

Key Takeaways

- **Risk aversion and implied volatility measures are at all-time lows – what does this mean?**
- **Equity and bond valuations appear rich with little evidence to further support multiple expansion**
- **Economic growth remains sub-par and a lack of productivity gains suggest the current path will not change anytime soon**

Overview

- For most equity markets, retail investors continued to pour money into passive index ETFs, driving prices higher during April. At the same time, implied volatility (VIX) and risk aversion recently hit an all-time low.
- Bond prices moved sideways in April 2017 with very little movement in bond yields and low rates of credit default.
- Commodity prices moved lower on sharply lower oil prices due to excess supply and weak demand issues.

Areas of Opportunity & Concern

- We believe equity markets, especially in the U.S., continue to trade at levels well above their implied fair market value. Search for return continues to favor equities relative to bonds in a low interest rate environment.
- More confounding is the record low level of market volatility and risk aversion despite unfavorable investment fundamentals and elevated political uncertainty. Some of this phenomena may be explained by current levels of excessive call writing, possibly seeking income return.
- Low levels of volatility and risk aversion are typically followed by periods of elevated volatility, hence lower market returns.
- We continue to focus on prudent diversification away from market-weighted portfolio exposures in favor of active factor allocations, along with non-correlated investment strategies and direct equity hedge strategies.

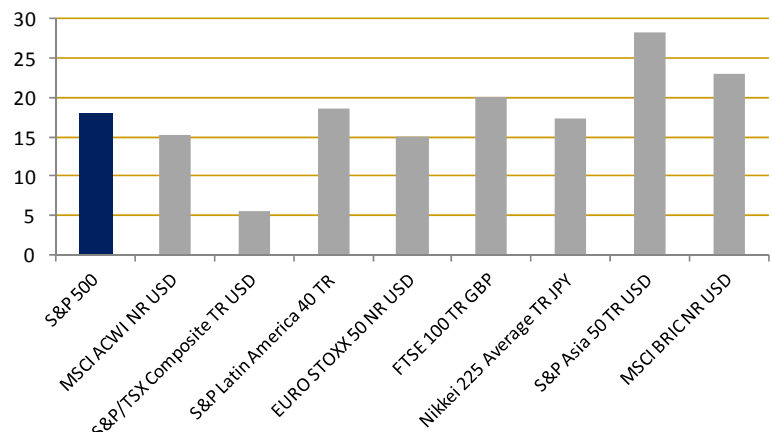
Key Market & Economic Indicators

	Bullish	Favorable	Neutral	Cautious	Bearish
Equities					
U.S. Large & Mid Cap					Neutral
U.S. Small Cap					Cautious
International					Cautious
Emerging Markets					Cautious
Fixed Income					
U.S. Aggregate					Neutral
U.S. Government					Cautious
U.S. Corporate					Favorable
U.S. High Yield					Neutral
Non-U.S. Developed					Cautious
Emg Market Debt					Bearish
Alternatives					
REITs					Neutral
Commodities					Bearish
Managed Futures					Cautious
Hedge Fund					Favorable

Source: Morningstar Data as of 04/30/2017

Regional Index Returns (%)

1 Year Trailing (As of 04/30/2017)



Source: Morningstar

Important Disclosures

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Index definitions:

“U.S. Large Cap” represented by the S&P 500 Index.

“U.S. Small Cap” represented by the Russell 2000 Index.

“International” represented by the MSCI Europe, Australasia, Far East (EAFE) Net Return Index.

“Emerging” represented by the MSCI Emerging Markets Net Return Index.

“U.S. Aggregate” represented by the Barclays U.S. Aggregate Bond Index.

“U.S. Government” represented by the Barclays U.S. Government Bond Index.

“U.S. Corporate” represented by the Barclays U.S. Credit Bond Index.

“U.S. High Yield” represented by the Barclays U.S. Corporate High Yield Index.

“Non-U.S. Developed” represented by the S&P International Treasury ex U.S. Index.

“Emg Market Debt” represented by the JP Morgan GBI-EM Global Core Index

“REITs” represented by the FTSE North American Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) Equity REITs Index.

“Commodities” represented by the S&P Goldman Sachs Commodities Index (GSCI).

“Managed Futures” represented by the Credit Suisse Managed Futures Index.

“Global Macro” represented by the Credit Suisse Global Macro Index

Direct investment in an index is not possible.

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