

ASTORIA'S ETF INSIGHTS: A SURGICAL LOOK AT QUAL, DGRW, EDIV, DNL, AND GDX

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The key message from Astoria Portfolio Advisors is that **portfolio risk has increased** given 1) the significant YTD returns in US stocks (+21%) and US bonds (+6%) 2) global economic data has deteriorated 3) trade uncertainty remains high.
- For short term tactical portfolios, we suggest **reducing stocks & bonds** and **increasing exposure to alternatives, gold, and cash**.
- Is the Federal Reserve cutting because the global economy has meaningfully deteriorated or is this just an insurance cut? If it's the former, investors should reduce portfolio risk further in our view.
- We are concerned that too much faith rests on the Federal Reserve to inflict the global economy higher. Astoria believes other Central Banks need to do a better job of stimulating their economies.
- In Astoria's dynamic portfolios, the standout tilts are as follows: stocks with above average quality, higher quality bonds, liquid alternatives, gold, and cash.
- The forward 12-month PE ratio for the S&P 500 is 17.0x (the 10-year average is 14.8x). Research shows that when **starting valuations are high**, **future returns tend to be lower**.
- Q2 EPS estimates in the US appear high to us. For instance, Q4 2019 estimates are projected to be 7% while 2020 estimates are expected to be in the 10%-12% range. We believe companies will want clarity on supply chain economics, global trade, and the interest rate outlook to solidify future spending.
- There are pockets of ETFs which are **trading at a premium to the market multiple**: 1) minimum volatility 2) defensive equities 3) US high quality. The PE ratio for these ETFs are approximately **20x** while SPY is around **18x.** Be careful here.
- Astoria believes the overseas market offers investors a more attractive risk/return: 1) valuations are considerably lower than the US, offering investors with a greater margin of safety 2) EM Central Banks are cutting rates 3) the ECB has hinted about implementing more stimulus 4) China has been injecting liquidity into its economy.
- We recently went on **CNBC TV** and highlighted a few ETFs that Astoria currently utilizes (click <u>here</u> to watch the interview). In this report, we provide more detailed characteristics on these ETFs as well as a few others.





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DGRW & QUAL vs. SPY

- As per Portfolio Visualizer, DGRW has a higher profitability factor loading when compared to QUAL & SPY (RMW¹ of 0.29, 0.24, & 0.03 respectively).
- **QUAL**, however, has produced the **highest Sharpe Ratio** (1.03, 0.98, & 0.96 for QUAL, SPY, & DGRW respectively).
- As per Bloomberg PORT, QUAL has a higher projected portfolio risk when compared to DGRW (12.92% & 12.65% respectively).

EDIV vs. EEM

- EDIV has a higher profitability factor loading when compared to EEM (RMW of 0.46 & 0.11 respectively).
- **EEM**, however, has **produced a higher Sharpe Ratio** than **EDIV** (0.13 & 0.02 respectively).
- EEM has a higher projected portfolio risk when compared to EDIV (13.22% & 13.04% respectively).

DNL vs. ACWX

- **DNL** has a **higher profitability factor loading** when compared to **ACWX** (RMW of 0.20 & -0.16 respectively).
- **DNL** has also **produced double the Sharpe Ratio** of **ACWX** (0.27 & 0.13 respectively).
- DNL has a higher projected portfolio risk when compared to ACWX (12.52% & 11.41% respectively).

Benefits of Gold in a Portfolio

 Historically, multi-asset portfolios have benefited from an allocation to gold. As global rates have declined, the opportunity cost for owning gold has lowered.

1. Robust Minus Weak: The profitability premium.

We would like to thank Nick Cerbone for his valuable insights in this report.





ETF PORTFOLIO RISK ANALYTICS

DGRW & QUALVS. SPY

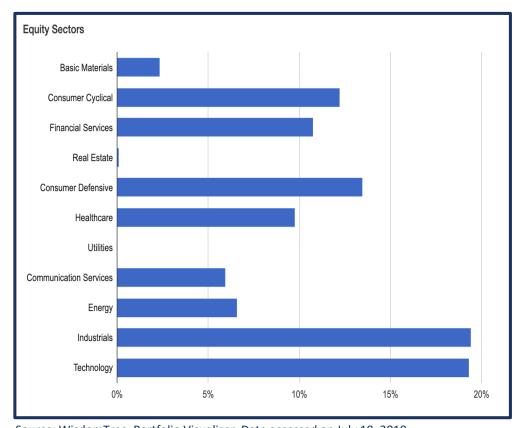


DGRW BLENDS QUALITY PLUS GROWTH CHARACTERISTICS

DGRW Methodology & Sector Weights

- DGRW applies a quality and a growth screen when constructing the portfolio. In Astoria's view, this is particularly attractive as we don't necessarily think investors should be ignoring growth stocks but instead picking securities which have both growth and quality characteristics.
- The earnings growth ranking is 50% of the portfolio construction process and is derived from companies' longterm earnings growth expectations.
- The quality ranking is the remaining 50% of the screening **process** and is split evenly between a three-year average return on assets (ROA) and the three-year average return on equity (ROE).
- DGRW removes companies with higher dividend yields. The logic here is that if companies are paying out more than they earn, companies may have to cut back their dividends in the future.

Source: https://www.wisdomtree.com/-/media/us-media-files/documents/resourcelibrary/investment-case/the-case-for-us-quality-dividend-growth-fund-(dgrw).pdf



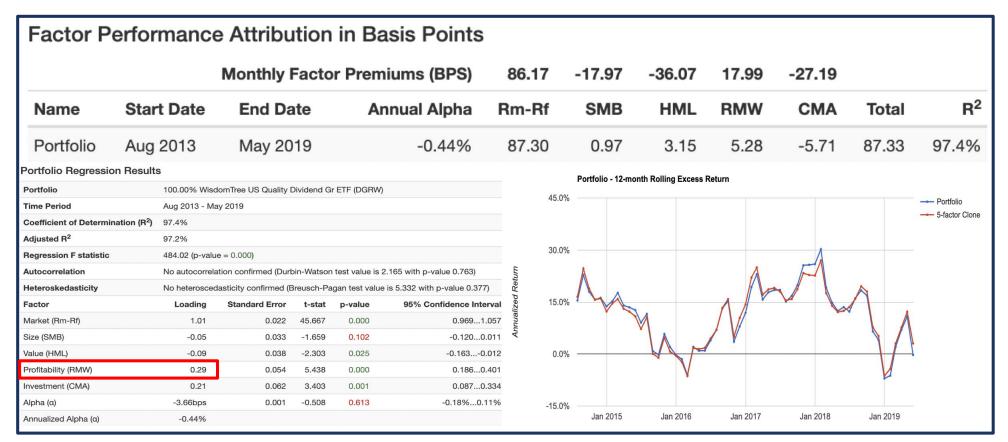






BASED ON PORTFOLIO VISUALIZER'S FACTOR ANALYSIS, DGRW HAS A HIGHER PROFITABILITY FACTOR LOADING THAN QUAL AND SPY (RMW OF 0.29, 0.24, & 0.03 RESPECTIVELY)

