CMB International Securities | Equity Research | Sector Update

China express delivery

Eyes on "Double 11" amid accelerated sector consolidation

SF/YTO/STO/Yunda's operational data in Sep suggested fiercer competition in low-end e-commerce parcel market, given greater ASP decline and aggressive volume growth. We view that the heated sector consolidation will see completion in 2020E, due to limited room for cost cut and further market growth slowdown. Suggest to pay attention to STO (002468 CH) for Alibaba's possible volume diversion and ZTO (ZTO US) for prominent cost control capability during the upcoming "Double 11" e-commerce carnival.

- Pitched battle on e-commerce parcels under way. SF/YTO/STO achieved 38%/42%/51% YoY volume growth in Sep, along with 11%/18%/14% YoY decline, in contrast to market volume/ ASP 25%/-2% YoY change. Yunda's volume/ASP grew 41%/84% YoY. Excluding impact from Yunda's change on revenue recognition, we saw the price war in low-end e-commerce parcel market heat up. Considering 1) the limited room for further dramatic cost cut based on current technical level, and 2) inevitable market growth slowdown in 2020E (CMBI forecasts: volume +21% YoY), we reaffirm that the showdown of ongoing sector consolidation will occur in 2020E.
- Eyes on upcoming "Double 11" e-commerce carnival. Although we saw "Tongda"s sequentially raise ASP to offset margin pressures caused by volume peak during "Double 11" e-commerce carnival (ZTO, YTO officially announced already), we deem that it cannot be regarded as price war truce. SF/JD Logistics have confirmed that they would maintain aggressive pricing tactics in low-end market, and we believe the heightened competition will continue. Meanwhile, we suggest watching for STO (002468), as it is the first "Double 11" after Alibaba's investment in STO. In addition, the players with advantage on automation and capacity, like ZTO, will edge out, in our view.
- Large restricted share circulation to shadow sector in near term. As YTO/Yunda/SF went public on A-share market through restructuring three years ago, their restricted shares issued in restructuring placement will be circulated in the following three months. We worry that the sector will tremble upon lock-up expiration in the near term, and prefer US-listed ZTO which is free from this share-selling brunt.
- Reiterate ZTO as our top pick. We think the sector will be volatile in the near term, in view of 1) "Double 11" as catalyst and 2) impact from large restricted share circulation. That said, we are bullish on ZTO, due to 1) accelerated sector consolidation, 2) its advantage on automated sorting and transportation capacity, and 3) limited share-selling risk in the near term.

Valuation Table

Company	Ticker	Rating	Mkt cap	Price	TP	Upside	P/	Ξ	P/B	ROE
		((USD mn)	(LC)	(LC)	(%)	19E	20E	19E	19E
ZTO	ZTO US	BUY	16,299	20.84	22.17	6.4	24.2	21.0	3.1	13.7
SF	002352 CH	BUY	25,544	40.90	46.53	13.8	34.1	29.3	4.4	13.1
YTO	600233 CH	NR	5,000	12.43	NA	NA	17.4	15.1	2.7	16.0
STO	002468 CH	NR	4,940	22.81	NA	NA	18.3	15.8	3.5	19.8
Yunda	002120 CH	NR	11,334	35.98	NA	NA	28.1	22.8	5.9	20.7

Source: Bloomberg, CMBIS estimates



MARKET PERFORM (Maintain)

China Express Delivery Sector

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Related Reports

1. Margins eroded in 1H19; Price war to culminate – 24 Sep 2019

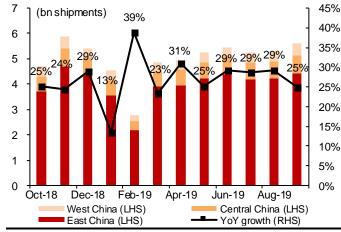
2. YTO likely to fall behind "Tongda" peers – 19 Jul 2019

3. Heated competition to stretch into 2020E- 5 Jul 2019



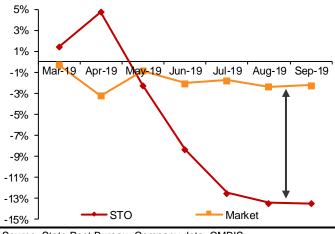
Focus Charts





Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

Figure 3: ASP changes of STO



Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

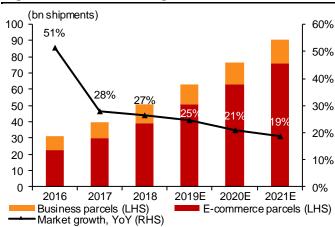
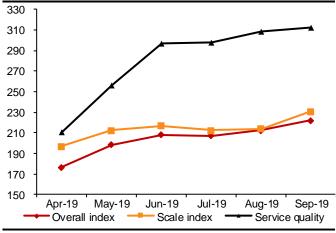


