

DEFENSIVE EQUITY STRATEGY

as of 12/31/2024

OVERVIEW

The Defensive Equity strategy remains focused on identifying companies with stable operating results and reduced stock price volatility in the broader market.

Although we anticipated a broadening in market performance, what unfolded was a further concentration of gains, particularly within the AI sector. Companies at the forefront of AI development and infrastructure, such as those specializing in generative AI, cloud computing, and semiconductors, saw outsized growth as investor enthusiasm continued to surge.

This narrow focus reflected a belief that AI-driven innovation would deliver transformational economic benefits, overshadowing other sectors that were expected to contribute more evenly to market performance. As a result, the market's rally became even more reliant on a handful of AI-centric players, highlighting both the opportunities and risks of such concentrated leadership. Given the lack of diversification in market returns, more balanced strategies, like Defensive Equity, struggled to keep up, posting a return of approximately -5% in the fourth quarter and around 10% for the year. This underperformance underscores the challenges of navigating a market dominated by a few high-growth sectors.

In terms of portfolio allocation, our strategy maintains an overweight position in high-quality stocks while deliberately underweighting sectors that are particularly sensitive to economic cycles, such as regional banks and materials. This approach is designed to mitigate risk and prioritize stability, especially in uncertain market conditions, positioning the portfolio to weather volatility while capturing growth opportunities in more resilient areas of the market.

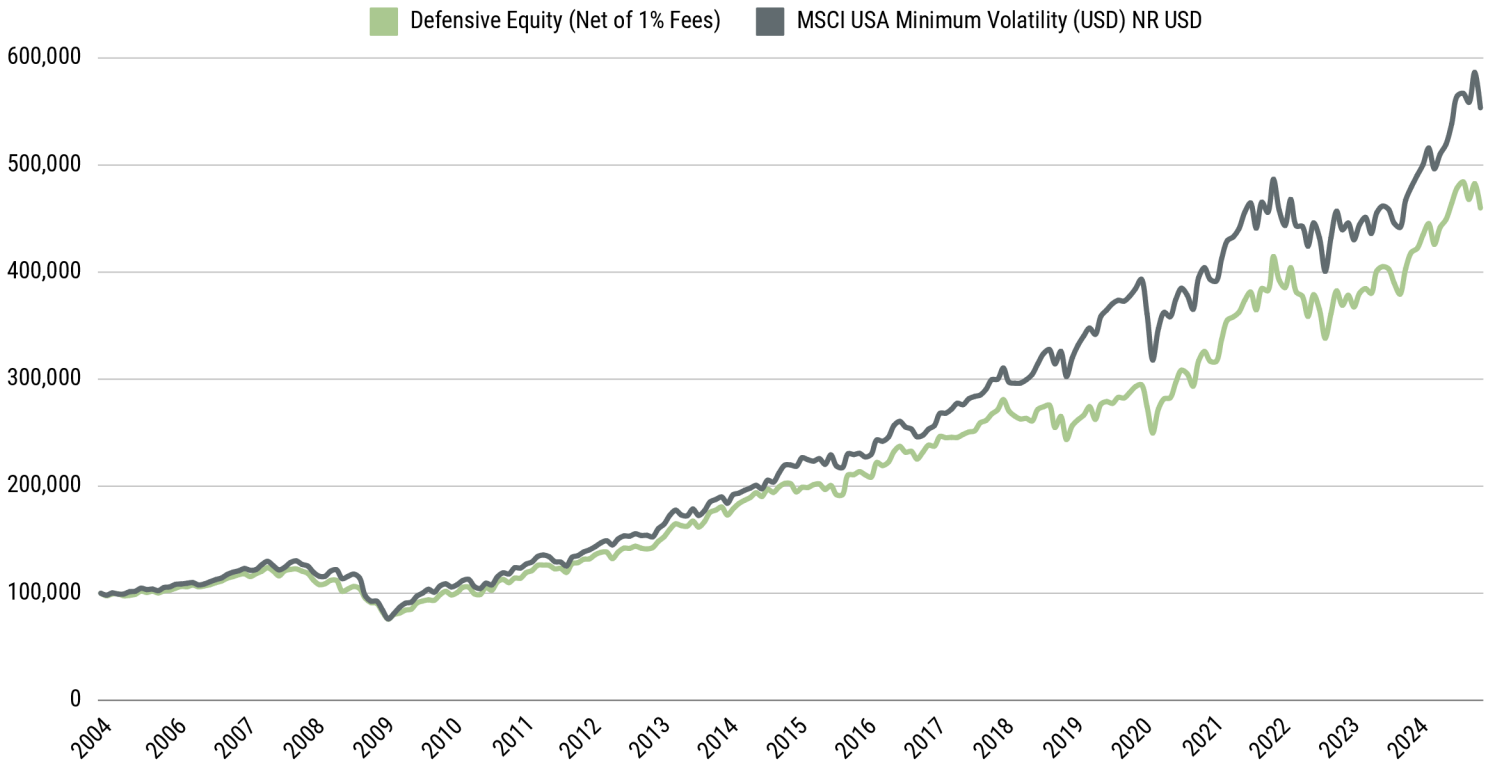
Additionally, we continue to hold cash and have a small position in gold.