DGRW Factor Analysis



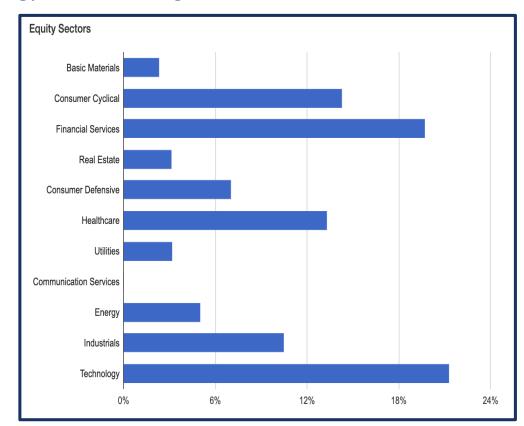




QUAL CAPTURES QUALITY BY FOCUSING ON EQUITIES WITH HIGH ROE, STABLE YOY EARNINGS GROWTH, & LOW FINANCIAL **LEVERAGE**

QUAL Methodology & Sector Weights

- QUAL tracks an index of US large and mid-cap stocks. The stocks are selected and weighted by high ROE, stable earnings growth, and low debt/equity.
- In our view, QUAL also has a sound methodology and has been the clear leader so far with \$11 bln in assets in the Quality ETF space.
- QUAL tends to be more **concentrated** with only 120 stocks or so.
- There are some notable differences in the constituents and their weights for QUAL and DGRW so investors need to be comfortable with the portfolio risk characteristics when deciding between both FTFs.

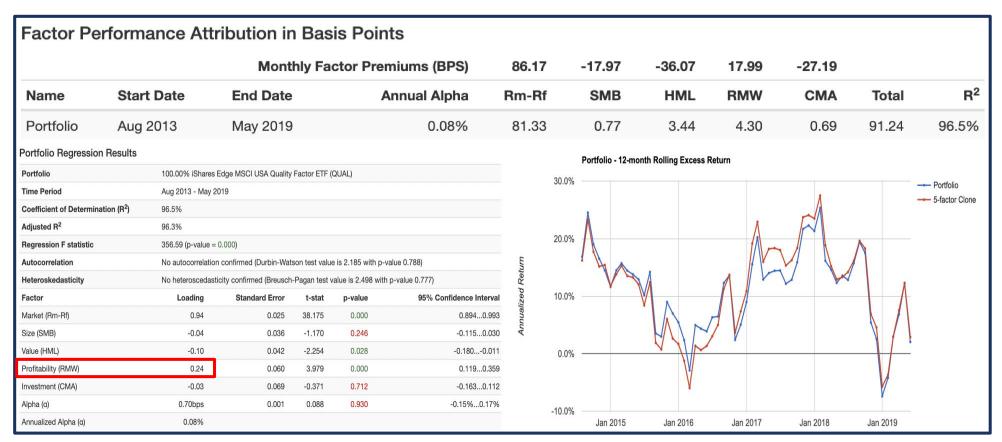


Source: https://www.msci.com/eqb/methodology/meth docs/MSCI Quality Indices Source: MSCI, Portfolio Visualizer. Data accessed on July 19, 2019. Methodology.pdf



BASED ON PORTFOLIO VISUALIZER'S FACTOR ANALYSIS, QUAL HAS A LOWER PROFITABILITY FACTOR LOADING THAN DGRW BUT A HIGHER PROFITABILITY FACTOR LOADING THAN SPY (RMW OF 0.24, 0.29, & 0.03 RESPECTIVELY)

QUAL Factor Analysis

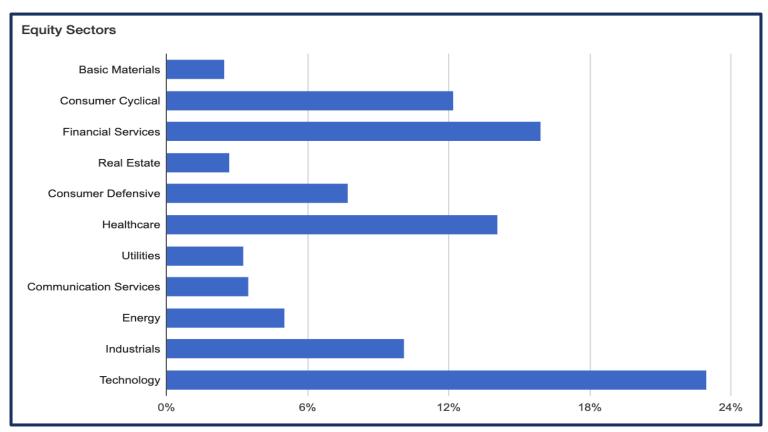






FROM A SECTOR WEIGHT STANDPOINT, SPY IS MOST EXPOSED TO TECHNOLOGY, FINANCIAL SERVICES, & HEALTHCARE

SPY Sector Weights

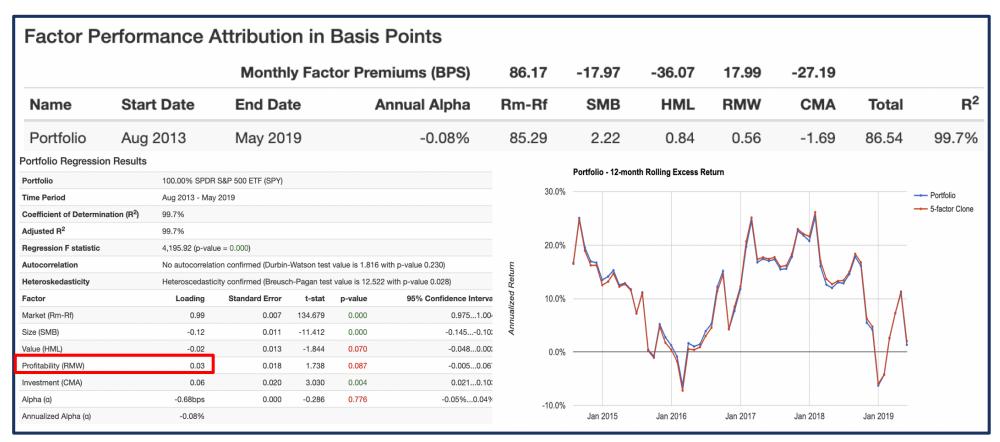






AS PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED, SPY HAS A CONSIDERABLY LOW PROFITABILITY FACTOR LOADING (MAINLY BECAUSE OF ITS INCLUSION OF JUNKIER STOCKS)

