

MAXIMAI Investment Partners

2Q 2025 Outlook



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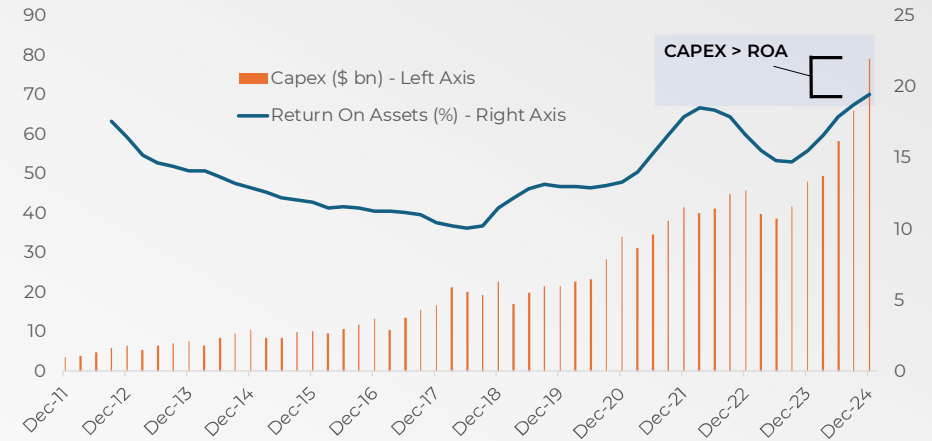
By: Sinan Kermen, CFA
Head of Investment Strategy & Research

DeepSeek

Q1 Recap

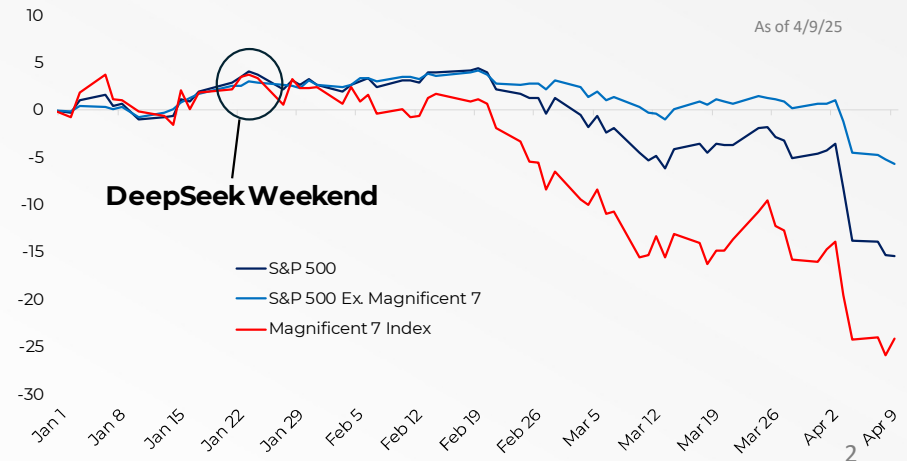
- The Magnificent 7 and other AI adopters have ramped up Capex levels over the last couple of years with plans integrate AI into their business and ultimately increase productivity and decrease costs
- Shareholders have been increasingly looking for ROA generated from the Capex to justify the spending
- DeepSeek’s launch of its R2 model in February launched it into the public spotlight, with claims that it had developed its model at a fraction of the cost – calling into question the large capex spend by large US tech companies

Mag 7 Cap Ex and Return on Assets: 2011-Present



Mag 7: AAPL, AMZN, GOOGL, META, MSFT, NVDA, TSLA

S&P 500 YTD Performance (%) With and Without Magnificent 7



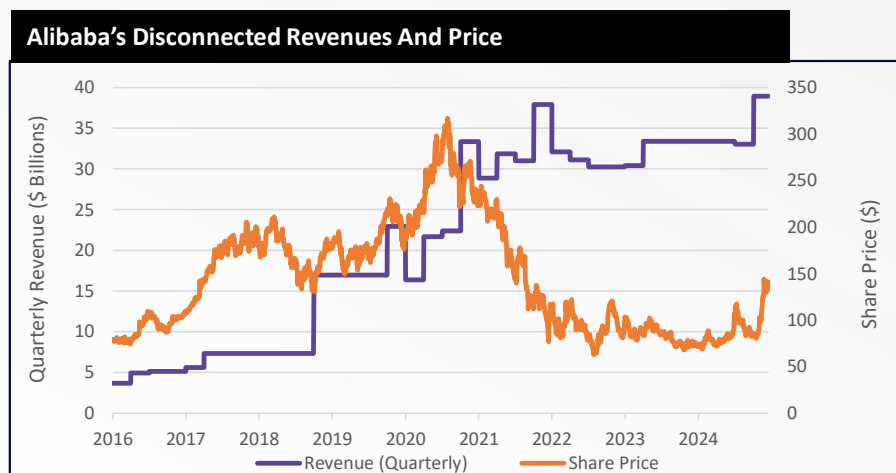
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Source: Bloomberg, Bespoke Investment Group

