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Investments:  
Analysis and  
Management

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Fifth Edition

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### **Investments: Analysis and Management**

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**Beta Measurements** The beta coefficient is an *index of systematic risk*. Beta coefficients may be used for ranking the systematic risk of different assets. If the beta is larger than 1,  $b > 1.0$ , then the asset is more volatile than the market and is called an **aggressive asset**. If the beta is less than 1,  $b < 1.0$ , the asset is a **defensive asset**; its price fluctuations are less volatile than the market's. Figure 10-1 illustrates the characteristic lines for three different assets that have low, medium, and high levels of beta (or undiversifiable risk).

Figure 10-2 shows that IBM is a stock with an average amount of systematic risk. IBM's beta of 1.02 indicates that its return tends to increase 2 percent more than the return on the market average when the market is rising. When the market falls, IBM's return tends to fall 2 percent more than the market's. The characteristic line for IBM has an above average correlation coefficient of  $\rho = .7495$ , indicating that the returns on this security follow its particular characteristic line slightly more closely than those of the average stock.

### Partitioning Risk

Total risk can be measured by the variance of returns, denoted  $\text{Var}(r)$ . This measure of *total risk is partitioned into its systematic and unsystematic components in Equation (10-8).*<sup>7</sup>

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Var}(r_i) &= \text{total risk of } i\text{th asset} \\ &= \text{Var}(a_i + b_i r_{m,t} + e_{i,t}) \\ &\quad \text{by substituting } (a_i + b_i r_{m,t} + e_{i,t}) \text{ for } r_{i,t} \\ &= 0 + \text{Var}(b_i r_{m,t}) + \text{Var}(e_{i,t}) \\ &\quad \text{since } \text{Var}(a_i) = 0 \end{aligned} \tag{10-8}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Var}(r_i) &= b_i^2 \text{Var}(r_m) + \text{Var}(e) \quad \text{since } \text{Var}(b_i r_m) = b_i^2 \text{Var}(r_m) \\ &= \text{systematic} + \text{unsystematic risk} \end{aligned} \tag{10-8a}$$

$$.01389 = .00780 + .00609 \quad \text{for IBM}$$

The unsystematic risk measure  $\text{Var}(e)$  is called in regression language the *residual variance* or, synonymously, the *standard error squared*.

**Undiversifiable Proportion** The percentage of total risk that is systematic can be measured by the coefficient of determination  $\rho^2$  (that is, the characteristic line's squared correlation coefficient).

<sup>7</sup>In this context, **partition** is a technical statistical term that means to divide the total variance into *mutually exclusive* and *exhaustive* pieces. This partition is only possible if the returns from the market are statistically independent from the residual error terms that occur simultaneously,  $\text{Cov}(r_{m,t}, e_{i,t}) = 0$ . The mathematics of regression analysis will orthogonalize the residuals and thus ensure that the needed statistical independence exists.

$$\frac{\text{Systematic risk}}{\text{Total risk}} = \frac{b_i^2 \text{Var}(r_m)}{\text{Var}(r_m)} = \rho^2 \quad (10-9)$$

$$\frac{.007802}{.01389} = \frac{(1.021)^2 (.00749)}{.00749} = .5617 \times 100 = 56.17\% \quad \text{for IBM}$$

**Diversifiable Proportion** The percentage of unsystematic risk equals  $(1.0 - \rho^2)$ .

$$\frac{\text{Unsystematic risk}}{\text{Total risk}} = \frac{\text{Var}(e)}{\text{Var}(r_i)} = (1.0 - \rho^2)$$

$$\frac{.00609}{.01389} = (1.0 - .5617) = .438 \times 100 \quad (10-10)$$

$$= 43.8\% \text{ unsystematic} \quad \text{for IBM}$$

Studies of the characteristic lines of hundreds of stocks listed on the NYSE indicate that the average correlation coefficient is approximately  $\rho = .5$ .<sup>8</sup> This means that about  $\rho^2 = 25$  percent of the total variability of return in most NYSE securities is explained by movements in the market.

	NYSE average	IBM
Systematic risk: $\rho^2$	.25	.5617
Unsystematic risk: $(1.0 - \rho^2)$	.75	.4383
Total risk: 100%	1.00	1.0000

As explained above, systematic changes are common to all stocks and are therefore undiversifiable.

