

Mid Cap Relative Value SMA Commentary

1st Quarter 2025

Investment Objective

The Sterling Capital Mid Cap Relative Value SMA seeks long-term capital appreciation. The portfolio uses a value investment approach to invest primarily in common stocks of mid-cap companies. We believe that undervalued companies with good earnings prospects have superior appreciation potential with reasonable levels of risk. Quantitatively, we focus on a stock's fundamental valuation relative to its peers. Qualitatively, we seek to identify business catalysts which will serve to drive future earnings growth, increase investor interest and expand valuation.

Performance	QTR	YTD	1Y	3Y	5Y	10Y	Since Inception ¹
Sterling (Gross)	-2.94%	-2.94%	-2.20%	5.12%	15.27%	7.82%	9.57%
Sterling (Net)	-3.67%	-3.67%	-5.06%	2.06%	11.94%	4.69%	6.39%
Index	-2.11%	-2.11%	2.27%	3.78%	16.70%	7.62%	9.21%

Key Quarterly Performance Notes

- The SMA posted a total return of -2.94% (gross of fees) and -3.67% (net of fees) during the three-month period ended March 31, 2025.
- In the quarter, it underperformed the Russell Midcap[®] Value Index by 156 basis points (bps).
- Within the portfolio, holdings in the Communications Services, Energy, and Utilities sectors performed the best on an absolute basis. Holdings within Information Technology, Industrials, and Health Care lagged.
- On a sector basis, relative underperformance during the first quarter was driven by negative stock selection, primarily within the Industrials, Information Technology, and Materials sectors. Positive stock selection within the Communications Services and Consumer Staples sectors, as well as an underweight allocation to Consumer Discretionary, served as a partial offset.

BPS = basis points. ¹The composite inception date is 07.01.2013. Data is as of 03.31.2025. Performance results prior to 08.01.2015 are considered "predecessor performance" and were achieved by the investment team when they were part of the Stratton Management Company. The benchmark is the Russell MidCap Value[®] Value Index. Performance is preliminary and is annualized for periods longer than one year. Net of fees performance returns are preliminary and are presented net of the investment management fees and trading expenses. Gross of fees performance returns reflect the deduction of trading costs: a client's return will be reduced by the management fees and other expenses it may incur. Investment management fees are described in SCM's Form ADV 2A. Performance reflects the reinvestment of interest income and dividends and realized capital gains. The performance presented represents past performance and is no guarantee of future results. Performance is compared to an index; however, the volatility of an index varies greatly and investments cannot be made directly in an index. Market conditions vary from year to year and can result in a decline in market value due to material market or economic conditions. Please refer to the attached GIPS Composite Report for additional disclosures. Net returns are calculated by deducting the highest applicable wrap fee of 3.00% annually from the gross composite return. Sources: Russell Investments; eVestment Alliance; Sterling Capital Management Analytics.

