

TATA COMMUNICATIONS

RESULT UPDATE

KEY DATA

Rating	BUY
Sector relative	Outperformer
Price (INR)	1,680
12 month price target (INR)	2,000
52 Week High/Low	2,175/1,586
Market cap (INR bn/USD bn)	479/5.5
Free float (%)	39.6
Avg. daily value traded (INR mn)	587.1

SHAREHOLDING PATTERN

	Dec-24	Sep-24	Jun-24
Promoter	58.86%	58.86%	58.86%
FII	17.80%	18.06%	18.09%
DII	13.66%	13.45%	13.15%
Pledge	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

FINANCIALS

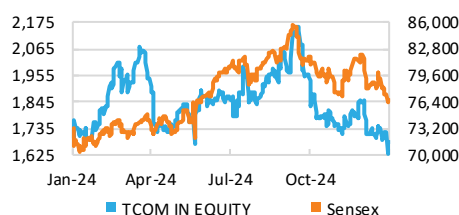
(INR mn)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Revenue	2,09,688	2,31,496	2,57,307	2,94,011
EBITDA	42,301	46,927	58,573	70,743
Adjusted profit	12,040	11,484	21,658	31,391
Diluted EPS (INR)	42.2	40.3	76.0	110.2
EPS growth (%)	(30.0)	(4.6)	88.7	44.9
RoAE (%)	58.0	63.0	62.1	56.3
P/E (x)	39.7	41.7	22.1	15.2
EV/EBITDA (x)	14.6	12.8	10.0	7.8
Dividend yield (%)	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2

CHANGE IN ESTIMATES

	Revised estimates		% Revision	
Year to March	FY25E	FY26E	FY25E	FY26E
Revenue	2,31,496	2,57,307	-1.2%	-2.2%
EBITDA	46,927	58,573	-5.7%	-5.0%
Adjusted profit	14,121	21,658	-13.6%	-8.2%
Diluted EPS (INR)	49.5	76.0	-13.6%	-8.1%

PRICE PERFORMANCE



Modest results; ask rate climbing

TCOM reported modest Q3FY25 numbers with revenue at INR58.0bn (+1.2% QoQ/+3.8% YoY) in line with our estimate of INR59.4bn. Data revenue grew +1.4% QoQ (+6.2% YoY) as Digital grew +4.1% QoQ (+10.2% YoY). Consolidated EBITDA margin was 20.4% (+65bp QoQ), in line with estimates. PAT at INR2.4bn, was slightly below estimates.

As growth continues to elude TCOM due to macro and micro factors, its ask rate to meet the FY25 guidance (especially growth) keeps rising. We continue to see TCOM as an exciting play, offering the best of telecom (stability) and IT Services (growth) sectors. We are cutting FY25E/26E EBITDA by -5% mainly on lower growth assumption. We maintain 'BUY/SO' with TP of INR2,000 (earlier INR2,150).

Digital finally reports decent growth

Data revenue grew 1.4% QoQ (+6.2% YoY) to INR49.0bn on a blended basis. This was driven by a +4.1% QoQ (+10.2% YoY) growth in the Digital portfolio while Core Connectivity declined -0.9% QoQ. In Digital, Next-gen grew +14.4% QoQ while Cloud and Security grew +4.1% QoQ. Media declined -0.2% YoY, whereas CPaaS witnessed growth of +5.7% QoQ. Management indicated that the challenges from cable cuts, in core connectivity business have been resolved, with repairs completed in October.

Margins show healthy improvement

EBITDA margin improved to 20.4% (+65bp QoQ/+27bp YoY) with data margins at 19.2% (+99bp QoQ/-165bp YoY). Margins improved on account of cost optimisation activities. Management indicated that excluding the two acquisitions (Kalyera and Switch), consolidated margins remain close to 23% range. RoCE for Q3FY25 dipped -40bp QoQ to 16.0% hurt by FX fluctuations. Net debt decreased marginally to INR104.7bn (INR104.8bn QoQ). Management remains committed to strategic measures, including monetisation of non-core assets has received shareholder approval for the land sale, expected to fetch INR8.5bn in Q4FY25.

Outlook and Valuation: Ask rate gradually becoming higher

While management maintained its four-point FY27 guidance, the confidence in achieving the revenue guidance appears to be waning. The longer the company takes to report stronger growth, higher the ask rate becomes to achieve the guidance. We continue to hold fort, expecting Digital growth and margins to pick up sharply in FY26, leading to strong growth in FY26E/27E. We continue to value the digital business at 12x average of FY26E-27E EV/EBITDA and Core/Others at 10x/4x average of FY26E-FY27E EV/EBITDA. In all, we remain positive on this unique technology and telecom play (read IC [here](#)); maintain 'BUY'.