A primary use of the characteristic line (or *market model*, or the *single-index model*, as it is also called) is to assess the risk characteristics of one asset.<sup>9</sup> The statistics in Table 10-2, for instance, indicate that IBM's common stock is slightly more risky than the average common stock in terms of total risk and

<sup>8</sup>The average  $\rho$  was found to be about .5, as reported in Marshall Blume, "On the Assessment of Risk," *Journal of Finance*, March 1971, p. 4. For similar estimates, see J. C. Francis, "Statistical Analysis of Risk Surrogates for NYSE Stocks," *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, Dec. 1979.

<sup>9</sup>Professor Jensen reformulated the characteristic line in a risk-premium form. See M. C. Jensen, "The Performance of Mutual Funds in the Period 1945 through 1964," *Journal of Finance*, May 1968, pp. 389-416. See also M. C. Jensen, "Risk, the Pricing of Capital Assets, and the Evaluation of Investment Portfolios," *Journal of Business*, vol. XLII, 1969. Jensen interprets the alpha intercept term of the characteristic line, as he formulates it, as an investment performance measure. It has been suggested that Jensen's performance measure is biased. See Keith V. Smith and Dennis A. Tito, "Risk-Return Measures of Ex-Post Portfolio Performance," *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, Dec. 1969, vol. IV, no. 4, p. 466.

systematic risk.<sup>10</sup> New risk measurements must be made periodically, however, because the risk and return of an asset may change with the passage of time.<sup>11</sup>

**10-3****CAPITAL ASSET PRICING MODEL (CAPM)**

An old axiom states “there is no such thing as a free lunch.” This means that you cannot expect to get something for nothing—a rule that certainly applies to investment returns. Investors who want to earn high average rates of return must take high risks and endure the associated loss of sleep, the possibility of ulcers, and the chance of bankruptcy. The question to which we now turn is: Should investors worry about total risk, undiversifiable risk, diversifiable risk, or all three?

In Chapter 1 it was suggested that *investors should seek investments that have the maximum expected return in their risk class*. Their happiness from investing is presumed to be derived as indicated in the expected utility  $E(U)$  function below.

$$E(U) = f[E(r), \sigma]$$

The investment preferences of wealth-seeking risk-averse investors represented by the function above cause them to maximize their expected utility (or, equivalently, happiness) by (1) maximizing their expected return in any given risk class,  $\partial E(U)/\partial E(r) > 0$ , or, conversely, (2) minimizing their total risk at any given rate of expected return,  $\partial E(U)/\partial \sigma < 0$ . However, in selecting individual assets, investors will not be particularly concerned with the asset's total risk  $\sigma$ . Figure 9-1 showed that the unsystematic portion of total risk can be easily diversified by holding a portfolio of different securities. But, systematic risk affects all stocks in the market because it is undiversifiable. Portfolio theory therefore suggests that only the undiversifiable (or systematic) risk is worth avoiding.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup>Statements about the relative degree of total risk are made in the context of a long-run horizon—that is, over at least one *complete business cycle*. Obviously, an accurate short-run forecast which says that some particular company will go bankrupt next quarter makes it more risky than IBM, although IBM may have had more historical variability of return.

<sup>11</sup>Empirical studies documenting the intertemporal instability of betas have been published. Marshall Blume, “Betas and Their Regression Tendencies,” *Journal of Finance*, June 1975, pp. 785–795. See also J. C. Francis, “Statistical Analysis of Risk Coefficients for NYSE Stocks,” *Journal of Financial and Quantitative Analysis*, Dec. 1979, vol. XIV, no. 5, pp. 981–997. An appendix at the end of this chapter reviews some evidence about shifting betas, standard deviations, and correlations.

<sup>12</sup>Both the systematic and unsystematic portions of total risk must be considered by **undiversified investors**. Entrepreneurs who have their entire net worth invested in one business, for example, can be bankrupted by a piece of bad luck that could be easily averaged away to zero in a diversified portfolio. Poorly diversified investors should not treat diversifiable risk lightly. Only well-diversified investors can afford to ignore diversifiable risk.