OUR U.S. DIVIDEND FUNDS ARE TURNING 10 YEARS OLD

Christopher Gannatti — Global Head of Research 05/03/2016

It is amazing to me that some of our <u>dividend</u>-focused strategies are already going to hit their 10-year anniversary of live performance history on June 16, 2016. Time really does fly. To put things into context, on June 16, 2006: • The <u>U.S. 3-</u> <u>Month Treasury Bill</u> had an <u>interest rate</u> of 4.9%. (As of March 31, 2016, it was at 0.19%.)¹ • The <u>S&P 500 Index</u> closed at 1,252. (As of March 31, 2016, it was at 2,059.)² • There was no such term as "<u>smart beta</u>" yet,³ just as there was no such thing as an iPhone⁴ or an iPad⁵—three things that it would be difficult to imagine not hearing multiple references to each and every day, at least if you work in financial services and are tasked with developing innovative approaches to indexing. So, how have our strategies done compared to their respective peer group? **Average Annual Returns**

Fund	Ticker	Exp. Ratio	Inception Date	YTD	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	Since Fund Inception	YTD	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	Since Fund Inception
WisdomTree Total Dividend Fund	DTD	0.28%	6/16/2006	4.26%	2.84%	10.62%	11.80%	7.09%	4.24%	2.65%	10.63%	11.78%	7.08%
WisdomTree LargeCap Dividend Fund	DLN	0.28%	6/16/2006	3.82%	3.04%	10.44%	11.76%	6.86%	3.79%	2.93%	10.43%	11.75%	6.83%
WisdomTree MidCap Dividend Fund	DON	0.38%	6/16/2006	7.31%	2.98%	12.64%	12.90%	8.91%	7.31%	2.89%	12.60%	12.89%	8.95%
WisdomTree SmallCap Dividend Fund	DES	0.38%	6/16/2006	6.26%	-1.70%	9.41%	10.62%	7.01%	6.28%	-1.83%	9.35%	10.63%	7.00%
WisdomTree High Dividend Fund	DHS	0.38%	6/16/2006	7.90%	7.88%	10.89%	13.18%	6.36%	7.89%	7.83%	10.86%	13.17%	6.36%
WisdomTree Dividend ex-Financials Fund	DTN	0.38%	6/16/2006	8.06%	2.96%	10.18%	12.30%	8.07%	8.02%	2.90%	10.17%	12.28%	8.05%

Source: WisdomTree, for period from 6/16/06 to 3/31/16.

Respe	ective		Mor	Peer				
Ticker	Fund	Fund Inception Date	Morningstar Category	YTD	1-Year	3-Year	5-Year	Since Fund Inception
DTD	WisdomTree Total Dividend Fund	6/16/2006	Large Value	86%	90%	88%	94%	83%
DTN	WisdomTree Dividend ex-Financials Fund	6/16/2006	Large Value	98%	90%	83%	97%	98%
DLN	WisdomTree LargeCap Dividend Fund	6/16/2006	Large Value	85%	91%	86%	94%	86%
DHS	WisdomTree High Dividend Fund	6/16/2006	Large Value	97%	98%	91%	99%	77%
DON	WisdomTree MidCap Dividend Fund	6/16/2006	Mid-Cap Value	98%	98%	99%	99%	94%
DES	WisdomTree SmallCap Dividend Fund	6/16/2006	Small Value	95%	91%	92%	99%	80%

WisdomTree's Results vs. Groups

Source: Morningstar Direct, for period from 6/16/06 to 3/31/16.

Performance is historical and does not guarantee future results. Current performance may be lower or higher than quoted. Investment returns and principal value of an investment will fluctuate so that an investor's shares, when redeemed, may be worth more or less than their original cost. Performance data for the most recent month-end is available at www.wisdomtree.com.

WisdomTree shares are bought and sold at market price (not NAV) and are not individually redeemed from the Fund. Total returns are calculated using the daily 4:00 p.m. EST net asset value (NAV). Market price returns reflect the midpoint of the bid/ask spread as of the close of trading on the exchange where Fund shares are listed. Market price returns do not represent the returns you would receive if you traded shares at other times.

