

## Bullish Sentiment Index (BSI) for US Equities

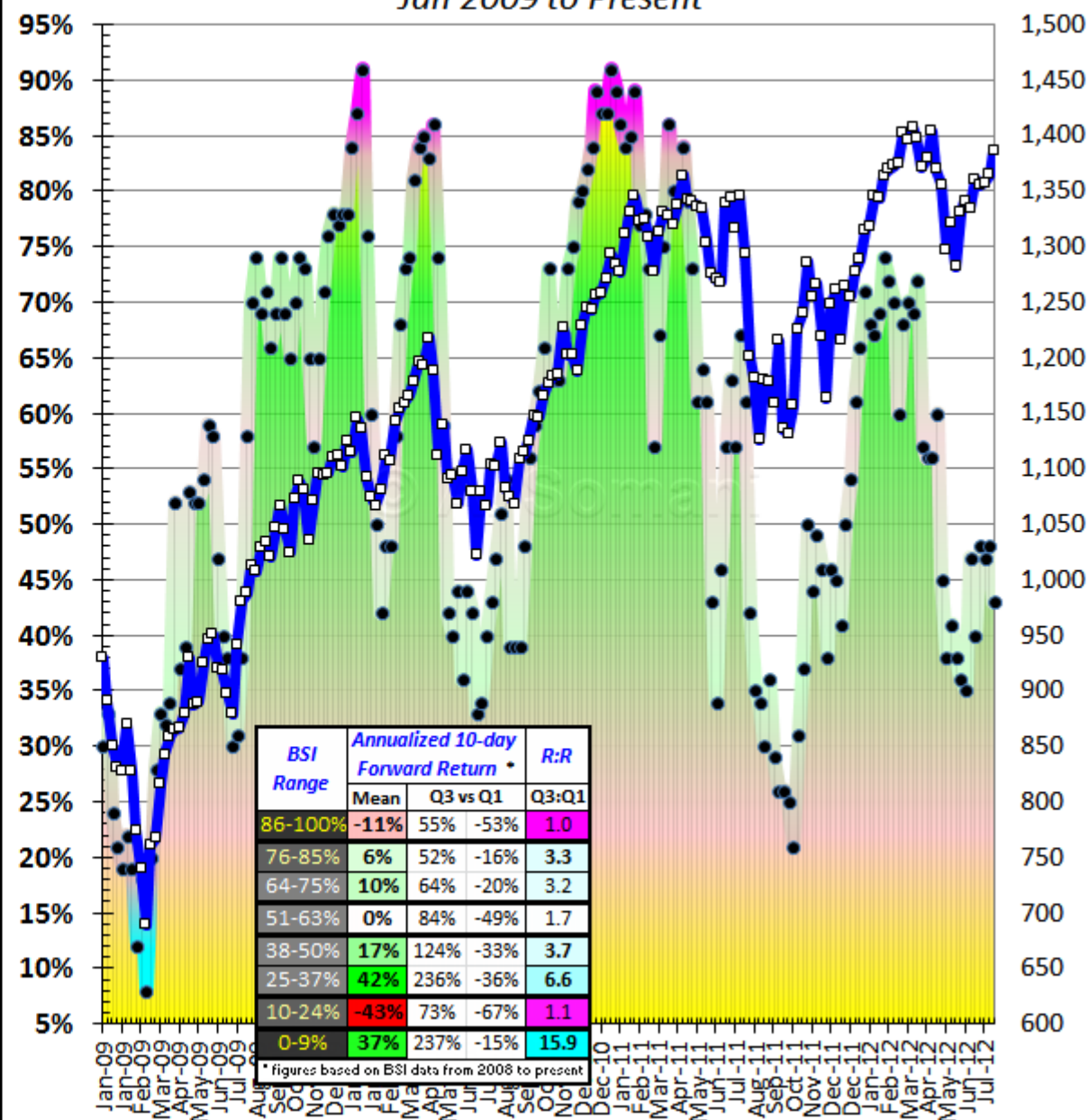
### Rough BSI Interpretation Guidelines

| Cyclical Bull Market |         | Cyclical Bear Market |          |
|----------------------|---------|----------------------|----------|
| Extreme              | 86-100% | 0-9%                 | Minimal  |
| Extended             | 76-85%  | 10-24%               | Shallow  |
| Neutral              | 51-75%  | 25-37%               | Neutral  |
| Shallow              | 38-50%  | 38-50%               | Extended |
| Minimal              | 25-37%  | 51-63%               | Extreme  |