SPY Factor Analysis

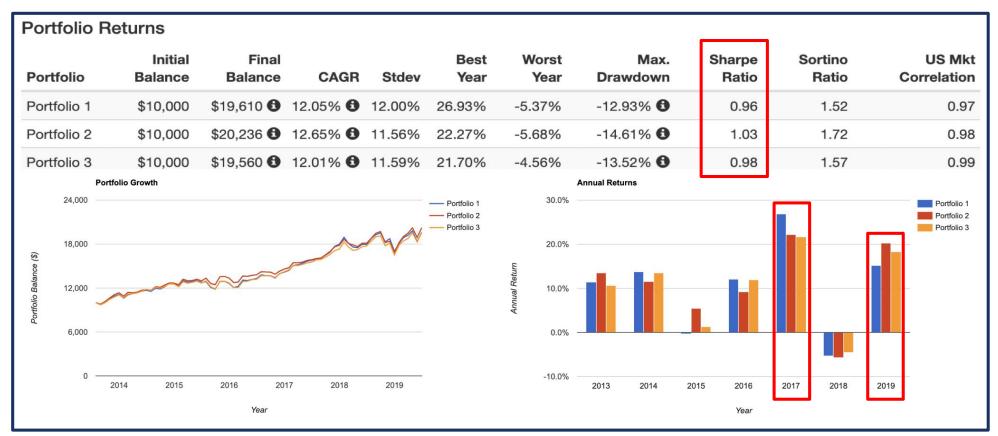






SINCE AUG 2013, QUAL HAS PRODUCED A SLIGHTLY HIGHER SHARPE RATIO THAN DGRW & SPY (1.03, 0.98, & 0.96 FOR QUAL, SPY, & DGRW RESPECTIVELY)

DGRW (Portfolio 1) & QUAL (Portfolio 2) vs. SPY (Portfolio 3) Risk/Return Analysis





BLOOMBERG PROJECTS DGRW AND QUALTO HAVE TOTAL PORTFOLIO RISKS OF 12.65% AND 12.92% RESPECTIVELY

DGRW (Portfolio) vs. QUAL (Benchmark): Total Risk

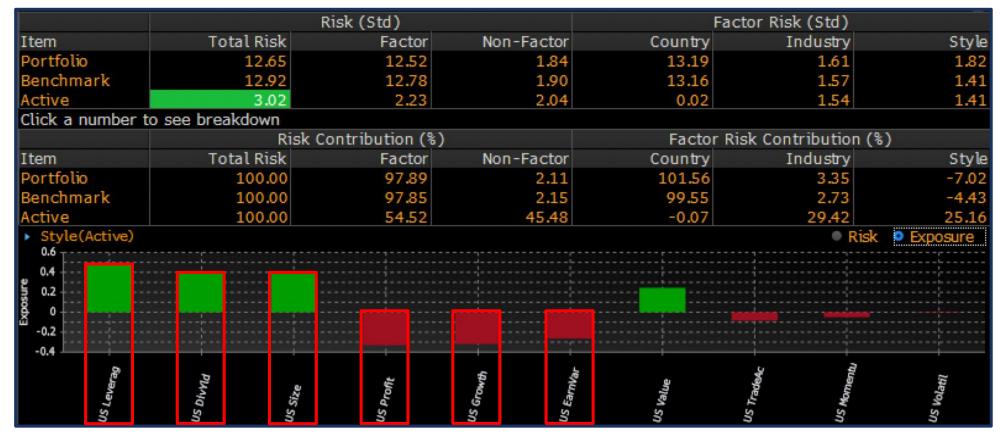




DGRW HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO US LEVERAGE, US DIVIDENDS, & US SIZE

QUAL HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO US PROFIT, US GROWTH, & US EARNINGS

DGRW (Portfolio) vs. QUAL (Benchmark): Style Factor Exposures



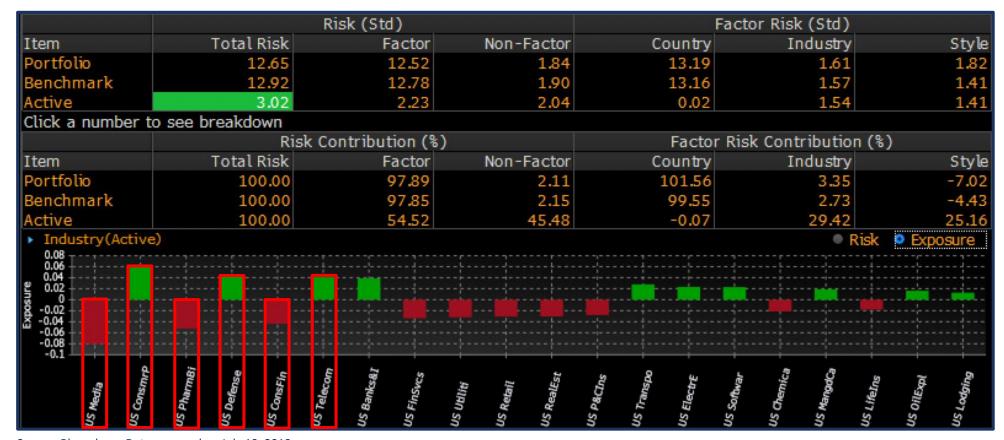




DGRW HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO US CONSUMER, US DEFENSIVES, & US **TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

QUAL HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO US MEDIA, US PHARMA, & US CONSUMER

DGRW (Portfolio) vs. QUAL (Benchmark): Industry Factor Exposures





ETF PORTFOLIO RISK ANALYTICS

EDIV VS. EEM





EDIV SCREENS FOR EMERGING MARKET STOCKS WITH POSITIVE EARNINGS AND DIVIDEND GROWTH

EDIV Methodology & Sector Weights

- EDIV screens for stocks that have positive earnings per share for the most recent 12-month period, positive 3year earnings growth, stable or increasing 3-year dividend growth, and a dividend yield higher than the median for the universe.
- Comprised of 100 stocks
- EDIV only has a 7% overlap with EEM.
- YTD performance through 7/22/2019:
 - EDIV +11.87, EEM +10.59%
 - EDIV has outperformed EEM by 128bps
- In terms of valuations:
 - In 2019, EDIV has a PE of 10.36 while EEM has a PE of 13.11 (based on 2019 estimates; source: www.ETFaction.com)

Equity Sectors Basic Materials Consumer Cyclical **Financial Services** Real Estate Consumer Defensive Healthcare Utilities Communication Services Energy Industrials Technology 12% 18% 24%

Source: S&P, Portfolio Visualizer. Data accessed on July 19, 2019.

