

COVERED CALL ETFs

by Henry Pasts, Executive Vice President and Analyst, BTS Asset Management, Inc.



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COVERED CALL ETFs — JEPI and JEPQ

The Covered Call ETFs strategy makes up 10% of the BTS Enhanced Equity Income portfolio. The strategy involves a static 10% allocation split between JEPI, JPMorgan Equity Premium Income ETF, and JEPQ, JPMorgan Nasdaq Equity Premium Income ETF. Here is a brief overview of each fund:

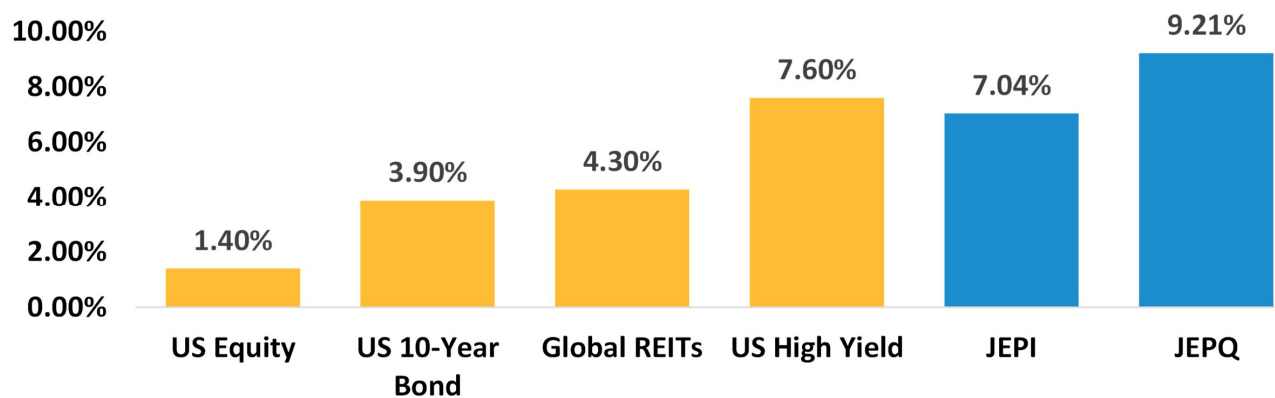
JEPI seeks to deliver monthly distributable income and equity market exposure with less volatility. The portfolio consists of a defensive equity portfolio with bottom-up fundamental research stock selection with risk-adjusted stock rankings. JEPI generates income with a disciplined options overlay that implements written out-of-the-money S&P 500 Index call options that seek to generate distributable monthly income.¹

JEPQ seeks to generate income through a combination of selling options and investing in U.S. large cap growth stocks, seeking to deliver a monthly income stream from associated option premiums and stock dividends. It seeks to deliver the returns of the NASDAQ 100 Index with less volatility. JEPQ generates income with a disciplined options overlay that implements written out-of-the-money NASDAQ 100 Index call options that seek to generate distributable monthly income.²

Why Covered Call ETFs Fit Into the BTS Enhanced Equity Portfolio

Both JEPI and JEPQ aim to distribute income while reducing the beta and volatility against the S&P 500 and NASDAQ 100, respectively. Unlike other income producing assets, such as bonds, Covered Calls distribute income without duration or credit risk. This is key in an equity income solution because investing a portion of the portfolio in bonds or other income producing assets would add non-equity risks. Below is a comparison of yield against other income asset classes to highlight the attractive yield that Covered Calls offer.

Attractive Yield vs. Other Asset Classes as of 12/31/2023



Adopted from JPMorgan, as of 12/31/2023³

Covered Call ETFs Components of Return

To get a better sense of the return dynamics of Covered Calls, let's analyze the annual return potentials and components of JEPI and JEPQ in a historically normalized market environment.

JEPI Annualized Returns Observed in a Historically Normalized Environment



JEPQ Annualized Returns Observed in a Historically Normalized Environment



Adopted from JPMorgan. Past Performance is Not Indicative of Future Results³

From above, there are three components of return for Covered Call strategies: 1. Dividends, 2. Option Premiums, and 3. Net Equity Contribution.

In addition to the option premium, Covered Call ETFs offer dividends from the underlying equity positions that increase distributable income. Additionally, in more volatile markets, option premiums tend to be higher (and lower in less volatile markets), potentially offering some added returns during negative, volatile markets. Finally, unless Equities rise above the strike price of the out-of-the-money calls, then Net Equity Contribution or market return should aid in the return of the Covered Call ETF strategy.



