

Baidu (BIDU US)

FUNDAMENTAL VIEW ¹

As of 10 Jun 2025

- We maintain our M/P on Baidu post its uninspiring 1Q25 results; topline growth was ahead of expectation on strong AI cloud demand, but EBITDA margin fell on a weaker revenue mix, FOCF turned negative on higher AI investments, debt metrics weakened, and net cash contracted. We expect a modest deterioration in Baidu's debt metrics compared to YE24. We continue preferring Alibaba and Tencent over Baidu among A-rated China tech credits. We like the stronger balance sheet, larger scale, stronger business positions, and better credit outlook of Alibaba and Tencent. Baidu trades only 3-8 bp wider than Alibaba and Tencent which we view as rich given the limited improvement in its debt metrics over the next 12 months. For investors looking for exposure in Baidu, we prefer its Apr-2030.

RISKS & CATALYSTS

As of 10 Jun 2025

- Any regulatory clampdowns abroad and domestically (e.g. potential US investment ban, antitrust rules, data security and personal information protection laws) may adversely affect the business of Baidu. The interpretation of Chinese laws and regulations involves some degree of uncertainty.
- There are regulatory risks given the corporate structure which uses variable interest entities (VIEs) to circumvent China's restrictions on foreign ownership of Internet Content Providers (ICPs).
- Baidu has made significant investments into long-term AI-related projects, which may take time to turn profitable. A potential escalation of the US chip restriction could have a material negative impact its AI related business (ie. cloud, ernie bot, autonomous driving).

CREDIT QUALITY SCORE (CQS) ²

As of 06 Aug 2025

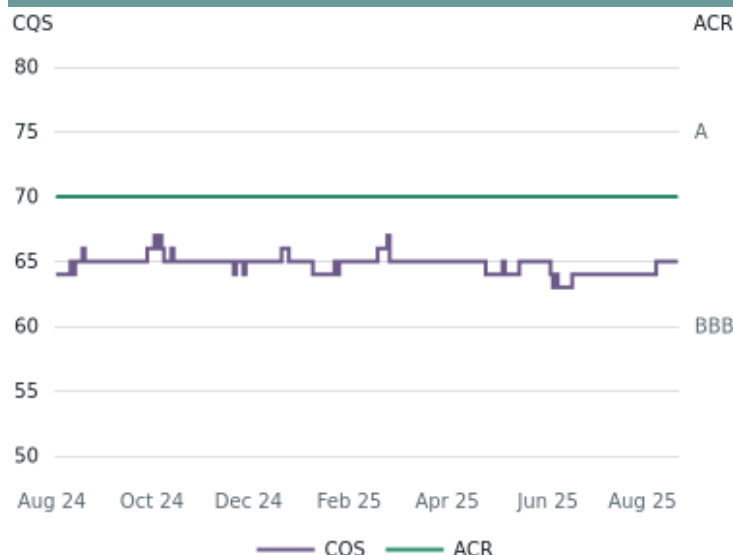
CURRENT CQS

65

CQS OUTLOOK ³

NEGATIVE STABLE POSITIVE

HISTORICAL RATINGS: AVERAGE AGENCY RATING (ACR) ⁴ VS CQS



KEY METRICS

As of 10 Jun 2025

RMB BN	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	LTM 1Q25
Debt to Book Cap	29.7%	28.5%	25.0%	22.5%	26.7%
Debt/Total Equity	42.2%	39.8%	33.4%	29.0%	36.4%
Debt/Total Assets	24.1%	23.4%	20.8%	18.5%	22.5%
Gross Leverage	3.3x	2.8x	2.2x	2.0x	2.6x
Interest Coverage	8.2x	11.4x	12.1x	13.8x	13.5x
EBITDA Margin	22.6%	26.8%	29.2%	29.3%	28.9%

Baidu has historically maintained a net cash position. Year-end: 31 December.

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

As of 10 Jun 2025

- Founded in 2000, Baidu started out as a search engine business and began its development into artificial intelligent (AI) since 2010.
- Baidu Core is the main revenue driver of the company (78% of 1q25 revenues) which provides search-based, feed-based and other online marketing services (total: 53% of 3Q24 revenues), as well as products and services from new AI initiatives (29% of revenues); Baidu's AI initiatives include AI cloud (enterprise & public sector cloud, and personal cloud), Intelligent Group Driving (Apollo Go, Apollo auto solutions, and intelligent EVs under Jidu Auto), Mobile Ecosystem (Baidu App, ERNIE Bot, Haokan and Baidu Post), and other growth initiatives (ie. Xiaodu smart devices powered by DuerOS smart assistant and AI chips).
- iQiyi accounts for the remaining revenues of Baidu; iQIYI is an online video platform with a content library that includes licensed movies, television series, cartoons, and other programs.
- Baidu launched ERNIE bot in Mar-23, a generative AI chatbot powered by ERNIE, Baidu's in-house foundation model.
- Baidu has a market capitalization of RMB 223.4 bn as of 10 June 2025.

GLOSSARY

¹ The **Fundamental View** is our current assessment of credit quality and our expectation of how credit quality will trend over the next year or longer.

² The **Credit Quality Score (CQS)** is a number between 5 and 100. It is a medium-term credit score for corporates and financial institutions that utilizes a combination of sector fundamental scores and equity market signals. Values of CQS above 50 generally indicate investment grade credit quality.

³ The **Credit Quality Score (CQS) Outlook** is the near-term (3 month) outlook for the CQS, based on its trend, volatility and distance from the adjacent CQS risk bucket.

⁴ The **Agency Composite Rating (ACR)** is the average senior unsecured rating from one or more major rating agencies.

Quantitative scores provided by CreditSights Analytics, LLC. Scores are shown are for the lesser of (1) 2 years and (2) date of CreditSights inception of quantitative coverage.