The Bullish Sentiment Index (BSI) for US Equities is designed to provide a single, numerical, and comprehensive measurement of bullish sentiment on the US stock market at any given time. It is normalized, oscillates in a range of 0-100% (where 0% indicates there is no bullish sentiment and 100% indicates bullish sentiment is at its zenith), and is constructed through the application of custom weighting and smoothing mechanisms to various third-party sentiment gauges.

| Date      | Approx. SPX (SPY*10) | %Ch. | SPX Stretch from Mean (-50 to 50) | BSI | Ch. | BSI Stretch from Mean (-50 to 50) |
|-----------|----------------------|------|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----------------------------------|
| 4/13/2012 | 1,371                | -2%  | -11                               | 57% | -15 | -15                               |
| 4/20/2012 | 1,380                | 1%   | -26                               | 56% | -1  | -29                               |
| 4/27/2012 | 1,404                | 2%   | -21                               | 56% | 0   | -26                               |
| 5/4/2012  | 1,370                | -2%  | -26                               | 60% | 4   | -23                               |
| 5/11/2012 | 1,356                | -1%  | -29                               | 45% | -15 | -33                               |
| 5/18/2012 | 1,297                | -4%  | -41                               | 38% | -7  | -45                               |
| 5/25/2012 | 1,321                | 2%   | -40                               | 41% | 3   | -45                               |
| 6/1/2012  | 1,282                | -3%  | -45                               | 38% | -3  | -39                               |
| 6/8/2012  | 1,331                | 4%   | -33                               | 36% | -2  | -39                               |
| 6/15/2012 | 1,341                | 1%   | -15                               | 35% | -1  | -46                               |
| 6/22/2012 | 1,335                | -1%  | 0                                 | 47% | 12  | -40                               |
| 6/29/2012 | 1,361                | 2%   | 12                                | 40% | -7  | -38                               |
| 7/6/2012  | 1,355                | 0%   | 19                                | 48% | 8   | -32                               |
| 7/13/2012 | 1,358                | 0%   | 15                                | 47% | -1  | -19                               |
| 7/20/2012 | 1,365                | 1%   | 8                                 | 48% | 1   | -19                               |
| 7/27/2012 | 1,387                | 2%   | 10                                | 43% | -5  | -25                               |

## BSI vs SPX Jan 2009 to Present



“Bull markets are born on pessimism, grow on skepticism, mature on optimism, and die on euphoria. The time of maximum pessimism is the best time to buy, and the time of maximum optimism is the best time to sell.”

John Marks Templeton (d. 2008)

## **BSI Summary**

The BSI fell 5 notches this past week to close at **43%**. Meanwhile the SPX closed higher by about 2%.

The SPX currently sits about 2% below its 52-week closing high and about 5% above its 200-day moving average.

The current level of the BSI should be interpreted within the context of the current **cyclical trend** of US equities:

- Within the context of a ***cyclical bull market***, the current level of the BSI suggests **bullish sentiment is Shallow** – so, there is apparently a large amount of “gas in the tank” for a multi-week rally.

## **Understanding the BSI**

The BSI may be best used as a blunt and continuous (as opposed to discrete) indication as to the general mood of traders and investors toward the US equity market. With regard to the BSI's associated indicators (“SPX Stretch from Mean” and “BSI Stretch from Mean”, respectively), if their associated cells are colored blue (purple) this weekend, then it indicates an unusually oversold (overbought) market and/or unusually rapid drop (rise) in bullish sentiment. Overall, the BSI and its associated indicators are designed with the aim of helping a trader or investor to gauge when to increase or hedge/decrease exposure to US equities so as to help manage risk effectively and thereby maximize risk-adjusted returns. However, the BSI and its associated indicators represent merely one suite of tools a trader or investor can use to analyze the US equity market with, and should not be interpreted except in combination with the interpretation of one or more other suites of tools that the trader or investor feels confident in comprehensively analyzing the US equity market with.

