

POLEN | CAPITAL

POLEN INTERNATIONAL GROWTH STRATEGY

Summary



Todd Morris
*Portfolio Manager
& Analyst*



Daniel Fields
*Portfolio Manager
& Analyst*

- During the fourth quarter of 2018, the Polen International Growth Composite (the “Portfolio”) returned -11.54% gross of fees. The MSCI All Country World Index (ex-US) (the “Index”) returned -11.46%.
- Our holdings in the industrials sector and a lack of exposure to the Financials, Materials and Energy sectors contributed most to Portfolio returns in the fourth quarter, while our holdings in the Communications Services and Information Technology sectors were detractors.
- For the full year of 2018, the Portfolio returned -4.60% versus -14.19% for the Index.
- Our holdings in the Healthcare and Industrials sectors and a lack of exposure to the Financials and Energy sectors contributed most to Portfolio returns for the full year, while our holdings in the Communications Services and Information Technology sectors were detractors.

Commentary

During the fourth quarter of 2018, the Polen International Growth Composite (the “Portfolio”) returned -11.54% gross of fees. The MSCI All Country World Index (ex-US) (the “Index”) returned -11.46%. For the full year, the Portfolio returned -4.60% versus -14.19% for the Index.

For the full year of 2018, the Portfolio outperformed the Index by a 9.59% margin. Holdings in the Healthcare and Industrials sectors contributed to our performance, as did a lack of exposure to the Financials sector, while holdings in the Communication Services and Information Technology sectors detracted from full-year performance. In the fourth quarter, indiscriminate selling in most markets drove share prices lower and the Portfolio lagged the Index by 0.08%. Holdings in the Industrials sector and a lack of exposure to the Materials, Financials and Energy sectors contributed in the quarter. Holdings in the Communication Services and Information Technology sectors detracted from our fourth quarter performance.

Many of the stocks that performed well in the first three quarters of the year experienced sharp declines in the fourth quarter. Stock selection contributed to returns over the first three quarters, but aggressive selling in the fourth quarter drove correlations higher. Our recent white paper [Outperformance in the Next Bear Market?](#) explores reasons why this could be a structural issue across markets. Market structure issues aside, we believe quality investing continues to offer superior odds of performance over the long term.

In the past two years, the Portfolio has experienced two wildly different environments. For calendar year 2017, international markets saw solid share price gains and the Portfolio more than kept pace. In 2018, while international markets declined and fell out of favor, the Portfolio outperformed again and the Portfolio's performance gap over the Index widened, which we believe speaks to the strengths of Polen Capital's quality growth investment principles. For example, in over 30 years of managing client assets, Polen Capital's strategies have outperformed in other negative return environments as well. We believe concentrated portfolios holding high quality businesses with strong balance sheets help to limit some investment risk. Furthermore, we believe the Portfolio can generate faster earnings growth than the Index. The combined effect of quality and growth across the Portfolio is aimed at outperforming the Index in the long run.

Just twelve months ago, a coordinated economic expansion seemed on order for the whole world. That view now seems like a distant memory as signs of slowing economic growth and heightened volatility instead visited financial markets in 2018. Most emerging markets stumbled, some harder than others. Developed markets also showed signs of deceleration. Fourth quarter economic data has not been reported, but Japan, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Sweden all reported year-over-year contractions in third quarter gross domestic product. Most equity markets delivered negative returns for the year and the pace of selling accelerated during the fourth quarter.

Rising uncertainty was a theme in 2018 and one that impacted equity markets around the world. Uncertainty continues into 2019. Our [First Quarter 2018 Commentary](#) walked through three issues acting as sources of noise: trade wars, interest rate policy normalization and the beginning stages of balance sheet contraction by the Federal Reserve. We feel these issues contributed to global equity market volatility during 2018 though it's impossible to quantify the impact of these drivers on equity markets. Furthermore, the unprecedented nature of central bank balance sheet contraction makes it even more difficult to infer lessons from the past. At a minimum, these issues have certainly changed the investment backdrop by reducing liquidity in the case of central bank actions and introducing uncertainty for business managers in the case of trade wars.