Financials

Year to March	Q3FY25	Q3FY24	% Change	Q2FY25	% Change
Net Revenue	57,981	56,333	2.9	57,674	0.5
EBITDA	11,810	11,343	4.1	11,170	5.7
Adjusted Profit	2,509	2,303	8.9	1,843	36.1
Diluted EPS (INR)	8.8	8.1	9.1	6.5	36.2

Financial Statements

Income Statement (INR mn)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Total operating income	2,09,688	2,31,496	2,57,307	2,94,011
COGS	80,864	94,281	90,923	1,03,889
Employee costs	44,530	47,465	52,748	60,272
Other expenses	41,993	42,823	55,063	59,107
EBITDA	42,301	46,927	58,573	70,743
Depreciation	24,697	25,822	27,000	28,114
Less: Interest expense	6,442	6,194	5,432	4,382
Add: Other income	2,825	1,323	3,081	3,952
Profit before tax	14,187	16,134	28,884	41,861
Prov for tax	2,135	4,646	7,221	10,465
Less: Other adj	(2,357)	2,637	0	0
Reported profit	9,683	14,121	21,658	31,391
Less: Excp.item (net)	(2,357)	2,637	0	0
Adjusted profit	12,040	11,484	21,658	31,391
Diluted shares o/s	285	285	285	285
Adjusted diluted EPS	42.2	40.3	76.0	110.2
DPS (INR)	16.7	18.0	20.0	20.0
Tax rate (%)	15.0	28.8	25.0	25.0

Important Ratios (%)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Material cost as % of rev	38.6	40.7	35.3	35.3
Staff cost as % of rev	21.2	20.5	20.5	20.5
Other exp. as % of rev	20.0	18.5	21.4	20.1
EBITDA margin (%)	20.2	20.3	22.8	24.1
Net profit margin (%)	5.7	5.0	8.4	10.7
Revenue growth (% YoY)	17.5	10.4	11.1	14.3
EBITDA growth (% YoY)	(2.0)	10.9	24.8	20.8
Adj. profit growth (%)	(30.0)	(4.6)	88.6	44.9

Assumptions (%)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
GDP (YoY %)	6.5	6.3	6.5	6.5
Repo rate (%)	6.5	5.3	5.3	5.3
USD/INR (average)	84.0	84.0	84.0	84.0
Total Revenue growth	17.5	10.4	11.1	14.3
Total organic growth	7.4	4.3	11.1	14.3
Data business growth	21.9	13.4	13.5	16.4
Core connectivity growth	6.0	2.5	3.8	4.6
Digital business growth	55.4	29.0	24.5	27.6

Valuation Metrics

Year to March	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Diluted P/E (x)	39.7	41.7	22.1	15.2
Price/BV (x)	26.8	17.8	11.2	7.0
EV/EBITDA (x)	14.6	12.8	10.0	7.8
Dividend yield (%)	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2

Source: Company and Nuvama estimates

Balance Sheet (INR mn)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Share capital	2,850	2,850	2,850	2,850
Reserves	15,014	24,005	39,964	65,655
Shareholders funds	17,864	26,855	42,814	68,505
Minority interest	39	43	47	52
Borrowings	1,01,178	91,178	71,178	51,178
Trade payables	36,562	38,054	42,297	48,331
Other liabs & prov	48,383	48,383	48,383	48,383
Total liabilities	2,45,613	2,47,000	2,48,107	2,60,736
Net block	85,332	79,339	77,170	74,180
Intangible assets	5,362	5,262	5,162	5,062
Capital WIP	0	0	0	0
Total fixed assets	90,694	84,601	82,332	79,242
Non current inv	13,068	13,068	13,068	13,068
Cash/cash equivalent	9,917	16,550	15,880	25,718
Sundry debtors	37,584	36,786	39,477	43,498
Loans & advances	0	0	0	0
Other assets	14,799	15,866	16,078	16,380
Total assets	2,45,613	2,47,000	2,48,107	2,60,736

Free Cash Flow (INR mn)

Year to March	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Reported profit	9,683	14,121	21,658	31,391
Add: Depreciation	24,697	25,822	27,000	28,114
Interest (net of tax)	6,442	6,194	5,432	4,382
Others	(6,612)	5,085	6,823	9,941
Less: Changes in WC	(192)	(1,222)	(1,339)	(1,712)
Operating cash flow	31,820	45,354	52,354	61,651
Less: Capex	(20,718)	(18,720)	(24,973)	(25,683)
Free cash flow	11,102	26,634	27,380	35,969

Key Ratios

Year to March	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
RoE (%)	58.0	63.0	62.1	56.3
RoCE (%)	14.6	14.2	22.4	29.9
Inventory days	5	5	8	8
Receivable days	57	59	54	52
Payable days	156	144	161	159
Working cap (% sales)	(15.7)	(14.7)	(13.8)	(12.6)
Gross debt/equity (x)	5.7	3.4	1.7	0.7
Net debt/equity (x)	5.1	2.8	1.3	0.4
Interest coverage (x)	2.7	3.4	5.8	9.7