Knowledge of the cyclical trend of US equities is an important element of interpreting the BSI and its associated indicators accurately. For instance, in a cyclical bull (bear) market, it is not unusual for the BSI and its associated indicators to remain elevated (depressed) for extended periods without US equities declining (rising) in any significant way. At the end of each calendar month, it will be evaluated for the purpose of this report (based on reader feedback or anticipated reader feedback) whether it is fitting to comment on the BSI just within the context of a cyclical bull market, just within the context of a cyclical bear market, or within both the context of a cyclical bull market and the context of a cyclical bear market.

*“I invest only when I hear the sound of cannon fire and see blood running in the streets. I sell when I hear the sound of violins.”*

*Nathan Mayer Rothschild (d. 1836)*

## **Just the Humble Opinion of the BSI Editor(s)**

(Do not be surprised if this space is often empty, mainly due to time constraints).

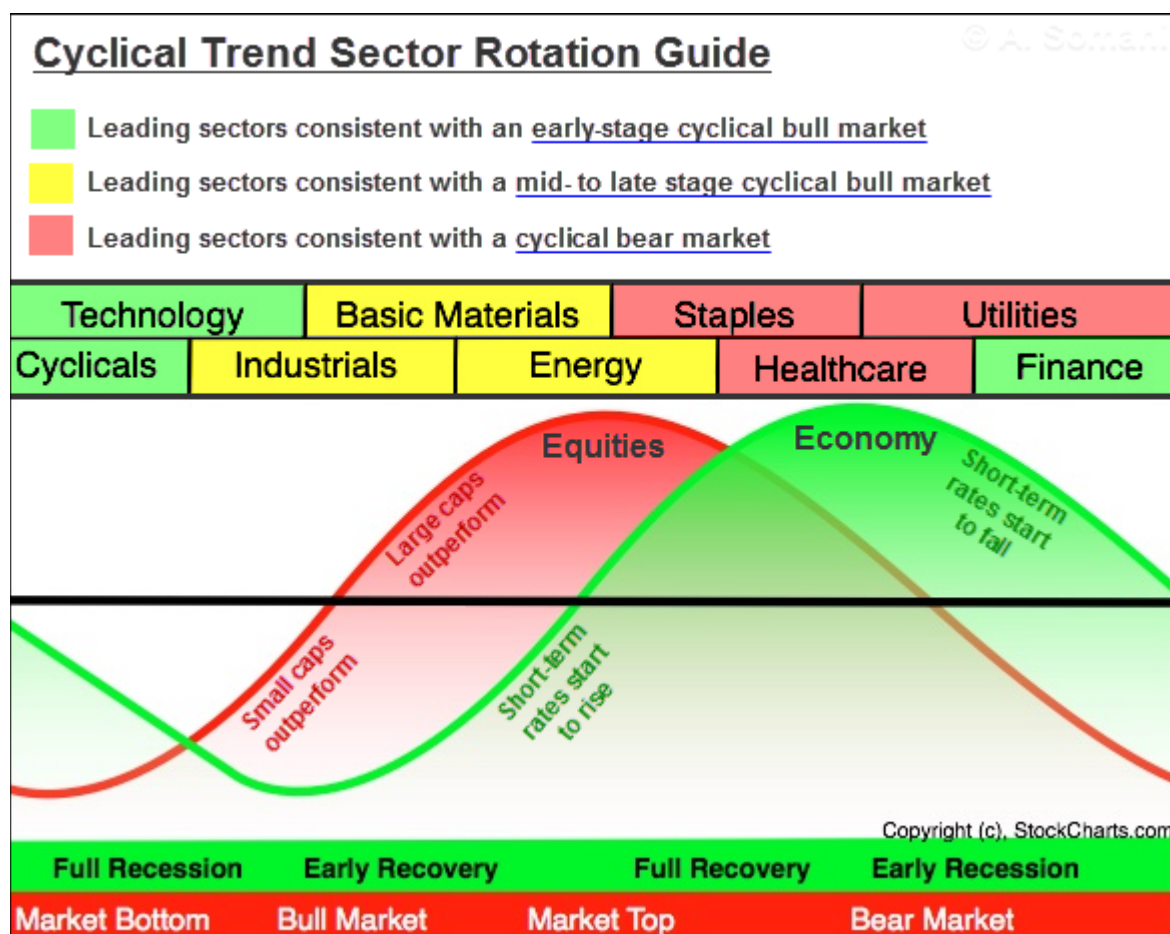
Even though market breadth has been weak – since about mid-July – in supporting price action in the SPX, the low bullish sentiment present out there combined with heavily watched moving averages (such as the 50- and 150- and 200-day SMAs) culminating together in the low to mid-1300s, has repeatedly put a floor on recent multi-day selloffs. Without a definitive closing breach of all of these averages anytime soon, the line of least resistance for the market (from a multi-week to multi-month perspective) continues to be sideways to up. I believe it is only a matter of weeks or months before the SPX makes new highs even if the SPX were to clearly venture back below the culmination of the moving averages mentioned, in fact.