Of the three issues flagged, interest rate increases are the most frequent occurrence, and those ultimately tend to be a drag on valuation multiples as rate hikes tighten financial conditions. The U.S. Federal Reserve's efforts to simultaneously raise interest rates and shrink its balance sheet garners much attention on Wall Street. Chairman Powell's comments so far in 2019 indicate a willingness to reassess the pace of change in the Fed's balance sheet and rate hikes if markets continue to gyrate. In uncertain times, it's helpful to have a steady philosophy to guide your actions. Polen Capital's investment philosophy has delivered consistent results over the long term, through periods featuring all sorts of uncertainty. Looking into 2019, we remain confident that the Portfolio's quality growth bias positions it well to deliver faster growth than the Index.

Portfolio Performance & Activity

During the fourth quarter, the leading contributors to performance were **Sage Group plc**, **RELX Group**, and **Bunzl Plc**. For the full year, **ICON Plc**, **CSL Limited** and **Dassault Systemes SA** were the leading contributors. Market-wide selling pressure in the fourth quarter was significant enough that two of the Portfolio's three leading positions were still negative absolute return contributors. To be blunt, the fourth quarter was one to forget.

Ireland-based ICON is a contract research organization (CRO) that runs clinical trials for companies in the pharmaceutical and biotech industries. When a pharmaceutical or biotech company wants to outsource drug trial administration to a trusted partner, they often turn to best-in-class operator, ICON. Outsourcing to ICON allows drug companies to focus on their own core competencies, including drug development and commercialization. As pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies continue to look for ways to run operations more efficiently and cut costs, we believe they are likely to outsource more work that will benefit large, scaled CROs like ICON that have a global footprint and expertise in an increasingly complex world of diseases and illnesses. We view ICON as an exceptional operator capable of driving consistent growth with increasing efficiency to deliver double-digit annual earnings growth over five years.

Australia-based CSL Limited (CSL) is a global leader in the highly regulated market for blood plasma derivatives, hemophilia treatments and influenza vaccines. CSL's core business specializes in blood plasma and numerous therapies associated with human blood. CSL operates a global network of collection centers to draw blood from humans then move collected blood to facilities, which fractionate and repurpose it over months of processing for administration to patients in need. Scale within the core operation makes CSL a leader in an oligopoly market. Furthermore, steady investments in research and development (R&D) are yielding a robust crop of innovative specialty drugs and hemophilia treatments. R&D efforts have also created a promising pipeline of potential therapies. Specialty therapies can often be made using byproducts from the core business, thereby generating significant profitability. We remain impressed by the steady nature of CSL's core business, the beneficial impact of highly profitable new therapies, and the successful turnaround of the Sequiris flu vaccine business in recent years. Today, we believe CSL is firing on all cylinders and has the potential to compound earnings at a mid-teens rate for the next five years.

In our view, France-based Dassault Systemes continues to be a high-quality business providing software that customers use to design, simulate, test, and verify full 3D digital mock-ups of products within an end-to-end system for product lifecycle management (PLM). The core customers are transportation, autos, aerospace and defense, and industrials, and

increasingly, architecture, and engineering and construction companies. Dassault Systemes's software has high switching costs; the company is a market leader in an attractive growing industry and continues to be run by an exceptionally long-term minded management team. Management has a proven track record of reinvesting back into the business and making acquisitions to expand into attractive adjacencies. We believe Dassault is an example of effective family control, enabling a management team to allocate capital and run a business as if they wanted it to be around in 100 years, rather than as if this quarter or this year's earnings were the end-all be-all. We believe Dassault Systemes can compound earnings at a mid-teens rate for the next five years.

The leading detractors from performance for the fourth quarter were **Baidu, Inc**, **ICON Plc** and **Amadeus IT Group SA**. For the full year, **Tencent Holdings Ltd.**, Baidu, Inc and **Sage Group plc** were the leading detractors.

