

NetEase (NTES US)

2Q26 earnings beat; legacy game titles maintain solid performance

NetEase reported 2Q26 financial results: total revenue grew by 8% YoY to RMB30.1bn, 2.5% ahead of Visible Alpha (VA) consensus estimate thanks to the solid game business performance; operating income increased by 33% YoY to RMB12.1bn, 17.1% ahead of VA consensus mainly due to the strong GPM expansion and improved operational efficiency. Legacy game titles like *Where Winds Meet* continue to maintain solid performance with active users reaching new record high, although the launch of *Sea of Remnants* was below expectation and more time is needed for its revenue to ramp up. We lift our FY26-28E operating profit forecasts by 8-9% given the strong GPM and operational efficiency improvement. We raise our SOTP-derived target price to US\$159.5 (previous: US\$155.0). Maintain BUY on NetEase's strong game portfolio and solid earnings growth outlook.

■ **Solid games revenue growth.** Games & related VAS revenue was up by 10% YoY to RMB25.0bn in 2Q26, 4% ahead of consensus estimate thanks to the strong performance of legacy titles. Contract liabilities recorded solid growth of 14% YoY as of Jun 2026. By products: 1) *Where Winds Meet* achieved record-high MAUs and healthy YoY revenue growth in 2Q26, thanks to the new content update; 2) *Sword of Justice*'s concurrent users reached a 2-year high after the launch of its major anniversary update in June, demonstrating longevity of the game; 3) *Eggy Party* further strengthened its leadership in party game genre, with registered users surpassing 700mn in June. For *Sea of Remnants*, management acknowledged the steep learning curve impacted user experience at initial launch, but also saw improving user feedbacks after content update and refined operations. Looking ahead, major new game titles include *ANANTA* (无限大), *Tamas: Shadowveil* (诡影藏锋), *Beneath the Mist* (雾海之下) and *Blood Message* (归唐).

■ **Non-gaming businesses maintained steady performance.** NetEase Cloud Music revenue was largely flattish YoY at RMB1.98bn in 2Q26 amid intensifying competitive environment. Youdao revenue increased by 3.5% YoY to RMB1.47bn in 2Q26, mainly attributable to the solid growth of learnings services. Innovative businesses and others revenue dropped by 4% YoY to RMB1.64bn in 2Q26, mainly due to decreased net revenues from the e-commerce business.

■ **Continuous margin expansion.** Overall GPM improved by 5.8ppts YoY to 70.5% in 2Q26, mainly underpinned by the favourable revenue mix shift and channel cost optimization. Total opex to revenue ratio also dropped by 1.9ppts YoY to 30.3% in 2Q26, thanks to the enhanced operating efficiency and prudent expenses control. Overall OPM expanded by 7.7ppts YoY to 40.2% in 2Q26. We expect operating income to grow by 33% YoY in FY26E, underpinned by the strong GPM expansion and efficiency improvement. The company's current valuation (13x FY26 non-GAAP PE) offers attractive risk-reward, in our view.

Earnings Summary

(YE 31 Dec)	FY24A	FY25A	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
Revenue (RMB mn)	105,295	112,626	120,897	130,868	139,862
Adjusted net profit (RMB mn)	33,510.6	37,343.7	40,557.4	46,379.5	51,045.6
EPS (Adjusted) (RMB)	52.35	58.83	62.92	71.95	79.19
Consensus EPS (RMB)	52.35	58.83	64.06	71.52	77.99
P/E (x)	17.4	15.1	13.8	12.0	10.9

Source: Company data, Bloomberg, CMBIGM estimates

BUY (Maintain)

Target Price US\$159.50
(Previous TP US\$155.00)
Up/Downside 33.1%
Current Price US\$119.81

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Stock Data

Mkt Cap (US\$ mn)	76,721.9
Avg 3 mths t/o (US\$ mn)	39.8
52w High/Low (US\$)	159.34/109.26
Total Issued Shares (mn)	640.4

