creditrisk monitor[®]

HIGH RISK REPORT SCHOOL SPECIALTY, INC. February 14, 2020



CreditRiskMonitor's assessment of School Specialty, Inc.'s ("School Specialty") "high risk" status has been determined by a combination of factors:

Monthly Average FRISK® Score	_Page 2
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MONTHLY AVERAGE FRISK[®] SCORE

CreditRiskMonitor's proprietary FRISK[®] score signals that School Specialty, Inc. (OTC: SCOO) has a 10 to 50 times greater risk of bankruptcy than the average public company.

						2019						20	20
Business Name	F	Μ	Α	Μ	J	J	Α	S	0	N	D	J	F
School Specialty, Inc.	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

The FRISK® score is 96% accurate* in predicting the risk of corporate failure/bankruptcy over a 12-month horizon. All FRISK® scores are recalculated every night for each subsequent 12-month period.

	BANKRUPTCY RISK RELATIVE	TO THE HISTORICAL AVERAGE
FRISK [®] Score	FROM	ТО
10	0.00x	0.12x
9	0.12x	0.27x
8	0.27x	0.34x
7	0.34x	0.55x
6	0.55x	0.87x
5	0.87x	1.40x
¥ 4	1.40x	2.10x
3 8 8 8 8 8 8 8	2.10x	4.00x
[≞] 2	4.00x	9.99x
1	9.99x	50.00x

While the risk of bankruptcy varies at each FRISK[®] score, 96% of public companies that eventually go bankrupt enter the FRISK[®] "red zone" prior to filing. A FRISK[®] score of 5 or less is an important warning sign.

* FRISK® score accuracy of 96% is based on backtesting of U.S. public companies; results may vary by country.



THE FRISK[®] SCORE COMPONENTS

At the core of the CreditRiskMonitor[®] process is our 96% accurate FRISK[®] score, which indicates a company's level of financial stress on a scale of 1 to 10, based on the probability of bankruptcy over a 12-month horizon. When available, the FRISK[®] score incorporates a number of powerful risk indicators including:



Crowdsourced CreditRiskMonitor® Usage Data

<u>Crowdsourcing</u> has enhanced the accuracy and timeliness of the FRISK[®] score. We collect and analyze data patterns from thousands of CreditRiskMonitor[®] subscribers, including professionals from more than 35% of the Fortune 1000 and other large corporations worldwide.

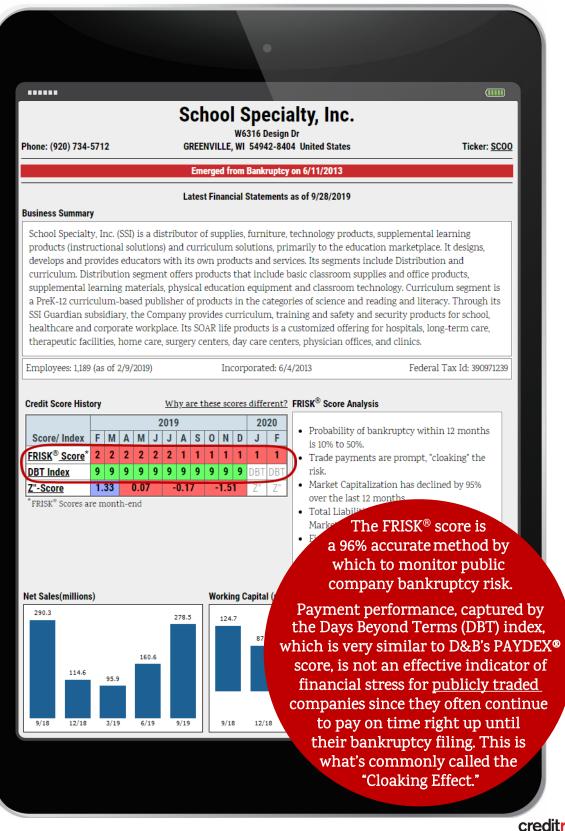
The crowdsourcing advantage is even more powerful in our FRISK[®] score since many of the professionals who use our service are credit managers:

- Credit managers control one of the largest sources of working capital going into a company
- They are not held to the same "Fair Disclosure" restrictions that prevent nondisclosed information sharing on public companies
- Credit managers use a variety of non-public information sources such as their own company's management and sales representatives to be alerted to concerns in a public company's performance
- It is commonly known credit managers confidentially share information with other credit managers, thus collectively, their behavior helps to provide advanced insight to financial problems in public companies

<u>Read more in Credit Research Foundation's quarterly journal article, "Assessing Public</u> <u>Company Financial Risk by Crowdsourcing the Research of Credit Professionals"</u>



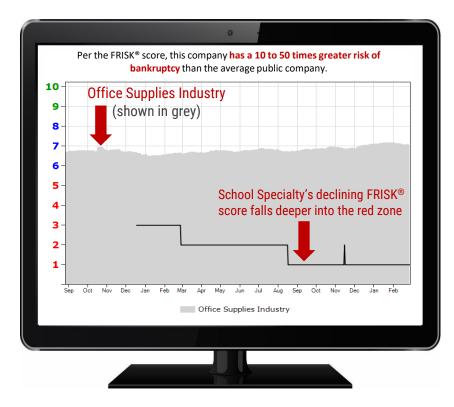
COMPANY REPORT DETAIL



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FRISK® DEEP DIVE



The FRISK[®] score relative to the broader Office Supplies industry raises an additional red flag signaling heightened risk relative to peers, as well...

MAKING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION REQUIRED.

ADJUSTED MARKET CAP VOLATILITY



One of the inputs of the FRISK[®] score is a company's market cap volatility, adjusted for dividends, over the course of a year. Incorporating this information allows us to capture the "wisdom of markets" on a daily basis. This ensures our subscribers are getting the most up to date view of the risks they face since stocks tend to be more liquid and faster moving than bond prices and ratings.



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PEER ANALYSIS ON ALTERNATE SUPPLIERS AND CUSTOMERS

The Peer Analysis expands to provide a ranking of a company's competitors, which can help provide options for alternate suppliers or new customers

icip provide options						
or alternate suppliers						
	Year/Qua	rter: 201	9.3 🔻			
Businesses m Peer Group: 567	Ranking Within Peer Group	Number Of Peers Ranked	Company Value		Range Median	High
	Credit R	atings				
Z-Score	140	<u>154</u>	-1.51	l -82.90	3.28	84.45
P	erforman	ce ratios:				
Net Sales (Thousands of U.S. Dollars)	7					2,947,000
Gross Margin % Of Sales	57				21.44	100.00
Gross Margin % Of Sales TTM	60			Co	ompany Nam	ie
SGA % Of Sales	97			OCC PCL		
SGA % Of Sales TTM	121		2	Miroku Corporati	on	
Operating Margin % Of Sales	47					
Operating Margin % Of Sales TTM	134			Union Auction PC	_	
EBITDA Margin Of Sales	24			Kayee Internation	al Group Co	Ltd
EBITDA Margin Of Sales TTM	52			SUZUDEN CORPO	RATION	
Net Profit Margin % Of Sales	46		0.4	-075.06	2.04	543.81
Net Profit Margin % Of Sales TTM	139				2.00	267.81
Pre-tax Income % Of Sales	59				3.68	548.97
Effective Tax Rate	16				19.51	526.31
Depreciation % Of Prop/Plant/Equipment	94		34.94		9.58	75,655.17
Capital Expense % Of Prop/Plant/Equipment	88 31		28.81		6,17	200.94 368.16
Interest Coverage Interest Coverage TTM	31		-0.89			42.397.95
interest coverage TTM	Liquidity		J -0.89	-1,090.09	0.48	42,397.93
Cash Ratio	152		0.02	2 0.00	0.36	295.16
Ouick Ratio	112				0.90	530,64
Current Ratio	141		0.93		1.61	2.357.35
	Efficientcy		Rank		ompany Name	
Accounts Receivable Turnover	53					
Days Sales Outstanding	53		1 3	unny Loan Top Co.,		
% of Inventory Financed by Vendors	70		20	<u>hanghai Lansheng</u>	Corporation	
% of Inventory Financed by Vendors TTM	78			rang Thi Commerci	al Service JS	<u>C</u>
Inventory Turnover	54			hanghai Xinhua Me		
Inventory Turnover TTM	80					
Days Sales in Inventory	54			<u>anTai Yuancheng G</u>		44,039.29
Inventory to Working Capital	133	149	-3.83	3 -47.28	0.54	51.21
Accounts Payable Turnover	38				7.34	120.65
Accounts Payable Turnover TTM	59			4 0.00	7.15	99.63
	rage & de	bt coverage	je:			
Total Debt to Equity Ratio	138				0.39	7.66
Debt to Tangible Equity Ratio	134				0.40	20.45
Total Debt to Assets Ratio	137				0.21	4.94
Short-Term Debt % of Total Debt	125		100.00		58.06	100.00
Short-Term Debt % of Working Capital	125			4 -15,686.74		48,044.32
Liabilities to Net Worth Ratio	148				0.95	54.44
Total Liabilities to Equity Ratio	150				0.91	54.44
TTM EBITDA to Total Debt	47				0.22	15.89
Net Debt to TTM EBITDA		<u>40</u>		-102.98	2.05	11.24
				r Quartile of I		
				Two Quartile		
	Re			Quartile of P	eer Grou	P
TTM = trailing 12 months				onfidential		
N/A = Not Available		Gre	y - Data is	Not Available	e	