Valuation Drivers

Year to March	FY24A	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
EPS growth (%)	(30.0)	(4.6)	88.7	44.9
RoE (%)	58.0	63.0	62.1	56.3
EBITDA growth (%)	(2.0)	10.9	24.8	20.8
Payout ratio (%)	49.2	36.3	26.3	18.2

Q3FY25 earnings call highlights

- Revenue growth was driven by data business. Revenue growth was 0.2% QoQ and 1% YoY if adjusted for foreign exchange gains.
- CPaaS grew 5.7% QoQ and 11.7% YoY. Launched Kalyera.io (AI platform) to help clients in their workflow.
- Network fabric is witnessing growth backed by continuous cloud migration, and AI adoption. The connectivity segment witnessed headwinds, including price erosion and customer churn.
- Media portfolio grew .7% -0.2% QoQ and 6YoY. Has signed one of the deals with Latin based media tech company.
- Internationally, cable rate cuts posed a challenge, but repairs were completed in October. In Q3FY25, the focus shifted to customer acquisition.
- YTD order book grew double-digit and Q4FY25 is expected to witness robust deal wins. Deal pipeline funnel remains robust and deal conversion remained at normal levels. Large deals are taking more time for closure.
- In Next-gen connectivity order conversion takes elongated time due to large nature of deals. Despite this digital portfolio growth remains healthy.
- Working towards making TCTS more profitable; Q3FY25 margins improved by 800bps. This is an outcome from move coming out of large lost making contracts.
- FCF was negative until H1FY25; however, in Q3FY25, it reached INR8.4bn, the highest level in the last 10 quarters.
- Expects leverage ratios to improve in the next couple of quarters. Net debt and RoCE were hurt by forex exchange fluctuations.
- Large part of the product portfolio is network. Demand for network transformation is going to remain healthy, as there would be more data to transfer.
- CPaaS would make more channel diversity in different markets during the year, which would work as trigger for growth. SMS is not growing at a faster pace and the margins too remain subdued.
- There are some levers in digital portfolio especially in international geographies and acquired entities, which can led to margin expansion. Ex. of acquisitions margins remain healthy at 23% levels.
- Management has outlined a timeline prioritising net debt reduction, followed by improvements in ROCE and lastly margins improvement in each year moving forward.
- Management indicated that excluding the two acquisitions (Kalyera and Switch), consol margins remain close to 23% range.
- Management aims to improve margins to previous levels of 23-25%.
- Strategic measures pertaining to review of non-core assets and its monetization remain intact. Had announced the land monetization provisions in last quarter and have received approvals from shareholders.

Exhibit 1: Financial snapshot (INR mn)

Year to March	Q3FY25	Q2FY25	QoQ	Q3FY24	YoY	FY24	FY25E	FY26E	FY27E
Total revenues	57,981	57,674	0.5	56,333	2.9	2,09,688	2,31,496	2,57,307	2,94,011
Cost of materials	25,134	24,622	2.1	22,792	10.3	80,864	94,281	90,923	1,03,889
Employee Benefit Expense	11,240	11,986	(6.2)	11,617	(3.2)	44,530	47,465	52,748	60,272
Other Expense	9,797	9,896	(1.0)	10,580	(7.4)	41,993	42,823	55,063	59,107
EBITDA	11,810	11,170	5.7	11,343	4.1	42,301	46,927	58,573	70,743
Depreciation	6,371	6,606	(3.5)	6,190	2.9	24,697	25,822	27,000	28,114
EBIT	5,438	4,564	19.1	5,153	5.5	17,604	21,104	31,573	42,629
Less : Exceptional Items	149	-429	(134.8)	1,855	(92.0)	2,357	-2,637	0	0
Less: Interest expense	1,869	1,926	(2.9)	1,876	(0.4)	6,442	6,194	5,432	4,382
Other Income	287	141	103.5	115	150.3	2,825	1,323	3,081	3,952
Add: Share of profits from associates	-85	40	(311.8)	48	(277.1)	200	-99	-338	-338
PBT	3,623	3,249	11.5	1,585	128.5	11,831	18,771	28,884	41,861
Provision for taxation	1,262	976	29.3	1,135	11.2	2,135	4,646	7,221	10,465
Less: Minority Interest	1	0	200.0	2	(50.0)	12	4	5	5
Reported profit	2,360	2,272	3.8	448	426.6	9,683	14,121	21,658	31,391
Add : Exceptional item	149.3	-429.0		1,855.2		2,357	-2,637	-	-
Adjusted profit	2,509	1,843	36.1	2,303	8.9	12,040	11,484	21,658	31,391
as % of net revenues									
Employee Benefit Expense	19.4	20.8		20.6		21.2	20.5	20.5	20.5
Other Expenses	16.9	17.2		18.8		20.0	18.5	21.4	20.1
EBITDA margin	20.4	19.4		20.1		20.2	20.3	22.8	24.1
EBIT margin	9.4	7.9		9.1		8.4	9.1	12.3	14.5
Adjusted profit	4.3	3.2		4.1		5.7	5.0	8.4	10.7
Tax rate	34.8	30.0		71.6		18.0	24.8	25.0	25.0

