

# **QANTM Intellectual Property Ltd**

# Guidance for EPS of 20-25% above consensus

QANTM Intellectual Property Ltd (ASX:QIP) owns a group of intellectual property (IP) services businesses operating under the independent brands of Davies Collison Cave (DCC), FPA Patent Attorneys, and Sortify.tm. It is a major player in the mature and regulated Australian patent, trade marks and IP legal services market, and has a diversified mix of local and foreign clients (~45%/55% split; ~50% US\$ revenue). The company has provided a trading update that it expects underlying EBITDA (post AASB 16) to be between 8% and 10% higher than the analyst estimate of \$31m and that reported EPS will be between 20% and 25% higher than the analyst estimate of \$0.081/share. QIP highlighted that the increase in expected earnings was being driven by continually improving financial disciplines, the implementation of strategic initiatives starting to deliver increased benefits, a strong operating performance by Davies Collison Cave and FPA Patent Attorneys and stronger-than-expected exchange rate tailwinds. Note that we are forecasting underlying EBITDA of \$31.0m for FY24, which on our forecast for service revenue of \$103.8m, implies an underlying EBITDA margin of 28.8%. We will review our forecasts at the interim result in February. We note that even on the new guidance, QIP is trading at a significant discount (~50%) to its closest peer, ASXlisted IPH Ltd (ASX:IPH) on an FY24f EV/EBITDA basis and at least a 38% discount to the peer group. Our DCF valuation of \$1.65/share implies an EV/EBITDA adjusted multiple of 8.0x FY23a and 7.4x FY24f which would still put QIP at a discount to this group. We are of the view that this underscores QIP's relative value.

# **Business model**

QIP has three core offerings: (1) Patent and trade mark attorney services (~88% of service charge revenue); (2) IP-focused litigation and legal services (~12% of service charge revenue); and (3) Legal technology services via Sortify's online trade marks registration platforms and tools. QIP produces service revenue from a diverse mix of local and foreign clients (est. ~45%/55% revenue split) with no client accounting for >2%. It has sizeable US\$ exposure (~50% of service charges vs. primarily A\$ costs). It generates service charges from event-driven fixed fees (est. ~55%) and hourly rate fees (est. ~45%). Patent applications trigger various workstreams that extend over several years. QIP's two key areas of strategic focus are: (1) Completing its business transformation programme (tech modernisation and business simplification) and subsequently realising EBITDA margin improvements (low-30s medium-term target); and (2) Geographic expansion via DCC/FPA (Asia focused – medium-to long-term aim for >25% of revenue from Asia) and Sortify's trade marks platform.

# Guidance confirms FY24 tracking ahead of RaaS' forecast

QANTM Intellectual Property has announced it expects underlying EBITDA to be between 8% and 10% higher than the analyst forecast for \$31m for FY24f and EPS reported is expected to be between 20% and 25% higher than the analyst estimate of \$0.081/share. This suggests underlying EBITDA of between \$33.48m and \$34.1m and reported EPS of between \$0.097/share and \$0.1013/share. We will adjust our FY24f forecasts after incorporating the H1 FY24 results which are due to be released on February 22.

# DCF valuation of \$1.65/share, unchanged

Our QIP DCF valuation remains at \$1.65/share and is based on a WACC of 10.2% incorporating a beta of 1.1 and a RFR of 4.0%. This implies EV/underlying EBITDA multiples of 7.4x for FY24f and 6.8x for FY25f. As a cross-reference, we note that even after applying the new underlying EBITDA guidance for FY24f, QIP is trading at a FY24f EV/underlying EBITDA discount of ~50% to its closest peer, the ASX-listed IP services group IPH Ltd (ASX:IPH), on 10.3x. In our view, continued demonstration of EBITDA margin improvement and earnings growth should help close this valuation gap.

