Northcoast Research

## Recreation \& Leisure Products

## PII \& ACAT: Despite Sequential Improvements, December Demand Remains Weak

## Overview

- While the weakness appears to have moderated sequentially in December, we would note that (1) we believe that overall PII retail sales still declined slightly in December; (2) the strength was driven by favorable snow; (3) some of the improvement is driven by optics associated with easy comps and (4) aggressive ATV spiffs.
- Specifically, our UTV volume index improved to 43.8 compared to 41.9 in November. As a result, our 4Q16 UTV index came in at 40.5 compared to 35.4 in 3Q16. On the ATV side, our volume index increased to 51.5 vs 46.5 in November. Consequently, our 4Q16 ATV volume index increased to 44.2 compared to 38.2 in 3Q16.
- Both the ATV and UTV ASP metrics improved sequentially, with the sharpest improvement taking place in ATV category. Specifically, our ATV ASP index came in at 53.0 compared to 31.7 in November, while our UTV ASP index increased to 42.2 compared to 32.1 in November.
- While the Maverick X3 is taking market share in the recreational UTV market, there was also chatter that Polaris Ranger sales have been pressured by Can-Am's Defender models (farmer incentives \& aftermarket parts gaining traction). Despite encroaching competitors in the utility space, contacts have noted the Polaris Ranger 1000 is being received positively in the market. Also, many contacts suggested that the OEM could benefit from offering incentives and promotions on its utility/sport UTV General.
- Dealers noted that OEMs are not providing them enough promotions to drive sales, as a net $-3.7 \%$ of dealers in December indicated that they were receiving favorable or unfavorable promotional support $y / y$ to help them move units compared to $18.2 \%$ in November.
- December was the first time since September that we have seen some improvement in our inventory metric as a net $30.3 \%$ of dealers surveyed said they had too much inventory relative to demand compared to $39.5 \%$ in November.
- Our survey respondents' outlook on near-term demand improved, as our forward looking index came in at 69.7 compared to 55.0 in November.


## Conclusion

While we were encouraged by the improving momentum as measured by our survey, we believe it is unlikely that PII will report positive retail sales for its ORV business in 4Q16. As for Arctic Cat, most news from the channel points to ongoing struggles in the ORV business (and more recently in Snowmobiles as well). As such, we are maintaining our NEUTRAL ratings.

|  |  | Target |  | Cur Qtr | Cur Year | Out Year | Mkt. <br> Cap $(M)$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Symbol: | Price | Price | Rating |  |  |  | $\$(0.49) \mathrm{e}$ |
| ACAT | $\$ 13.70$ | NA | N | $\$ 0) \mathrm{e}$ | $\$ 0.10 \mathrm{e}$ | $\$ 178.8$ |  |
| PII | $\$ 87.78$ | NA | N | $\$ 1,015.5 \mathrm{e}$ | $\$ 4,314.4 \mathrm{e}$ | $\$ 5,041.3 \mathrm{e}$ | $\$ 5,623.8$ |

Rating Legend: $B=B u y, N=N e u t r a l, S=S e l l$

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## Northcoast Research ORV Survey; Survey Methodology

As part of our ongoing coverage of Polaris, Arctic Cat and the broader Powersports space, we conduct a monthly survey of Off Road Vehicle (ORV) dealers. The study is predicated on a dynamic survey of more than 50 ORV dealers across North America, which helps us better gauge the overall health of the ORV market and demand for ORV products produced by Polaris Industries and Arctic Cat. Specifically, the survey is designed to provide insight into (1) directional retail trends in the UTV and ATV categories; (2) the retail competitive environment (as measured by price/mix trends); (3) OEM promotional activity; (4) dealer inventory levels; and (5) dealers' outlook for future demand trends. The survey responses are expressed in diffusion indices, with index levels above 50 indicating market expansion (or expectation for expansion), while sub 50 levels are indicative of contracting demand.

## Northcoast Research ORV Survey: Key Themes from December

ORV market continues to be lackluster for Polaris dealers: Our recent checks imply that PII dealers experienced lackluster ORV trends again last month as we continue to believe that overall retail trends remained dull in December. While the weakness appears to have moderated sequentially, we would note that (1) we believe that overall PII retail sales still declined slightly in December; (2) the strength was driven by favorable snow; (3) some of the improvement is driven by optics associated with easy comps and (4) aggressive ATV spiffs. Finally, there is little doubt in our minds that BRP's Can-Am brand continued to gain share in December. While we were encouraged by the improving momentum as measured by our survey, we believe it is unlikely that PII will report positive retail sales for its ORV business in 4Q16.