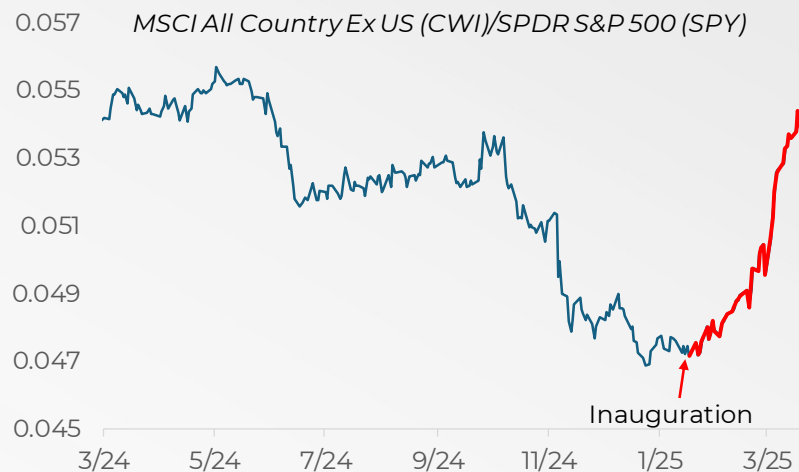
China's Tech Revival

Q1 Recap



- As one of the top tech companies in China, Alibaba's share price (along with other companies in China) has been trading at a significant discount due to relationship with the government
- In February, there was a symbolic handshake between Xi Jinping and Jack Ma, symbolizing the end of the government's strict regulations and fines, promoting a more conducive environment

Relative Strength of World (CWI) vs US (SPY)



- As China reiterates their 5% GDP growth target and emphasizes their renewed focus on the consumer, there is a growing risk of remaining underweight China
- During the China National People's Congress in March, there as a significant shift in focus on driving the Chinese consumer via stimulus, which has been absent in the past



Source: Bloomberg, Bespoke Investment Group

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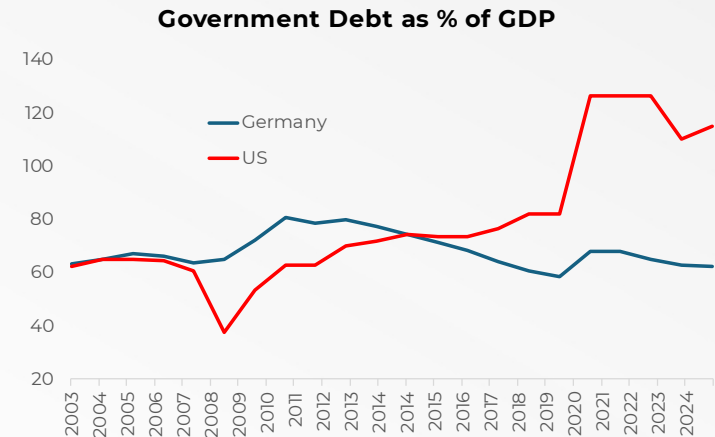
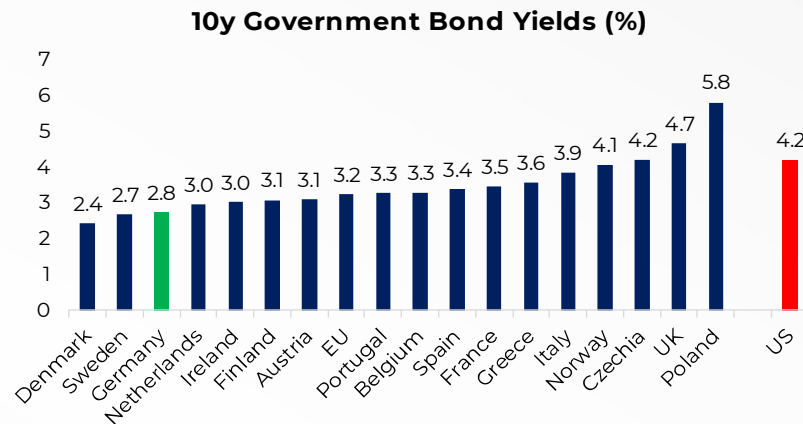
Germany Goes Fiscal

Q1 Recap

Policy Uptick

Germany's soon-to-be government announced a sweeping spending plan to kickstart the economy, including lifting their foot off the "Debt Brake" to finance the plan. After years of fiscal austerity, their plan will lead to higher defense and infrastructure. Germany's fiscal policies (up until the plan takes effect) couldn't be more different to the US, where the "debt ceiling" is extended quite frequently. Germany and other European countries are in a stronger fiscal position to increase spending, unlike the US.

