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Digital Financial Statements

- Like Non-GAAP Financial Measures, Digital Financial Statements –
 - Are Important to Investors, and
 - Should be Audited.

Technology is Driving Change in Financial Reporting

- Until recently, assumptions about the way users consumed financial statements were settled: *users would read them*.
- In reality, the majority¹ of financial statement information is *now consumed digitally*. For many years this has been via data distributors who themselves convert paper to digital.
- SEC is one of many regulators around the world to *require a digitally tagged financial statement* – but it is a separate nonaudited exhibit.
- SEC is shifting to "Inline XBRL" which embeds machine readable financial statements in a single document.
- The single human and machine readable financial statement will be the *only financial statement*.

The Anomaly – Digital Aspects of the Financial Statements are Not Audited

Investors Rightly Expect to Trust Digital Financials

- Stable financial markets rely on transparency and trust in a broad range of issuer disclosures.
- Audited financial statements have been the cornerstone of that trust.
- Financial statement information used for analysis has been and will continue to be sourced from digital filings.
- Investors are surprised when they learn financial statements delivered digitally are not audited.
- Indeed, 50% of CFA members surveyed in 2016 believe that digital information should be incorporated into the standard financial statement audit.²

A New Expectation Gap is Developing

SEC Now Accepts Inline XBRL

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Long-term debt		225,000	225,000

Currently - Only the Human Readable Layer is Audited



Digital Financials Provide Direct Utility

- Data provided directly by companies in a machine-consumable form are immediately usable.
- Analysis can be carried out on a company-specific basis, or, as shown at right³, on the entire population of companies.



The Analytical Capability is Powerful

The World View

- Inline XBRL will be the only financial statement language used in at least 32 countries within the next five years, including the US, Japan and the whole of the EU.
- The Netherlands is mandating audit of all XBRL filings for every private and public company.
- This question is not yet on the IAASB work program, but given developments in Europe, it is fair to assume that it will be considered soon.
- Audit firms in the UK and US are providing "agreed-upon" assurance as a private service for clients – and thus, should have a good idea of the cost.

The World is Moving Towards Audited Digital Financial Statements

Organizations Endorsing Assurance

- CFA Institute
- American Institute of CPAs
- Dutch SBR Programme
- Bloomberg
- Morningstar
- XBRL International

Users Want Independent Assurance Over Digital Financial Statements

Digital Financial Statements Should be Audited

- Digital financial statements allow users to consume information directly and with consistency of definitions across issuers.
- Digital financial statements facilitate analysis.
- Digital financial statements will be the only financial statements.
- Digital financial statements could contain errors in translation from the paper version - which could be minimized with auditor involvement.
- Investors expect both the human readable layer AND the machine readable layer to be audited.⁴

Relevancy of the Audit is Reduced if Not Applied to Digital Information

Reference Links

- ¹ See "<u>CFA Institue Member Survey: XBRL</u>", p3, published by the CFA Institute, October 2016.
- ² See "<u>Data and Technology: Transforming the Financial Information</u> <u>Landscape</u>" published by the CFA Institute, June 2016.
- ³ Calcbench Research Report <u>Common Stock Repurchases June</u> <u>2017</u>
- ⁴ See "<u>CFA Institue Member Survey: XBRL</u>", p20, published by the CFA Institute, October 2016.