DISCLAIMER

Important Notice

This report ("Report") is for informational purposes only. Neither the information contained in this Report, nor any opinion expressed therein is intended as an offer or solicitation with respect to the purchase or sale of any security or as personalized investment advice. This Report is not intended to be distributed to anyone in any jurisdiction where the receipt of this Report by such person would be legally or regulatorily impermissible and any such distribution has not been authorized by CreditSights.

Except as expressly set forth herein, user shall not transfer, sell, license, sublicense, publish, transmit, redistribute or disseminate this Report or any other CreditSights research reports or any summary or portion thereof (collectively, the "Products") in any manner or in any media or release or otherwise provide access to the Products or any portion thereof to any other person without the prior written consent of CreditSights. Any such unauthorized distribution of such material is prohibited by law and can result in prosecution. In addition, user shall not alter, modify, adapt or create derivative works based on the Products or any portion thereof.

All proprietary rights in relation to the Products (including, without limitation, all copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets and other intellectual property rights) are and remain the sole and exclusive property of CreditSights and/or its third party licensors and nothing herein shall transfer any right to or interest in the Products, in any data included therein or component thereof, or in any proprietary rights pertaining thereto.

The Products contain information and data which are compiled from sources believed by CreditSights to be accurate and reliable and are presented for general information use only. However, CreditSights disclaims any and all liability with respect to the truth, accuracy or completeness of the information and data conveyed. Accordingly, the products are being provided to user on an "as is" basis, exclusive of any express or implied warranty or representation of any kind, including as to the accuracy, timeliness, completeness, or merchantability or fitness for any particular purpose of the Products and of any such information or data. Furthermore, CreditSights does not warrant that the Products will meet any user's requirements.

Investing in fixed income securities may involve certain risks, including the credit quality of individual issuers, possible prepayments, market or economic developments, inflation, and yield and price changes due to fluctuations in interest rates. When interest rates go up, bond prices typically drop, and vice versa; this effect can be more pronounced with longer term securities. Any fixed income security sold or redeemed prior to maturity may be subject to a loss.

Neither CreditSights nor its affiliates ("CreditSights Parties") will be responsible for or have any liability for any injuries or damages, including injuries or damages that may result from (i) the reliance of any person upon any information or opinion provided or (ii) any errors, inaccuracies, omissions in, or any other failure of, the Products, from whatever cause. To the fullest extent provided by law, CreditSights shall not be liable for direct, indirect or incidental, special or consequential damages resulting from the information in the Report and/or from decisions taken or not taken by an investor on the basis of such information, regardless of whether such damages were foreseeable or unforeseeable.

Any statements that are not factual in nature constitute only current opinions, which are subject to change without notice. CreditSights does not recommend the purchase or sale of financial products or securities, and does not give investment advice and does not provide any legal, auditing, accounting, appraisal, valuation or actuarial services. Recommendations made in a report may not be suitable for all investors and do not take into account any individual user's investment risk tolerance, return objectives, asset allocation, investment horizon, or any other factors or constraints. The Products are created for use by CreditSights clients and any other recipient who receives this report will be receiving it after it has been distributed to such clients, who may have traded based on information contained in the report; however, the Products are intended only to provide general and preliminary information to investors and shall not be construed as the basis for any investment decision. CreditSights may issue or may have issued other reports that are inconsistent with or may reach different conclusions than those represented in this Report, and all opinions are reflective of judgments made on the original date of publication. CreditSights is under no obligation to ensure that other reports are brought to the attention of any recipient of the Products.

Information included in any report that includes analysis of documents, agreements, controversies, or proceedings is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. To the extent the Products contain summaries of other documents, such as indentures, reference is made to such other documents for a complete statement of the terms thereof. No attorney client relationship is created between any reader and CreditSights as a result of the publication of any research report, or any response provided by CreditSights (including, but not limited to, the ask an analyst feature or any other analyst interaction) or as the result of the payment to CreditSights of subscription fees. The material included in a report may not reflect the most current legal developments.

Certain data appearing in this Report is owned by, and used under license from, certain third parties. Please see "Legal Notices" at www.creditsights.com for such information. Terms and conditions are also available at Terms & Conditions.

CreditSights, Inc. is an independent investment research provider whose affiliate, CreditSights Ltd, is authorized and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority ("FCA"). CreditSights Products are not intended for use in the UK by Retail Customers, as defined by the FCA. CreditSights Risk Products, including its Credit Quality Scores and related information, to the extent incorporated in any Products, are provided by CreditSights Analytics, LLC, an affiliate of CreditSights.

If you have any questions regarding the contents of this Report, please contact CreditSights at legal@creditsights.com.

This document is made available to clients under an agreement between Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co. ("Metrobank") and CreditSights, Inc., an independent investment research provider. It is for information purposes only and does not constitute any offer, recommendation or solicitation to any person to enter into any transaction or adopt any hedging, trading or investment strategy, nor does it constitute any prediction of likely future movements in rates or prices or any representation of any future market movements.

This document is for general guidance only. It is not intended to be the sole basis of any evaluation or treatment of any financial instrument. Past performances are not necessarily an indication much less a guarantee of any future performance.

Metrobank does not make any representation as to the accuracy or completeness of the information provided herein. You should consult your own professional advisers prior to entering into any agreement. You acknowledge that Metrobank is not in the business of providing legal, accounting, auditing or appraisal advice. Metrobank assumes no responsibility whatsoever for the consequence of any investment, trading or business decision that is taken on the basis of the information in this document.

Metrobank is a commercial bank whose businesses include active trading and market making in foreign exchange, securities and derivatives. The Bank's traders, investing, lending and sales personnel may make investment decisions, or may provide oral or written market commentary or trading strategies that contradict the views expressed herein.