UTV weakness moderates in December: While our survey points to a continuation of sluggish top-line retail trends, it is worth noting that our index of UTV demand sustained the sequential month to month rise we saw through 4Q16. Specifically, our volume index improved to 43.8 compared to 41.9 in November. As a result, our 4Q16 UTV index came in at 40.5 compared to 35.4 in 3Q16. The most popular models within the category were consistent as models from PII, Can-Am and Honda were noted the most among respondents. Additionally, secondary brands like Odes, CFMOTO and Kymco continue to be emerging topics amongst dealers due to their robust growth. Despite the volatile industry demand trends, and poor fill rates on 72 -inch models, commentary from Can-Am dealers suggest the X 3 continued to take share in December.

ATV volumes maintains its outperformance: On the ATV side, our volume index increased to 51.5 vs 46.5 in November. Consequently, our 4Q16 ATV volume index increased to 44.2 compared to 38.2 in 3 Q16. From a model standpoint, PII, CanAm, and Honda led the way in the ATV category, with the strongest demand coming from entry-level price point models. While the results of our work imply the strongest ATV sell-through since 1Q16, like the UTV market, 4Q comps are favorable relative to 3Q16. Anecdotally, we were pleased to hear incremental commentary that the entry-level ATV category received a tailwind from snow in certain parts of the Midwest in December, as well as talk of stronger holiday youth ATV sales compared to last year ( $\$ 50$ spiff on youth models).

Pricing improvement driven by less MY16 promotions, easy comps: Both the ATV and UTV metrics improved sequentially, with the sharpest improvement taking place in ATV category. Specifically, our ATV ASP index came in at 53.0 compared to 31.7 in November, while our UTV ASP index increased to 42.2 compared to 32.1 in November. As for the quarter our 4Q16 UTV ASP index increased to 36.0 from 31.0 in 3Q16, while our ATV ASP index increased to 40.4 compared to 34.5 in 3 Q16. In our opinion, December's ASP improvement reflects the lack of MY16 inventory on dealer's showroom floor (larger promotions) as well as the cycling of December 2016 when dealers were desperate to reduce inventory levels. As for ATVs, snow accessories were the top reason for the ASP expansion during the month.

Worth noting: While the Maverick X3 is taking market share in the recreational UTV market, there was also chatter that Polaris Ranger sales have been pressured by Can-Am's Defender models (farmer incentives \& aftermarket parts gaining traction). Interestingly, some of our Honda contacts received MY16 Pioneer 1000 models in early December as the OEM has not shipped the MY17 Pioneer 1000 yet, which we believe could also be weighing on Ranger sales. Although Pll's retail sales will face easier comps in '17, the changing market place suggest that competition will continue to weigh on retail. Despite encroaching competitors in the utility space, contacts have noted the Polaris Ranger 1000 is being received positively in the market. Also, many contacts suggested that the OEM could benefit from offering incentives and promotions on its utility/sport UTV General.

## Volume Improves in Both Categories; ATV Expansion \& UTV Weakness Moderates On Easy Comp



## UTV Volume Index; <br> Quarterly Results



Source: Northcoast Research

# UTV Monthly Demand; <br> Softness Persists in December 




December UTV ASP Index;
Dealers Still See Price/Mix Headwind


Source: Northcoast Research

ASP Index Improves in December


Source: Northcoast Research

Quarterly ATV Demand Index;
Sequential Upswing in 4Q16


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# Monthly ATV Demand Index; <br> First Expansion Since November 2015 





ATV Price/Mix Index; Sharp Sequential Increase in December
Index
60

30

20

Source: Northcoast Research

## Current Conditions

OEM incentives: Dealers noted that OEMs are not providing them enough promotions to drive sales, as a net $-3.7 \%$ of dealers in December indicated that they were receiving favorable or unfavorable promotional support $\mathrm{y} / \mathrm{y}$ to help them move units compared to $18.2 \%$ in November. On the surface, it would appear that OEMs tempered promotional support last month; however, we believe that the sequential decline in this metric is impacted by the view that the MY17 programs are not compelling enough to move the retail sales needle the way the MY16 programs did. That said, we would note that OEMs are offering more incentives $\mathrm{y} / \mathrm{y}$, which continues to fuel the promotional environment.