 $Source: \underline{https://www.spindices.com/documents/methodologies/methodology-sp-dividend-\underline{opportunities.pdf?force_download=true}$







BASED ON PORTFOLIO VISUALIZER'S FACTOR ANALYSIS, EDIV HAS A HIGHER PROFITABILITY FACTOR LOADING THAN EEM (RMW OF 0.46 & 0.11 RESPECTIVELY)

EDIV Factor Analysis

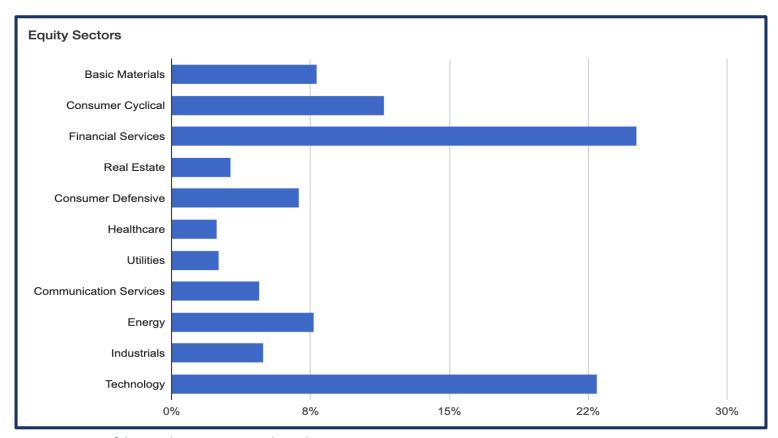
Factor Performance Attribution in Basis Points														
			Monthly Factor Premiums (B					84 -	-12.34 -	-23.37	17.95	-10.51		
Name	Start Date		End Date			Annual Alpha	Rm-Rf		SMB	HML	RMW	СМА	Total	R ²
Portfolio	Mar 2	2011 May 2019		May 2019 -11.74%		-11.74%	87.18		2.34	-1.74	8.28	-1.10	-2.88	35.5%
Portfolio Regression	Results													
Portfolio 100.00% SPDR S&P Emerging Markets Dividend ETF (EDIV)								Portfolio - 12-m	onth Rolling Excess	Return				
Time Period		Mar 2011 - May 201	19					50.0%						Portfolio
Coefficient of Determina	ition (R ²)	35.5%												5-factor Clone
Adjusted R ²		32.1%												
Regression F statistic		10.26 (p-value = 0.000)						25.0%	$\overline{}$	1. 1. 1		A A	lack	
Autocorrelation		No autocorrelation confirmed (Durbin-Watson test value is 1.793 with p-value 0.147)							. / 4	$M \sim V_{\perp}$	\wedge			
Heteroskedasticity		No heteroscedasticity confirmed (Breusch-Pagan test value is 2.687 with p-value 0.748)									M		$\chi \setminus \Lambda$	
Factor		Loading	Standard Error	t-stat	p-value	95% Confidence Interven	al pezi	0.0%	$+$ \wedge	A	1 . 1 .			
Market (Rm-Rf)		0.94	0.136	6.881	0.000	0.6681.21	nual		\	$W \setminus \mathcal{I} \setminus$	1 N			
Size (SMB)		-0.19	0.223	-0.850	0.398	-0.6320.25	3 An		W		\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \			
Value (HML)		0.07	0.258	0.289	0.773	-0.4380.58	7	-25.0%		· ·	1			
Profitability (RMW)		0.46	0.334	1.380	0.171	-0.2031.12	5				V			
Investment (CMA)		0.10	0.394	0.266	0.791	-0.6770.88	6							
Alpha (α)		-97.84bps	0.005	-2.139	0.035	-1.89%0.079	%	-50.0%						
Annualized Alpha (a)		-11.74%							2013	2014 20	015 2016	2017 201	18 2019	





FROM A SECTOR WEIGHT STANDPOINT, EEM IS MOST EXPOSED TO FINANCIAL SERVICES, TECHNOLOGY, & CONSUMER CYCLICALS

EEM Sector Weights

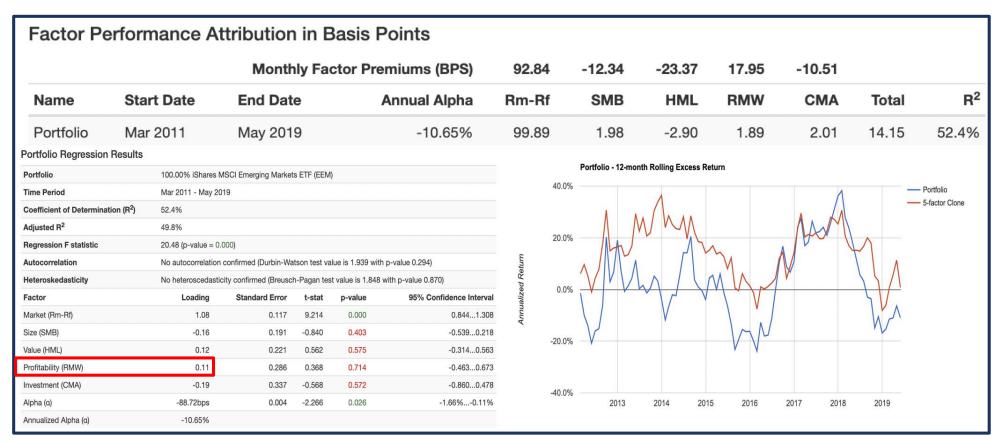






BASED ON PORTFOLIO VISUALIZER'S FACTOR ANALYSIS, EEM HAS A LOWER PROFITABILITY FACTOR LOADING THAN EDIV (RMW OF 0.11 & 0.46 RESPECTIVELY)

EEM Factor Analysis

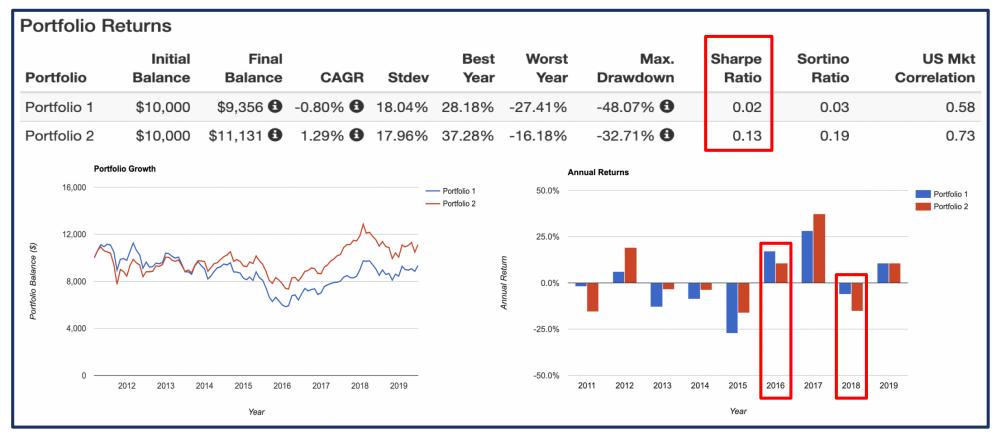






SINCE MAR 2011, EEM HAS PRODUCED A SLIGHTLY HIGHER SHARPE RATIO THAN EDIV (0.13 & 0.02 RESPECTIVELY)