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A Covered Call refers to a financial transaction in which the investor selling call options owns an equivalent amount of the underlying security. To execute this, an investor who holds a long position in an asset then writes (sells) call options on that same asset to generate an income stream. The investor's long position in the asset is the cover because it means the seller can deliver the shares if the buyer of the call option chooses to exercise.

JPMorgan Equity Premium Income ETF (JEPI) The investment objective of the Fund is to seek current income while maintaining prospects for capital appreciation. The Fund seeks to achieve this objective by (1) creating an actively managed portfolio of equity securities comprised significantly of those included in the Fund's primary benchmark, the Standard & Poor's 500 Total Return Index (S&P 500 Index) and (2) through equity-linked notes (ELNs), selling call options with exposure to the S&P 500 Index. The resulting Fund is designed to provide investors with performance that captures a majority of the returns associated with the S&P 500 Index, while exposing investors to lower volatility than the S&P 500 Index and also providing incremental income.

JPMorgan Nasdaq Equity Premium Income ETF (JEPO) The investment objective of the Fund is to seek current income while maintaining prospects for capital appreciation. The Fund seeks to achieve this objective by (1) creating an actively managed portfolio of equity securities comprised significantly of those included in the Fund's primary benchmark, the Nasdaq-100 Index® (the Benchmark), and (2) through equity-linked notes (ELNs), selling call options with exposure to the Benchmark. The resulting Fund is designed to provide investors with performance that captures a majority of the returns associated with the Benchmark, while exposing investors to lower volatility than the Benchmark and also providing incremental income.

S&P 500 is an index that includes 500 leading companies in leading industries of the U.S. economy and is a proxy for the total stock market. This is the primary index used for comparison to the portfolio as we believe this portfolio should be used in the equity portion of a client's account.

Nasdaq 100 is an index of the 100 largest, most actively traded companies listed on the Nasdaq stock exchange. The index includes companies from diverse industries like manufacturing, technology, healthcare, and others. The index excludes those in the financial sector, like commercial and investment banks.

Out Of The Money (OTM) Call Option is an expression used to describe an option contract that only contains extrinsic value. These options will have a delta of less than 0.50. An OTM call option will have a strike price that is higher than the market price of the underlying asset.

Beta measures sensitivity to market movements relative to a benchmark index. The S&P 500 is used as the benchmark, based on monthly returns.

10-Year Treasury Note is a debt obligation issued by the United States government with a maturity of 10 years upon initial issuance. A 10-year Treasury note pays interest at a fixed rate every six months and it pays the face value to the holder at maturity.

The Bloomberg US Corporate High Yield Bond Index measures the USD-denominated, high yield, fixed-rate corporate bond market. Securities are classified as high yield if the middle rating of Moody's, Fitch and S&P is Ba1/BB+/BB+ or below.

The FTSE EPRA NAREIT Global Real Estate Index Series is designed to represent general trends in listed real estate equities worldwide.

US High Yield - Bloomberg US Corporate High Yield

Global REITs - FTSE NAREIT Global REITs

US 10-Year Bond – Tullett Prebon

US Equity – MSCI USA

The MSCI USA Index is designed to measure the performance of the large and mid cap segments of the US market. With 609 constituents, the index covers approximately 85% of the free float-adjusted market capitalization in the US.

Sources:

¹ <https://am.jpmorgan.com/us/en/asset-management/adv/products/jpmorgan-equity-premium-income-etf-etf-shares-46641q332>

² <https://am.jpmorgan.com/us/en/asset-management/adv/products/jpmorgan-nasdaq-equity-premium-income-etf-etf-shares-46654q203#/documents>

³ <https://am.jpmorgan.com/content/dam/jpm-am-aem/americas/us/en/literature/fund-story/STO-JEPI.pdf> and
<https://am.jpmorgan.com/content/dam/jpm-am-aem/americas/us/en/literature/fund-story/STO-JEQP.pdf>

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PAST PERFORMANCE IS NO GUARANTEE OF FUTURE RESULTS.

About BTS Asset Management

Founded in 1979, BTS Asset Management is one of the oldest risk managers, managing traditional assets with a nontraditional approach. BTS has a multi-year track record in tactical fixed income and equity management. Our goal is to find opportunities with the potential to take advantage of rising markets while working to manage losses during downturns.

BTS:

- Seeks to preserve capital
- Aims to offer downside protection and upside potential
- Strives to reduce volatility while delivering consistent long-term returns



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