Source: Company, Nuvama Research

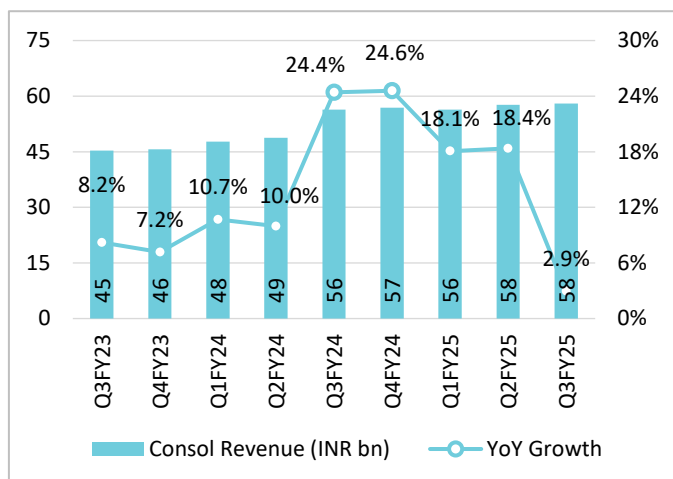
Note: Financials not restated for retrospective period

Exhibit 2: Digital revenue breakdown

		Q3FY23	Q4FY23	Q1FY24	Q2FY24	Q3FY24	Q4FY24	Q1FY25	Q2FY25	Q3FY25
Collaboration/CPaaS	Revenue	4,015	3,869	4,388	4,063	10,536	10,509	10,447	11,140	11,773
	YoY Growth	8.8%	1.8%	19.4%	7.5%	162.4%	171.6%	138.1%	174.2%	11.7%
Cloud and Security	Revenue	3,240	3,568	3,487	3,705	3,646	3,670	4,157	4,151	4,320
	YoY Growth	23.7%	38.5%	23.9%	24.4%	12.5%	2.9%	19.2%	12.1%	18.5%
Next Gen Connectivity	Revenue	1,835	1,926	2,213	2,555	2,530	2,468	2,078	2,172	2,485
	YoY Growth	26.8%	10.5%	46.6%	46.9%	37.9%	28.1%	-6.1%	-15.0%	-1.8%
Media	Revenue	1,469	1,436	2,928	3,070	3,089	3,023	3,367	2,889	3,083
	YoY Growth	17.1%	19.5%	108.7%	107.0%	110.3%	110.6%	15.0%	-5.9%	-0.2%
Incubation Services	Revenue	1,221	1,335	1,132	1,175	1,193	1,153	1,388	1,856	1,468
	YoY Growth	125.3%	65.3%	27.5%	-2.7%	-2.3%	-13.7%	22.6%	58.0%	23.1%

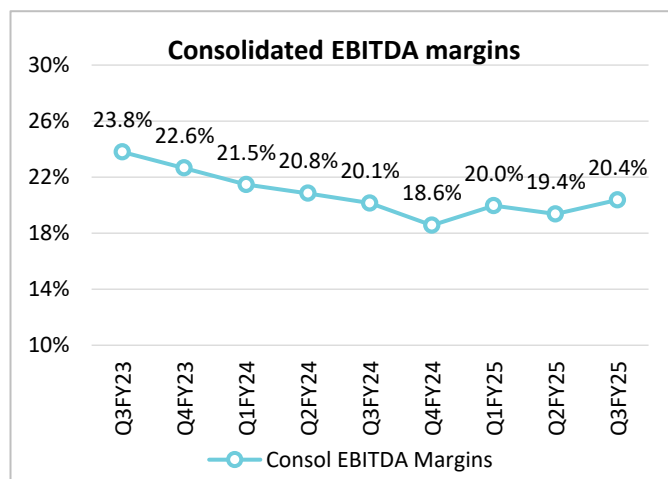
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 3: Consolidated revenue and growth