2016 Morningstar, Inc. All rights reserved. The information contained herein: (1) is proprietary to Morningstar and/or its content providers; (2) may not be copied or distributed; and (3) is not warranted to be accurate, complete or timely. Neither Morningstar nor its content providers are responsible for any damages or losses arising from any use of this information. Past performance, rankings and ratings are no guarantee of future results. The percent of peer group beaten is the funds' total-return percentile rank relative to all funds in the same Morningstar Category and is subject to change each month. Regarding ranking of funds: 1=best, and 1,437=worst, using the 6/1/14-3/31/16 time frame as an example where there were 1,437 managers with performance extending through the full period.

• Impressive "Since

Inception" Results: Between June 16, 2006, and March 31, 2016, a LOT has happened in U.S. equity markets. Any equity strategy would have been tested by the large upward or downward moves. In our opinion, over such a period it is difficult to beat more than half of managers in a respective peer group. • **Remarkable Five-Year Results:** For the five years ended March 31, 2016, every single WisdomTree Fund we show beat more than 90% of its respective peer group. DHS, DON and DES all beat 99% of their respective categories over this time frame. • **Strong Results Thus Far in 2016:** In this volatile quarter, many of WisdomTree's domestic dividend Funds were able to outperform significant portions of their peer groups. In the Large Value category, DTD and DLN outperformed around 85% of their peers, while DTN and DHS beat more than 95% of their peers. In the Small Value and Mid-Cap Value categories, DES beat 95% while DON beat an impressive 98% of its peer group.⁶ **Prospects for 2016** It is important to put these strategies in their



appropriate context in order to understand and frame the potential paths of performance that might be observed. The Indexes they track: • Are not growth or <u>momentum</u> Indexes—and we saw that growth and momentum were two avenues of outperformance in 2015. While these trends may not continue in 2016, usually in times of volatility, like we've seen thus far in 2016, a focus on dividend-paying stocks has tended to provide some degree of relative outperformance. • Are focused solely on dividend payers. We cited at the outset that the period of nearly 10 years during which these Indexes have been live has seen the 3-Month T-bill go from an interest rate of almost 5.0% to approximately 20 basis

points (bps). Lower interest rates are supportive for high-dividend⁷ stocks, as individuals search for sources of income outside low-yielding fixed income. If markets are volatile and risk-off sentiment becomes more pervasive than risk-on sentiment, interest rates may remain lower for longer and ultimately continue to provide a supportive element for income-generating equity approaches. • Are flexible, in that they are rebalanced once a year to reflect the conditions of the dividend-paying landscape as they exist at that time. One example of this is the Information Technology sector. This represented a very low exposure in 2006, when many large companies in this sector were not paying dividends. As of the most recent Index screening date—November 30, 2015—many of these firms had begun paying dividends, allowing them to be considered for inclusion since these Indexes do not require multiple years of past dividend history for their constituents. Sources of uncertainty-be it the U.S. presidential election, China's growth prospects, oil price levels or other items yet to enter the forefront of our attention span-may lead to continued volatility. Dividend-focused strategies ¹Source: Bloomberg. ²Source: Bloomberg. ³Source: While it's quite difficult to may therefore remain at the forefront. indicate the first use of the term "smart beta," Towers Watson is credited with coining the phrase and wrote "Understanding Smart Beta" in July 2013. ⁴Source: "Apple Reinvents the Phone with iPhone," Macworld San Francisco press release, 1/9/07. ⁵Source: "Apple Launches iPad," Apple press release, 1/27/10. ⁶Paragraph refers to the quarter ending 3/31/16.⁷High dividend: Refers to a component of the methodology of the WisdomTree High Dividend Index, which selects the 30% highest-yielding stocks from the WisdomTree Dividend Index universe on an annual basis.

Important Risks Related to this Article

Dividends are not guaranteed, and a company's future ability to pay dividends may be limited. A company currently paying dividends may cease paying dividends at any time.

Funds focusing their investments on certain sectors and/or smaller companies may be more vulnerable to any single economic or regulatory development. This may result in greater share price volatility.

Please read each Fund's prospectus for specific details regarding each Fund's risk profile.