We added no new positions in Q4.

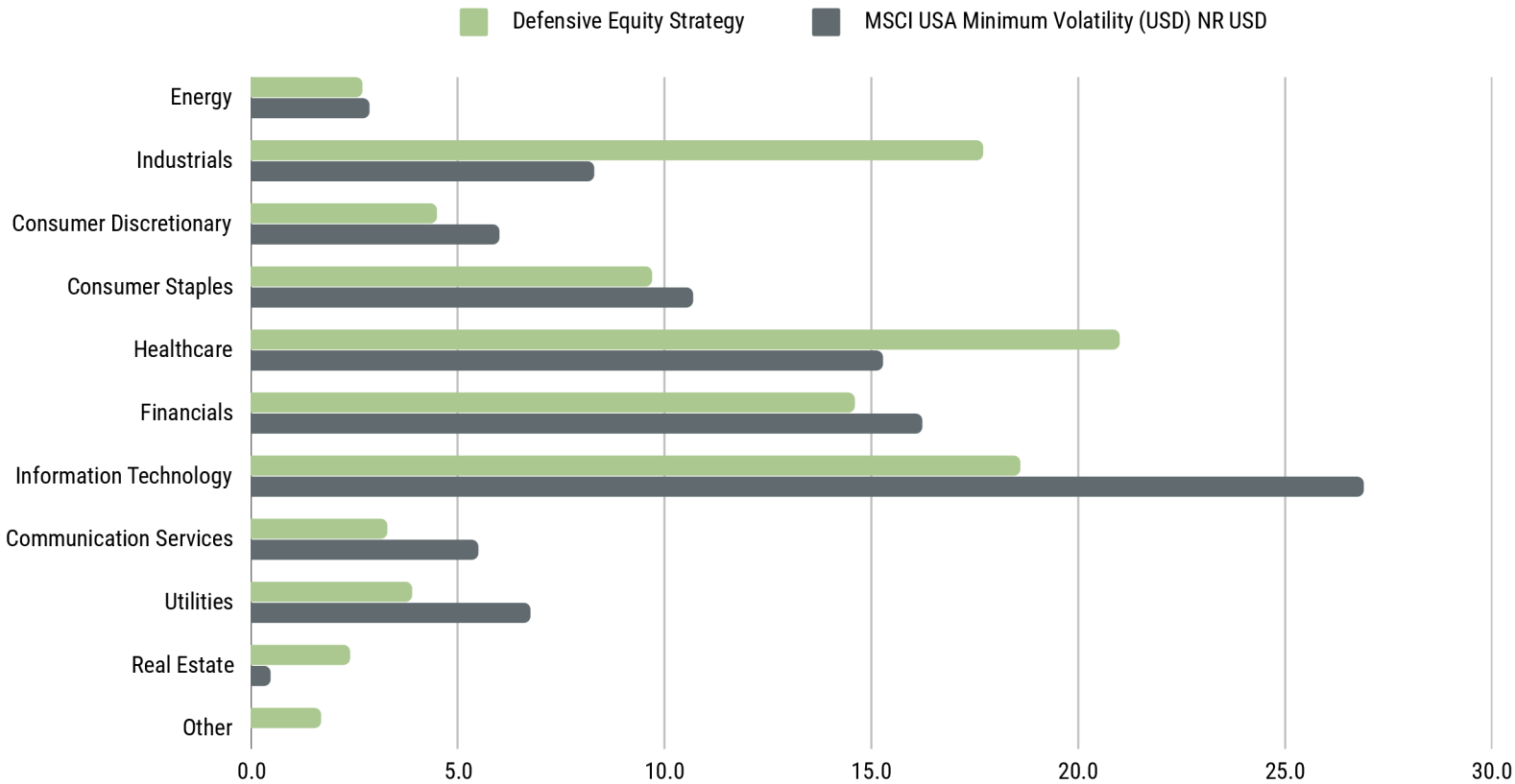


iShares® 0-3 Month Treasury Bond ETF	4.8	Waste Management Inc	3.5
Marsh & McLennan Companies Inc	4.4	Costco Wholesale Corp	3.1
Microsoft Corp	4.4	AbbVie Inc	2.9
Berkshire Hathaway Inc Class B	4.3	Mastercard Inc Class A	2.9
Apple Inc	4.0	Other	62.2
Oracle Corp	3.6		

GROWTH OF \$100,000



DEFENSIVE EQUITY STRATEGY GICS SECTOR WEIGHTS



MEET THE TEAM



PETE TRONTIS, CFA Sr. Portfolio Manager

Pete joined Exencial Wealth Advisors as a portfolio manager for the Enhanced Yield strategy. Prior to joining Willingdon, he was a research analyst for Horizon Investments where he focused on global equity research and supported the firm's trading and performance reporting operations. Prior to Horizon Investments, Pete was a Market Risk analyst for Wells Fargo Securities. He began his career as an analyst for Liquid Credit Products at Bank of America.