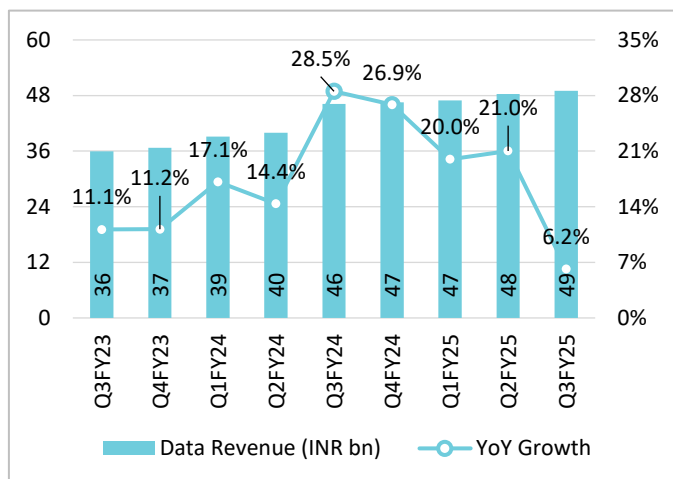
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 4: Consolidated EBITDA margins



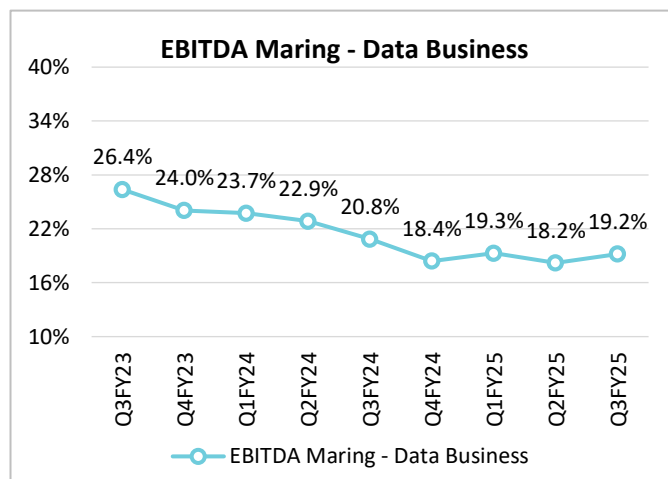
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 5: Data business revenue and growth



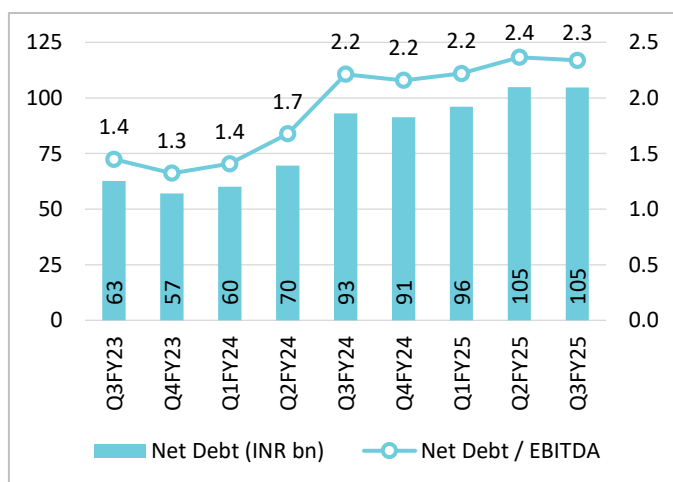
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 6: Data business EBITDA margins



Source: Company, Nuvama Research

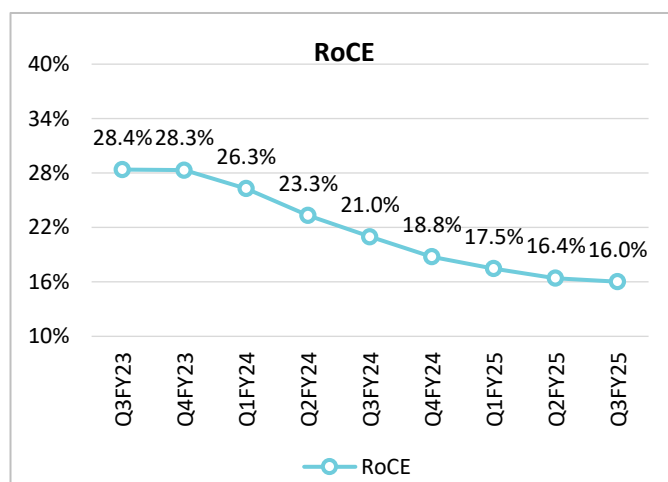
Exhibit 7: Debt profile of TCOM



Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Note: Financials not restated for retrospective period

Exhibit 8: Return on capital employed (RoCE)



