

# Focus Equity SMA

09.30.2026



**STERLING**  
CAPITAL

## Focus Equity Management Team

- Portfolio Managers:
  - Casey Nelsen, CFA®
  - Charles Radtke, CFA®

## Investment Philosophy

Seeks positions featuring attractive and sustainable multi-year return profiles underpinned by businesses perceived to possess:

- Robust financial returns and visible reinvestment opportunities
- Talented management
- Attractive valuation

## Investment Process

- Qualitative and quantitative screens identify opportunities
- Emphasis on proprietary primary research and due diligence
- Candidates and holdings continuously vetted by investment team

## Portfolio Structure

- Conviction-weighted portfolio of 15-30 securities
- Tax-efficient low turnover typically less than 25%

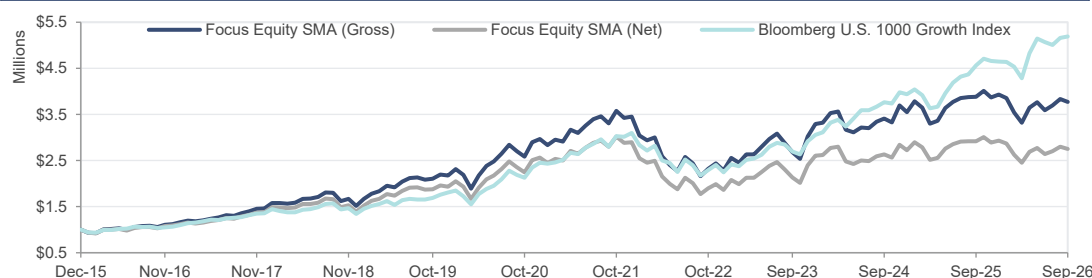
| Performance                | QTR   | YTD    | 1Y     | 3Y     | 5Y     | 10Y    | ITD <sup>1</sup> |
|----------------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------------|
| Focus Equity SMA (Gross)   | 4.93% | -4.10% | -2.94% | 12.03% | 2.64%  | 13.29% | 13.14%           |
| Focus Equity SMA (Net)     | 4.17% | -6.22% | -5.78% | 8.78%  | -0.35% | 10.01% | 9.86%            |
| Bloomberg U.S. 1000 Growth | 2.46% | 11.78% | 13.78% | 24.41% | 13.13% | 17.18% | 16.56%           |

| Portfolio Characteristics    |           |           |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
|                              | Portfolio | Index     |
| Wtd. Avg. Market Cap         | \$1478.4B | \$1980.5B |
| Wtd. Med. Market Cap         | \$255.7B  | \$1069.4B |
| Wtd. Avg. Dividend Yield     | 0.51%     | 0.63%     |
| Med. Hist. 5Y DPS Growth     | 12.75%    | 8.27%     |
| Wtd. Harmonic Med. P/E (FY1) | 25.99x    | 25.99x    |
| Med. Hist. 3Y EPS Growth     | 17.11%    | 8.90%     |
| Med. Est. 3-5Y EPS Growth    | 19.00%    | 11.26%    |
| Med. Net Debt/EBITDA         | 0.34x     | 1.10x     |
| Med. Return on Equity        | 29.98%    | 14.33%    |
| Number of Holdings           | 31        | 702       |
| Active Share                 | 69.46%    | ---       |
| Turnover <sup>2</sup>        | 49.42%    | ---       |

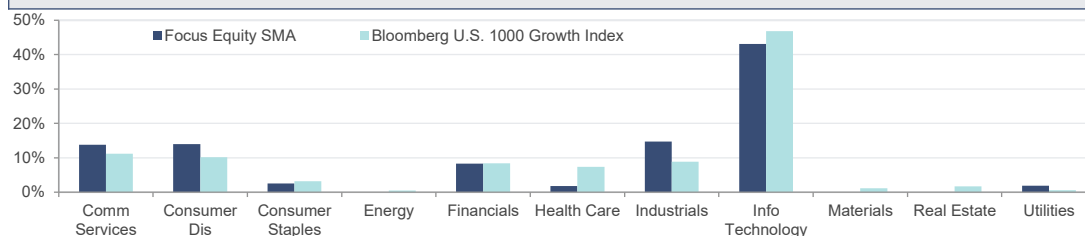
## Risk Statistics<sup>3</sup> vs. Bloomberg U.S. 1000 Growth Index