School Specialty demonstrates bottom quartile ranking in key financial ratios (shown in red) versus its industry peers.



QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE RATIOS

	g 12 iterest
in three of the last five fiscal quarters Performance Ratios - Sequential Quarters (Thousands of U.S. Dollars) 3 mos 3 m	g 12 iterest
the last five fiscal quarters Performance Ratios - Sequential Quarters (Thousands of U.S. Dollars) 3 mos	iterest
fiscal quarters Performance Ratios - Sequential Quarters (Thousands of U.S. Dollars) 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3	
Performance Ratios - Sequential Quarters (Thousands of U.S. Dollars) 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3	ratio
Performance Ratios - Sequential Quarters (Thousands of U.S. Dollars) 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3	
3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3 mos 3	
	mos 9/2018
	\$290,280
% change 73.41% 67.42% -16.30% -60.52%	71.49%
Gross Margin \$\$92,567 \$52,679 \$32,803 \$36,146	\$97,504
% change 75.72% 60.59% -9.25% -62.93%	65.98%
% of sales 33.24% 32.80% 34.19% 31.54%	33.59%
change as % of incremental sales 33.83% 30.73% n/m n/m	32.03%
SG&A \$ \$59,881 \$46,242 \$48,330 \$50,676	\$58,668
% change 29.49% -4.32% -4.63% -13.62%	11.05%
% of sales 21.50% 28.79% 50.38% 44.21%	20.21%
change as % of incremental sales 11.57% -3.23% n/m n/m	4.839
Operating margin \$ \$22,471 \$1,813 (\$20,804) (\$39,045)	\$37,230
% change 1,139.44% 108.71% 46.72% -204.88%	681.329
% of sales 8.07% 1.13% -21.69% -34.07%	12.839
change as % of incremental sales 17.52% 34.97% n/m n/m	26.839
EBITDA \$ \$27,076 \$6,155 (\$16,633) (\$34,735)	\$41,444
% change 339.90% 137.00% 52.11% -183.81%	376.37%
% of sales 9.72% 3.83% -17.34% -30.31%	14.28%
change as % of incremental sales 17.74% 35.23% n/m n/m EBIT \$ \$22,471 \$1,813 (\$20,804) (\$39,045)	27.06%
	\$37,230
% change 1,139.44% 108.71% 46.72% -204.88% % of sales 8.07% 1.13% -21.69% -34.07%	681.329 12.839
change as % of incremental sales 17.52% 34.97% n/m n/m	26.83%
Pre-tax income \$ \$16,892 (\$4,229) (\$25,430) (\$43,242)	\$33,073
	2,970.84%
% of sales 6.07% -2.63% -26.51% -37.73%	11.39%
change as % of incremental sales 17.91% 32.78% n/m n/m	26.44%
Net income (loss) \$ \$17,864 (\$2,856) (\$24,975) (\$38,637)	\$18,556
	2,988.89%
% of sales 6.41% -3.65% -26.03% -33.71	6.399
change as % of incremental sales 20.12% 29.56% n/m	19
Tax expense \$ (\$972) \$1,627 (\$455)	
Effective tax rate -5.75% -38.47% 1.79%	
Depreciation expense \$ \$3,671 \$3,408 \$3,232	£
++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++++	
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative	
Negerive	ow
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative	ow
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% Cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 34.94% 31.14% 33.94% Capital expenditures \$ \$3,027 \$3,887 \$3,613	ow