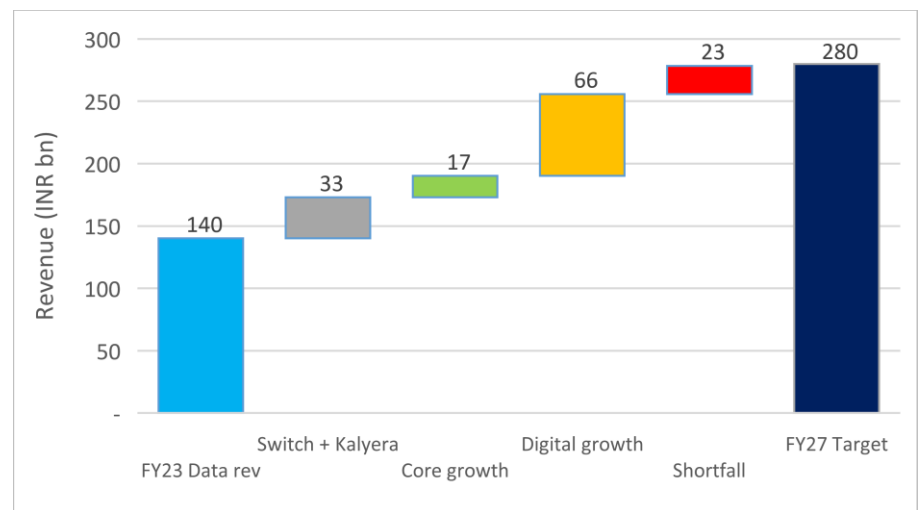
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 9: SotP valuation of TCOM

Segment (INR mn)	Avg FY26-27 EBITDA	Target multiple	Total EV	Per share
Data business				
Core Connectivity	44,667	10.0	4,46,668	1,567
Digital	11,836	12.0	1,42,037	498
Voice business	1,399	4.0	5,595	20
Other businesses	6,756	4.0	27,025	95
Total Business EV			6,21,325	2,180
Net debt			55,298	194
Total Business Equity Value			5,66,026	2,000

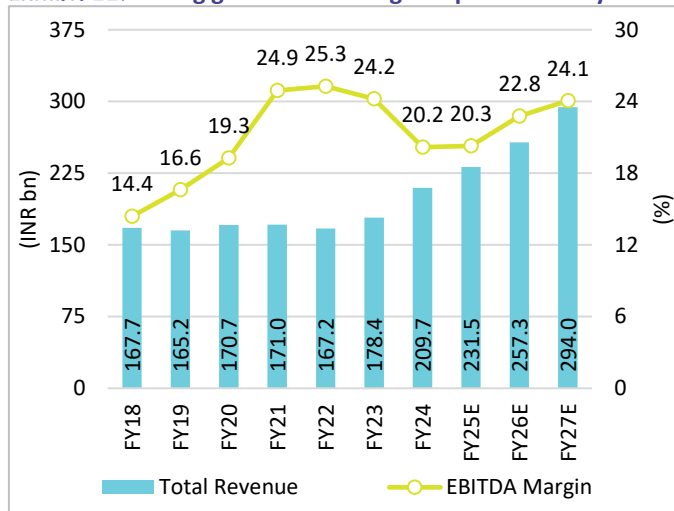
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 10: FY27 target achievable with a bit of help from acquisitions



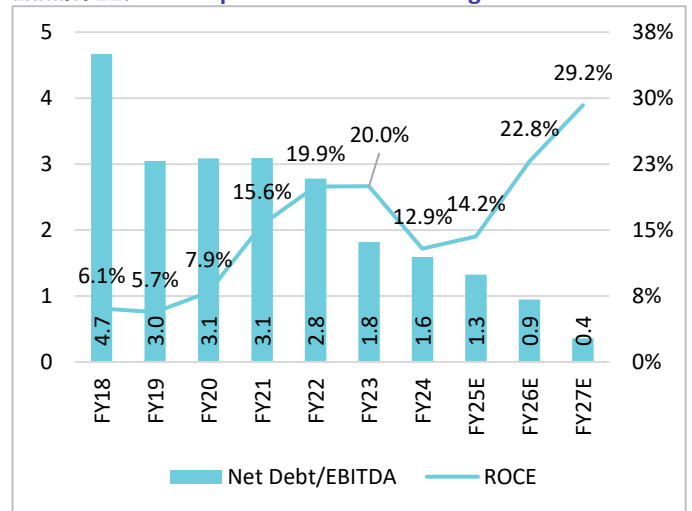
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 11: Strong growth and margin expansion likely...



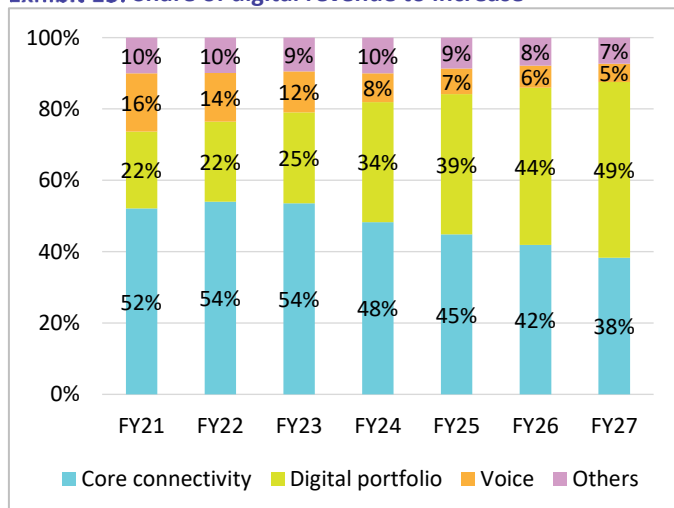
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 12: ... to improve RoCE and leverage