EDIV (Portfolio 1) vs. EEM (Portfolio 2) Risk/Return Analysis

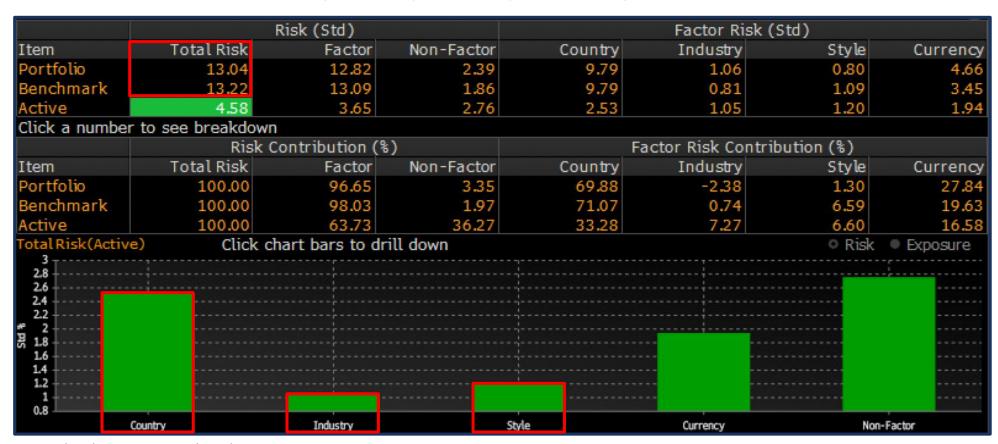






BLOOMBERG PROJECTS EDIV AND EEM TO HAVE TOTAL PORTFOLIO RISKS OF 13.04% AND 13.22% RESPECTIVELY

EDIV (Portfolio) vs. EEM (Benchmark): Total Risk



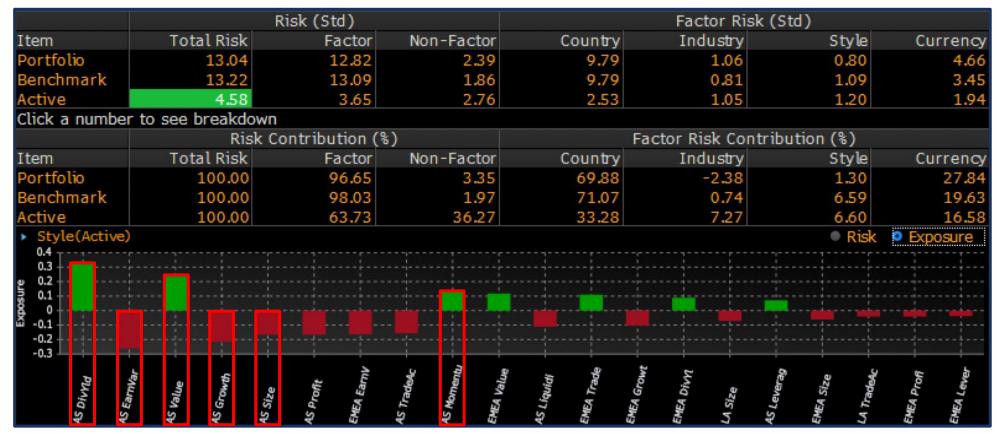




EDIV HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO AS DIVIDENDS, AS VALUE, & AS MOMENTUM

EEM HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO AS EARNINGS, AS GROWTH, & AS SIZE

EDIV (Portfolio) vs. EEM (Benchmark): Style Factor Exposures



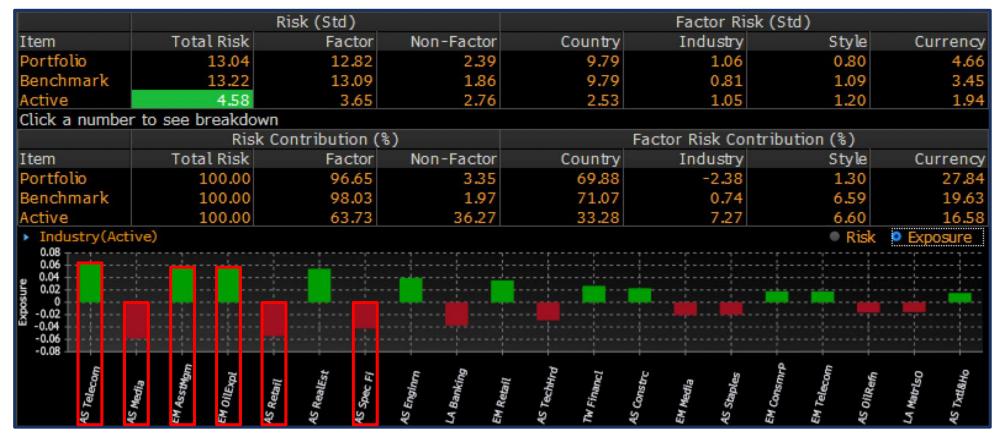




EDIV HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO AS TELECOMMUNICATIONS, EM ASSET MANAGEMENT, & EM OIL EXPLORATION

EEM HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO AS MEDIA, AS RETAIL, & AS SPEC FI

EDIV (Portfolio) vs. EEM (Benchmark): Industry Factor Exposures







ETF PORTFOLIO RISK ANALYTICS

DNL VS. ACWX



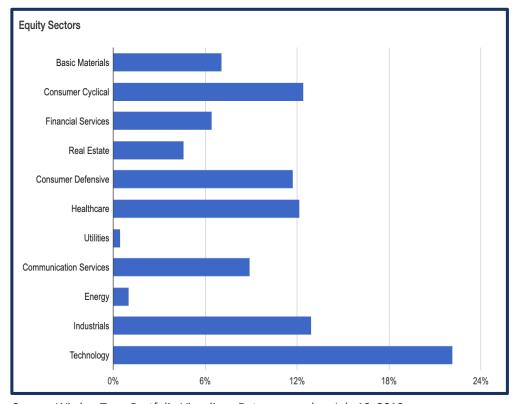


DNL BLENDS QUALITY PLUS GROWTH CHARACTERISTICS WITH DEVELOPED INTERNATIONAL AND EMERGING MARKET STOCKS

DNL Methodology & Sector Weights

- DNL uses the **same methodology** as DGRW except it targets developed international and emerging market stocks.
- DNL has relatively high active share and is composed of **271 stocks** (ACWX includes 1334 stocks).
- YTD performance through 7/22/2019:
 - DNL +19.90%, ACWX +13.50%
 - DNL has outperformed ACWX by **641bps**