That being said, the recent negative disparity between price and market breadth suggests that a re-test of this week's closing low of SPX 1339 would not be a surprise and would in fact be healthy. Before such a re-test, upside beyond a couple of percent above this week's close seems quite unlikely barring perhaps an unexpectedly high amount of additional further easing from somewhere.

There are highly anticipated announcements this coming week from the Fed and ECB on Wednesday and Thursday, respectively. Given recent market strength, the Fed has little reason to change its current easing policies much, in my opinion. As for the ECB, it has set expectations high for Thursday given recent comments from President Draghi that made it emphatically clear where he stands when push comes to shove (as if it weren't already pretty clear).

## Additional Segment: Cyclical Trend Sector Rotation Monitoring

The following cyclical trend sector rotation guide is my personal adaptation of a [chart made available by John Murphy of Stockcharts.com](#):



The top five performing sectors of the SPX over the past 3 months are highlighted below, color-coded according to the above guide:

| Sector  | Performance |         |         |
|---|-------------|---------|---------|
|   | 1 Month     | 3 Month | YTD     |
| <b>Telecommunication Services</b><br>1 Industry | +5.17%      | +11.97% | +17.48% |
| <b>Utilities</b><br>1 Industry                  | +3.96%      | +6.49%  | +5.36%  |
| <b>Health Care</b><br>2 Industries              | +3.46%      | +3.57%  | +13.81% |
| <b>Consumer Staples</b><br>3 Industries         | +4.43%      | +3.51%  | +9.28%  |
| <b>Energy</b><br>1 Industry                     | +9.05%      | -1.61%  | +0.81%  |

Sector rotation may be one tool for a person to consider use of (among a number of others) in helping to determine the [cyclical trend](#) of US equities. Based on the color-coded table shown above, sector rotation currently appears to be consistent with US equities being in a mid- to late stage cyclical bull market.

*As detailed in earlier reports, I continue to view US equities as being in a mid- to late stage cyclical bull market.*

### Additional Segment: Magazine Cover Confirmation Indicator

Far more often than not, popular magazine covers will be meaningless for the average market participant. But, on occasion, one or more of these covers will **confirm** unsustainably bullish or bearish sentiment toward one or more publicly-traded asset classes or securities, and thereby mark a turning point or near turning point in one or more of these asset classes or securities, depending on the nature of the cover(s) in question. As financial commentator Barry Ritholtz [has noted](#): "The magazine cover contrary indicator works when it reflects a fairly long lasting, well understood concept that is reaching a climax."

Here are the magazine covers (out of the ones linked to at the bottom of this segment or additional ones that I've come across) that may be of interest to the average market participant this weekend considering the above:



Here are links that will allow one to (at least) view a thumbnail of the covers of (some of, if not most of) those weekly magazines that have enough readership and relevance for a market participant to consider monitoring each week, ordered in a descending fashion based on recent US public circulation numbers (Time Magazine is by far the most popular):

1. [Time Magazine](#)
2. [Newsweek](#)
3. [Businessweek](#)
4. [The Economist](#)

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*“Start keeping a diary. Write down every time you are convinced that the market is going up or down. After a few years, you will realize that your insights are worth nothing. Once you realize that, it becomes much easier to float on that ocean we call the market.”*

*Meir Statman*