Inventory levels improve: While the combination of shipment cuts and aggressive programs helped right-size channel inventory at the end of $3 Q 16$, we believe that sell-in outpaced sell-out in the fourth quarter. Indeed, December was the first time since September that we have seen some improvement in our inventory metric as a net $30.3 \%$ of dealers surveyed said they had too much inventory relative to demand, which represents an improvement from 39.5\% in November, $33.3 \%$ in October, and $31.8 \%$ in September (was $45 \%$ prior to last shipment cut). Bloated inventory levels continue to be broad based (vs discrete areas such as oil or ag region in the past), and are not limited to any one manufacturer though some OEMs appear to be in better shape (Can-Am) than others (ACAT). In other words, aside from pockets of growth in the industry inventory still has room for improvement.

Near term outlook: Our survey respondents' outlook on near-term demand increased, as our forward looking index came in at 69.7 compared to 55.0 in November. While dealers may not have seen a large influx of consumers right after the election, they continue to believe they will receive a post-election tailwind. In addition, contacts in cold weather climates believe they will benefit from a better snow season $\mathrm{y} / \mathrm{y}$.

Inventories at the End of December; Dealers Experience Moderate Improvement


Source: Northcoast Research

## 3-Month Outlook for Unit Sales;



Source: Northcoast Research


Source: Northcoast Research

## * P**LARIS

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Polaris - Income Statement
Total revenues
Growth (\%)
Two-year stacked growth (\%)
Cost of sales
Gross profit
Gross profit
Margin (\%)
year-over-year bps $\Delta$
Operating expenses:
Selling and marketing
Research and developpment
Total operating expenses
Margin (\%)
Margin (\%)
year-over-year bps $\Delta$
ncome from core operations
Income from financial services
perating income
Marain $(\%)$
Margin (\%)
year-over-year bps $\Delta$
Non-operating expense (income)
Interest expense
Gain on securities available for sale
Other (income) expense, ne
Income before income taxes
Provision for income taxes
Income tax rate
Net income
Adjusted earnings per share
Weighted average shares outstanding
Basic
Diluted
Dividend per share
Year-over-year change
EBitda


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|  | Seth B. Woolf <br> Research Analyst <br> Northcoast Research <br> seth.woolf@northcoastresearch.com <br> 216.468.6927 |
|  | Arctic Cat - Income Statement <br> Net sales: <br> Snowmobile \& ATV units <br> Parts, garments, \& accessories <br> Total net sales <br> Growth (\%) |
|  | Cost of goods sold: <br> Snowmobile \& ATV units <br> Parts, garments, \& accessories <br> Total cost of goods sold |
|  | Gross profit Margin (\%) Yearlyear change (bps) |
|  | Operating expenses: Selling \& marketing Research \& development General \& administrative Total operating expenses Opex rate (\%) Year/year change (bps) |
|  | Operating profit (loss) Margin (\%) <br> Yearlyear change (bps) |
|  | Net interest expense (income) Pretax income |
|  | Income tax provision (benefit) Income tax rate |
|  | Net earnings (loss) |
|  | Diluted earnings per share |
|  | Diluted earnings per share Weighted average share outstanding Basic <br> Diluted |
|  | EBitda EBITDA/share |