Source: FactSet

Shareholding Structure

William Lei Ding	45.5%
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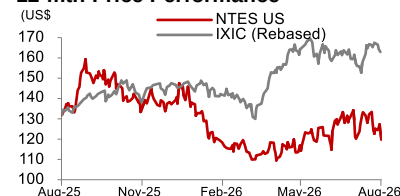
Source: Company data

Share Performance

	Absolute	Relative
1-mth	-7.5%	-8.3%
3-mth	4.8%	5.7%
6-mth	1.2%	-11.2%

Source: FactSet

12-mth Price Performance



Source: FactSet

Figure 1: NetEase: earnings revision

RMB bn	Current			Previous			Change (%)		
	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
Revenue	120.9	130.9	139.9	120.5	129.0	137.4	0.3%	1.4%	1.8%
Gross profit	84.6	91.0	97.6	80.8	86.7	92.6	4.8%	5.0%	5.4%
Operating profit	47.6	51.6	56.2	43.9	47.8	51.9	8.4%	8.0%	8.4%
Adjusted net profit	40.6	46.4	51.0	42.6	46.3	49.1	-4.7%	0.1%	3.9%
Adjusted EPS (RMB)	62.8	71.9	79.1	66.1	71.8	76.1	-5.0%	0.1%	3.9%
Gross margin	70.0%	69.5%	69.8%	67.0%	67.2%	67.4%	3.0 ppt	2.4 ppt	2.4 ppt
Operating margin	39.3%	39.4%	40.2%	36.4%	37.1%	37.8%	2.9 ppt	2.4 ppt	2.4 ppt
Adjusted net margin	33.5%	35.4%	36.5%	35.3%	35.9%	35.8%	-1.8 ppt	-0.5 ppt	0.7 ppt

Source: CMBIGM estimates

Note: we lower FY26E adjusted net profit forecast mainly to reflect investment loss of RMB2.95bn in 2Q26.

Figure 2: CMBIGM estimates vs consensus

RMB bn	CMBIGM			Consensus			Diff (%)		
	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E	FY26E	FY27E	FY28E
Revenue	120.9	130.9	139.9	121.1	130.4	139.9	-0.2%	0.3%	0.0%
Gross profit	84.6	91.0	97.6	81.2	88.2	95.4	4.2%	3.1%	2.3%
Operating profit	47.6	51.6	56.2	43.6	47.8	52.3	9.2%	8.1%	7.5%
Adjusted net profit	40.6	46.4	51.0	41.6	46.1	50.2	-2.4%	0.6%	1.6%
Adjusted EPS (RMB)	62.8	71.9	79.1	64.1	71.5	78.0	-1.9%	0.5%	1.4%
Gross margin	70.0%	69.5%	69.8%	67.0%	67.7%	68.2%	2.9 ppt	1.9 ppt	1.6 ppt
Operating margin	39.3%	39.4%	40.2%	36.0%	36.6%	37.4%	3.4 ppt	2.8 ppt	2.8 ppt
Adjusted net margin	33.5%	35.4%	36.5%	34.3%	35.4%	35.9%	-0.8 ppt	0.1 ppt	0.6 ppt