Source: https://www.wisdomtree.com/-/media/us-media-files/documents/resourcelibrary/pdf/research/methodologies/wisdomtree-global-ex-us-dividend-growth-indexmethodology-961.pdf

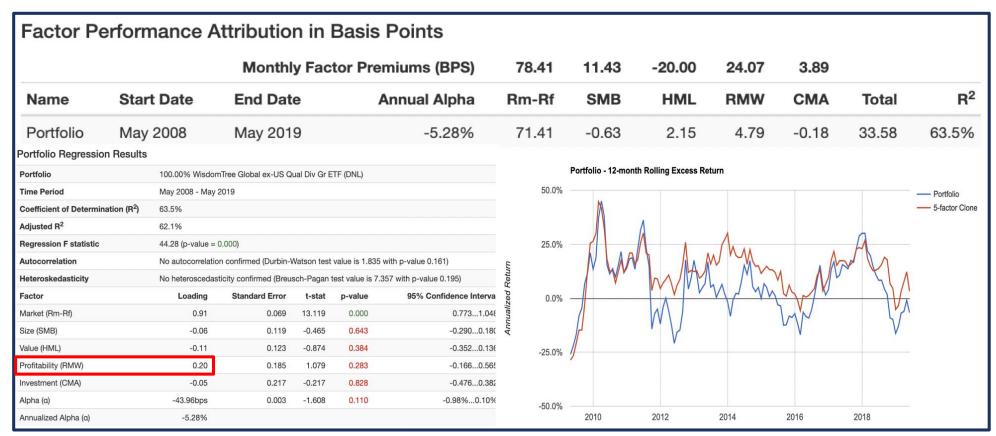






BASED ON PORTFOLIO VISUALIZER'S FACTOR ANALYSIS, DNL HAS A HIGHER PROFITABILITY FACTOR LOADING THAN ACWX (RMW OF 0.20 & -0.16 RESPECTIVELY)

DNL Factor Analysis

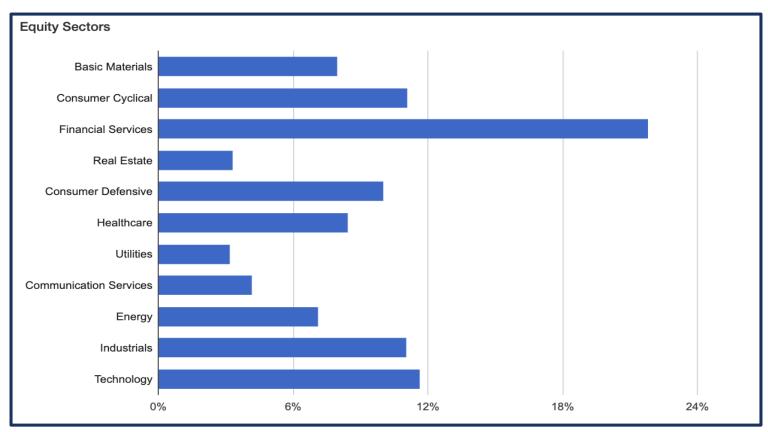






FROM A SECTOR WEIGHT STANDPOINT, ACWX IS MOST EXPOSED TO FINANCIAL SERVICES, TECHNOLOGY, & CONSUMER CYCLICALS

ACWX Sector Weights

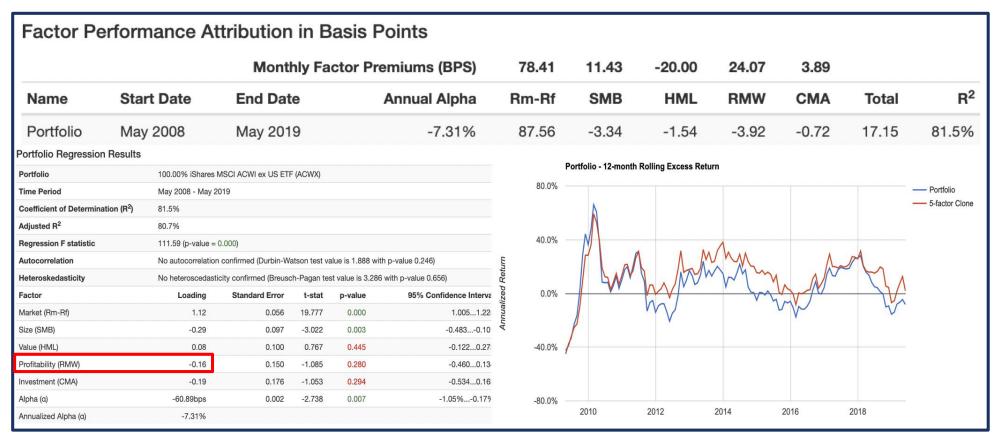






BASED ON PORTFOLIO VISUALIZER'S FACTOR ANALYSIS, ACWX HAS A LOWER PROFITABILITY FACTOR LOADING THAN DNL (RMW OF -0.16 & 0.20 RESPECTIVELY)

ACWX Factor Analysis







SINCE MAY 2008, DNL HAS PRODUCED DOUBLETHE SHARPE RATIO OF ACWX (0.27 & 0.13 RESPECTIVELY)