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% Cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 34.94% 31.14% 33.94% Cash fl Capital expenditures \$ \$3,027 \$3,887 \$3,613 % change -22.13% 7.58% -18.77%	
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% Cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 34.94% 31.14% 33.94% Capital expenditures \$ \$3,027 \$3,887 \$3,613 % change -22.13% 7.58% -18.77% % of PP&E, net (annualized) 28.81% 35.51% 37.94% 55.%	
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% Cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 34.94% 31.14% 33.94% Capital expenditures \$ \$3,027 \$3,887 \$3,613 % change -22.13% 7.58% -18.77% 55.5 55.5 % of PP&E, net (annualized) 28.81% 35.51% 37.94% 55.5 % of working capital (annualized) 86.95% 30.16% 20.50% 16.80%	.58% 13.83%
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 34.94% 31.14% 33.94% cash fl Capital expenditures \$ \$3,027 \$3,887 \$3,613 cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 28.81% 35.51% 37.94% 55.% % of PP&E, net (annualized) 28.81% 35.51% 37.94% 55.% % of working capital (annualized) 86.95% 30.16% 20.50% 16.80% Interest coverage ratio 4.85 1.02 (3.60) (8.28)	
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 34.94% 31.14% 33.94% cash fl Capital expenditures \$ \$3,027 \$3,887 \$3,613 cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 28.81% 35.51% 37.94% 55.% % of PP&E, net (annualized) 28.81% 35.51% 37.94% 55.% % of working capital (annualized) 86.95% 30.16% 20.50% 16.80% Interest coverage ratio 4.85 1.02 (3.60) (8.28) % change 376.41% 128.33% 56.56% -183.01%	.58% 13.83% 9.97 322.62%
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% cash fl % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 34.94% 31.14% 33.94% cash fl Capital expenditures \$ \$3,027 \$3,887 \$3,613 cash fl % change -22.13% 7.58% -18.77% 55.5 % of PP&E, net (annualized) 28.81% 35.51% 37.94% 55.5 % of working capital (annualized) 86.95% 30.16% 20.50% 16.80% Interest coverage ratio 4.85 1.02 (3.60) (8.28) % change 376.41% 128.33% 56.56% -183.01% Free cash flow \$ (\$7,660) (\$21,411) (\$30,195) \$79,021	.58% 13.83% 9.97 <u>322.62%</u> (\$24,022)
% of sales 1.32% 2.12% 3.37% Negative % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% cash fl % of capital expenses 121.28% 87.68% 89.45% cash fl % of PP&E, net (annualized) 34.94% 31.14% 33.94% cash fl Capital expenditures \$ \$3,027 \$3,887 \$3,613 cash fl % change -22.13% 7.58% -18.77% 55.% % of PP&E, net (annualized) 28.81% 35.51% 37.94% 55.% % of working capital (annualized) 86.95% 30.16% 20.50% 16.80% Interest coverage ratio 4.85 1.02 (3.60) (8.28) % change 376.41% 128.33% 56.56% -183.01% Free cash flow \$ (\$7,660) (\$21,411) (\$30,195) \$79,021 % change 64.22% 29.09% -138.21% 428.95%	0W .58% 13.83% 9.97 322.62% \$24,022 30.86%

11/12/2019 8/12/2019

5/8/2019

3/14/2019



11/8/2018

QUARTERLY LEVERAGE RATIOS

High debt to equity ratio, indicating heightened risk Financial covenant noncompliance in Q3 2019 increases short-term debt to 100% of total debt