# Historical earnings and RaaS estimates (in A\$m unless otherwise stated)

Year end	Total revenue	EBITDA adj.*	EBITDA rep.	NPAT adj.	EPS adj.* (c)	P/E adj.* (x)	EV/EBITDA adj.* (x)	Dividend yield (%)	
06/23a	137.0	28.5	23.4	14.7	10.6	10.2	6.1	5.8	
06/24f	142.4	31.0	27.0	16.2	11.6	9.3	5.6	5.8	
06/25f	148.1	33.8	33.0	18.4	13.1	8.2	4.9	6.9	
06/26f	153.4	36.4	35.6	20.3	14.5	7.5	4.4	6.9	
Sources: Company data; RaaS estimates for FY24f-FY25f; *Adjusted for non-recurring items									

**Trading Update** 

Commercial & Professional Services

## 24 January 2024

Share Details	
ASX code	QIP
Share price (23-Jan)	\$1.09
Market capitalisation	\$151.1M
Shares on issue	138.6M
Net debt at 30-Jun-2023	\$24.2M
Free float (inc. all vendors/ excl. non-insider vendors)	~55%/ ~74%

## Share Performance (12 months)



## **Company Interview**

QANTM IP RaaS Interview 30 August 2023

## Initiation Report

QANTM Intellectual Property (ASX:QIP) RaaS Initiation Report 18 April 2023

## Upside Case

- Meets or exceeds target of low-30s EBITDA margins by FY26/FY27
- Uptake/expansion of Sortify's online trademarks platform exceeds expectations
- Earning-accretive M&A/expansion in Asia

### **Downside Case**

- Lower-than-expected transformation programme benefits/EBITDA margins
- Prolonged economic downturn → R&D/ innovation spend may not be insulated
- Changes to regulation (e.g. local agents)

## Catalysts

- Sustained progress with EBITDA margin expansion/transformation programme benefits
- Sustained operating and free cash-flow growth (as transformation programme spend ↓ and benefits ↑) leading to ↑ DPS and/or ↑ capital management opportunities
- Material accretive expansion via acquisition and/or organic growth

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## RaaS Contact

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# Exhibit 1: Financial Summary