|                                                |         |
|------------------------------------------------|---------|
| (Gross of Fees, Since Inception <sup>1</sup> ) |         |
| Up Market Capture                              | 106.82% |
| Down Market Capture                            | 122.01% |
| Std. Deviation (Portfolio)                     | 20.50%  |
| Std. Deviation (Index)                         | 16.36%  |
| Annualized Alpha                               | -4.49%  |
| Beta                                           | 1.14    |
| Tracking Error                                 | 8.46    |
| Rolling 3Y Batting Avg.                        | 37.23%  |
| Rolling 5Y Batting Avg.                        | 24.29%  |
| Outperforms in Down Periods                    | 32.61%  |

## Growth of \$1 Million (Gross & Net of Fees, Since Inception)<sup>1,4</sup>



## Sector Allocation<sup>5</sup>



| Top Ten Equity Holdings <sup>5</sup> |               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Alphabet Inc. Class C                | 8.56%         |
| Microsoft Corporation                | 7.37%         |
| Amazon.com, Inc.                     | 6.15%         |
| NVIDIA Corporation                   | 5.84%         |
| Shopify, Inc. Class A                | 5.26%         |
| Adyen N.V. Unsponsored ADR           | 4.93%         |
| Meta Platforms Inc Class A           | 4.88%         |
| Broadcom Inc.                        | 4.41%         |
| Eaton Corp. Plc                      | 4.05%         |
| Synopsys, Inc.                       | 3.71%         |
| <b>Total % of Portfolio</b>          | <b>55.16%</b> |

<sup>1</sup>The performance inception date is 12.31.2015. The net of fee performance reflects the deduction of the maximum SMA bundled fee of 3.00% annually for all periods presented. Performance is preliminary and is annualized for periods longer than one year. Net of fees performance returns are presented net of the SMA bundled fee, which includes all charges for trading costs, advisory services, portfolio management, custody and other administrative fees. "Pure" gross of fees performance returns do not reflect the deduction of any fees including 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. The benchmark is the Bloomberg U.S. 1000 Growth Index. <sup>2</sup>Turnover is for the last 12 months. <sup>3</sup>Risk statistics are based on monthly returns since inception. Risk statistics are calculated using the gross performance of the strategy composite. <sup>4</sup>The Growth of \$1 Million chart depicts a hypothetical investment based upon actual returns of the composite since inception. <sup>5</sup>Specific securities identified and described do not represent all of the securities purchased, sold or recommended to clients. There are no assurances that securities identified will be profitable investments. The securities described are neither a recommendation nor a solicitation. The **Bloomberg U.S. 1000 Growth Index** provides exposure to companies with superior growth factor scores based on their earnings yield, valuation, dividend yield, and growth. The **Chartered Financial Analyst®** (CFA) charter is a graduate-level investment credential awarded by CFA Institute — the largest global association of investment professionals. To earn the CFA charter, candidates must: 1) pass three sequential, six-hour examinations; 2) have at least four years of qualified professional investment experience; 3) join CFA Institute as members; and 4) commit to abide by, and annually reaffirm, their adherence to the CFA Institute Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct. Sources: FactSet; Bloomberg L.P.; eVestment Analytics; Sterling Capital Management Analytics.

## Sterling Capital Focus Equity SMA

|      | Total "Pure"<br>Gross Return | Total<br>Net Return | Benchmark<br>Return | 3Y Composite<br>Std. Dev. (Gross) | 3Y Benchmark<br>Std. Dev. | Composite<br>Dispersion | Number of<br>Portfolios | Composite<br>AUM (MM) | Total Firm<br>AUM (MM) |
|------|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 2025 | 10.78%                       | 7.57%               | 17.93%              | 21.41%                            | 13.74%                    | 0.12%                   | 29                      | \$9                   | \$69,234               |
| 2024 | 7.64%                        | 4.51%               | 28.88%              | 26.43%                            | 19.48%                    | 0.08%                   | 50                      | \$16                  | \$66,160               |
| 2023 | 44.12%                       | 40.03%              | 36.12%              | 25.90%                            | 19.62%                    | 0.32%                   | 80                      | \$27                  | \$66,746               |
| 2022 | -33.73%                      | -35.74%             | -27.47%             | 25.94%                            | 22.48%                    | 0.31%                   | 104                     | \$25                  | \$62,842               |
| 2021 | 16.35%                       | 12.99%              | 26.08%              | 20.02%                            | 17.29%                    | 0.36%                   | 238                     | \$111                 | \$75,309               |
| 2020 | 36.48%                       | 32.58%              | 35.83%              | 20.88%                            | 18.74%                    | 1.01%                   | 251                     | \$104                 | \$70,108               |
| 2019 | 43.06%                       | 39.00%              | 34.76%              | 13.72%                            | 12.31%                    | 0.67%                   | 151                     | \$35                  | \$58,191               |
| 2018 | 4.19%                        | 1.15%               | -1.12%              | 13.77%                            | 11.64%                    | Not Calculable          | 36                      | \$5                   | \$56,889               |
| 2017 | 29.91%                       | 26.20%              | 27.42%              | < 3 Years                         | < 3 Years                 | Not Calculable          | 5                       | \$1                   | \$55,908               |
| 2016 | 12.24%                       | 8.99%               | 6.43%               | < 3 Years                         | < 3 Years                 | Not Calculable          | 4                       | \$0                   | \$51,603               |

