A	FY14E	FY15E	FY16E	Ratio Analysis	FY13A	FY14E	FY15E	FY16E
Cash and cash equivalents			50	41	Sales growth	36.7%	54.5%	70.4%	47.0%
Accounts receivable	8	12	16	22	EBIT growth	72.8%	66.4%	(54.7%)	(106.7%)
Inventories	7	9	12	14	EPS growth	-	-	-	-
Other current assets	3	3	3	3					
Current assets	51	56	114	113	Gross margin	-	-	-	-
PP&E	-	-	-	-	EBIT margin	(90.7%)	(97.8%)	(26.4%)	0.5%
Total assets	51	57	114	114	EBITDA margin	(85.9%)	(94.9%)	(23.9%)	3.0%
					Tax rate	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total debt	18	28	63	63	Net margin	(122.9%)	(101.4%)	(29.2%)	(2.9%)
Total liabilities	33	44	81	82					
Shareholders' equity	31	21	40	38	Net Debt / EBITDA	(67.8%)	(61.4%)	(65.5%)	600.5%
					Net Debt / Capital (book)	36.8%	57.6%	24.6%	36.5%
Net income (including charges)	(29)	(50)	(24)	(4)					
D&A	2	1	2	3	Return on assets (ROA)	(90.7%)	(91.0%)	(28.3%)	(3.1%)
Change in working capital	(4)	(4)	(6)	(7)	Return on equity (ROE)	(172.0%)	(188.1%)	(79.9%)	(9.1%)
Other	(1)	0	0	0					
Cash flow from operations	(32)	(52)	(28)	(8)	Enterprise value / sales	-	-	-	-
					Enterprise value / EBITDA	-	-	-	-
Capex	(1)	(3)	(3)	(4)	Free cash flow yield	-	-	-	-
Free cash flow	(33)	(56)	(31)	(11)	•				
Cash flow from investing activities	`(1)	(3)	(3)	(4)					
Cash flow from financing activities	53	45	76	0					
Dividends	0	0	0	0					
Dividend yield	-	-							

Source: Company reports and J.P. Morgan estimates.

Note: \$ in millions (except per-share data). Fiscal year ends Dec

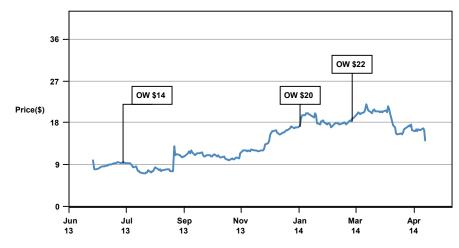
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NanoString (NSTG, NSTG US) Price Chart



Date	Rating	Share Price (\$)	Price Target (\$)
22-Jul-13	OW	9.27	14.00
07-Jan-14	OW	17.32	20.00
26-Feb-14	OW	18.41	22.00

Source: Bloomberg and J.P. Morgan; price data adjusted for stock splits and dividends. Initiated coverage Jul 22, 2013.

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	(buy)	(hold)	(sell)
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North America Equity Research 07 May 2014

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