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Market Commentary

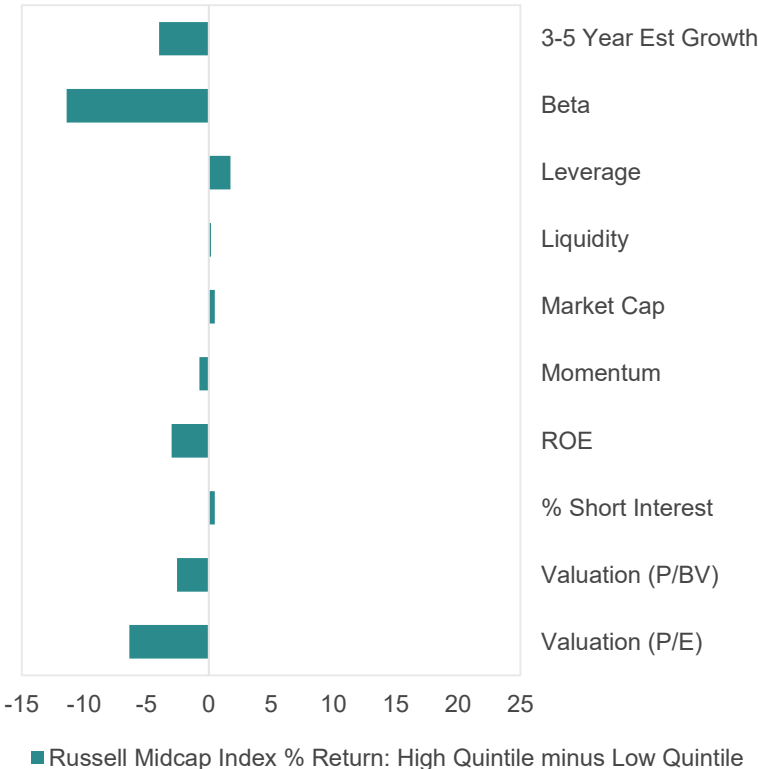
Mid Cap Market Review

- Mid cap equities, represented by the Russell Midcap[®] Index, posted a total return of -3.40% in Q1. After a strong January for stocks, the market turned negative for the remainder of the quarter as economic data slowed, consumer confidence fell, and uncertainty, including around tariffs, rose. As a result, performance favored more traditionally defensive sectors including Utilities, Real Estate, and Consumer Staples. Factor performance reflected the general characteristics of those sectors, with lower valuation, lower beta, and lower growth companies outperforming. Higher leverage also moderately outperformed as interest rates fell.
- Sectors that underperformed the broader benchmark in the quarter included Information Technology, Consumer Discretionary, and Industrials. We attribute the decline in the Information Technology sector to falling sentiment for all stocks considered part of the Artificial Intelligence trade, as evidenced by poor performance in the Semiconductor and Technology Hardware industries. Declining consumer confidence numbers and company comments underscoring an uncertain selling environment weighed on much of the Consumer Discretionary sector, from apparel to general merchandise to automobiles. Industrials were negatively impacted by tariff concerns as well as fallout from declining expectations for data center construction.
- Within the Mid Cap segment, Value outperformed Growth by 501 bps for the quarter. The higher weighting of the more defensive, outperforming sectors referenced above influenced the relative performance of Value versus Growth.

Outlook

- Sentiment across both businesses and consumers improved following the November 2024 U.S. election, though both began to wane following January’s presidential inauguration. The possibility of significant domestic policy changes by the incoming administration and heightened geopolitical tensions globally, adds uncertainty to the market outlook for 2025.
- In the first Trump term, the administration’s policy roll out started favorably with tax reform before market-negative events like tariffs were enacted. The second Trump administration appears to be working in the opposite direction.
- Performance over the last two months of the first quarter favored defensive sectors, a trend which we believe may continue until the market gains more clarity on the outlook for a tax package and the effects of any tariff policies.
- We continue to seek investments in higher quality, value equities with above-peer-average earnings prospects. We believe these characteristics will remain in relative favor through a potentially volatile environment for stocks.

Factor Performance:
Mid Cap Equity Market



AI = artificial intelligence. GDP = gross domestic product; Fed = Federal Reserve. The above chart depicts the performance of the constituents of the Russell MidCap Value Index based on relative composite fundamental characteristics. The benchmark for this composite is the Russell MidCap Value Index. For illustrative purposes only, characteristics are also shown for the Russell MidCap Value Index in order to provide additional information on the broader small-cap equity market. For each characteristic, the constituents of the index are sorted and grouped into quintiles. The bar adjacent to each characteristic listed shows the performance of the stocks in the highest quintile relative to the performance of those in the lowest quintile. Terms and definitions can be found on page 4. Source: Bloomberg L.P.

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Performance Attribution Analysis