| 120.0 | \$ 111.1 | 84.3 | 97.4 | 227.4 | 180.7 | 139.7 | 147.2 | 165.5 | 143.1 | 138.5 | 148.6 |  | 72.1 | 99.7 | 135.5 | 146.7 |  | 584.9 | 534.6 | 497.9 | 539.9 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 23.7 | 23.3 | 20.6 | 20.4 | 35.1 | 30.5 | 24.9 | 25.0 | 28.3 | 22.9 | 25.6 | 26.7 |  | 26.8 | 21.7 | 28.5 | 32.3 |  | 113.9 | 98.3 | 99.6 | 104.5 |
| 143.6 | 134.4 | \$ 104.9 | 117.8 | 262.5 | 211.2 | 164.6 | 172.3 | 193.7 | 166.0 | 164.1 | 175.4 | \$ | 98.9 | 121.4 | 163.9 | 178.9 | \$ | 698.8 | 632.9 | 597.5 | 644.4 |
| 18.9\% | (6.4\%) | (22.0\%) | 12.3\% | 10.0\% | (19.6\%) | (22.0\%) | 4.7\% | (14.2\%) | (14.3\%) | (1.2\%) | 6.9\% |  | (32.0\%) | 22.7\% | 35.1\% | 9.2\% |  | (4.3\%) | (9.4\%) | (5.6\%) | 7.8\% |
| 97.7 | 97.0 | 80.7 | 85.6 | 185.1 | 147.7 | 133.3 | 136.8 | 140.2 | 125.7 | 124.4 | 127.9 |  | 82.5 | 105.8 | 111.6 | 115.5 |  | 505.4 | 476.2 | 450.0 | 465.7 |
| 15.1 | 14.9 | 12.4 | 12.5 | 22.3 | 19.5 | 17.8 | 18.0 | 18.7 | 16.0 | 16.3 | 16.6 |  | 17.8 | 15.6 | 16.6 | 18.1 |  | 73.9 | 66.0 | 63.1 | 65.1 |
| 112.8 | 111.8 | 93.1 | 98.0 | 207.4 | 167.2 | 151.1 | 154.7 | 158.8 | 141.8 | 140.8 | 144.5 |  | 100.2 | 121.4 | 128.2 | 133.6 |  | 579.3 | 542.2 | 513.1 | 530.8 |
| 30.8 | 22.6 | 11.8 | 19.8 | 55.1 | 43.9 | 13.5 | 17.5 | 34.9 | 24.3 | 23.3 | 30.9 |  | (1.3) | (0.1) | 35.8 | 45.3 |  | 119.4 | 90.7 | 84.4 | 113.5 |
| 21.4\% | 16.8\% | 11.2\% | 16.8\% | 21.0\% | 20.8\% | 8.2\% | 10.2\% | 18.0\% | 14.6\% | 14.2\% | 17.6\% |  | (1.4\%) | (0.1\%) | 21.8\% | 25.3\% |  | 17.1\% | 14.3\% | 14.1\% | 17.6\% |
| (270) | (465) | (558) | 559 | (487) | (19) | $(1,257)$ | 195 | 21 | (341) | (41) | 341 |  | $(1,514)$ | 131 | 2,187 | 351 |  | (359) | (277) | (21) | 350 |
| 7.0 | 9.0 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 12.1 | 11.8 | 11.2 | 11.3 | 11.8 | 12.2 | 11.2 | 11.5 |  | 8.8 | 10.7 | 10.2 | 10.4 |  | 39.7 | 43.7 | 41.8 | 42.4 |
| 5.3 | 6.0 | 7.9 | 8.3 | 6.6 | 6.2 | 8.4 | 8.9 | 6.5 | 7.2 | 7.8 | 8.3 |  | 5.9 | 7.7 | 7.8 | 8.2 |  | 24.3 | 27.2 | 31.9 | 33.8 |
| 12.9 | 9.2 | 12.0 | 7.1 | 12.3 | 7.2 | 13.0 | 9.2 | 10.8 | 10.6 | 13.5 | 10.6 |  | 12.9 | 9.0 | 8.3 | 7.3 |  | 48.9 | 36.0 | 46.9 | 34.3 |
| 25.2 | 24.1 | 29.1 | 24.7 | 31.0 | 25.3 | 32.6 | 29.4 | 29.1 | 30.1 | 32.6 | 30.4 |  | 27.6 | 27.4 | 26.3 | 25.9 |  | 112.9 | 106.9 | 120.5 | 110.5 |
| 17.6\% | 17.9\% | 27.7\% | 21.0\% | 11.8\% | 12.0\% | 19.8\% | 17.1\% | 15.0\% | 18.1\% | 19.8\% | 17.3\% |  | 27.9\% | 22.6\% | 16.0\% | 14.5\% |  | 16.2\% | 16.9\% | 20.2\% | 17.1\% |
| 44 | 38 | 977 | (671) | 116 | 15 | 787 | (277) | 533 | 312 | 173 | (251) |  | 1,234 | (531) | (659) | (153) |  | 376 | 73 | 328 | (303) |
| 5.6 | (1.5) | (17.3) | (5.0) | 24.1 | 18.7 | (19.1) | (11.9) | 5.9 | (5.8) | (9.3) | 0.5 |  | (29.0) | (27.5) | 9.5 | 19.4 |  | 6.5 | (16.2) | (36.2) | 3.1 |
| 3.9\% | (1.2\%) | (16.5\%) | (4.2\%) | 9.2\% | 8.8\% | (11.6\%) | (6.9\%) | 3.0\% | (3.5\%) | (5.6\%) | 0.3\% |  | (29.3\%) | (22.7\%) | 5.8\% | 10.8\% |  | 0.9\% | (2.6\%) | (6.1\%) | ..5\% |
| (314) | (503) | $(1,535)$ | 1,230 | (603) | (33) | $(2,044)$ | 472 | (512) | (653) | (214) | 593 |  | $(2,747)$ | 661 | 2,846 | 504 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.2 |  | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.4 | (0.0) | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.5 | (0.0) |  | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 1.0 |  | 0.3 | 0.8 | 1.2 | 1.1 |
| 5.5 | (1.7) | (17.5) | (5.1) | 23.9 | 18.3 | (19.5) | (11.9) | 5.8 | (6.0) | (9.7) | 0.5 |  | (29.0) | (27.6) | 9.4 | 18.4 |  | 6.2 | (17.0) | (37.4) | 1.9 |
| 2.0 | (0.6) | (7.0) | (1.7) | 8.5 | 7.1 | (6.8) | (4.0) | (1.7) | (3.6) | (3.3) | 0.2 |  | (7.4) | (10.7) | 3.2 | 6.3 |  | 1.3 | (7.9) | (13.9) | 0.7 |
| 35.5\% | 36.4\% | 39.8\% | 34.0\% | 35.5\% | 38.9\% | 34.6\% | 34.0\% | (29.7\%) | 60.1\% | 34.0\% | 34.0\% |  | 25.7\% | 38.9\% | 34.0\% | 34.0\% |  | 20.8\% | 46.1\% | 37.0\% | 34.0\% |
| 3.6 | (1.1) | (10.6) | (3.4) | 15.4 | 11.2 | (12.8) | (7.8) | 7.5 | (2.4) | (6.4) | 0.3 |  | (21.5) | (16.9) | 6.2 | 12.1 |  | 4.9 | (9.2) | (23.6) | 1.3 |
| \$0.27 | (50.08) | (\$0.81) | (50.26) | \$1.18 | \$0.85 | (50.98) | (50.60) | 50.57 | (50.18) | (50.49) | 50.03 |  | (\$1.66) | (\$1.30) | \$0.47 | 50.93 |  | \$0.38 | (50.71) | (\$1.80) | \$0.10 |

