

Initial Public Offerings: Direct Listings Through February 2, 2024

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Table 13a: Direct Listings in the U.S., 2018-2024
(updated February 2, 2024)

With direct listings, no shares trade hands at the reference price. Instead, there is typically a large block trade at the open. The first-day return is thus calculated from the open to the closing price. With traditional IPOs, including auctions, the first-day return would be computed from the offer price to the close. The returns calculated in these two manners reflect the returns earned by buyers who bought from the issuer and selling shareholders. The July 2019 Nasdaq listing of iHeartMedia (IHRT) is not included because the stock was traded OTC beforehand. For Watford Holdings, the “Current Reference Price” is used instead of a “Reference Price” based on the front page of the SEC Form 424B3 prospectus. For this company, there had been no private market transactions on which to base a reference price. The current reference price was defined to be the market-clearing opening price.

Thryv Holdings has unusually low volume on the first day of trading, only 9,569 shares (this number has been confirmed with the company as correct). It had much higher volume on the second day, 208,916 shares, with a price jump to a close of \$14.39. The prospectus for Thryv Holdings reports 30,829,145 shares outstanding, giving it a market cap at the opening price of \$430 million, considerably less than the unicorns doing direct listings.

Bright Green Corporation also did not have a reference price, but instead has a current reference price that is equal to the opening trade.

Table 13a**Direct Listings in the U.S., 2018-2024**

In the bottom panel, the last column is a measure of intraday volatility on the first day of trading. The average volatility for these five direct listings is about the same as that on the IPOs of similar companies. High, low, and closing prices, as well as trading volume, come from BigCharts.Marketwatch.com or WSJ.com.

Panel A: First day return from the open to close

Name of IPO (ticker)	Date of Listing	Prices			First-day Return
		Reference	Open	Close	
Spotify Technology (SPOT)	20180403	\$132.00	\$165.90	\$149.01	-10.2%
Watford Holdings (WTRE)	20190328	\$25.26	\$25.26	\$27.00	6.9%
Slack (WORK)	20190620	\$26.00	\$38.50	\$38.62	0.3%
Asana (ASAN)	20200930	\$21.00	\$27.00	\$28.80	6.7%
Palantir Technologies (PLTR)	20200930	\$7.25	\$10.00	\$9.50	-5.0%
Thryv Holdings (THRY)	20201001	\$12.40	\$14.00	\$11.075	-20.9%
Roblox (RBLX)	20210310	\$45.00	\$64.50	\$69.50	7.8%
Coinbase Global (COIN)	20210414	\$250.00	\$381.00	\$328.28	-13.8%
SquareSpace (SQSP)	20210519	\$50.00	\$48.00	\$43.65	-9.1%
ZipRecruiter (ZIP)	20210526	\$18.00	\$20.00	\$21.10	5.5%
Amplitude (AMPL)	20210928	\$35.00	\$50.00	\$54.80	9.6%
Warby Parker (WRBY)	20210929	\$40.00	\$54.11	\$54.49	0.7%
Bright Green (BGXX)	20220517	\$15.99	\$15.99	\$25.245	57.9%
Surf Air Mobility (SRFM)	20230727	\$20.00	\$5.00	\$3.15	-37.0%
Courtside Group (PODC)	20230908	\$8.00	\$4.30	\$4.39	2.1%
reAlpha Tech (AIRE)	20231023	\$8.00	\$23.01	\$406.67	1,667.4%
FibroBiologics (FBLG)	20240131	\$8.00	\$30.00	\$29.10	-3.0%

Table 13a (continued)

Panel B: Intraday Volatility

Name of IPO (ticker)	Trading Volume	Prices			(High-Low) ÷Close, %
		Low	High	Close	
Spotify Technology (SPOT)	30,526,500	\$148.26	\$165.90	\$149.01	11.8%
Watford Holdings Ltd (WTRE)	129,131	\$25.26	\$27.40	\$27.00	7.9%
Slack (WORK)	137,364,188	\$38.25	\$42.00	\$38.62	9.7%
Asana (ASAN)	40,825,910	\$26.75	\$29.96	\$28.80	11.1%
Palantir Technologies (PLTR)	338,584,375	\$9.11	\$11.42	\$9.50	24.3%
Thryv Holdings (THRY)	9,569	\$10.60	\$14.00	\$11.075	30.7%
Roblox (RBLX)	97,069,344	\$60.50	\$74.83	\$69.50	20.6%
Coinbase Global (COIN)	81,065,750	\$310.00	\$429.54	\$328.28	36.4%
SquareSpace (SQSP)	5,471,014	\$42.82	\$50.02	\$43.65	16.5%
ZipRecruiter (ZIP)	16,606,301	\$19.32	\$21.69	\$21.10	11.2%
Amplitude (AMPL)	11,529,531	\$50.00	\$54.90	\$54.80	8.9%
Warby Parker (WRBY)	13,805,076	\$52.96	\$54.74	\$54.49	3.3%
Bright Green (BGXX)	315,750	\$15.99	\$36.44	\$26.245	77.9%
Surf Air Mobility (SFRM)	3,237,295	\$2.75	\$5.00	\$3.15	71.4%
Courtside Group (PODC)	1,054,440	\$3.89	\$5.80	\$4.39	43.5%
reAlpha Tech (AIRE)	32,239	\$23.01	\$575.41	\$406.67	135.8%
FibroBiologics (FBLG)	68,731	\$22.00	\$55.00	\$29.10	113.4%

Table 13b (created April 17, 2023)

Long-run Returns on Auction IPOs and Direct Listings

23 IPOs using auctions from 1999-2008, including one bank offering (B of I Holdings), are used, along with 12 direct listings from 2018-2021, with returns calculated through December 31, 2022. The companies are listed in Tables 13 (auctions) and 13a (direct listings). The five IPOs during 2020-2021 that used bookbuilding with limit orders, listed in Table 13 as auctions, are not included. For the direct listings, the first-day return is computed from the opening price to the closing price, whereas for the auction IPOs, the offer price is used to calculate the first-day return. Buy-and-hold returns are calculated from the first closing market price until the earlier of the three-year anniversary or the delisting date, or December 30, 2022. Market-adjusted returns use the CRSP value-weighted index. Style adjustments use firms matched by market cap and book-to-market ratio with at least five years of CRSP listing and no follow-on equity issues in the prior five years. The market-adjusted and style-adjusted returns are the average buy-and-hold return on the IPOs minus the average compounded return on the benchmark. Market capitalization (size) is calculated using the first closing market price after the IPO and the post-issue number of shares outstanding.

Sector	Number of IPOs	Average First-day Return	Average 3-year Buy-and-hold Return		
			IPOs	Market-adjusted	Style-adjusted
Auction IPOs	23	12.7%	87.5%	79.2%	10.2%
Direct Listings	12	2.1%	21.3%	-33.5%	-25.6%
All	35	9.0%	50.2%	40.6%	-2.1%

6 of the 23 auction IPOs had 3-year buy-and-hold returns of at least 150%. The style-adjusted return for the auction IPOs is much lower than the market-adjusted return because two of the matching firms had 3-year buy-and-hold returns of over 700%. Most of the direct listings saw large price declines in 2022 when the prices of most high-growth companies dropped substantially.