Difference Between Governments Across the Globe

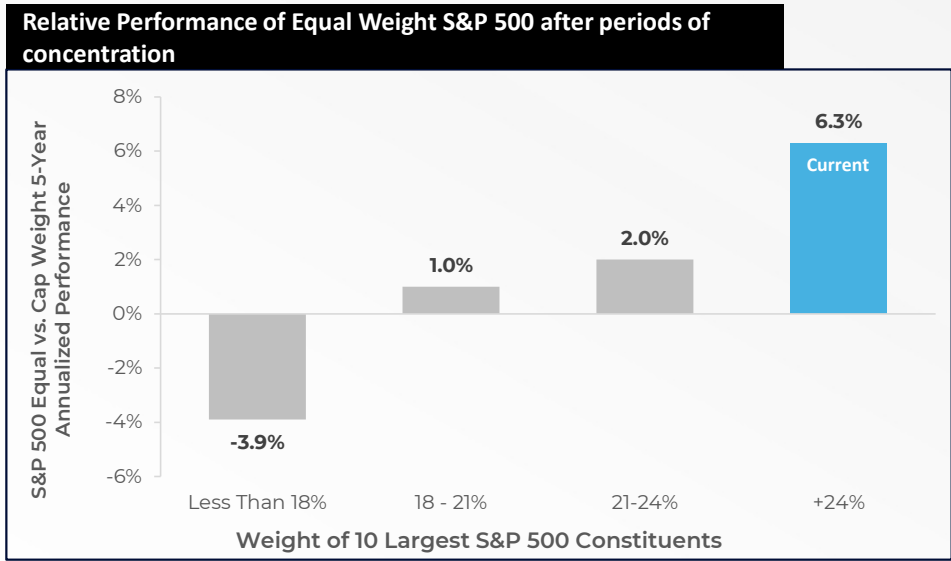


Source: Bloomberg, Bespoke Investment Group

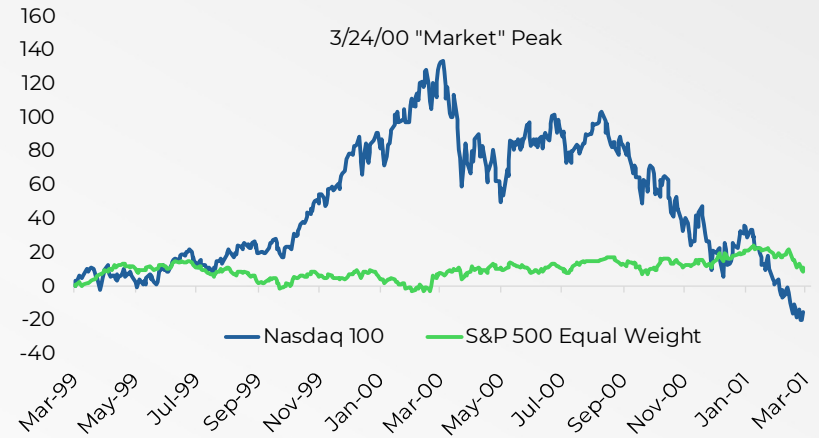
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Market Broadening

Q1 Recap



Nasdaq 100 vs. S&P 500 Equal Weight: Year Before and After 3/24/00 Peak (% Change)



- When the top ten weights in the S&P 500 have historically made up an outsized share of the benchmark, the equal-weight S&P 500 outperforms its cap-weighted counterpart over the next five years.
- While the Magnificent 7 earnings growth continues to exceed those of the broader market, the rest of the market is catching up, with the gap between them narrowing.



Source: ClearBridge: "The Anatomy of a Recession", Bloomberg, Bespoke Investment Group

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Trump 1.0 vs Trump 2.0

Q2 Outlook

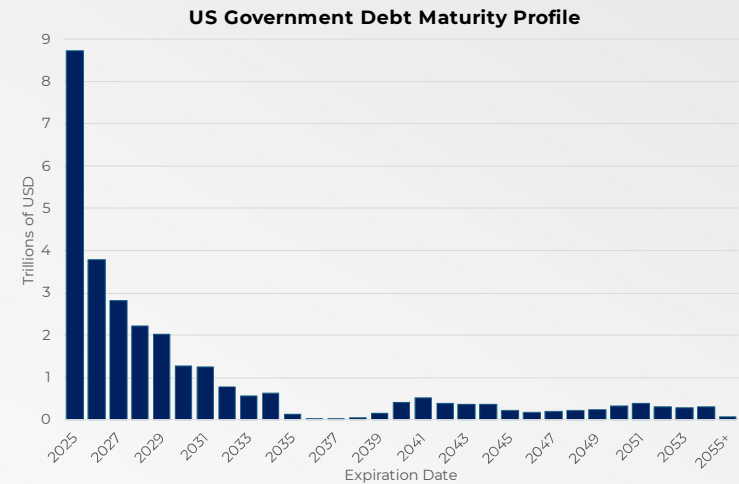
The Most Important Price

As the US prepares to refinance \$9.2 Trillion of debt in 2025, the Treasury Department is focused on a lower 10-year Treasury yield to refinance debt at lower levels and term out treasury debt over time

One Plus One Doesn't Equal Two

In a change of pace from his first term, Trump has reiterated focus on the importance of a lower ten-year treasury rather than the stock market

The US bond market uncovered the "Trump Put", seen mainly in the long-end of the treasury curve and credit spreads



S&P 500 % Change Since Taking Office: Trump 1.0 vs. Trump 2.0



Source: Bloomberg, Bespoke Investment Group

Trump's Tariff Timeline

Q2 Outlook

Campaign Trail

While campaigning, Donald Trump says "10-20% tariffs on foreign countries that have been ripping us off for years"

Tariff Announcement Planned

President Trump announces April 2nd will be the day he unveils the tariffs to be enacted. Around this time, the market was pricing in a ~10% tariff across the board

