

Tesla in 'Code Red Situation' as Sell-Off Exceeds 20% and Musk-Scam gets exposed

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(Bloomberg) -- Tesla Inc.'s stock rout following this month's \$2.4 billion capital raise intensified after a once-bullish analyst called the range of issues facing the electric-car maker a "code red situation."

The shares have dropped in nine of the last 10 trading days, a stretch that started the day Tesla closed offerings of new stock and convertible bonds to shore up its balance sheet. In that span, Tesla has plunged more than 20% and fallen back behind Ford Motor Co. by market capitalization.

In a note Sunday, Wedbush analyst Dan Ives wrote that Tesla faces a "Kilimanjaro-like uphill climb" to hit targets for profitability in the second half of the year. He cast doubt on underlying demand for the company's first mass-manufactured vehicle, the Model 3 sedan, and cut his price target on the stock to \$230 from \$275.

Once among the most bullish analysts covering Tesla -- he slashed his target from \$365 just last month -- Ives said he has "major concerns around the trajectory of Tesla's growth prospects."

Tesla shares fell as much as 7.5% to \$195.25, breaching the \$200 level for the first time since December 2016. The stock had already closed at the lowest level in almost 2 1/2 years on Friday, after Chief Executive Officer Elon Musk called for a "hardcore" review of all the company's expenses and another analyst warned of potentially severe fallout from a fatal crash involving Autopilot.

Tesla delivered just 63,000 cars in the first quarter but expects to deliver 90,000 to 100,000 cars in the second quarter, and 360,000 to 400,000 for the year. Ives said hitting the full-year target is going to be a "Herculean task" and sees 340,000 to 355,000 as a more likely scenario.

Representatives for Tesla didn't respond to requests for comment.

Tesla's 5.3% bonds due 2025 now yield about 9%, according to Trace, well above the average yield for a B-rated company. The bonds have trailed the broader Bloomberg Barclays Single B U.S. High Yield Index this year by around 500 basis points, according to Bloomberg Intelligence analyst Joel Levington.

"There's little in the form of favorable credit catalysts to turn momentum around in the near term," Levington said in a report Monday. The bond price dropped below 83 cents on the dollar and was one of the biggest losers in the high-yield market Monday, according to Trace.

Musk, 47, recently told employees in an email that he and Chief Financial Officer Zachary Kirkhorn will personally scrutinize expenditures following a worse-than-expected first-quarter loss. After having to pay off a \$920 million convertible bond with cash in March, another \$566 million is due in November.

When drumming up interest for a stock and debt offering earlier this month, Musk pitched investors on a future of autonomous robotaxis as the key to Tesla becoming a \$500 billion company. Its market capitalization is now about \$36 billion, trailing General Motors Co. and Ford.

If Tesla is unable to earn profit in the second half of the year, the company may need to raise another \$1 billion to \$2 billion of capital, Ives said in an interview with Bloomberg Television.

“With a code red situation at Tesla, Musk & Co. are expanding into insurance, robotaxis, and other sci-fi projects/endeavors when the company instead should be laser-focused on shoring up core demand for Model 3 and simplifying its business model and expense structure,” Ives wrote in his report.

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