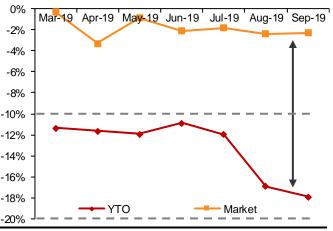
Figure 5: Market volume growth estimates

Figure 2: Sector development index



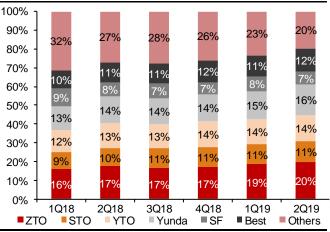
Source: State Post Bureau, CMBIS

Figure 4: ASP changes of YTO



Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

Figure 6: Market shares by parcel volume



Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

Source: State Post Bureau, CMBIS estimates



45%

40%

35%

30%

25% 20%

15%

10%

5%

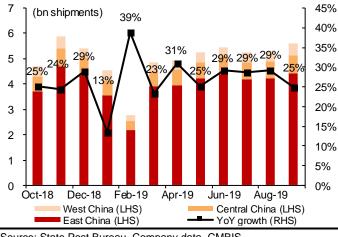
0%

Market Overview

Market Vol/ASP +25%/-2% YoY in Sep

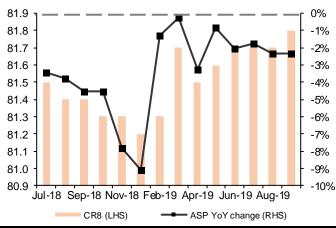
Market in Sep recorded slightly decelerated volume growth of 25% YoY, along with 2% ASP slide (i.e. RMB11.6 per shipment). By segment, East/Central/West grew respectively by 25%/30%/19% YoY; Inter-city/Intra-city/International increased by 34%/17%/41% YoY, respectively. Sector consolidation progressed well as CR8 saw 0.1ppt rise to 81.8 in Sep.





Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

Figure 9: CR8 and market ASP changes



Source: Company data, CMBIS estimates



Feb-19

International (LHS) Source: State Post Bureau, CMBIS

Inter-City (LHS)

Dec-18

29.0%

6

5

4

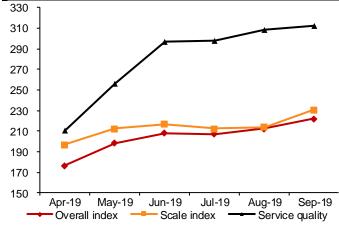
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2

0

Oct-18

Figure 10: Sector development index



Source: State Post Bureau, CMBIS

Figure 11: Market ASP trend in 2017-19

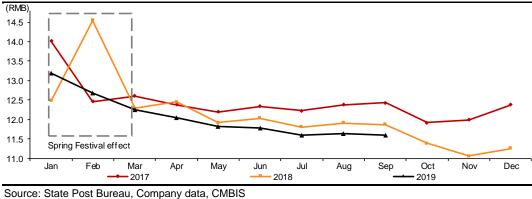


Figure 8: Volume growth by business segment 7 (bn shipments)

31.1%

Apr-19

29.1%

Jun-19

29.3%

Aug-19

Intra-City (LHS) YoY growth (RHS)

25.09

28.6%

38.8%



Volume expected to grow 21%/19% in 2020/21E

Mainly driven by prudent outlook towards domestic social consumption hampered by economic slowdown, we moderately revised down our 2020/21E volume growth forecasts from 22%/20% to 21%/19% YoY, respectively. As for ASP trend, we expect 5% decrease in 2020E in view of 1) intensified price war, 2) greater volume contribution from low-ASP e-commerce parcels and 3) continued cost optimization empowered by technology.