Liberation Day

Markets completely underestimated the size and scope of the tariffs announced, investors are blindsided by the extent of the plan as well as the math behind the calculations

Critics question the delivery method of the tariffs, as President Trump used a large physical poster during his speech

Post-Liberation Day

Markets slip the next open, and weakness remained until Trump was forced to blink after the bond market began selling off and spreads widened

Communication from the White House has been poor and digested badly by markets and caused heightened volatility

President Trump later announces a 90-day pause and exemptions in specific situations. Markets rise as a result

Source: Goldman Sachs: "Lowering our S&P 500 EPS and valuation forecasts as the "Maleficent 7" pushes the index to the brink of correction"

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Liberation Day – By the Numbers

Q2 Outlook

Trump's Rose Garden "Reciprocal Tariffs" Percentages

Country	"Tariffs Charged to the U.S."	"U.S. Discounted Reciprocal Tariffs"	Country	"Tariffs Charged to the U.S."	"U.S. Discounted Reciprocal Tariffs"
Lesotho	99%	50%	Nigeria	27%	14%
Cambodia	97%	49%	Dem. Rep. Congo	22%	11%
Laos	95%	48%	Cameroon	22%	11%
Madagascar	93%	47%	United Kingdom	10%	10%
Vietnam	90%	46%	Brazil	10%	10%
Sri Lanka	88%	44%	Singapore	10%	10%
Myanmar (Burma)	88%	44%	Chile	10%	10%
Mauritius	80%	40%	Australia	10%	10%
Iraq	78%	39%	Turkey	10%	10%
Guyana	76%	38%	Colombia	10%	10%
Bangladesh	74%	37%	Peru	10%	10%
Serbia	74%	37%	Costa Rica	17%	10%
Botswana	74%	37%	Dominican Rep.	10%	10%
Liechtenstein	73%	37%	UAE	10%	10%
Thailand	72%	36%	New Zealand	20%	10%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	70%	35%	Argentina	10%	10%
China	67%	34%	Ecuador	12%	10%
North Macedonia	65%	33%	Guatemala	10%	10%
Taiwan	64%	32%	Honduras	10%	10%
Indonesia	64%	32%	Egypt	10%	10%
Fiji	63%	32%	Saudi Arabia	10%	10%
Angola	63%	32%	El Salvador	10%	10%
Switzerland	61%	31%	Trinidad and Tobago	12%	10%
Moldova	61%	31%	Morocco	10%	10%
South Africa	60%	30%	Oman	10%	10%
Algeria	59%	30%	Uruguay	10%	10%
Pakistan	58%	29%	Bahamas	10%	10%
Tunisia	55%	28%	Ukraine	10%	10%
Kazakhstan	54%	27%	Bahrain	10%	10%
India	52%	26%	Qatar	10%	10%
South Korea	50%	25%	Iceland	10%	10%
Japan	46%	24%	Haiti	10%	10%
Malaysia	47%	24%	Bolivia	20%	10%
Brunei	47%	24%	Panama	10%	10%
Côte d'Ivoire	41%	21%	Ethiopia	10%	10%
Namibia	42%	21%	Ghana	17%	10%
European Union	39%	20%	Jamaica	10%	10%
Jordan	40%	20%	Paraguay	10%	10%
Nicaragua	36%	18%	Lebanon	10%	10%
Israel	33%	17%	Georgia	10%	10%
Philippines	34%	17%	Senegal	10%	10%
Zambia	33%	17%	Azerbaijan	10%	10%
Mozambique	31%	16%	Uganda	20%	10%
Norway	30%	15%	Albania	10%	10%
Venezuela	29%	15%	Armenia	10%	10%

- Leading up to Liberation Day on April 2nd, Trump had enacted tariffs equating to about a 10% effective tariff rate, mainly targeting countries such as China, Canada, and Mexico.
- In a highly telegraphed event, the White House **shook** the markets with the surprise of proposing ~\$470B of reciprocal tariffs or ~25% effective tariff rate
- Typically markets look for a calming voice from The Federal Reserve or the White House in times like this, but this time there was no solace from either

