

# Castrol India HOLD

# Healthy Volumes and Margins, Upside Still Limited

## Summary

Castrol India's performance was broadly in-line with our expectations. Castrol's sales increased by 6% YoY, led by 9% YoY volume growth on the back of strong volume growth in the industrials segment (double digit) and CV segment (+8% YoY), while Personal Mobility grew 6% YoY. EBITDA increased by 13% YoY to Rs3.2bn, with EBITDA margin expanding by 148bps YoY to 23.7%, primarily aided by a fall in base oil prices and forex volatility, showcasing strong cost management. The Management remains focused on expanding the distribution network and deepening penetration in the Industrials segment and high margin CV segment deriving both value and volume growth. We roll-over to CY27E estimates, valuing the stock at a PER of 18x CY27E EPS to derive a target price of Rs211 and maintain our HOLD rating on the stock.

## **Key Highlights and Investment Rationale**

- Realization flattish: Castrol's realization decreased by 1.2% YoY to Rs231/litre.
   However, EBITDA per litre increased by 5% YoY to Rs55 as benefits of lower raw material costs floated in.
- Focus on network expansion: Castrol expanded its service and maintenance network, with a special focus on rural. It has crossed 40,500 rural workshop assets and retail outlets and now contributes 25% of the total volumes. Additionally, the company broadened its national footprint to over 150,000 outlets and 750+ Castrol Auto Service centers, strengthening its distribution network.
- Maintaining HOLD: Strong free cash flow generation, minimal capital requirements, high ROEs and robust payouts make Castrol an attractive investment. However, rich valuations limit potential upside, so we await a better entry point in the stock.

TP I	Rs211
CMP	Rs190
Potential upside/downside	14%
Previous Rating	HOLD

Price Performance (%)							
	-1m	-3m	-12m				
Absolute	(6.1)	(10.6)	(12.4)				
Rel to Sensex	(8.0)	(14 1)	(16.1)				

V/s Consensus		
EPS (Rs)	CY65E	CY27E
IDBI Capital	10	11
Consensus	10	11
% difference	(0.1)	1.8

Key Stock Data	
Bloomberg / Reuters	CSTRL IN / CAST.BC
Sector	Lubricant
Shares o/s (mn)	989
Market cap. (Rs mn)	188,378
3-m daily avg Trd valu	ie (Rs mn) 6.0
52-week high / low	Rs252 / 163
Sensex / Niftv	83.311 / 25.510

Shareholding Pattern (%)	
Promoters	51.0
FII	10.3
DII	15.0
Public	23.7

## **Financial snapshot**

(Rs mn)

CY23	CY24	CY25E	CY26E	CY27E
50,746	53,649	57,258	61,301	65,629
6.3	5.7	6.7	7.1	7.1
12,024	12,782	13,341	14,712	15,948
8.2	6.3	4.4	10.3	8.4
23.7	23.8	23.3	24.0	24.3
8,641	9,272	9,538	10,752	11,620
9	9	10	11	12
6.0	7.3	2.9	12.7	8.1
21.8	20.3	19.8	17.5	16.2
3.9	6.8	7.4	7.6	7.9
14.3	13.3	12.9	12.0	11.2
43.1	42.1	46.2	64.5	87.5
55.4	53.6	59.4	81.3	110.9
	50,746 6.3 12,024 8.2 23.7 8,641 9 6.0 21.8 3.9 14.3 43.1	50,746     53,649       6.3     5.7       12,024     12,782       8.2     6.3       23.7     23.8       8,641     9,272       9     9       6.0     7.3       21.8     20.3       3.9     6.8       14.3     13.3       43.1     42.1	50,746         53,649         57,258           6.3         5.7         6.7           12,024         12,782         13,341           8.2         6.3         4.4           23.7         23.8         23.3           8,641         9,272         9,538           9         9         10           6.0         7.3         2.9           21.8         20.3         19.8           3.9         6.8         7.4           14.3         13.3         12.9           43.1         42.1         46.2	50,746         53,649         57,258         61,301           6.3         5.7         6.7         7.1           12,024         12,782         13,341         14,712           8.2         6.3         4.4         10.3           23.7         23.8         23.3         24.0           8,641         9,272         9,538         10,752           9         9         10         11           6.0         7.3         2.9         12.7           21.8         20.3         19.8         17.5           3.9         6.8         7.4         7.6           14.3         13.3         12.9         12.0           43.1         42.1         46.2         64.5