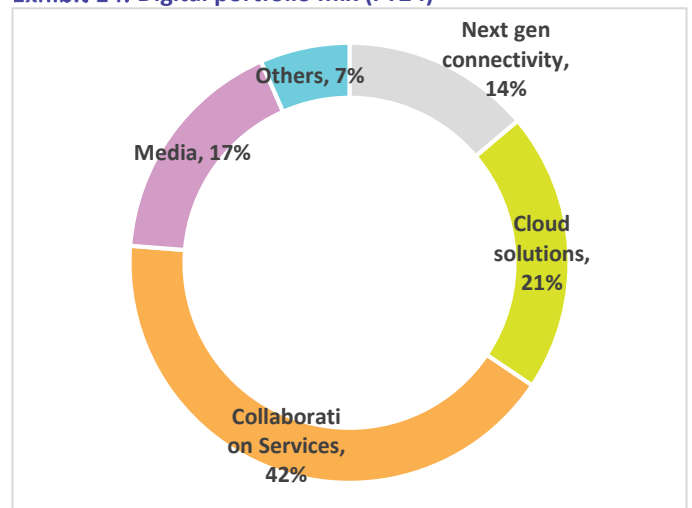
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 13: Share of digital revenue to increase



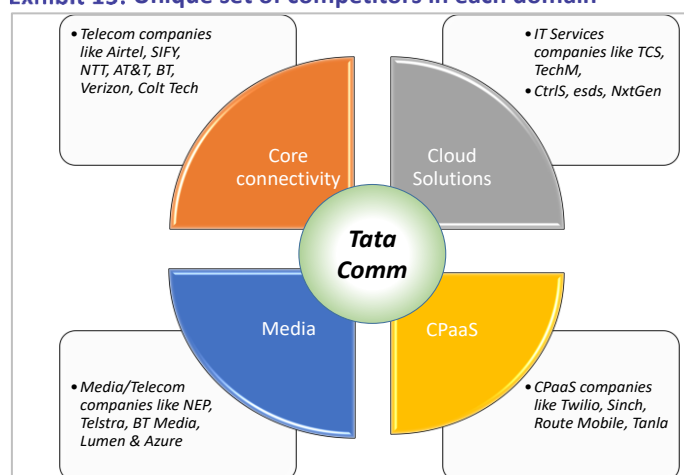
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 14: Digital portfolio mix (FY24)



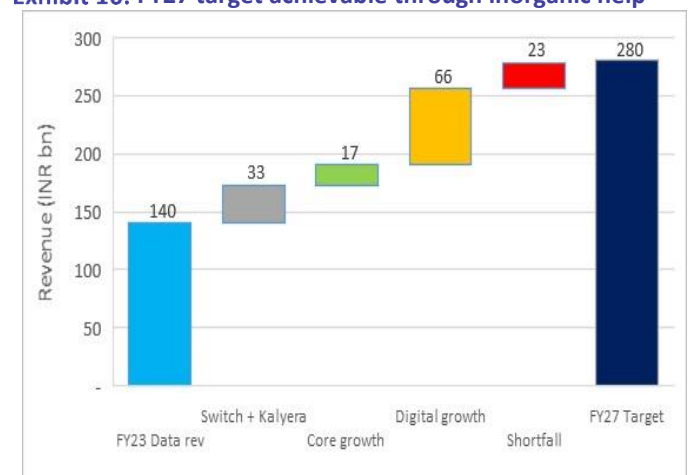
Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 15: Unique set of competitors in each domain



Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Exhibit 16: FY27 target achievable through inorganic help



Source: Company, Nuvama Research

Company Description

Tata Communications was incorporated as Videsh Sanchar Nigam (VSNL), a public sector enterprise, in 1986. In 2002, the Tata Group acquired 25% stake in VSNL. In FY06, VSNL acquired Tyco and Teleglobe providing it undersea cable network spanning 60k km connecting the continents of North America, Europe, and Asia. In 2008, VSNL was renamed Tata Communications and announced an expansion of network connectivity into Africa through an agreement with Neotel. In recent years, it has developed and expanded its portfolio of digital solutions around the telecom infrastructure – to get transformed from a telecom infrastructure provider – to an enabler of digital telecom solutions.