Source: Bloomberg, CMBIGM estimates

Figure 3: NetEase: key financial data forecasts

(RMB mn)	1Q25	2Q25	3Q25	4Q25	1Q26	2Q26	Cons.	Diff%
Online games revenue	24,048	22,806	23,328	21,967	25,713	25,023	24,108	3.8%
YoY%	12.1%	13.7%	11.8%	3.4%	6.9%	9.7%		
As % of total revenue	83.4%	81.8%	82.3%	79.7%	84.1%	83.1%		
Youdao revenue	1,298	1,418	1,629	1,565	1,348	1,467	1,515	-3.2%
YoY%	-6.7%	7.2%	3.6%	16.8%	3.8%	3.5%		
As % of total revenue	4.5%	5.1%	5.7%	5.7%	4.4%	4.9%		
Cloud Music revenue	1,858	1,969	1,964	1,968	1,981	1,977	2,089	-5.3%
YoY%	-8.4%	-3.5%	-1.8%	4.7%	6.6%	0.4%		
As % of total revenue	6.4%	7.1%	6.9%	7.1%	6.5%	6.6%		
Innovative businesses	1,624	1,699	1,439	2,047	1,549	1,639	1,614	1.6%
YoY%	-17.6%	-17.8%	-18.9%	-10.4%	-4.6%	-3.5%		
As % of total revenue	5.6%	6.1%	5.1%	7.4%	5.1%	5.4%		
Total revenue	28,829	27,892	28,359	27,547	30,591	30,107	29,379	2.5%
YoY%	7.4%	9.4%	8.2%	3.0%	6.1%	7.9%		
Gross profit margin (%)	64.1%	64.7%	64.1%	64.2%	69.4%	70.5%	66.4%	4.0ppt
S&M expenses ratio (%)	9.4%	12.8%	15.7%	14.1%	11.2%	12.2%		
R&D expenses ratio (%)	15.2%	15.6%	16.0%	16.1%	14.7%	15.4%		
Operating profit	10,441	9,061	8,013	8,319	12,657	12,089	10,322	17.1%
YoY%	37.0%	29.6%	12.1%	6.4%	21.2%	33.4%		
OPM (%)	36.2%	32.5%	28.3%	30.2%	41.4%	40.2%		

Source: Company data, CMBIGM

We use sum-of-the-parts (SOTP) valuation methodology to value NetEase's four main business segments. Our SOTP-derived target price is US\$159.5, comprising:

- 1) US\$142.0 for the online game business (89.0% of total valuation), based on 15x 2026E EV/EBIT, on par with the industry average;
- 2) US\$1.0 for Youdao (0.6% of total valuation), based on 1.2x 2026E EV/revenue, on par with the industry average;
- 3) US\$2.2 (1.4% of total valuation) for the NetEase Cloud Music business, based on 2.0x 2026E EV/revenue, on par with the industry average;
- 4) US\$1.1 (0.7% of total valuation) for the innovative businesses and others, based on 0.7x 2026E EV/revenue, on par with the industry average;
- 5) US\$13.3 for net cash.

Figure 4: NetEase: SOTP Valuation

(RMBmn)	Valuation basis	Multiple (x)	2026E sales	2026E EBIT	Valuation	Shareholding (%)	Valuation to NetEase	Valuation per ADS (US\$)
Online games	EV/EBIT	15.0	100,267	40,909	613,631	100.0%	613,631	142.0
Youdao	EV/revenue	1.2	6,145		7,374	57.1%	4,211	1.0
Cloud Music	EV/revenue	2.0	7,915		15,829	59.4%	9,403	2.2
Innovative businesses	EV/revenue	0.7	6,570		4,599	100.0%	4,599	1.1
Enterprise value							631,844	
Net cash							57,616	13.3
Equity value							689,460	
RMB/US\$							6.8	
Valuation (US\$m)							102,142	
No. of ADSs (mn)							640	
Value per ADS (US\$)							159.5	

Source: Company data, CMBIGM estimates

Figure 5: Peer comparison: online games

Company	Ticker	Price (Local)	EBIT growth (YoY %)		EV/EBIT (x)	
			FY26E	FY27E	FY26E	FY27E
Tencent	700 HK	447.2	11	5	14	13
Nintendo	7974 JP	8,870.0	24	12	24	21
Bandai Namco	7832 JP	5,566.0	(12)	13	17	15
Perfect World	002624 CH	11.1	92	28	10	7
37 Interactive	002555 CH	18.6	7	8	10	10
Average EV/EBIT					15	13

Source: Bloomberg consensus estimates, CMBIGM

Note: data as of market close on 19 Aug

Figure 6: Peer comparison: education, online music, and e-commerce

Company	Ticker	Price	Revenue growth (YoY %)		EV/revenue (x)	
		(Local)	FY26E	FY27E	FY26E	FY27E
Education						
New Oriental	EDU US	56.9	14	19	0.9	0.8
TAL Education	TAL US	12.1	32	25	1.4	1.1
Gaotu	GOTU US	1.7	18	16	0.0	0.0
Average					1.2	1.0
Community						
TME	TME US	9.0	11	8	2.0	1.9
Spotify	SPOT US	533.4	11	14	4.4	3.9
BiliBili	BILI US	17.3	12	10	1.0	0.9