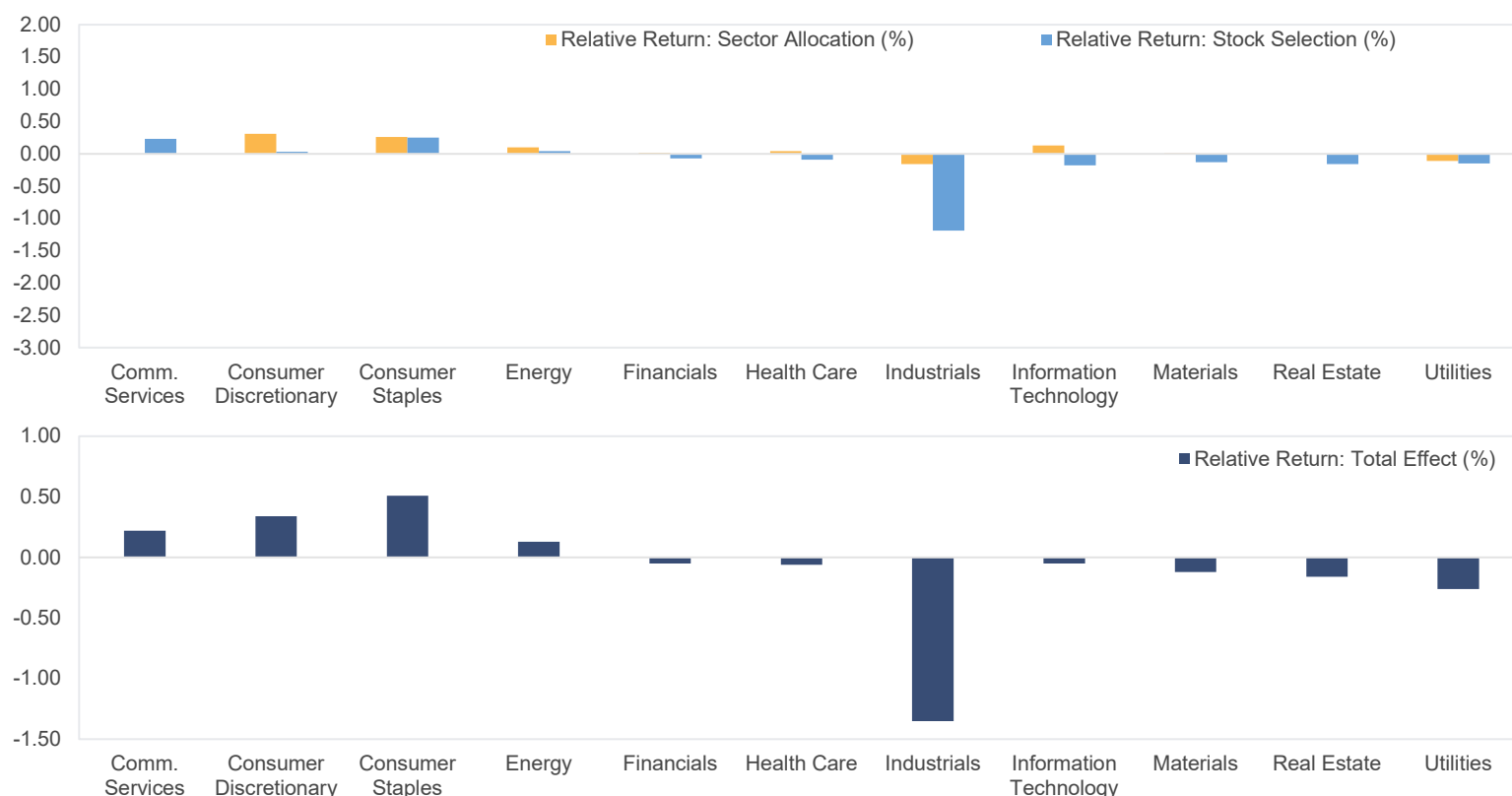
Top Contributors		Bottom Contributors	
▪ BJ's Wholesale Club	▪ Hanover Insurance Group	▪ nVent Electric	▪ PTC
▪ Casey's General Stores	▪ NiSource	▪ MasTec	▪ United Rentals
▪ Take-Two Interactive		▪ Digital Realty Trust	

Relative Contributors

- Positive stock selection within the Consumer Staples sector driven by portfolio holdings BJ's Wholesale Club and Casey's General Stores.
- Positive stock selection within the Communication Services sector driven by portfolio holding Take-Two Interactive.
- An underweight allocation to the Consumer Discretionary sector.

Relative Detractors

- Negative stock selection within the Industrials sector as portfolio holdings nVent Electric and MasTec lagged.
- Negative stock selection within the Information Technology sector driven by portfolio holdings PTC and Ciena.
- Negative stock selection within the Materials sector driven by portfolio holding Westlake.



Data is as of 03.31.2025. Sources: FactSet; Sterling Capital Management Analytics. Attribution source: FactSet. Attribution results are shown for illustrative purposes only.