Figure 12: Market volume estimates

	2016	2017	2018	2019E	2020E	2021E
Market volume (mn)	31,280	40,060	50,710	63,213	76,345	90,608
YoY	51.3%	28.1%	26.6%	24.7%	20.8%	18.7%
E-commerce parcels						
Social consumption (RMB bn)	33,232	36,626	38,099	41,070	44,274	48,037
YoY	10.4%	10.2%	9.0%	7.8%	7.8%	8.5%
Social goods online consumption (RMB bn)	4,194	5,481	7,020	8,830	10,847	12,970
YoY	29.4%	30.7%	28.1%	25.8%	22.8%	19.6%
E-commerce penetration	12.6%	15.0%	18.4%	21.5%	24.5%	27.0%
Parcel value per unit (RMB)	186.2	182.4	178.0	173	171.5	170.5
E-commerce parcel volume (mn)	22,530	30,050	39,440	51,041	63,248	76,071
YoY	57.6%	33.4%	31.2%	29.4%	23.9%	20.3%
% of total volume	72.0%	75.0%	77.8%	80.7%	82.8%	84.0%
Business parcels						
PMI- New order index (monthly average)	51.13	53.12	52.02	50.6	50	51
Business parcel volume (mn)	8,750	10,010	11,270	12,172	13,097	14,537
YoY	36.7%	14.4%	12.6%	8.0%	7.6%	11.0%

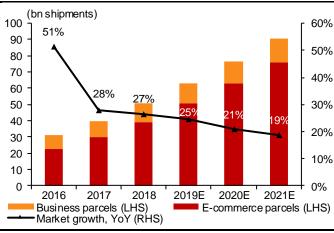
Source: State Council, State Post Bureau, NDRC, MOT, CMBIS estimates

Figure 13: Market volume estimates

	2016	2017	2018	2019E	2020E	2021E
Market volume (mn)	31,280	40,060	50,710	63,213	76,345	90,608
YoY	51.3%	28.1%	26.6%	24.7%	20.8%	18.7%
ASP (RMB)	12.71	12.37	11.91	11.43	10.86	10.64
YoY	-5.1%	-2.6%	-3.8%	-4.0%	-5.0%	-2.0%
Market size (RMB mn)	397,440	495,710	603,840	722,611	829,094	964,306
YoY	43.5%	24.7%	21.8%	19.7%	14.7%	16.3%

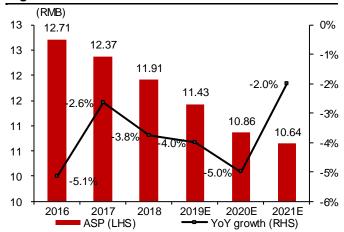
Source: State Post Bureau, CMBIS estimates

Figure 14: Volume growth estimates



Source: State Post Bureau, CMBIS estimates

Figure 15: Market ASP forecasts



Source: State Post Bureau, CMBIS estimates



Major players' performance

Driven by decent growth of e-commerce and solid share gains backed by aggressive pricing strategies, SF/YTO/STO/Yunda achieved 22%/42%/51%/41% YoY volume growth in Sep, along with -11%/-18%/-14%/84% YoY ASP changes.

As the ASP decline amplitude gap between major players and market accelerated to extend, we believe it evidenced that the major players were consistently sharing more profits with franchisees in a bid to incentivize them to scramble market shares. Considering 1) the limited room for further dramatic cost cut based on current technical level, and 2) inevitable market growth slowdown in 2020E (CMBI forecasts: volume +21% YoY), we think the ongoing price war cannot last too long, and reaffirm that the showdown of ongoing sector consolidation will occur in 2020E.

Figure 16: Major players' monthly operational data in Sep

	Market	SF	STO	ΥТО	Yunda
Revenue(RMB mn)	64,920	9,882	2,047	2,216	2,772
YoY growth	22.2%	22.3%	30.3%	16.7%	158.6%
Shipments(mn)	5,597	454	725	811	887
YoY growth	25.0%	38.0%	50.6%	42.2%	40.6%
Revenue per shipment	11.60	21.77	2.82	2.73	3.13
YoY growth	-2.2%	-11.3%	-13.5%	-17.9%	84.1%

Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

Note: Yunda started to recognize last-mile delivery fee as revenue since 2019.