QANTM Intellectual Proper	ty Ltd					Share price (23 January 2024)						1.08
Profit and Loss (A\$m)						Half yearly (A\$m)	H1 FY22a	H2 FY22a	H1 FY23a	H2 FY23a	H1 FY24f	H2 FY24
Y/E 30 June	FY22a	FY23a	FY24f	FY25f	FY26f	Service charge revenue	48.9	47.7	52.0	51.8	54.5	53.3
Service charge revenue	96.6	103.8	107.8	112.4	117.3	EBITDA - statutory	10.5	11.1	11.2	12.2	12.2	14.8
Associate revenue	30.7	33.2	34.6	35.6	36.2	EBITDA - underlying	12.8	13.5	13.8	14.7	15.0	16.0
Total revenue	127.3	137.0	142.4	148.1	153.4	EBIT - statutory	6.2	7.2	6.9	8.7	8.4	10.
Other income	3.2	2.5	2.1	2.2	2.2	NPAT - statutory	3.4	3.7	3.4	5.2	4.9	6.
Recoverable expenses	(29.3)	(31.1)	(32.5)	(33.6)	(34.8)	NPAT - underlying	6.5	6.3	6.7	8.0	7.9	8.
N et rev enue	101.2	108.3	112.0	116.7	120.8	EPS (reported)	2.5	2.8	2.5	3.2	3.5	4.
EBITDA - statutory	21.6	23.4	27.0	33.0	35.6	EPS (underlying)	4.7	4.6	4.8	5.8	5.7	5.
EBITDA - underlying	26.3	28.5	31.0	33.8	36.4	Dividend (cps)	3.0	3.5	2.8	3.5	2.8	3.
Depreciation	(1.1)	(1.0)	(1.1)	(0.9)	(1.1)	Operating cash flow	7.3	8.7	2.2	14.1	4.0	13.
Amort (intang & leases)	(7.1)	(6.8)	(6.7)	(6.6)	(6.6)	Free Cash flow	6.8	8.3	(0.1)	13.7	3.1	12.
EBIT	13.4	15.6	19.2	25.6	27.8	Segmented (half yearly)	H1 FY22a	H2 FY22a	H1 FY23a	H2 FY23f	H1 FY24f	H2 FY2
Interest	(2.4)	(3.6)	(3.0)	(3.0)	(2.5)	Patents	33.5	31.5	35.4	34.5	37.1	35.
Tax	(3.9)	(4.2)	(4.9)	(6.8)	(7.6)	Trade Marks	9.5	10.3	10.4	11.1	11.1	11.
NPAT - statutory	7.1	7.9	11.3	15.8	17.7	Legal Services	5.7	6.0	6.2	6.2	6.3	6.
NPAT - underlying	12.8	14.7	16.2	18.4	20.3	Service charge revenue	48.9	47.7	52.0	51.8	54.5	53.
Cash flow (A\$m)	12.0	1.1.7	10.2	10.1	20.0	Associate revenue	13.8	16.9	16.6	16.6	16.8	17.
Y/E 30 June	FY22a	FY23f	FY24f	FY25f	FY26f	Total revenue	62.7	64.6	68.6	68.3	71.3	71.
EBITDA - statutory	21.6	23.4	27.0	33.0	35.6	Other income	1.1	2.1	1.2	1.4	1.0	1.
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Interest	(1.7)	(2.9)	(2.4)	(2.3)	(2.0)	Recoverable expenses	(13.1)	(16.1)	(15.7)	(15.4)	(15.8)	(16.
Tax payments	(4.6)	(3.9)	(4.9)	(6.8)	(7.6)	Net revenue	50.6	50.6	54.1	54.3	56.4	55.
Working capital chgs	0.7	(0.3)	(2.6)	(2.4)	(2.1)	Employ ment	(31.3)	(28.9)	(32.7)	(29.2)	(31.0)	(31.0
Operating cash flow	16.0	16.3	17.2	21.5	23.9	Technology	(3.7)	(4.4)	(3.9)	(4.8)	(4.8)	(4.3
Capex	(0.5)	(2.1)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.8)	Occupancy	(1.1)	(1.0)	(0.9)	(1.4)	(1.4)	(1.2
Capitalised dev costs	(0.4)	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.6)	Other costs	(4.1)	(5.2)	(5.3)	(6.2)	(7.0)	(4.2
Free cash flow	15.1	13.6	15.9	20.1	22.5	EBITDA - statutory	10.5	11.1	11.2	12.7	12.2	14.
Acquisitions	(6.7)	(0.5)	(0.5)	0.0	0.0	EBITDA - underlying	12.8	13.5	13.8	14.7	15.0	16.
Acq'n related costs	q'n related costs (1.1) (0.1) 0.0 0.0		0.0	Growth, Margins, Leverage, I	Returns	FY22a	FY23a	FY24f	FY25f	FY26		
Cash flow pre financing	7.3	13.0	15.4	20.1	22.5	Service charge rev growth		4.6%	7.4%	3.9%	4.3%	4.3%
Equity	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	Total revenue growth		6.9%	7.6%	4.0%	4.0%	3.6%
Borrowings (net)	8.2	0.4	(1.5)	(3.5)	(2.0)	EBITDA margin (underly/service cha		27.2%	27.4%	28.7%	30.1%	31.0%
Other financing (leases)	(5.0)	(4.1)	(3.8)	(3.8)	(3.7)	EBITDA margin (underlying/total rev)		20.7%	20.8%	21.8%	22.8%	23.7%