Source: Bespoke Investment Group

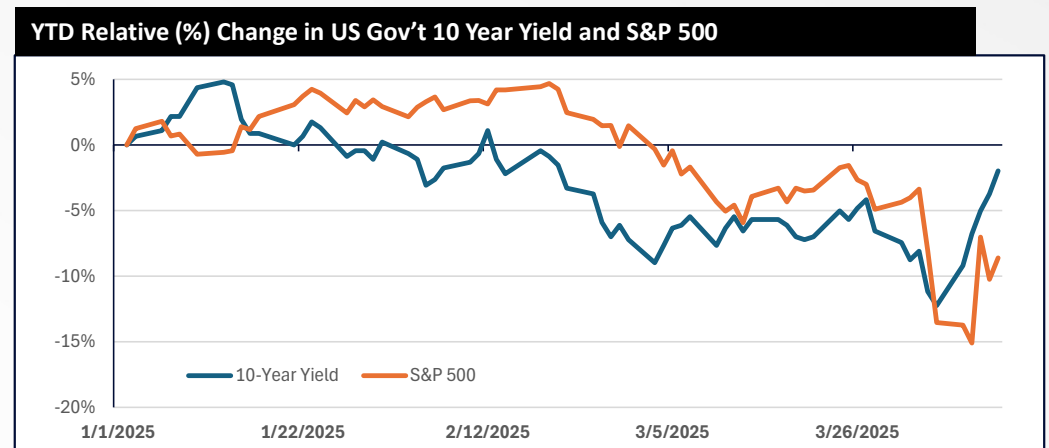
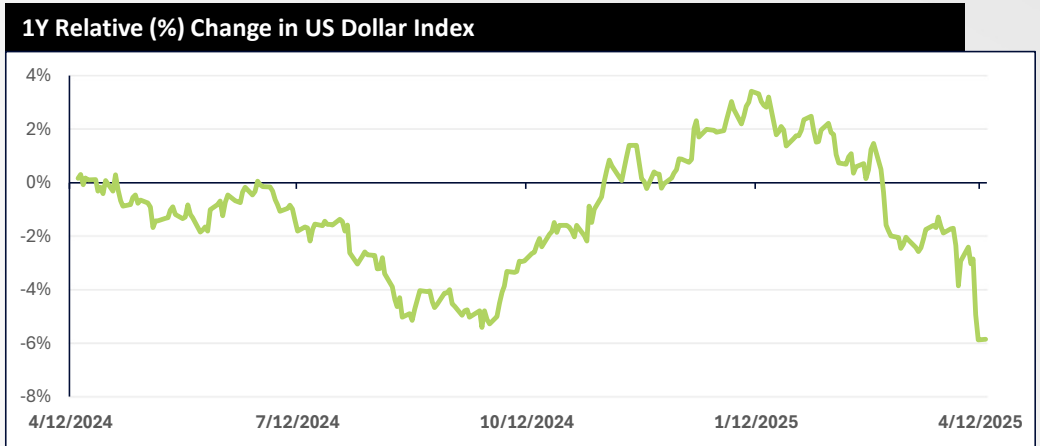
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April Market Shocks

Q2 Outlook

- April 1st – Market Close on April 2nd**
Markets priced in a ~10% tariff across the board, and had no real reason to panic
- After Close on April 2nd**
President Trump announces a sweeping tariff plan that far exceeded expectations
- April 4th**
China announces a retaliatory tariff of 34%
- April 8th**
Markets jump, then lose steam
- April 9th**
President Trump announces a 90-day pause on tariffs as well as reducing reciprocal tariffs to a 10% baseline for 60 countries. The S&P 500 has its 9th largest single-day % change in history.



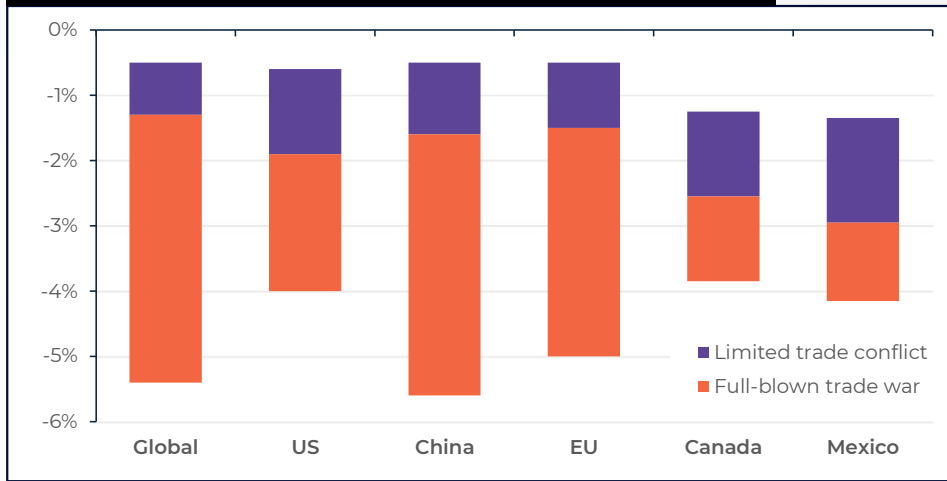
Source: Bloomberg, YCharts, & FRED as of 4/11/25

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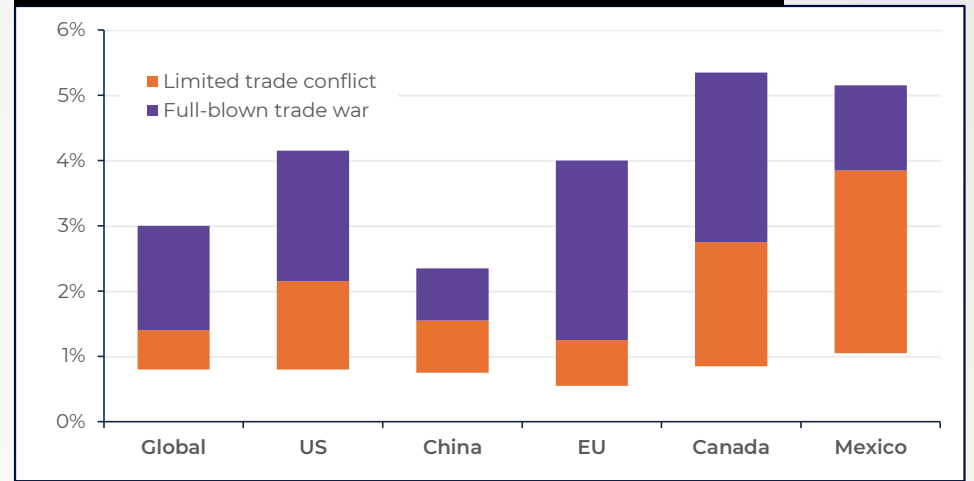
Stagflation