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Important Information & Disclosures

Past performance is not indicative of future results. Any type of investing involves risk and there are no guarantees that these methods will be successful. Economic charts are provided for illustrative purposes only. The information provided herein is subject to market conditions and is therefore expected to fluctuate.

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Performance is preliminary and is annualized for periods longer than one year. Net of fees performance returns are preliminary and are presented net of the investment management fees and trading expenses. Net returns are calculated by deducting the highest applicable wrap fee of 3.00% annually from the gross composite return. Gross of fees performance returns reflect the deduction of trading costs: a client's return will be reduced by the management fees and other expenses it may incur. Investment management fees are described in SCM's Form ADV 2A. Performance reflects the reinvestment of interest income and dividends and realized capital gains. The performance presented represents past performance and is no guarantee of future results. Performance is compared to an index: however, the volatility of an index varies greatly and investments cannot be made directly in an index. Market conditions vary from year to year and can result in a decline in market value due to material market or economic conditions. Please refer to the attached GIPS Composite Report for additional disclosures.

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Technical Terms: the below technical terms are sourced from Corporate Finance Institute.

Price-to-earnings ratio (P/E ratio) is the ratio for valuing a company that measures its current share price relative to its per-share earnings.

Price-to-book (P/B) ratio is the ratio to the market value of a company's shares (share price) over its book value of equity.

Return on equity (ROE) is the measure of a company's net income divided by its shareholders' equity.

Beta measures the volatility of returns relative to the entire market. It is used as a measure of risk and is an integral part of the capital asset pricing model. A company with a higher beta has greater risk and also greater expected returns.

The volatility of an index varies greatly. All indices are unmanaged and investments cannot be made directly in an index.

The Russell MidCap® Value Index is an unmanaged index (with no defined investment objective) that measures the performance of the mid cap value segment of the U.S. equity universe. Indices are not securities that can be purchased or sold, and their total returns are reflective of unmanaged portfolios.

The Russell MidCap® Index measures the performance of the mid-cap segment of the U.S. equity universe. The Russell Midcap® Index is a subset of the Russell 1000® Index. It includes approximately 800 of the smallest securities based on a combination of their market cap and current index membership. The Russell Midcap® Index is constructed to provide a comprehensive and unbiased barometer for the mid-cap segment.

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Sterling Capital Mid Cap Relative Value SMA

	Total Gross Return	Total Net Return	Benchmark Return	3Y Composite Std. Dev. (Gross)	3Y Benchmark Std. Dev.	Composite Dispersion	Number of Portfolios	Composite AUM (MM)	Total Firm AUM (MM)
2024	10.38%	7.18%	13.07%	18.82%	19.77%	Not Calculable	1	\$38	\$66,160
2023	15.08%	11.76%	12.71%	18.47%	19.31%	Not Calculable	1	\$44	\$66,746
2022	-10.18%	-12.84%	-12.03%	22.37%	24.44%	Not Calculable	1	\$44	\$62,842
2021	24.72%	21.14%	28.34%	19.79%	21.95%	Not Calculable	1	\$63	\$75,309
2020	4.49%	1.44%	4.96%	20.55%	22.62%	Not Calculable	1	\$61	\$70,108
2019	30.60%	26.87%	27.06%	12.54%	12.79%	Not Calculable	1	\$65	\$58,191
2018	-13.54%	-16.09%	-12.29%	12.80%	11.96%	Not Calculable	1	\$54	\$56,889
2017	22.79%	19.26%	13.34%	11.33%	10.32%	Not Calculable	1	\$69	\$55,908
2016	12.68%	9.42%	20.00%	12.21%	11.30%	Not Calculable	1	\$62	\$51,603
2015	-0.74%	-3.64%	-4.78%	< 3 Years	10.71%	Not Calculable	1	\$64	\$2,984