Dividends paid	(8.7)	(8.7)	(8.8)	(9.5)	(11.1)			22.3%	22.5%	25.0%	29.4%	30.3%
Net cash flow	1.7	0.6	1.3	3.3	5.7	EBIT margin (stat/total revenue)		10.5%	11.4%	13.5%	17.3%	18.1%
Balance sheet (A\$m)						NPAT margin (stat/service char		7.4%	7.6%	10.5%	14.1%	15.19
Y/E 30 June	FY22a	FY23a	FY24f	FY25f	FY26f	Net Debt	5-7	23.8	24.2	21.4	14.6	6.
Cash	7.4	8.0	9.3	12.6	18.3	Net debt/underlying EBITDA (x)		0.9	0.9	0.7	0.4	0.
Accounts receivable	38.2	41.4	43.0	44.8	46.4	ND/ND+Equity (%)	/	24.8%	25.1%	22.4%	15.4%	7.4%
Other current assets	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	EBIT interest cover (x)		5.7	4.3	6.4	8.6	11.
Total current assets	48.2	52.2	55.1	60.1		ROA		12.4%	4.3	13.2%	17.6%	18.9%
PPE												
	1.6	2.8	2.2	2.1		ROE		9.9%	10.9%	15.5%	20.4%	21.1%
Goodwill	54.8	54.4	54.4	54.4		NTA (per share)		(9.0)	(6.2)	(1.7)	4.9	11.
Intangibles	29.4	26.5	22.2	19.4		Working capital		24.0	25.7	27.6	29.4	30.
Other non current assets	8.7	9.9	10.9	9.7		WC/Sales (%)		18.9%	18.8%	19.4%	19.9%	20.0%
Total non current assets	94.6	93.5	89.7	85.6	80.5	Pricing		FY22a	FY23a	FY24f	FY25f	FY2
Total Assets	142.8	145.7	144.7	145.7	147.9	No of shares (y/e)	(m)	137	139	140	140	14
Accounts payable	14.1	15.7	15.4	15.3		Weighted Av Dil Shares	(m)	139	139	141	141	14
Current debt	3.6	3.0	3.0	3.0		EPS (statutory)	cps	5.3	5.6	8.1	11.3	12.
Lease liabilities (current)	3.6	3.3	2.9	2.9	2.9	EPS (underlying)	cps	9.3	10.6	11.6	13.1	14.
Other curr liab (inc AL prov)	9.5	11.2	9.8	9.8	9.8	EPS growth (statutory)		(31.1%)	6.6%	44.0%	39.2%	11.7%
Total current liabilities	30.9	33.2	31.1	31.1	31.4	EPS growth (underlying)		(6.0%)	13.6%	9.5%	13.2%	10.3%
Non-current debt	27.6	29.2	27.7	24.2	22.2	PE (x) - statutory		20.4	19.1	13.3	9.6	8.
Other non current liabs	12.4	11.0	11.6	9.8	7.1	PE (x) - underlying		11.6	10.2	9.3	8.2	7.
Total long term liabilities	39.9	40.2	39.3	34.0	29.3	DPS	cps	6.5	6.3	6.3	7.5	8.
Total Liabilities	70.8	73.4	70.5	65.1		DPS Growth	·	(12%)	(3%)	0%	19%	119
Net Assets	71.9	72.3	74.2	80.6	87.3	Dividend yield		6.0%	5.8%	5.8%	6.9%	7.7%
Share capital	298.9	300.1	301.2	301.2		Dividend imputation		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Retained earnings	(3.4)	(4.2)	(1.7)	4.6		EV/EBITDA (x) - underlying		6.5	6.1	5.6	4.9	4.4
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Reserves	(223.2)	(223.2)	(224.9)	(224.8)	. ,	FCF/Share	cps		9.8	11.3	14.3	16.0
Minorities	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.4)	. ,	Price/FCF share (x)		9.9	11.0	9.6	7.5	6.
Total Shareholder funds	71.9	72.3	74.2	80.6	87.3	Free cash flow Yield		10.1%	9.1%	10.5%	13.2%	14.8%

Sources: Company data, RaaS Advisory estimates (unadjusted for the company's January 23 guidance)



# FINANCIAL SERVICES GUIDE

# RaaS Advisory Pty Ltd ABN 99 614 783 363 Corporate Authorised Representative, number 1248415

of

BR SECURITIES AUSTRALIA PTY LTD ABN 92 168 734 530 AFSL 456663

Effective Date: 6th May 2021



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- how we transact with you
- how we are paid, and
- complaint processes

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In writing to: Australian Financial Complaints Authority, GPO Box 3, Melbourne, VIC, 3001.

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