Q2 Outlook

Tariff Impact on GDP vs. Baseline Scenarios



Tariff Impact on CPI vs. Baseline Scenarios



- Sustained high tariffs could disrupt supply chains, drive up prices, and weigh on both U.S. businesses and consumers, ultimately dragging down economic growth
- The last major period of Stagflation in the US was during the 1970's, which resulted due to a function of skyrocketing oil prices, a GDP slowdown, and inflation that was invertedly worsened by the government's response to the crisis
- If the tariffs remain at their existing levels, Stagflation is a real possibility the US could have to face

Correlations Up, Markets Down

Q2 Outlook

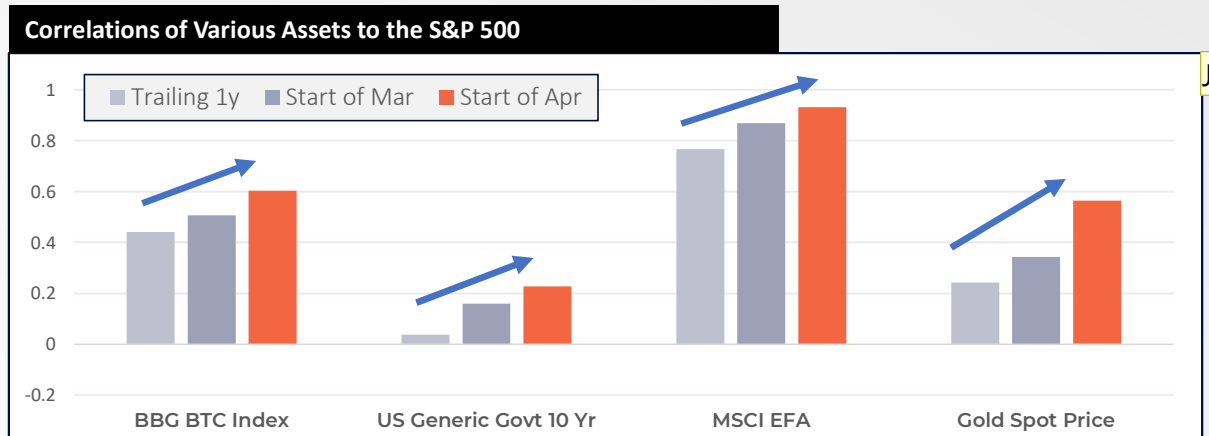
Rising Correlations

Markets in stress typically see correlations converge across asset classes

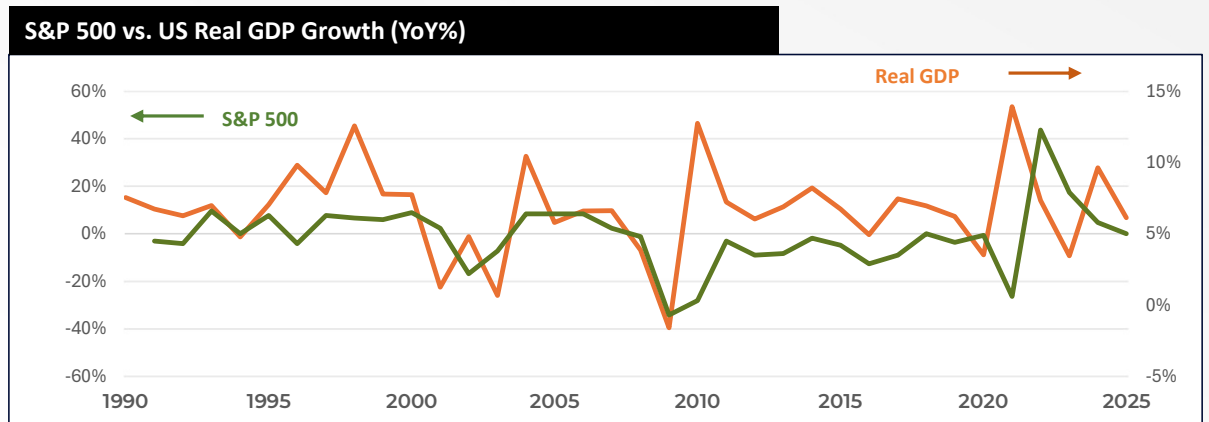
Since the start of March, correlations between major asset classes have increased, making it harder to properly diversify during turbulent markets

Markets in Step with GDP

While the administration has expressed their focus on 'Main Street' instead of Wall Street, the stock market is often highly correlated to the health of the economy and economic growth, especially when large moves occur