Benchmark: Russell Midcap® Value Index

Composite Creation Date: 09.26.2023

Inception Date: 07.01.2013

- Consists of all discretionary mid capitalization portfolios managed in the Stratton relative value style. Sterling's Stratton mid capitalization equity accounts invest primarily in companies similar to the market capitalization of the Russell Midcap® Index.
- The material risks of this strategy are, but not limited to, the following: Market Risk, Management Risk, Market Disruption and Geopolitical Risk, Company Specific Risk, Equity Securities Risk. For a full list of strategy risks, please reference Sterling Capital Management's Form ADV, Part 2A.
- Sterling Capital Management LLC claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS standards. Sterling Capital Management LLC has been independently verified for the periods 01/01/2001 to 12/31/2023. The verification report(s) is/are available upon request. A firm that claims compliance with the GIPS standards must establish policies and procedures for complying with all the applicable requirements of the GIPS standards. Verification provides assurance on whether the firm's policies and procedures related to composite and pooled fund maintenance, as well as the calculation, presentation, and distribution of performance, have been designed in compliance with the GIPS standards and have been implemented on a firm-wide basis. Verification does not provide assurance on the accuracy of any specific performance report. Benchmark returns are not covered by the report of the independent verifiers. GIPS® is a registered trademark of the CFA Institute. CFA Institute does not endorse or promote this organization, nor does it warrant the accuracy or quality of the content contained herein.
- Sterling Capital Management LLC (SCM) is a registered investment advisor with the U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC). Registration does not imply a certain level of skill or training. SCM manages a variety of equity, fixed income and multi-asset portfolios. Prior to January 2001, SCM was a wholly owned subsidiary of United Asset Management (UAM). In January 2001, SCM purchased all the assets and business of Sterling Capital Management Company from UAM to become an employee-owned firm. In April 2005, BB&T Corporation (BB&T) purchased a majority equity ownership stake in SCM. In October 2010, the management group of SCM entered into an agreement with BB&T that reduced and restructured management's interest in SCM. Additionally, BB&T Asset Management merged into SCM. In January 2013, CHOICE Asset Management merged into SCM. In August 2015, eight new employees joined SCM via Stratton Management Company following the close of BB&T's purchase of Susquehanna Bancshares. In December 2019, BB&T and SunTrustBanks, Inc. Holding Company merged as equals to form Truist Financial Corporation. SCM was then a wholly-owned subsidiary of Truist Financial Corporation. In August 2020, eight new employees joined SCM via the Investment Advisory Group of SunTrust Advisory Services. In July 2024, Guardian Capital LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Guardian Capital Group Limited (Guardian), completed the acquisition of SCM from Truist.
- The performance presented represents past performance and is no guarantee of future results. Market and economic conditions vary from year to year and can result in a decline in market value due to material market or economic conditions. Please refer to the slide titled "Performance" for the one-, five-, and ten-year returns of the composite.
- A complete list of all of SCM's composites and SCM's broad distribution pooled funds and their descriptions is available upon request. Policies for valuing investments, calculating performance, and preparing GIPS Composite Reports are available upon request.
- Performance reflects reinvested interest income and dividends and realized and unrealized capital gains and losses. Valuations and performance are reported in U.S. dollars. Periodic time weighted returns are geometrically linked. Returns are not calculated net of non-reclaimable withholding taxes due to immaterial dollar amounts. Effective 1/1/22, composite returns are calculated by weighting the individual portfolio returns using beginning of period market values. From 8/1/15 to 1/1/22, composite returns were asset weighted using the average capital base method that reflects both beginning market value and cash flows and uses the aggregate method. Prior to 8/1/15 composite returns were calculated by weighting the individual portfolio returns using beginning of period market values. Performance results prior to August 1, 2015 are considered "predecessor performance" and were achieved by the Relative Value Team when they were part of the Stratton Management Company.
- Gross of fees returns are presented before management fees but after all trading costs. Net returns are calculated by deducting the highest applicable wrap fee of 3.00% annually from the gross composite return. Since inception, the composite contains only the pooled vehicle account.
- The appropriate benchmark is the Russell Midcap Value Index which consists of stocks from the Russell Midcap® Index with a less than average growth orientation and lower price-to-book ratios. It represents the universe of stocks from which value managers typically select. The index is reconstituted annually. Total return includes price appreciation/depreciation and income as a percent of original investment.
- The annual composite dispersion presented is measured by an asset-weighted standard deviation calculation method of all portfolios in the composite for the entire year, and is calculated using gross of fee returns. It is not meaningful when there have been less than six portfolios in composite for entire calendar year. The three year annualized standard deviation measures the variability of the composite and benchmark returns over the preceding 36-month period. The composite 3-year standard deviation is calculated using gross of fee returns. It is not required to be presented when a full three years of composite performance is not yet available.