Figure 17: Monthly operational metrics overview

<u> </u>	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	Apr-19	May-19	Jun-19	Jul-19	Aug-19	Sep-19
Volume	oun ro	10010	mai 10	Лрі то	indy 10	oun io	our ro	Aug 10	
YoY growth									
SF	27.4%	-16.9%	7.3%	6.6%	10.2%	15.8%	22.6%	32.8%	38.0%
YTO	36.1%	62.8%	34.8%	32.3%	28.2%	35.9%	41.6%	48.9%	42.2%
STO	43.0%	81.3%	34.5%	43.7%	47.5%	54.4%	52.2%	40.0 <i>%</i>	50.6%
Yunda	45.0 <i>%</i> 35.6%	75.0%	35.1%	43.5%	43.0%	54.8%	56.1%	45.1%	40.6%
Market	13.5%	38.8%	23.3%	43.3 <i>%</i> 31.1%	43.0 <i>%</i> 25.2%	29.1%	28.6%	29.3%	40.0 <i>%</i> 25.0%
Market sha		30.070	23.370	31.170	23.270	29.170	20.076	29.370	23.076
SF	9.0%	8.0%	7.2%	6.6%	6.6%	6.8%	7.0%	7.6%	8.1%
SF YTO	9.0% 14.5%	0.0% 10.8%	14.5%	13.6%	13.7%		7.0% 14.7%		
-						13.9%		14.5%	14.5%
STO	11.3%	9.1%	10.6%	10.5%	11.4%	11.4%	12.1%	12.7%	13.0%
Yunda	14.6%	12.4%	16.1%	16.1%	16.6%	16.3%	16.7%	15.7%	15.8%
Devenue									
Revenue									
YoY growth		10.00/							
SF	38.5%	-16.6%	14.3%	11.3%	12.5%	14.3%	19.1%	21.6%	22.3%
YTO	23.9%	39.7%	19.5%	16.9%	12.9%	21.1%	24.6%	23.7%	16.7%
STO	39.7%	77.7%	36.5%	50.2%	44.2%	41.8%	33.2%	34.9%	30.3%
Yunda	140.9%	202.7%	153.2%	178.9%	186.8%	201.9%	218.9%	193.7%	158.6%
Market	20.0%	21.0%	23.0%	26.8%	24.2%	26.5%	26.3%	26.2%	22.2%
ASP change	e								
SF	8.7%	0.3%	6.5%	4.5%	2.1%	-1.3%	-2.8%	-7.3%	-11.3%
YTO	-9.0%	-14.2%	-11.3%	-11.6%	-11.9%	-10.9%	-12.0%	-16.9%	-17.9%
STO	-2.3%	-2.2%	1.4%	4.8%	-2.3%	-8.4%	-12.5%	-13.5%	-13.5%
Yunda	77.1%	72.8%	87.5%	94.0%	101.3%	95.1%	104.5%	102.5%	84.1%

Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

-12.8%

5.7%

Market

-0.3%

-3.3%

-0.9%

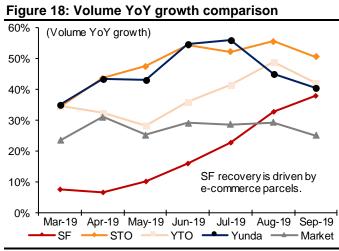
-2.1%

-1.8%

-2.4%

-2.2%





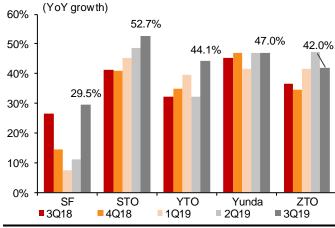
Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS



Figure 20: ASP changes of STO

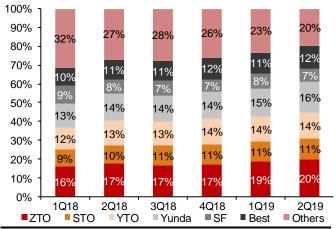
Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

Figure 22: Volume quarterly growth comparison



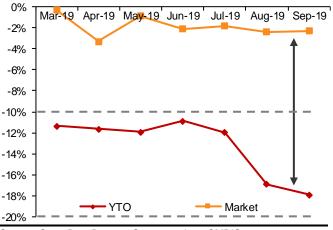
Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS estimates

Figure 19: Market shares by parcel volume



Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

Figure 21: ASP changes of YTO



Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS

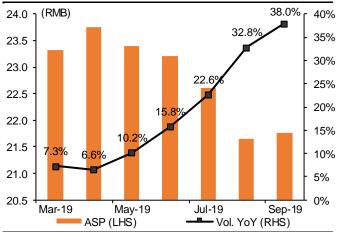


Figure 23: Low-end market to drive SF recovery

Source: State Post Bureau, Company data, CMBIS



Near-term highlights to focus

We believe the sector will be volatile in the near term due to mixed catalysts, and recommend investors to eye on 1) "Double 11" e-commerce carnival, 2) 3Q19 earning results, and 3) upcoming large share selling and restricted share circulation.