Investment Theme

TCOM primarily has two business segments (excluding others, which are small and/or declining) – Core connectivity and Digital Portfolio. The Core connectivity business forms 52% of revenue – in which it provides traditional point-to-point (P2P) connectivity solutions for enterprises. The digital business (25% of revenue) is the new-gen hi-tech Digital portfolio (Digital), built around its connectivity solutions – helping enterprises leverage the power of digital solutions like cloud and XaaS. Combined, TCOM intends to be able to address all the connectivity-related needs of an enterprise. In addition to these segments, it has an ATM network subsidiary in India (Tata Communications Payment Solutions) and a network management outsourcing subsidiary that supports global telecom service providers (Tata Communications Transformation Services).

Key Risks

Weak macro environment leading to deferment of technology spends by enterprises across the world

Regulatory changes in the telecom sector

Competitive intensity

Technology disruptions

Contingent liability of INR77bn for AGR dues

Additional Data

Management

CEO	A S Lakshminarayanan
CFO	Kabir Ahmed Shakir
Wholetime Director	
COO	N. Ganapathy Subramaniam
Auditor	S.R. Batliboi & Associates LLP

Holdings – Top 10*

	% Holding		% Holding
Panatone Finves	44.80	Mirae Asset Fin	1.99
Tata Sons Pvt L	14.07	Vanguard Group	1.62
HDFC AMC Ltd	4.43	Jhunjhunwala Re	1.58
First Sentier I	3.56	Norges Bank	1.48
First Sentier G	2.68	Quant Money Man	1.38

*Latest public data

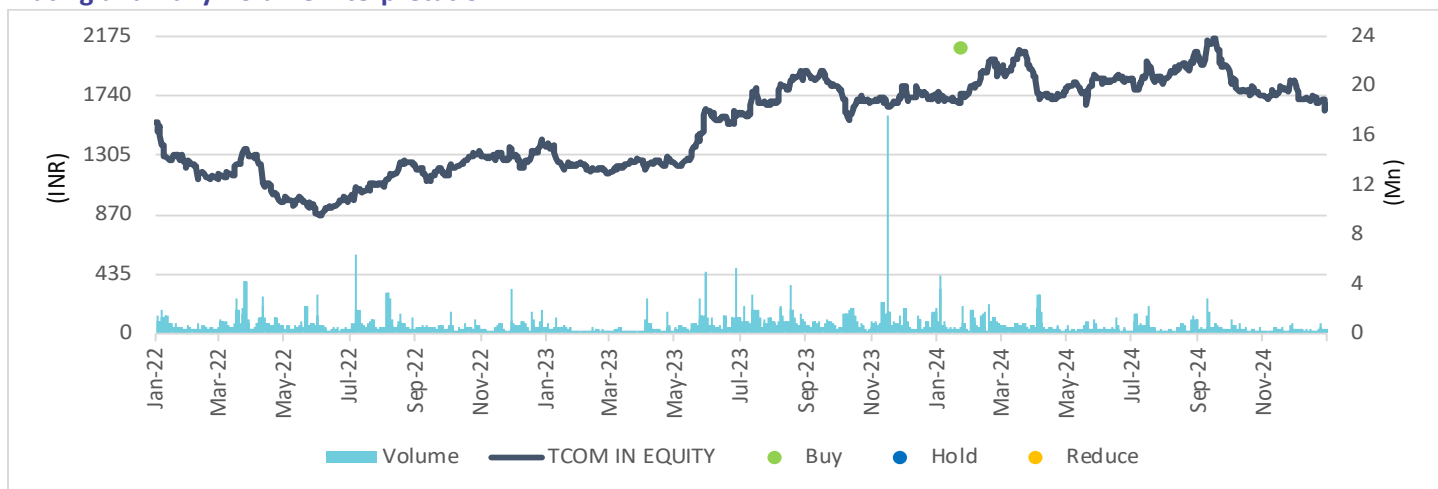
Recent Company Research

Date	Title	Price	Reco
17-Oct-24	In-line results; growth continues to elu; <i>Result Update</i>	1830	Buy
19-Jul-24	Growth disappoints; margins on track; <i>Result Update</i>	1788	Buy
12-Jun-24	Investor day: Opportunities galore; <i>Company Update</i>	1891	Buy

Recent Sector Research

Date	Name of Co./Sector	Title
17-Jan-25	Sterlite Tech.	Seasonality impacts growth; <i>Result Update</i>
14-Nov-24	Vodafone Idea	Sharp subscriber loss; challenges ahead; <i>Result Update</i>
05-Nov-24	Sterlite Tech.	Strong growth rebound in optical fibre; <i>Result Update</i>

Rating and Daily Volume Interpretation



Rating Rationale & Distribution: Nuvama Research

Rating	Expected absolute returns over 12 months	Rating Distribution
Buy	15%	227
Hold	<15% and >-5%	62
Reduce	<-5%	27

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Abneesh Roy

Head of Research Committee

Abneesh.Roy@nuvama.com