Benchmark: Bloomberg U.S. 1000 Growth Index

Composite Creation Date: 10.31.2018

Inception Date: 12.31.2015

- Consists of all discretionary separately managed wrap Focus portfolios. SCM's Focus portfolio investments are flexible and may span growth and value, large- and small-capitalization companies, and various capital forms including equity, debt, and derivatives. The strategy seeks positions featuring sustainable, multi-year return profiles underpinned by businesses perceived to possess attractive financial returns, visible reinvestment opportunities, and talented management.
- The material risks of this strategy include, but are 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 (SCM) claims compliance with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS®) and has prepared and presented this report in compliance with the GIPS standards. SCM has been independently verified for the periods 01/01/2001-12/31/2024. 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.
- 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 SunTrust Banks, Inc. Holding Company merged as equals to form Truist Financial Corporation (Truist). SCM was then a wholly-owned subsidiary of Truist. In August 2020, eight new employees joined SCM via the Investment Advisory Group of SunTrust Advisory Services. In July 2024, Guardian Capital U.S. Asset Management (formerly Guardian Capital LLC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Guardian Capital Group Limited (Guardian), completed the acquisition of SCM from Truist. In March 2026, Desjardins Group completed its acquisition of Guardian Capital Group Limited. SCM is now an indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary of Desjardins Global Asset Management Inc., which is part of the Desjardins Group.
- 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. All portfolios utilize trade-date and accrued income accounting. 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 9/1/18, composite returns are asset weighted using the beginning market value and time weighted return of the portfolios. Prior to 9/1/18, composite returns were asset weighted using the aggregate method that reflects both beginning market value and cash flows.
- "Pure" gross of fees returns are presented as supplemental information and do not reflect the deduction of any fees including trading costs. Net returns are calculated by deducting the highest applicable wrap fee of 3.00% annually from the pure gross composite return. Prior to 8/31/18, gross of fees returns reflect the deduction of trading costs. Effective 9/1/18, "pure" gross of fees returns do not reflect the deduction of any fees including trading costs. The SMA fee includes all charges for trading costs, portfolio management, custody, administrative fees, and foreign withholding taxes. The maximum SMA or bundled external platform fee is 2.52% annually and includes SCM's actual management fee of 0.32%. SCM's actual management fees are 0.32% annually. From 12/31/15-8/31/18, the composite was comprised 100% of separate accounts. As of 9/1/18 the composite has been comprised 100% of wrap fee portfolios.
- Effective 1/1/22, portfolios are removed from the composite for flows 10% or greater of prior month portfolio market value. Portfolio remains out of the composite for the month of the flow and for one additional period. Prior to 1/1/22, portfolios were not removed from the composite for flows.
- The appropriate benchmark is the Bloomberg U.S. 1000 Growth Index since inception, effective 6/30/2026. The Bloomberg U.S. 1000 Growth Index is a float-adjusted market-cap-weighted benchmark designed to track the top 1000 U.S. companies demonstrating superior growth characteristics, including earnings yield, valuation, dividend yield, and growth. Prior to 6/30/2026, the benchmark was the Russell 1000® Growth Index. Effective 3/31/20, the appropriate benchmark was changed retroactively to inception from the Russell 3000® Index to the Russell 1000® Growth Index.
- 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 3-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.