China is home to some of the Portfolio's largest laggards this past year; Tencent, Baidu and Alibaba all detracted from full-year performance. The long-term opportunity in front of these companies is immense. They continue to hold leading positions in gaming and social media (Tencent), internet search (Baidu), and e-commerce & cloud computing (Alibaba). Intensive investments into adjacent lines of business by all three companies are expanding their reach. Our [Second Quarter 2018 Commentary](#) covered reasons to take the long view of Chinese economic development, both in terms of consumer spending growth, as a percentage of GDP, becoming far higher over time, and the evolution of new trade channels away from the China-U.S. trade channel. Economic data out of China for the last two years exhibited signs of a slowing economy. Further, in 2018, tariffs and aggressive trade rhetoric from the Trump administration damaged investor sentiment, sending shares lower throughout most of 2018. Short-term volatility presents long-term investors with opportunity. China today serves as a case in point. Our five to ten-year investment horizon lets us look past the current malaise. We added to our Chinese holdings in the second half of 2018. All three companies capture the attention of hundreds of millions of users daily and are making sizeable investments to expand their operations into exciting new areas of growth. We believe these holdings each offer the potential for continued strong earnings growth for years into the future, and they now happen to be among the most attractively valued stocks in the Portfolio in our view.

Due largely to a lack of focus and trying to be "everything to everyone," Sage Group's cloud transition faltered in 2018. As a result, the board replaced their CEO Stephen Kelly with former CFO Steve Hare in the fall. We applaud the decision to name Mr. Hare permanent CEO. Hare announced what we saw as focused, rational strategic initiatives on his initial earnings call. His plan involves allocating more capital to reinvest back into the business and deemphasizing the dividend to accelerate growth and seize long-term high return investment opportunities at hand. Hare also announced the intention to realize value for Sage's long tail of non-core products, and managed investor expectations properly regarding the short-term revenue and margin pain inherent in cloud transitions. We have dealt with cloud transitions before, and we see a path to long-term value gain. Hare's plan to focus the company on the singular goal of a successful cloud transition makes sense to us, and we agree it's time to execute. As long-term investors, we give Sage the benefit of the doubt. We believe Sage has a great business with high switching costs, operates in a highly attractive industry with a long reinvestment runway, and has an honest and competent management team running the business. Long-term earnings growth greater than 10% is possible for Sage Group.

In the fourth quarter, we trimmed our position in Dassault Systemes, using the proceeds of this trim to add to our existing positions in Alibaba and the German enterprise software company **SAP SE**. Dassault Systemes contributed well to the Portfolio over the first nine months on the back of solid earnings growth and an expanding valuation. Conversely, Alibaba and SAP were trading at much lower valuations, but still offered solid long-term growth potential in our view. From our perspective, this trade allowed us to lower the Portfolio's overall valuation while increasing its long-term earnings power.

Thank you for your interest in Polen Capital and the Polen International Growth strategy. Please feel free to contact us with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Todd Morris & Daniel Fields

POLEN | CAPITAL

1825 Corporate Blvd NW #300, Boca Raton, FL 33431

+ 1-800-358-1887 | www.polencapital.com

The commentary is not intended as guarantee of profitable outcomes. Any forward-looking statements are based on certain expectations and assumptions that are susceptible to changes in circumstances.

Please reference the supplemental information to the composite performance which accompanies this commentary.

Historical Performance

Polen International Growth (SMA) Composite as of 12-31-2018			
	Polen (Gross)	Polen (Net)	MSCI ACWIxUS
Dec-18	-5.06	-5.06	-4.53
3 Month	-11.54	-11.74	-11.46
YTD	-4.60	-5.41	-14.19
1 Year	-4.60	-5.41	-14.19
Since Inception (1/3/17)	13.55	12.59	4.49

Returns are trailing through: Dec-31-2018

Annualized returns are presented for periods greater than 1 year.

Source: Archer

GIPS Disclosure

Polen Capital Management International Growth Composite-Annual Disclosure Presentation

Year End	UMA		Firm	Composite Assets		Annual Performance Results				3 Year Standard Deviation*	
	Total (millions)	Assets (millions)	Assets (millions)	U.S. Dollars (millions)	Number of Accounts	Composite		MSCI ACWI	Composite Dispersion	Polen Gross	MSCI ACWI (ex-USA)
						Gross	Net				
2017	17,422	6,956	10,466	0.3	1	35.06%	33.94%	27.19%	N/A	-	12.04

Note: N/A - There are five or fewer accounts in the composite the entire year.