Source: IDBI Capital Research

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**Exhibit 1: Quarterly Snapshot** 

(Rs mn)	Q3CY25	Q2CY25	% QoQ	Q3CY24	% YoY
Total Revenues	13,628	14,968	(9.0)	12,882	5.8
Total expenditure	10,400	11,473	(9.4)	10,021	3.8
EBIDTA	3,228	3,495	(7.6)	2,861	12.8
EBITDA margin (%)	23.7%	23.4%	34bps	22.2%	148bps
Depreciation and amortization	252	266	(5.4)	245	2.7
Interest costs	21	26	(21.4)	20	1.5
Other income	123	93	32.8	209	(41.1)
PBT	3,079	3,295	(6.6)	2,805	9.8
Tax	801	855	(6.4)	730	9.6
Net profit	2,278	2,440	(6.6)	2,074	9.8
EPS (Rs)	2.3	2.5	(6.6)	2.1	9.8

Source: Company; IDBI Capital Research

**Exhibit 2: Actual vs. Estimates** 

(Rs mn)	Q3CY25E	Q3CY25A	Variance (%)
Total Revenues	13,516	13,628	0.8
EBITDA	3,163	3,228	2.1
EBITDA margin (%)	23.4%	23.7%	29bps
Net profit	2,219	2,278	2.7
EPS	2.2	2.3	2.7

Source: Company; IDBI Capital Research



**Exhibit 3: Sales Volumes Exhibit 4: Net Sales Realization** (Rs/litr) (KL) 80 ¬ 250 66 63 59 59 234 55 231 229 60 227 226 230 40 210 20 190 Q3CY25 Q4CY24 Q2CY25 Q3CY24 Q4CY24 Q1CY25 Q2CY25 Q3CY25 Q3CY24 Q1CY25 Source: Company; IDBI Capital Research Source: Company; IDBI Capital Research

**Exhibit 5: Change in estimates** 

	CY25E			CY27E			
	Old	New	(%) Chg	Old	New	(%) Chg	New
Revenue (Rs bn)	57,258	57,258	-	61,301	61,301	-	65,629
EBITDA (Rs bn)	13,341	13,341	-	14,712	14,712	-	15,948
EBITDA margin (%)	23.3	23.3	-	24.0	24.0	-	24.3
Adj. Net profit (Rs bn)	9,538	9,538	-	10,752	10,752	-	11,620
Adj. EPS (Rs)	9.64	9.6	-	10.9	10.9	-	11.7

Source: Company; IDBI Capital Research



#### **Conference call takeaways**

#### **Strategic Direction and Volume Growth**

- Priority remains accelerating volume growth, delivering market share gains, maintaining profitability, and building solutions for evolving customer needs.
- The strategic focus on volume-led growth is yielding sustainable results. Growth is being driven by the expansion in rural markets and bolstered presence in the industrial segment.
- Rural volumes contribute a sizable 25-30% of B2C numbers and are growing in double digits YoY.
- Personal Mobility grew over 6%, Commercial Vehicles (CVO) grew about 8%, and Industrial was in double digits. Industrial volumes account for approximately 13–14% of the total, CVO 38–40%, and Personal Mobility 48–50%.

## **Portfolio Expansion and Mobility Ecosystem**

- Castrol is transforming from a lubricant provider to a full service and maintenance company.
- Key new products launched include the Castrol all-in-one helmet cleaner, an innovative foam spray addressing helmet hygiene, filling a market gap and reinforcing Castrol as a complete auto care brand
- EV fluids are offered under the Castrol ON range. The company is leveraging its technology center to formulate EV transmission and thermal fluids suited for India's environment.
- An MOU was signed with VinFast Auto, the Vietnamese EV manufacturer, allowing VinFast to leverage Castrol's workshop network (select Castrol Auto Service outlets) for after-sales EV service nationally. This generates a new revenue stream and supports India's sustainable mobility transition.