For standardized performance and the most recent month-end performance click <u>here</u> NOTE, this material is intended for electronic use only. Individuals who intend to print and physically deliver to an investor must print the monthly performance report to accompany this blog.

For more investing insights, check out our Economic & Market Outlook

View the online version of this article here.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

U.S. investors only: Click <u>here</u> to obtain a WisdomTree ETF prospectus which contains investment objectives, risks, charges, expenses, and other information; read and consider carefully before investing.

There are risks involved with investing, including possible loss of principal. Foreign investing involves currency, political and economic risk. Funds focusing on a single country, sector and/or funds that emphasize investments in smaller companies may experience greater price volatility. Investments in emerging markets, currency, fixed income and alternative investments include additional risks. Please see prospectus for discussion of risks.

Past performance is not indicative of future results. This material contains the opinions of the author, which are subject to change, and should not to be considered or interpreted as a recommendation to participate in any particular trading strategy, or deemed to be an offer or sale of any investment product and it should not be relied on as such. There is no guarantee that any strategies discussed will work under all market conditions. This material represents an assessment of the market environment at a specific time and is not intended to be a forecast of future events or a guarantee of future results. This material should not be relied upon as research or investment advice regarding any security in particular. The user of this information assumes the entire risk of any use made of the information provided herein. Neither WisdomTree nor its affiliates, nor Foreside Fund Services, LLC, or its affiliates provide tax or legal advice. Investors seeking tax or legal advice should consult their tax or legal advisor. Unless expressly stated otherwise the opinions, interpretations or findings expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of WisdomTree or any of its affiliates.

The MSCI information may only be used for your internal use, may not be reproduced or re-disseminated in any form and may not be used as a basis for or component of any financial instruments or products or indexes. None of the MSCI information is intended to constitute investment advice or a recommendation to make (or refrain from making) any kind of investment decision and may not be relied on as such. Historical data and analysis should not be taken as an indication or guarantee of any future performance analysis, forecast or prediction. The MSCI information is provided on an "as is" basis and the user of this information assumes the entire risk of any use made of this information. MSCI, each of its affiliates and each entity involved in compiling, computing or creating any MSCI information (collectively, the "MSCI Parties") expressly disclaims all warranties. With respect to this information, in no event shall any MSCI Party have any liability for any direct, indirect, special, incidental, punitive, consequential (including loss profits) or any other damages (www.msci.com)

Jonathan Steinberg, Jeremy Schwartz, Rick Harper, Christopher Gannatti, Bradley Krom, Tripp Zimmerman, Michael Barrer, Anita Rausch, Kevin Flanagan, Brendan Loftus, Joseph Tenaglia, Jeff Weniger, Matt Wagner, Alejandro Saltiel, Ryan Krystopowicz, Jianing Wu, and Brian Manby are registered representatives of Foreside Fund Services, LLC.

WisdomTree Funds are distributed by Foreside Fund Services, LLC, in the U.S. only.

You cannot invest directly in an index.



DEFINITIONS

Dividend : A portion of corporate profits paid out to shareholders.

1-3 month U.S. Treasury Bill : A short-term debt obligation backed by the U.S. government with a maturity of less than 3 months.

Interest rates : The rate at which interest is paid by a borrower for the use of money.

S&P 500 Index : Market capitalization-weighted benchmark of 500 stocks selected by the Standard and Poor's Index Committee designed to represent the performance of the leading industries in the United States economy.

Smart Beta : A term for rules-based investment strategies that don't use conventional market-cap weightings.

Volatility : A measure of the dispersion of actual returns around a particular average level. .

Value : Characterized by lower price levels relative to fundamentals, such as earnings or dividends. Prices are lower because investors are less certain of the performance of these fundamentals in the future. This term is also related to the Value Factor, which associates these stock characteristics with excess returns vs the market over tim.

Momentum Factor : Characterized by assets with recent price increase trends over time. This term is also associated with the Momentum Factor which associates these stock characteristics with excess return vs the market over time.

Basis point : 1/100th of 1 percent.

Rebalance : An index is created by applying a certain set of selection and weighting rules at a certain frequency. WisdomTree rebalances, or re-applies its rules based selection and weighting process on an annual basis.