		Price	Revenue growth (YoY %)		EV/revenue (x)	
Kuaishou	1024 HK	37.8	6	4	0.7	0.6
Average					2.0	1.8
E-commerce						
Alibaba	BABA US	128.9	10	12	1.5	1.3
JD	JD US	29.4	6	6	0.1	0.1
Pinduoduo	PDD US	90.2	14	12	1.0	0.9
Vipshop	VIPS US	14.5	(1)	5	0.3	0.2
Average					0.7	0.6

Source: Bloomberg consensus estimates, CMBIGM

Note: data as of market close on 19 Aug

Risks

Decline in revenue of legacy titles; delay in new game launch; tightening regulations.

Financial Summary

INCOME STATEMENT	2023A	2024A	2025A	2026E	2027E	2028E
YE 31 Dec (RMB mn)						
Revenue	103,468	105,295	112,626	120,897	130,868	139,862
Cost of goods sold	(40,405)	(39,488)	(40,224)	(36,275)	(39,852)	(42,296)
Gross profit	63,063	65,807	72,402	84,622	91,016	97,566
Operating expenses	(35,354)	(36,223)	(36,567)	(37,055)	(39,391)	(41,329)
Selling expense	(13,969)	(14,148)	(14,620)	(15,717)	(17,013)	(18,182)
Admin expense	(4,900)	(4,551)	(4,228)	(3,083)	(3,272)	(3,427)
R&D expense	(16,485)	(17,525)	(17,719)	(18,255)	(19,107)	(19,721)
Operating profit	27,709	29,584	35,835	47,567	51,625	56,237
Investment gain/loss	1,307	355	732	(2,937)	(2,350)	(705)
Other gains/(losses)	1,054	602	1,087	502	0	0
Interest income	4,120	4,921	3,953	3,603	3,136	2,284
Foreign exchange gain/loss	(133)	255	(776)	(1,059)	0	0
Pre-tax profit	34,057	35,718	40,830	47,676	52,411	57,816
Income tax	(4,700)	(5,461)	(6,033)	(9,535)	(9,434)	(10,407)
After tax profit	29,357	30,256	34,798	38,141	42,977	47,409
Minority interest	59	(559)	(1,038)	(727)	0	0
Net profit	29,417	29,698	33,760	37,414	42,977	47,409
Adjusted net profit	32,608	33,511	37,344	40,557	46,379	51,046
BALANCE SHEET	2023A	2024A	2025A	2026E	2027E	2028E
YE 31 Dec (RMB mn)						
Current assets	142,693	153,325	180,615	212,439	247,966	285,507
Cash & equivalents	21,429	51,383	47,168	67,764	90,783	114,891
Restricted cash	2,777	3,086	4,319	4,535	4,762	5,000
Account receivables	6,422	5,669	5,338	5,615	5,957	6,239
Inventories	695	572	689	622	683	725
Prepayment	6,077	6,417	7,658	8,056	8,546	8,951
ST bank deposits	100,856	75,441	92,639	101,903	112,094	123,303
Other current assets	4,436	10,756	22,804	23,944	25,141	26,398
Non-current assets	43,232	42,667	40,800	37,975	35,579	33,492
PP&E	8,075	8,520	8,425	8,332	8,239	8,147
Other non-current assets	35,157	34,147	32,374	29,643	27,340	25,344
Total assets	185,925	195,992	221,415	250,414	283,544	318,998
Current liabilities	53,842	49,668	52,369	55,803	59,700	62,878
Short-term borrowings	19,240	11,805	6,384	10,148	9,965	9,883
Account payables	881	721	643	580	637	676
Tax payable	2,572	2,759	3,874	4,159	4,502	4,811
Other current liabilities	18,219	19,982	25,404	26,431	28,682	30,617
Accrued expenses	12,930	14,401	16,063	14,486	15,914	16,890
Non-current liabilities	3,998	3,830	3,942	4,008	4,357	4,647
Other non-current liabilities	3,998	3,830	3,942	4,008	4,357	4,647
Total liabilities	57,841	53,497	56,311	59,811	64,058	67,525
Total shareholders equity	124,286	138,686	160,296	185,068	213,952	245,938
Minority interest	3,798	3,809	4,808	5,535	5,535	5,535
Total equity and liabilities	185,925	195,992	221,415	250,414	283,544	318,998