STO may act as game-changer in "Double 11" carnival

As "Double 11" came around, "Tongda"s have sequentially announced to raise ASP in particular areas to offset margin pressure caused by temporary staff and capacity. ZTO and YTO have now officially confirmed ASP hike. However, we deem that the hike cannot be regarded as a signal of price war truce. During last year's "Double 11", some players still offered discounts to gain volume even after ASP hike announcement. In addition, as JD Logistics and SF, two "new" players in low-end market, announced to maintain current pricing, we believe this year's shopping carnival will continue to be shined the highlight with intensified price war.

Taking account into 1) operational constraints under self-operation model, 2) longstanding high-end brand recognition, 3) existing e-commerce parcel contribution, and 4) drawback on automated sorting, we think JD Logistics/SF will hardly menace "Tongda" leadership in near term, which means the pitched battle will occur among "Tongda" peers. Suggest to watch for STO's performance as this is the first "Double 11" after Alibaba's strategic investment in STO. We noticed that STO has started to enhance capacity, upgrade digital system, and raise incremental volume incentives to prepare for spiking volume. Together with Alibaba's potentially greater support in terms of parcel diversion, STO may achieve robust growth, in our view.

Concentrated restricted share circulation may stumble the sector

Some major players (YTO, STO, SF) went public through restructuring three years ago, and shares lock-up is about to expire in the near term. We believe it may shock the market, especially as there are many financial investors involved in Yunda/STO/YTO's share circulation, against the backdrop of margins eroded by intensified sector consolidation. In contrast, the US-listed ZTO will confront limited share-selling risk in the near term.

Company	Ticker	Year	Event	Amount raised (RMB mn)
ZTO	ZTO US	2016	IPO (US)	9,184
YTO	600233 CH	2016	Restructuring	2,300
STO	002468 CH	2016	Restructuring	4,800
SF	002352 CH	2017	Restructuring	8,000
Yunda	002120 CH	2018	Private placement	3,915

Figure 24: Overview of major players' recent equity financing

Source: Wind, Company data, CMBIS

Figure 25: Short-term stock pressure form restricted shares circulation

Company	Status	Date	Event
SF	Ongoing	Oct 25,2019 (End)	Shun Da Feng Run to sell as many as 133mn shares (~3% of total shares)
SF	Pending	Oct 30,2019 (Begin)	Yuan He Shun Feng to sell as many as 132mn shares (~3% of total shares)
SF	Pending	Jan 23,2020	2,702mn restricted shares to circulate (Principle shareholder; ~61% of total shares)
YTO	Done	Sep 30, 2019	2,038mn restricted shares circulated (~72% of total shares)
Yunda	Pending	Dec 24, 2019	1,650mn restricted shares to circulate (287% of current free flow)
STO	Ongoing	Feb 19, 2020 (End)	Nan Tong Hong Shi to sell as many as 15mn shares (~1% of total shares)
STO	Pending	Dec 27, 2019	1,199mn restricted shares to circulate (361% of current free flow)