Total assets and UMA assets are supplemental information to the Annual Disclosure Presentation.

*A 3 Year Standard Deviation is not available for the composite due to the composite's January 1, 2017 creation date.

GIPS Disclosure

The International Growth Composite created on January 1, 2017 contains fully discretionary international growth accounts that are not managed within a wrap fee structure and for comparison purposes is measured against MSCI ACWI (ex-USA). Polen Capital invests exclusively in a portfolio of high-quality companies.

Polen Capital Management claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS standards. Polen Capital Management has been independently verified by ACA Performance Services, LLC for the periods January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2017. A verification covering the periods from April 1, 1992 through December 31, 2015 was performed by Ashland Partners & Company LLP, which was acquired by ACA Performance Services, LLC, whose report expressed an unqualified opinion thereon. The verification report is available upon request.

Verification assesses whether (1) the firm has complied with all the composite construction requirements of the GIPS standards on a firm-wide basis and (2) the firm's policies and procedures are designed to calculate and present performance in compliance with the GIPS standards. Verification does not ensure the accuracy of any specific composite presentation.

Polen Capital Management is an independent registered investment adviser. The firm maintains a complete list and description of composites, which is available upon request. In July 2007, the firm was reorganized from an S-corporation into an LLC and changed names from Polen Capital Management, Inc. to Polen Capital Management, LLC.

Results are based on fully discretionary accounts under management, including those accounts no longer with the firm. Past performance is not indicative of future results. Effective January 1, 2018, accounts must be fully invested at the market open on the first business day of the month, in order to be included in that month's composite.

The U.S. Dollar is the currency used to express performance. Returns are presented gross and net of management fees and include the reinvestment of all income. Net of fee performance was calculated using actual management fees. The annual composite dispersion presented is an asset-weighted standard deviation calculated for the accounts in the composite the entire year. Policies for valuing portfolios, calculating performance, and preparing compliant presentations are available upon request.

The management fee schedule is as follows:

Institutional: Per annum fees for managing accounts are 85 basis points (0.85%) on the first \$50 Million and 65 basis points (0.65%) on all assets above \$50 Million of assets under management. *HNW:* Per annum fees for managing accounts are 160 basis points (1.60%) of the first \$500,000 of assets under management and 110 basis points (1.10%) of amounts above \$500,000 of assets under management. Actual investment advisory fees incurred by clients may vary.

Past performance does not guarantee future results and future accuracy and profitable results cannot be guaranteed. Performance figures are presented gross and net of management fees and have been calculated after the deduction of all transaction costs and commissions. Polen Capital is an SEC registered investment advisor and its investment advisory fees are described in its Form ADV Part 2A. The advisory fees will reduce clients' returns. The chart below depicts the effect of a 1% management fee on the growth of one dollar over a 10 year period at 10% (9% after fees) and 20% (19% after fees) assumed rates of return.

The MSCI ACWI (ex-USA) Index is a market capitalization weighted index designed to provide a broad measure of equity-market performance throughout the world (excluding the United States). The MSCI ACWI (ex-USA) is maintained by Morgan Stanley Capital International, and is comprised of stocks from both developed and emerging markets.

The information provided in this document should not be construed as a recommendation to purchase or sell any particular security. There is no assurance that any securities discussed herein will remain in the composite or that the securities sold will not be repurchased. The securities discussed do not represent the composite's entire portfolio. Actual holdings will vary depending on the size of the account, cash flows, and restrictions. It should not be assumed that any of the securities transactions or holdings discussed will prove to be profitable, or that the investment recommendations or decisions we make in the future will be profitable or will equal the investment performance of the securities discussed herein. A complete list of our past specific recommendations for the last year is available upon request.

Return	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6 Years	7 Years	8 Years	9 Years	10 Years
10%	1.1	1.21	1.33	1.46	1.61	1.71	1.95	2.14	2.36	2.59
9%	1.09	1.19	1.3	1.41	1.54	1.68	1.83	1.99	2.17	2.39
20%	1.2	1.44	1.73	2.07	2.49	2.99	3.58	4.3	5.16	6.19
19%	1.19	1.42	1.69	2.01	2.39	2.84	3.38	4.02	4.79	5.69