CASH FLOW	2023A	2024A	2025A	2026E	2027E	2028E
YE 31 Dec (RMB mn)						
Operating						
Profit before taxation	34,057	35,718	40,830	47,676	52,411	57,816
Depreciation & amortization	3,055	2,418	2,247	4,213	4,166	4,119
Tax paid	(4,700)	(5,461)	(6,033)	(9,535)	(9,434)	(10,407)
Change in working capital	376	3,652	8,721	(937)	3,187	2,531
Others	2,543	3,351	4,973	0	0	0
Net cash from operations	35,331	39,677	50,740	41,417	50,329	54,060
Investing						
Capital expenditure	(4,266)	(2,192)	(2,007)	(3,998)	(3,955)	(3,914)
Net cash from investing	(17,043)	17,916	(33,181)	(11,730)	(12,808)	(14,209)
Financing						
Dividend paid	(8,014)	(11,165)	(13,826)	(11,442)	(12,893)	(14,223)
Net borrowings	(8,305)	(7,476)	(5,799)	3,763	(182)	(82)
Proceeds from share issues	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	(5,148)	(8,694)	(536)	(1,200)	(1,200)	(1,200)
Net cash from financing	(21,467)	(27,336)	(20,160)	(8,879)	(14,275)	(15,505)
Net change in cash						
Cash at the beginning of the year	24,889	21,429	51,383	47,168	67,764	90,783
Exchange difference	(202)	11	(382)	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cash at the end of the year	21,429	51,383	47,168	67,764	90,783	114,891
GROWTH	2023A	2024A	2025A	2026E	2027E	2028E
YE 31 Dec						
Revenue	7.2%	1.8%	7.0%	7.3%	8.2%	6.9%
Gross profit	19.5%	4.4%	10.0%	16.9%	7.6%	7.2%
Operating profit	41.2%	6.8%	21.1%	32.7%	8.5%	8.9%
Net profit	49.2%	1.0%	13.7%	10.8%	14.9%	10.3%
Adj. net profit	43.0%	2.8%	11.4%	8.6%	14.4%	10.1%
PROFITABILITY	2023A	2024A	2025A	2026E	2027E	2028E
YE 31 Dec						
Gross profit margin	60.9%	62.5%	64.3%	70.0%	69.5%	69.8%
Operating margin	26.8%	28.1%	31.8%	39.3%	39.4%	40.2%
Adj. net profit margin	31.5%	31.8%	33.2%	33.5%	35.4%	36.5%
Return on equity (ROE)	25.7%	22.6%	22.6%	21.7%	21.5%	20.6%
GEARING/LIQUIDITY/ACTIVITIES	2023A	2024A	2025A	2026E	2027E	2028E
YE 31 Dec						
Net debt to equity (x)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)
Current ratio (x)	2.7	3.1	3.4	3.8	4.2	4.5
Receivable turnover days	22.7	19.7	17.3	17.0	16.6	16.3
Payable turnover days	8.0	6.7	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8
VALUATION	2023A	2024A	2025A	2026E	2027E	2028E
YE 31 Dec						
P/E	17.6	17.4	15.1	13.8	12.0	10.9
P/E (diluted)	17.8	17.5	15.3	13.9	12.1	11.0
P/B	4.2	3.7	3.2	2.8	2.4	2.1

Source: Company data, CMBIGM estimates. Note: The calculation of net cash includes financial assets.

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