#### **Operational Excellence and Network Reach**

- Products are now available through over 150,000 retail outlets across the country, including 40,000+ outlets in rural India.
- The branded service network has expanded significantly. There are now more than 750 Castrol Auto Service centers across 300 cities (up from 580 YoY).



- The network is further strengthened by 33,000 independent bike workshops and 12,000 multibrand workshops.
- About 500 rural express (oil change kiosks) are also helping accelerate repeat buying.

#### **Cost, Margins, and External Factors**

- Market conditions remain volatile, with base oil fluctuations and out-of-range forex movements adding pressure.
- Cost of goods sold decreased by about 5% per liter in Q3 due to structural cost optimization rate negotiation, formulation optimization, manufacturing efficiency.
- Base oil volatility is noted, though its correlation with crude oil price is low. Approximately 50-55% of base oil requirement is imported, with the balance procured locally. Castrol hedges to ensure short-term volatility does not impact the P&L.
- Industrial lubricants offer significantly lower margins than automotive lubricants; if automotive gross margin is indexed at 100, industrial lubricants would be less than 25–30.
- The company must balance industrial growth protected from EV transition with profitability from ICE/EV fluids.
- Management is satisfied maintaining EBITDA margins in the 21–23% range, given the sector's structure.

#### **Future Opportunities and Strategic Review**

- Castrol is actively pursuing the data center opportunity, focusing on liquid cooling (direct-to-chip or immersion). The potential gross margin in this space is benchmarked globally at about a dollar per liter. Testing is ongoing with hyperscalers and data center operators.
- Chemical Management Services are gaining momentum. The company is exploring untapped sectors such as cement, steel, and glass.
- The investment in Key Mobility Solutions remains protected and is reviewed twice yearly. KMS provides revenue from lubricant and spare part sales into its network, offering valuable learning about the service environment.



# **Financial Summary**

Year-end: March

Change (yoy, %)

Change (yoy, %)

Margin (%)

Depreciation

Other income

Pre-tax profit

Net profit

Effective tax rate (%)

Exceptional items

Adjusted net profit

Change (yoy, %)

Dividend per share

Dividend Payout (%)

Operating expenses

Net sales

**EBITDA** 

**EBIT** 

Tax

EPS

#### Profit & Loss Account

**CY22** 

13.9

47,745

(36,634)

11,111

4.2

23.3

(814)

10,297

(40)

670

10,928

(2,776)

25.4

8,152

8,152

7.5

8.2

7.0

84.9

**CY23** 

50,746

(38,722)

12,024

6.3

8.2

23.7

(924)

(75)

787

11,811

(3,170)

26.8

8,641

8,641

6.0

8.7

7.5

85.8

13.0

138.7

14.0

145.2

14.5

133.4

11,100

(Rs mn) CY24 CY25E CY26E CY27E 61,301 65,629 53,649 57,258 5.7 6.7 7.1 7.1 (46,589)(49,681)(40,867)(43,917)12,782 14,712 15,948 13,341 6.3 10.3 8.4 4.4 23.8 23.3 24.0 24.3 (1,079)(1,160)(1,224)(998)11,784 12,262 13,552 14,724 (94)(90)(99)(107)886 613 959 959 12,576 12,785 14,412 15,576 (3,304)(3,247)(3,661)(3,956)26.3 25.4 25.4 25.4 9,272 9,538 10,752 11,620 9,538 10,752 9,272 11,620 7.3 2.9 12.7 8.1 9.4 9.6 10.9 11.7