DNL (Portfolio 1) vs. ACWX (Portfolio 2) Risk/Return Analysis

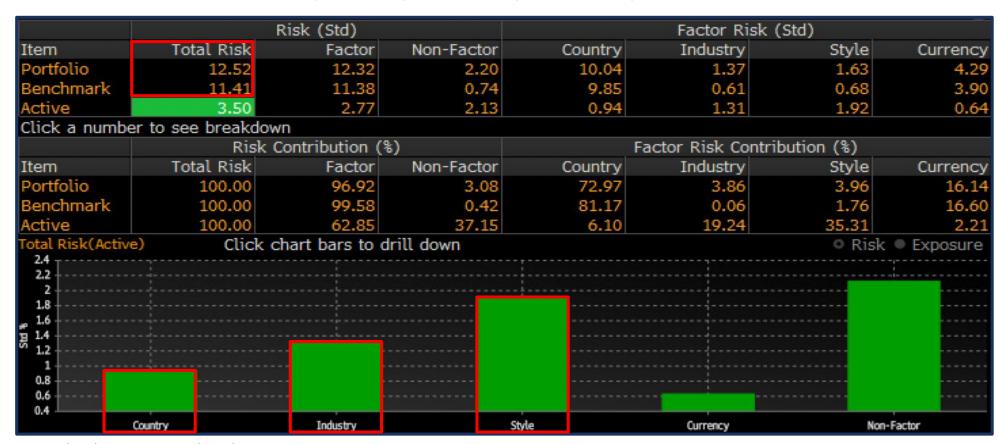






BLOOMBERG PROJECTS DNL AND ACWX TO HAVE TOTAL PORTFOLIO RISKS OF 12.52% AND 11.41% RESPECTIVELY

DNL (Portfolio) vs. ACWX (Benchmark): Total Risk

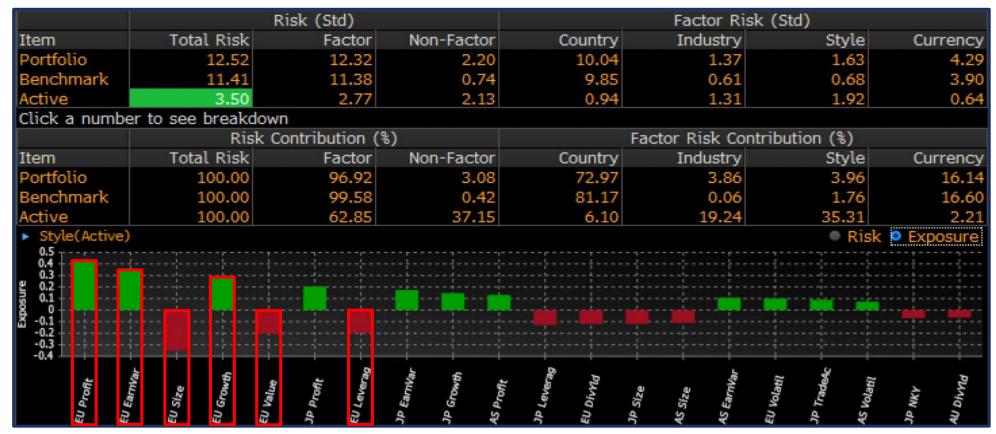




DNL HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO EU PROFIT, EU EARNINGS, & EU GROWTH

ACWX HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO EU SIZE, EU VALUE, & EU LEVERAGE

DNL (Portfolio) vs. ACWX (Benchmark): Style Factor Exposures



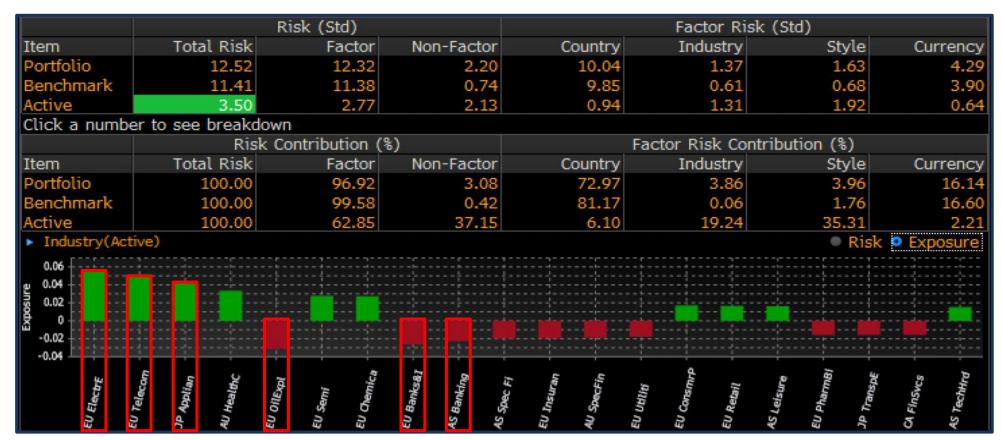




DNL HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO EU ELECTRIC, EU TELECOMMUNICATIONS, & JP APPLIANCES

ACWX HAS GREATER EXPOSURE TO EU OIL EXPLORATION, EU BANKS, & AS BANKS

DNL (Portfolio) vs. ACWX (Benchmark): Industry Factor Exposures







ETF PORTFOLIO RISK ANALYTICS

GDX & BENEFITS OF GOLD IN A PORTFOLIO





ASTORIA'S INSIGHTS ON GOLD

- Astoria believes that with global rates trending lower, the opportunity cost for owning gold has declined.
- 10-year *real* US yields have gone from **1.2% to 0.24%** since Sep 2018.
- In recent quarters, recession risks have increased which has made gold more favorable in our view.
- Gold has historically proven to be uncorrelated with stocks and has often lowered the overall risk of a portfolio. In our view, this diversification benefit is very valuable for multi-asset portfolios that aim for higher risk adjusted returns over varying economic cycles.
- Since the S&P 500's low in March 2009:
 - GDX -10%
 - GLD +45%
 - SPY +397%
- Moreover, we note the following:
 - GDX still 50% below all time highs in 2011
 - GLD still 25% below its all time high in 2011
- In the following pages, we highlight the risk/return of including an allocation to gold miners and the bullion in a 60% US equity and 40% US bond portfolio.





SINCE 1997, A PORTFOLIO OF 50% US STOCKS, 40% US BONDS, & 10% GOLD EQUITIES HAS PRODUCED A HIGHER SHARPE RATIO THAN A 60% US STOCKS & 40% US BONDS PORTFOLIO

Portfolio 1: 60% Vanguard Total Stock Market Index Fund (VITSX) & 40% Vanguard Total Bond Market Index Fund (VBMFX) vs. Portfolio 2: 50% VITSX & 40% VBMFX & 10% VanEck International Investors Gold Fund (INIVX) Risk/Return Analysis

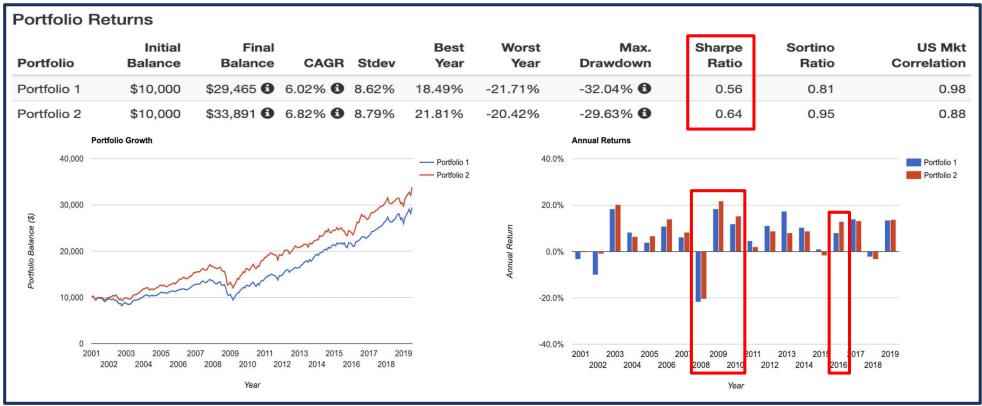






SINCE 2001, A PORTFOLIO OF 50% US STOCKS, 40% US BONDS, & 10% GOLD EQUITIES HAS PRODUCED A HIGHER SHARPE RATIO THAN A 60% US STOCKS & 40% US BONDS PORTFOLIO