Leverag	e Ratios - Se (Thousands of U		Quarters		
Period Ended	9/28/2019	6/29/2019	3/30/2019	12/29/2018	9/29/2018
Total debt \$	\$199,068	\$191,400	\$170,164	\$133,935	\$219,280
% change	4.01%	12.48%	27.05%	-38.92%	12.43%
Stockholders' equity \$	\$53,768	\$35,867	\$41,361	\$67,363	\$105,515
% change	49.91%	-13.28%	-38.60%	-36.16%	21.61%
Total debt to equity ratio	3.70	5.34	4.11	1.99	2.08
% change	-30.62%	29.71%	106.92%	-4.33%	-7.55%
Tangible net worth \$	\$9,735	(\$14,351)	(\$10,198)	\$14,670	\$29,021
% change	167.84%	-40.72%	-169.52%	-49.45%	239.39%
Total debt to tangible net worth	20.45	n/a	n/a	9.13	7.56
% change	n/a	n/a	n/a	20.83%	-66.87%
Total assets \$	\$354,249	\$333,360	\$288,086	\$270,676	\$407,016
% change	6.27%	15.72%	6.43%	-33.50%	9.199
Total debt to assets ratio	0.56	0.57	0.59	0.49	0.54
% change	-2.14%	-2.79%	19.38%	-8.17%	2.98%
Tangible assets \$	\$310,216	\$283,142	\$236,527	\$217,983	\$330,522
% change	9.56%	19.71%	8.51%	-34.05%	12.21%
Short-term debt \$	\$199,068	\$94,971	\$70,508	\$30,352	\$90,450
% change	109.61%	34.70%	132.30%	-66.44%	40.02%
Short-term debt % of total debt	100.00%	49.62%	41.44%	22.66%	41.25%
% change	101.54%	19.75%	82.84%	-45.06%	24.54%
Short-term debt % of working capital	-930.14%	192.82%	130.94%	34.83%	72.54%
% change	-582.39%	47.25%	275.90%	-51.98%	11.59%
Total liabilities \$	\$300,481	\$297,493	\$246,725	\$203,313	\$301,501
% change	1.00%	20.58%	21.35%	-32.57%	5.42%
Total liabilities to equity ratio	5.59	8.29	5.97	3.02	2.86
% change	-32.62%	39.04%	97.64%	5.63%	-13.319
Total liabilities to tangible net worth ratio	30.87	n/a	n/a	13.86	10.39
% change		n/a	n/a	33.40%	-68.94%
Total debt to EBITDA ratio (annualized)		77	n/a	n/a	1.32
% change			n/a	n/a	-76.40%
Source:	Total lial	oilities	10-Q	10-K	10-Q
	to equity tr	end at a	5/8/2019	3/14/2019	11/8/2018
	highly eleva				

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QUARTERLY LIQUIDITY RATIOS AND RATES OF RETURN

veclining working pital turns		•			Meageı cash an quick rat
negative	Liquidity Rat	ios - Seque		rs	
Period Ended	9/28/2019	6/29/2019	3/30/2019	12/29/2018	9/29/2018
Current assets \$	\$269,162	\$239,562	\$191,962	\$185,761	\$296,788
% change	12.36%	24.80%	3.34%	-37.41%	16.78%
% of short-term debt	135.21%	252.25%	272.26%	612.02%	328.12%
Current liabilities \$	\$290,564	\$190,308	\$138,116	\$98,629	\$172,102
% change	52.68%	37.79%	40.04%	-42.69%	11.20%
Working capital \$	(\$21,402)	\$49,254	\$53,846	\$87,132	\$124,686
% change	-143.45%	-8.53%	-38.20%	-30.12%	25.48%
% of sales (annualized)	-1.92%	7.67%	14.03%	19.01%	10.74%
Cash \$	\$5,862	\$7,236	\$6,435	\$1,030	\$7,922
% change	-18.99%	12.45%	524.76%	-87.00%	-8.31%
% of short-term debt	2.94%	7.62%	9.13%	3.39%	8.76%
Cash ratio	0.02	0.04	0.05	0.01	0.05
% change	-46.84%	-18.45%	348.08%	-77.39%	-17.56%
Quick assets \$	\$167,989	\$94,581	\$68,951	\$81,876	\$186,752
% change	77.61%	37.17%	-15.79%	-56.16%	85.16%
% of short-term debt	84.39%	99.59%	97.79%	269.75%	206.47%
Quick ratio	0.58	0.50	0.50	0.83	1.09
% change	16.32%	-0.44%	-39.86%	-23.50%	66.50%
Current ratio	0.93	1.26	1.39	1.88	1.72
% change	-26.41%	-9.43%	-26.20%	9.21%	5.02%
Source:	10-Q 11/12/2019	10-Q 8/12/2019	10-Q 5/8/2019	10-K 3/14/2019	10-Q 11/8/2018