## DISCLOSURES

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## Ratings

BUY - The stock is expected to outperform the S\&P 500 index over a twelve-month period.
NEUTRAL - The stock is expected to perform in-line with the S\&P 500 index over a twelve-month period.
SELL - The stock is expected underperform the S\&P 500 index over a twelve-month period.

## Valuation and Risks

Our price target, as well as our recommendation, is based on a 12-month time horizon; however, we cannot guarantee an investor will achieve these results. We use a variety of methods to determine the price target of individual securities including fundamental analysis. In addition, we employ numerous valuation methodologies which include, but are not limited to, price to earnings multiples, enterprise value to earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA), book value, free cash flow yield, discounted cash flow, and relative valuation. All securities are subject to various risk factors. Please reference the above text and our most recent report for specific company valuation and price target.


## Rating Summary

|  | Distribution of Ratings Table |  |  |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Rating |  | Count | Percent |
| BUY(B) | 56 | $35.44 \%$ |  |
| NEUTRAL(N) | 98 | $62.03 \%$ |  |
| SELL(S) | 4 | $2.53 \%$ |  |
| Total |  | 158 |  |

## Analyst Certification

I, Seth Woolf, certify that the views and opinions expressed in the research report accurately reflect my personal views about the securities and issuers mentioned in this report. Further, I certify that no part of my compensation was, is or will be directly or indirectly related to the specific recommendations or views contained in this report. Analyst compensation is based on the quality of analysis, communication skills, and stock price performance.
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