JK2

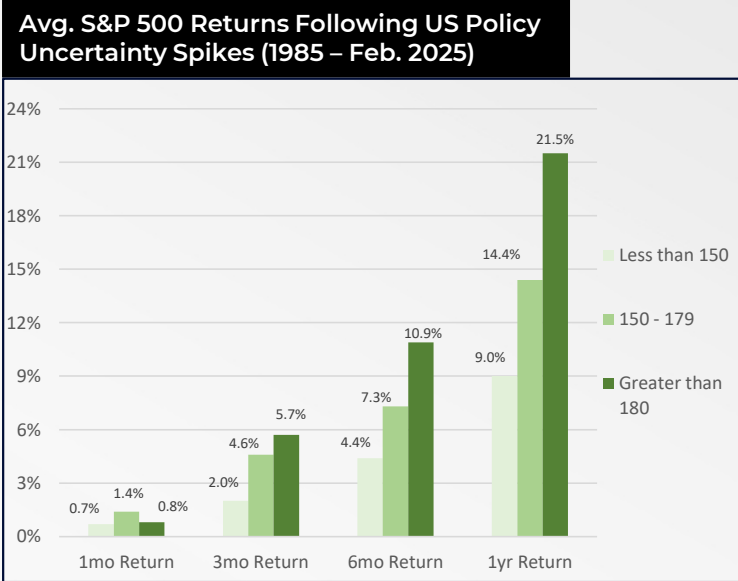
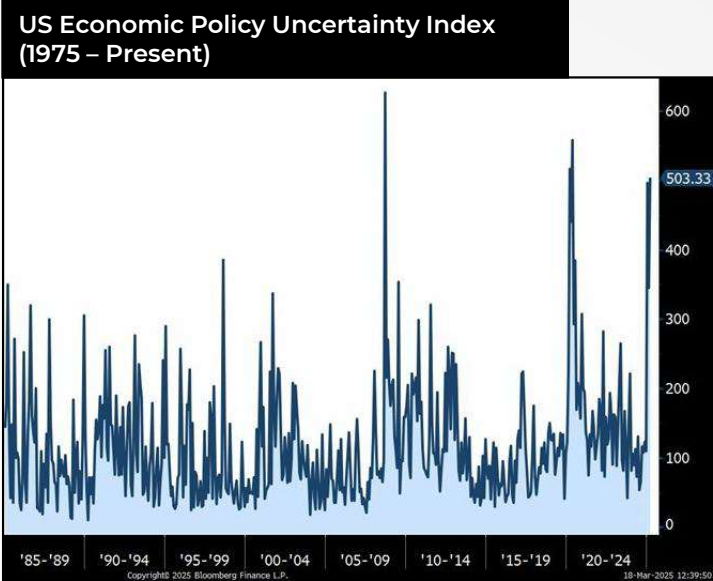


Slide 11

- KH0** [@Jaycee Kertzman] Not sure how they got their GDP data, this is what bloomberg pulls.
Kaden Hullick, 2025-04-11T15:46:40.976
- JK1** [@Kaden Hullick] for this chart, what does the third bar on each index stand for
Jaycee Kertzman, 2025-04-14T14:10:17.270
- JK1 0** [@Kaden Hullick] this might be mis labeled? Correlations went down from feb to march?
Jaycee Kertzman, 2025-04-14T17:59:14.032
- KH1 1** [@Jaycee Kertzman] I have the bloomberg Screenshots I just mislabeled the orange month
Kaden Hullick, 2025-04-14T20:46:02.265
- JK1 2** Got it thanks
Jaycee Kertzman, 2025-04-14T22:00:43.168
- JK2** Maybe remove bond index? Doesn't show anything we need. More of a question but what would correlations look like during covid? Maybe that's a good comparison price too
Jaycee Kertzman, 2025-04-14T22:37:52.058
- JK2 0** [@Kaden Hullick]
Jaycee Kertzman, 2025-04-15T13:44:28.543
- KH2 1** [@Jaycee Kertzman] I will remove the Agg, but if I had to guess correlations prob went up even higher during COVID
Kaden Hullick, 2025-04-15T14:54:48.125

Peak Uncertainty

Q2 Outlook



- Driven by on-again, off-again tariffs, US policy uncertainty is close to levels last seen in the GFC
- Going back to 1985, periods of uncertainty have historically been followed by strong stock market returns, presuming the US does not go into recession
- At the same time, prolonged uncertainty makes it hard for businesses and consumers to make decisions regarding spending. The longer it remains, the worse the impact could be

Source: Bloomberg, Bespoke Investment Group



Four Prices

Q2 Outlook

- **The USD, Credit Spreads, Absolute level of yields and slope of the yield curve, and Crude Oil serve as tactical indicators**
 - These indicators have been shifting into negative territory

United States Dollar



The USD has weakened as outflows from the US continue on the back of uncertainty. A weaker USD supports domestic industry and imports, however the dollar is falling for the wrong reasons

Credit Spreads



While spreads have widened, they remain historically low and have been tame amongst the volatility

Yields



The bond market has seen a major sell off with the 10 Year Yield increasing ~50bps in a matter of days. Higher rates mean higher funding costs for businesses and the housing market, which could create resistance

Crude Oil



Driven lower by recession fears, crude oil prices are at a one year low. Lower Crude prices could translate to lower input prices for businesses and the consumer

Gauging the Next Move

What We Are Watching

- **Where Total Effective Tariffs Land** – currently around ~25% total, anticipating a move down to the 10-15% range when chaos subsides
- **How Tariffs Will Be Digested** – consumer sentiment, profit margins, long-run inflation expectations, and supply chain disruptions are key indicators of response
- **Impact on Earnings** – economic data and earnings revisions for 2025 and beyond and the multiple the market will be willing to pay

Source: Yahoo Finance “The US's effective tariff rate keeps changing. But estimates still put it at the highest level in over 100 years.”