Pete holds a BS in Finance and a BS in Economics from DePaul University where he graduated cum laude. He also holds an MBA from Duke University where he graduated in the top 10 percent of his class and was designated a Fuqua scholar. He is a CFA charterholder and a member of the CFA society of North Carolina.



RANDY FARINA, CFA Sr. Portfolio Manager

Randy joined Exencial as a Senior Portfolio Manager for the Core and International Strategies. Randy has an extensive background in global equities with over 20 years' experience as an analyst and portfolio manager. Randy also has experience in client service partnering with both institutional and retail relationship managers. Before Exencial, Randy was a Portfolio Manager and Analyst for 16 years on the Global Small Cap Team for Putnam Investments. Randy helped implement a structured investment process focusing on intrinsic value. During his tenure at Putnam Randy also developed and managed an apprentice program to train and develop junior analysts. Randy most recently comes from Westwood Global in Boston where he was a Senior Research Analyst focusing on an International Large Cap Strategy.

Randy has a Master of Science in Finance from Boston College and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. Randy is a CFA charterholder.

DISCLOSURE

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Past Performance is no guarantee of future results. The information contained herein should not be construed as personalized investment advice. Performance results prior to July 2020 occurred under the management of two other separate investment advisors: Willingdon Wealth Management ("WWM") and Portfolio Capital Management ("PCM"). These portfolio managers were solely responsible for selecting the securities to be bought and sold and were affiliated with an investment advisor other than Exencial. PCM and its strategy, then known as the Enhanced Yield Strategy, was acquired in January 2016 by WWM and at that time became part of WWM and its investment strategies. WWM and its strategies were acquired by Exencial in July 2020 and at that time became part of Exencial and its investment strategies. The investment results prior to July 2020 are based on the performance of the Enhanced Yield Strategy in PCM accounts and the Defensive Equity Strategy in WWM accounts. Exencial now has access to and maintains the records supporting the performance of these accounts from inception to July 2020 and thereafter. From 01/01/2005 through the current month performance is based on the composite return net of fees of accounts invested in what was previously known as the Enhanced Yield Strategy, now known as the Defensive Equity Strategy.

All performance returns reflect the reinvestment of dividends and other earnings and the deduction of Exencial's investment advisory fee. Exencial's investment advisory fees are described in Part 2A of its Form ADV, which is available upon request. Clients may also incur other transactions costs such as brokerage commissions, custodial costs, and other expenses which are not reflected in the performance returns. Actual client accounts utilizing the Defensive Equity Strategy may experience different weightings and allocation and as such the performance of a specific individual client account may vary substantially from the Defensive Equity Strategy results. Exencial may depart from its strategic asset class allocations for particular strategies and allocate more or less to any asset class, or to other asset classes, in an attempt to add to the portfolios' overall returns. Exencial makes no representations that the results presented herein reflect the typical experience of an Exencial client nor that current or prospective clients will experience similar results in comparable situations. The Defensive Equity Strategy holdings listed herein do not represent all of the securities purchased, sold, or recommended for clients during the reflected time period. Information on the methodology used to calculate the performance and a list reflecting the contribution of each holding in the Defensive Equity Strategy Composite's overall performance during the time period, is available upon request. Different types of investments involve varying degrees of risk, including total loss of principal, and there can be no assurance that any specific investment or investment strategy will be profitable or equal the results portrayed herein. Information presented herein is subject to change without notice and should not be considered as a solicitation to buy or sell any security. Comparison of the Defensive Equity Strategy to the various indexes set forth above is for illustrative purposes only and the benchmarks have not been selected to represent the most appropriate or comparable benchmark with which to compare the Defensive Equity Strategy performance, but rather to allow for comparison of the Defensive Equity Strategy's performance with well known and widely recognized benchmark indexes. It is not possible to directly invest in an index, as indices are unmanaged, hypothetical vehicles that serve as market indicators and do not account for the deduction of investment management fees or transaction costs generally associated with investable products, which otherwise have the effect of reducing the performance of an actual investment portfolio. The securities held in clients' accounts following a particular strategy and the Defensive Equity Strategy may differ significantly from the securities included in a benchmark index, and the volatility of the securities may differ significantly from that of the benchmark index. A description of each index is available from us upon request. References to specific securities are presented principally to illustrate the firm's investment methodology or approach and are not being referenced to demonstrate Exencial's performance or investment results. Exencial is under no obligation to hold any equity position for any time period and Exencial's current recommendations are subject to change at any time without notice. A complete list of portfolio holdings and specific securities transactions for the preceding 12 months is available upon request. The information contained herein, while not guaranteed as to the accuracy or completeness, has been obtained from sources we believe to be reliable.

The MSCI USA Minimum Volatility (USA) Index is an investment for minimum variance equity strategies. The index reflects a minimum variance strategy applied to U.S. large and mid-cap companies. The companies are selected based on their provision of the lowest return variance for a given matrix of stock returns. This is calculated by using the Borra Optimizer, which centers around mean variance portfolio optimization.

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