Portfolio 1: 60% Vanguard 500 Index Investor (VFINX) & 40% Vanguard Total Bond Market Index Fund (VBMFX) vs. Portfolio 2: 50% VFINX & 40% VBMFX & 10% VanEck International Investors Gold Fund (INIVX) Risk/Return Analysis

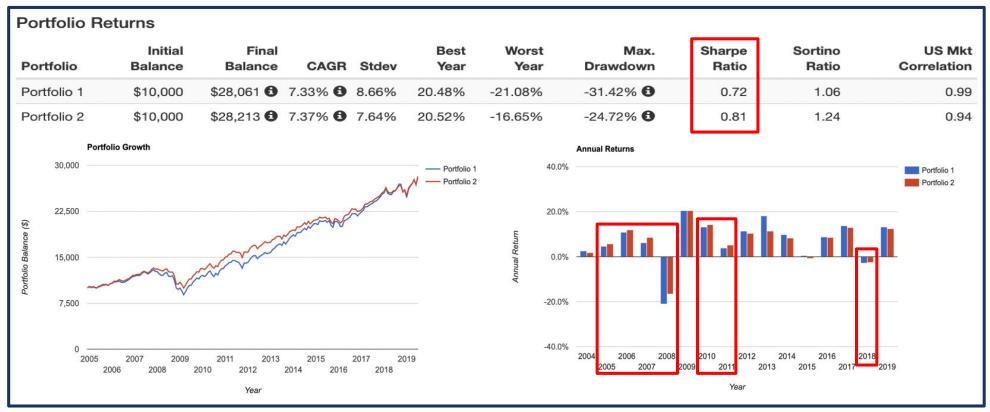






SINCE 2004, A PORTFOLIO OF 50% US STOCKS, 40% US BONDS, & 10% GOLD BULLION HAS PRODUCED A HIGHER SHARPE RATIO THAN A 60% US STOCKS & 40% US BONDS PORTFOLIO

Portfolio 1: 60% Vanguard 500 Index Investor (VFINX) & 40% Vanguard Total Bond Market Index Fund (VBMFX) vs. Portfolio 2: 50% VFINX & 40% VBMFX & 10% SPDR Gold Shares (GLD) Risk/Return Analysis







BLOOMBERG PROJECTS GDX TO HAVE A TOTAL PORTFOLIO RISK OF 22.20%

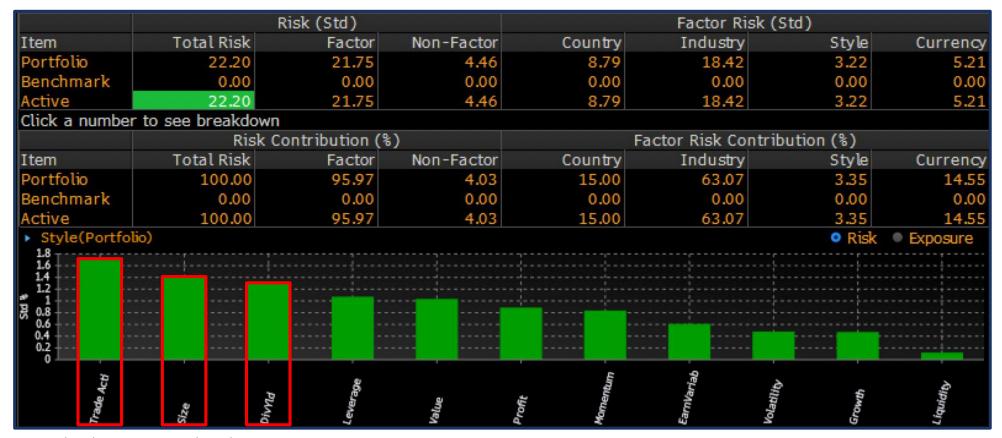
GDX: Total Risk





GDX'S GREATEST STYLE FACTOR RISKS COME FROM TRADE ACTIVITY, SIZE, & DIVIDEND YIELDS

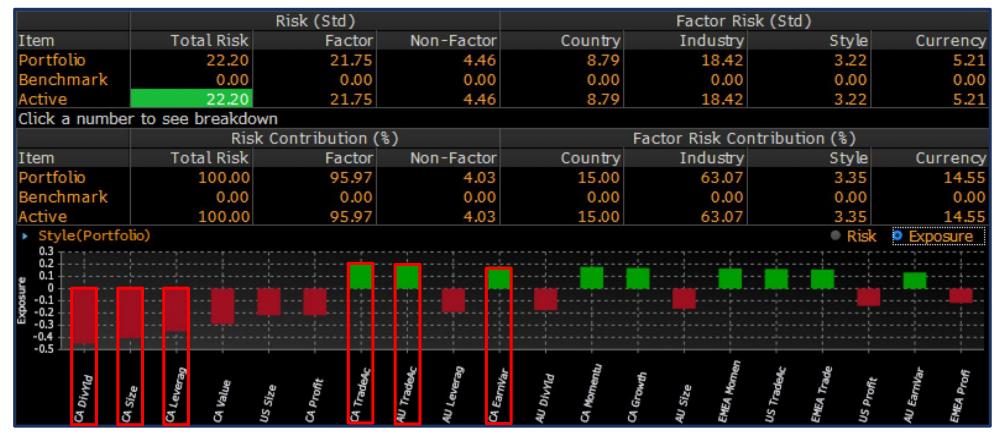
GDX: Style Factor Risks





GDX IS UNDER EXPOSED TO CA DIVIDENDS, CA SIZE, & CA LEVERAGE AND OVER EXPOSED TO CATRADE ACTIVITY, AUTRADE **ACTIVITY, & CA EARNINGS**

GDX: Style Factor Exposures







GDX'S GREATEST INDUSTRY FACTOR RISKS COME FROM CAPRECIOUS METALS, AU PRECIOUS METALS, & US METALS

GDX: Industry Factor Risks (Materials)





GDX'S GREATEST INDUSTRY FACTOR EXPOSURES COME FROM CA PRECIOUS METALS, US METALS, & AU PRECIOUS METALS

GDX: Industry Factor Exposures (Materials)





WARRANTIES & DISCLAIMERS

- Disclaimers | Not FDIC/NCUA Insured | Not a Deposit | May Lose Value | No Bank Guarantee | Not Insured | Past Performance is Not Indicative of Future Returns
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