Investment Implications

1. Tariffs will end up lower than where we currently are

We expect concessions to exceed retaliation and the ultimate effective tariff rate to be closer to 15% rather than 25%. However, even then, they will be a significant headwind to the economy and portend a seismic shift in global trade.

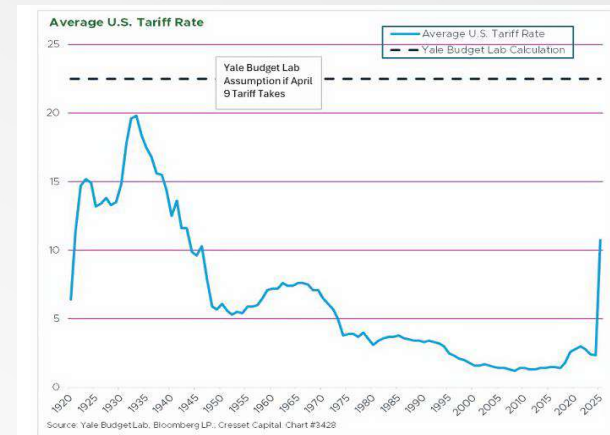
2. There are still significant downside risks

Markets have recovered somewhat from lows reached after “Liberation Day” but significant downside risks remain that may not have been fully priced in:

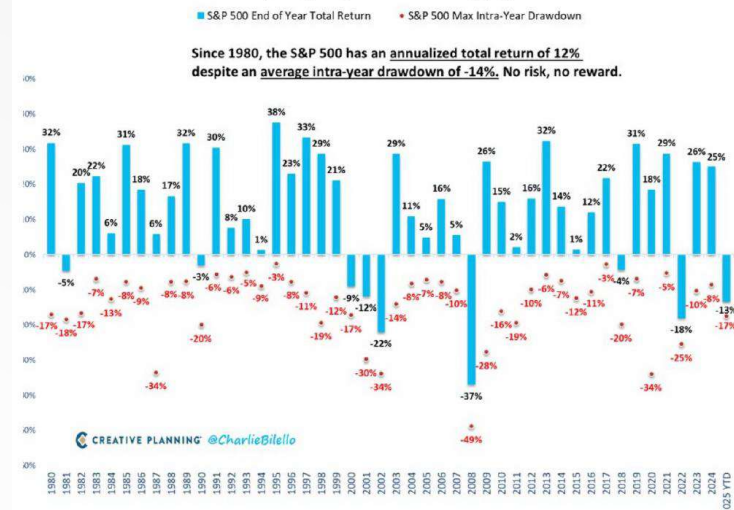
- Negative impact of tariffs on GDP, inflation and corporate earnings
- Negative impact of retaliation (incl. selling of US assets by foreigners, less tourism into the US)
- Deteriorating consumer and corporate confidence
- Negative impact of ~\$5trn decline in the S&P 500 (wealth effect)
- Negative impact of federal layoffs and immigration policy to the labor market

3. Volatility can create opportunity

Increased uncertainty has caused significant market volatility. There have been a number of years (see right) , where significant intra-year drawdowns have been followed by double-digit calendar year returns. Patience and dry powder is necessary to take advantage of these opportunities, which brings us to our next point...



S&P 500: Maximum Intra-Year Drawdown vs. End of Year Total Returns (Closing Prices, 1980 - 2025 - as of 4/4/25)



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Investment Implications (cont'd)

4. Cash is king

We recommend investors to set aside a decent amount of cash in their portfolios to take advantage of market dislocations, while earning ~4% interest.

5. Passive investing is less favorable in this environment

Tariffs will have varying degrees of impact to different sectors. (see right)
We recommend clients pick companies, sectors and asset classes within equities deliberately while continuing to stay diversified. We do see better value in US Mid-Cap and International Developed equity markets.

6. Fixed Income markets have been tricky but there is good value

Fixed Income markets moved unexpectedly when Treasuries sold off alongside the declines in equity markets. There are concerns that foreign holders of US debt may be selling in response to escalating tariff wars and potential erosion of confidence in US exceptionalism. Nevertheless, we see good value in Fixed Income, particularly in 2-7 year part of the Treasury curve as well as Municipal bonds. We do not like the value in Corporate Credit - neither in Investment Grade nor in High Yield - as current spreads do not price in the downside risks adequately.

7. Diversification via Private Alternatives continues to make sense

Private Alternatives shield portfolios from market volatility due to their low correlation with public markets. Given our economic outlook, we recommend investing in strategies and sectors that are less sensitive to economic swings. Private Credit with a focus on 1st Lien Senior Secured Credit continues to make sense as long as managers with superior credit underwriting capabilities are identified. In periods of high volatility, Structured Notes may be beneficial to portfolios by providing downside protection, incremental income and upside participation



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