15.0

127.7



Balance Sheet						(Rs mn)
Year-end: March	CY22	CY23	CY24	CY25E	CY26E	CY27E
Shareholders' funds	18,861	21,217	22,784	18,474	14,883	11,666
Share capital	4,946	4,946	4,946	4,946	4,946	4,946
Reserves & surplus	13,915	16,271	17,838	13,528	9,937	6,721
Total Debt	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other liabilities	-	-	-	-	-	-
Curr Liab & prov	12,169	12,982	13,569	16,212	17,194	18,460
Current liabilities	11,829	12,641	13,229	15,871	16,854	18,120
Provisions	340	342	340	340	340	340
Total liabilities	11,829	12,982	13,569	16,212	17,194	18,460
Total equity & liabilities	30,690	34,200	36,353	34,685	32,077	30,126
Net fixed assets	3,216	3,672	3,789	4,010	4,149	3,925
Investments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other non-curr assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
Current assets	27,475	30,528	32,564	30,676	27,928	26,201
Inventories	5,344	5,329	5,242	6,538	6,874	7,392
Sundry Debtors	3,504	4,228	4,377	4,318	4,856	5,082
Cash and Bank	12,177	16,873	18,865	15,739	12,118	9,646
Other Current Asset	1,887	4,097	4,080	4,080	4,080	4,080
Total assets	30,690	34,200	36,353	34,685	32,077	30,126



Cash Flow Statement						(Rs mn)
Year-end: March	CY22	CY23	CY24	CY25E	CY26E	CY27E
Pre-tax profit	10,928	11,811	12,576	12,785	14,412	15,576
Depreciation	814	924	998	1,079	1,160	1,224
Tax paid	(2,740)	(3,185)	(3,141)	(3,247)	(3,661)	(3,956)
Chg in working capital	304	(706)	369	1,405	110	520
Other operating activities	(150)	(313)	(361)	(523)	(860)	(852)
Cash flow from operations (a)	9,156	8,530	10,441	11,499	11,161	12,512
Capital expenditure	(1,097)	(916)	(927)	(1,300)	(1,300)	(1,000)
Chg in investments	1,269	(2,054)	(2,400)	-	-	-
Other investing activities	448	456	658	613	959	959
Cash flow from investing (b)	620	(2,513)	(2,669)	(687)	(341)	(41)
Equity raised/(repaid)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Debt raised/(repaid)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dividend (incl. tax)	(5,935)	(6,429)	(7,913)	(13,848)	(14,342)	(14,837)
Chg in minorities	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other financing activities	(140)	(209)	(278)	(90)	(99)	(107)
Cash flow from financing (c)	(6,075)	(6,638)	(8,191)	(13,938)	(14,441)	(14,944)
Net chg in cash (a+b+c)	3,701	(621)	(419)	(3,126)	(3,621)	(2,473)



## **Financial Ratios**

Year-end: March	CY22	CY23	CY24	CY25E	CY26E	CY27E
Book Value (Rs)	19	21	23	19	15	12
Adj EPS (Rs)	8	9	9	10	11	12
Adj EPS growth (%)	7.5	6.0	7.3	2.9	12.7	8.1
EBITDA margin (%)	23.3	23.7	23.8	23.3	24.0	24.3
Pre-tax margin (%)	22.9	23.3	23.4	22.3	23.5	23.7
Net Debt/Equity (x)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.9)	(0.8)	(0.8)
ROCE (%)	58.3	55.4	53.6	59.4	81.3	110.9
ROE (%)	46.2	43.1	42.1	46.2	64.5	87.5
DuPont Analysis						
Asset turnover (x)	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.8	2.1
Leverage factor (x)	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	2.0	2.3
Net margin (%)	17.1	17.0	17.3	16.7	17.5	17.7
Working Capital & Liquidity ratio						
Inventory days	40.9	38	36	42	41	41
Receivable days	26.8	30	30	28	29	28
Payable days	68	67	63	80	79	80

## **Valuations**

Year-end: March	CY22	CY23	CY24	CY25E	CY26E	CY27E
PER (x)	23.1	21.8	20.3	19.8	17.5	16.2
Price/Book value (x)	10.0	8.9	8.3	10.2	12.7	16.1
EV/Net sales (x)	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.7
EV/EBITDA (x)	15.6	14.3	13.3	12.9	12.0	11.2
Dividend Yield (%)	3.7	3.9	6.8	7.4	7.6	7.9

Source: Company; IDBI Capital Research



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**Key to Ratings Stocks:** 

BUY: 15%+; HOLD: -5% to 15%; SELL: -5% and below.

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