Source: Wind, Company data, CMBIS



Figure 26: Overview of major players' achievement in Sep

Comp	Date	Event	Highlights
	Early Sep	Obtained personal privacy protection certificate	 Constantly reinforced protection on personal information Benchmarked against global standards
	Sep 4	SFBest launched new- business supermarkets	 Focused on improving operating leverage
07	Sep 6	SFFix convened "intelligent logistics empowered by post- sales services" with top brands	 Aimed to provide post-sales supply chain solutions throughout various industries and expand presence in supply chain business
SF	Mid Sep	SF Rush launched new timeliness product "Bang Wo Mai"(帮我买) in Zhengzhou	 Expanded service categories in intra-city segment
	Sep 15	Initiated first B747 flight into Europe	 Built out international air cargo network Focused on help domestic customers penetrate into Europe market.
	Sep 24	CEO Wang Wei announced to increase couriers' income	 Monthly incremental expense of RMB24mn Limited impact; increased expense ratio by 0.2ppt
	Sep 2	Opened "Kunming - Karachi" flight route	 Opened 14 international fight routes in total, with focus on BRI countries
YTO	Sep 4	Hebei Suning sorting center was put into operation	 Investment amounted to RMB170mn Daily capacity surpassed 1mn shipments
	Sep 30	Over 2bn restricted shares circulated	 Market cap reached RMB23.3bn
670	Sep 20	Set up Sina Life Insurance in conjunction with Sina and Weibo	 Stepped up penetration into financial service sector
STO	Sep 24	Cooperated with Cainiao network to provide cross- border delivery services	 Took charge of first-mile parcel pick-up Services covered 27provinces, 203 cities nationwide
	Sep 9	Published its first ESG report	 Introduced its consistent effort in environmental and social issues
BEST	Sep 19	Entered partnership with Yongxing County to boost sales of local agricultural products	 Aimed to provide end-to-end agricultural product logistic solution
ZTO	Early Sep	Tested "5G+automated" truck	 Tested automated truck's reaction under various circumstances

Source: Company data, CMBIS



Stock pick

Reiterate ZTO as top pick

We think the sector will be volatile in the near term, in view of 1) "Double 11" as catalyst and 2) impact from large restricted share circulation. That said, we are bullish on ZTO, due to 1) accelerated sector consolidation, 2) its advantage on automated sorting and transportation capacity, and 3) limited share-selling risk in the near term.

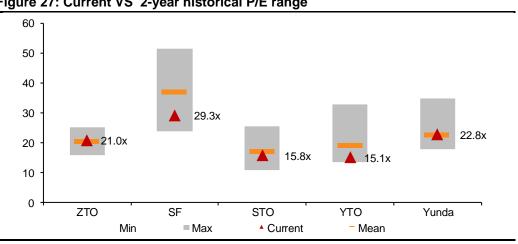


Figure 27: Current VS 2-year historical P/E range

Source: Bloomberg, CMBIS estimates

Figure 28: Peers comparison

Comp	Ticker	Mkt cap	Curr.	Price	TP	Upside	RC	DE	P	E	P	B	EV/E		FY18-20E
		(USD mn)			(LC)	(%)	19E	20E	19E	20E	19E	20E	19E	20E	EPS CAGR
China exp	oress delivery														
ZTO	ZTO US	16,299	USD	20.84	22.17	6.4	12.4	13.8	24.2	21.0	3.1	2.7	14.6	11.6	12%
SF	002352 CH	25,544	CNY	40.90	46.53	13.8	13.7	14.2	34.1	29.3	4.4	3.9	17.4	14.4	33%
YTO	600233 CH	5,000	CNY	12.43	NA	NA	16.0	16.1	17.4	15.1	2.7	2.3	9.7	8.4	10%
STO	002468 CH	4,940	CNY	22.81	NA	NA	19.8	19.8	18.3	15.8	3.5	2.9	10.6	8.7	4%
Yunda	002120 CH	11,334	CNY	35.98	NA	NA	20.7	20.7	28.1	22.8	5.9	4.9	15.9	12.3	13%
Deppon	603056 CH	1,737	CNY	12.79	NA	NA	15.2	16.1	17.2	13.8	2.7	2.3	6.7	5.6	12%
Average							16.3	16.8	23.2	19.6	3.7	3.2	12.5	10.2	14%
Overseas e	express delivery														
FedEx	FDX US	39,113	USD	149.9	NA	NA	19.7	17.5	9.8	12.2	1.9	2.0	8.2	8.9	-4%
UPS	UPS US	100,769	USD	117.4	NA	NA	120	87.3	15.6	14.4	15.4	10.4	11.6	10.7	6%
Yamato	9064 JP	6,701	JPY	1,768	NA	NA	6.4	6.0	19.3	20.2	1.2	1.2	5.9	5.8	50%
DHL	DPW GR	42,436	EUR	30.76	NA	NA	18.6	19.3	14.4	12.5	2.6	2.3	7.0	6.4	16%
Average							41.1	32.5	14.8	14.9	5.3	4.0	8.2	7.9	17%
Total Ave	rage						37.2	37.5	19.8	12.7	3.9	7.3	10.5	5.9	15%

Source: Bloomberg, CMBIS estimates



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