Negative returns except for seasonally strong September period ends

Rate of Return - Sequential Quarters

(Thousands	of U.S.	Dollars)
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Period Ended	3 mos 9/28/2019	3 mos 6/29/2019	3 mos 3/30/2019	3 mos 12/29/2018	3 mos 9/29/2018
Return on equity	49.81%	-14.16%	-37.08%	-36.62%	21.39%
% change	451.78%	61.81%	-1.25%	-271.22%	102,716.35%
Return on net tangible equity	n/a	n/a	-170.25%	-133.13%	217.00%
% change	n/a	n/a	-27.87%	-161.35%	87,472.20%
Return on total assets	5.20%	-1.88%	-8.94%	-11.40%	4.76%
% change	375.71%	78.92%	21.60%	-339.58%	89,698.11%
Return on tangible assets	6.02%	-2.25%	-10.99%	-14.09%	5.94%
% change	367.17%	79.49%	21.99%	-337.29%	85,946.38%
Source:	10-Q 11/12/2019	10-Q 8/12/2019	10-Q 5/8/2019	10-K 3/14/2019	10-Q 11/8/2018



ANNUAL STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

perating ctivities					
	ment of Cas	h Flows - An	nual - Stand	lardized	
	(Tł	nousands of U.S. D	ollars)		
Period Ended	12 mos 12/29/2018	12 mos 12/30/2017	12 mos 12/31/2016	35 weeks 12/26/2015	52 weeks 4/25/2015
Cash Flows from Operating Act					
Net income	(\$38,741)	\$6,779	\$14,764	\$15,301	(\$33,532)
Depreciation/depletion	17,917	14,061	13,863	11,644	19,233
Deferred taxes	2,672	(1,851)	(180)	(1)	45
Non-cash Items	33,325	16,369	2,492	9,490	22,312
Changes in working capital	(17,769)	3,457	4,601	10,871	(2,675
Total cash from operating activities	(2,596)	38,815	35,540	47,305	5,383
Cash Flows from Investing Acti	vities:				
Capital expenditures	(16,950)	(18,743)	(14,361)	(7,207)	(17,381)
Other investing cash flow items, total	100	(19,026)	9,893	84	1,813
Total cash from investing activities	(16,850)	(37,769)	(4,468)	(7,123)	(15,568)
Cash Flows from Financing Act	ivities:				
Financing cash flow items	(1,118)	(4,016)	0	(462)	(1,034)
Issuance/retirement of debt, net	(10,214)	(289)	<mark>(9,874)</mark>	(34,563)	12,150
Total cash from financing activities	(11,332)	(4,305)	(9,874)	(35,025)	11,110
Foreign exchange effects	(53)	23	1,034	(1,212)	(1,019
Net change in cash	(30,831)	(3,236)	22,232	3,945	(88)
Net cash-beginning balance	31,861	35,097	12,865	8,920	9,008
Net cash-ending balance	\$1,030	\$31,861	\$35,097	\$12,865	\$8,920
Supplemental Disclosures:					
Cash interest paid	\$12,087	\$10,918	\$13,753	\$10,304	\$15,705
Cash taxes paid, supplemental	\$1,805	\$318	\$1,524	\$418	\$3,461
Auditor/Opinion:	Deloitte &				
	Touche LLP Unqualified				

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