

Financial Daily Dose 5.19.2020 | Top Story: US Markets Surge on Hopes for Covid-19 Vaccine

Optimism over promising results for a coronavirus vaccine from Moderna helped drive stocks up on Monday after a rough go of it last week – WSJ and NYTimes and Bloomberg and MarketWatch

Inside sources suggest that the DOJ is preparing to file “antitrust charges against Google as early as this summer . . . in what would be one of the biggest antitrust actions by the United States since the late 1990s” when the Justice Department took on Microsoft. Investigators are reportedly focusing on Google’s “dominance in the online advertising industry, and the case will also involve allegations that the company abused its dominant position in online search to harm competitors” – NYTimes

In comments on “60 Minutes” over the weekend, Fed Chair Jay Powell suggested that “a full rebound from the virus-induced lockdowns could take until the end of 2021” and again renewed his call for more action both from his own body and from Congress “to help workers and businesses make it through the sudden and sharp slump caused by efforts to contain the coronavirus” – NYTimes and Marketplace

Powell will expand on those thoughts in his hearing with the Senate Banking Committee today – Bloomberg and WSJ and MarketWatch

The Fed, FDIC, and OCC have issued a new rule temporarily changing how the supplementary leverage ratio is calculated, a move they hope could free up \$55 billion for big banks to “provide credit to households and businesses in light of the challenges arising from the coronavirus response” – Law360

The Times pulls back the curtain to explore what a “Mark Zuckerberg Production” means for the ‘book and its sister products in the time of Covid-19 – NYTimes

Freshly Chapter-11’d retailer J.C. Penney will permanently shutter nearly 30% of its stores and two distribution centers in an effort to “streamline its business” while hoping to “supercharge its e-commerce operations” – WSJ

Troubled California utility PG&E announced on Monday that “thousands

of homeowners and businesses had overwhelmingly approved a \$13.5 billion settlement for wildfires caused” by its equipment, an “important victory in its effort to resolve its bankruptcy” – NYTimes

More on the SoftBank disaster that prompted Jack Ma to decamp from Masa Son’s board, including a \$9 billion loss for the fiscal year ending in March – WSJ

A sale of a “significant portion” of its shares in T-Mobile to controlling shareholder Deutsche Telekom could be one path forward for SoftBank in an effort to recoup some of those losses – WSJ

The Department of Labor issued a final rule on Monday that expands “how many employers can qualify as ‘retail’ businesses that may fall under an exemption to the Fair Labor Standards Act,” making it easier for employers to cut down on the number of employees eligible for overtime pay – Law360

TikTok has nabbed Disney’s head of streaming, Kevin Mayer, to take the reins of the Chinese-owned short-video app – NYTimes and WSJ

China’s much-touted Belt & Road largesse appears poised to come back and bite it—either financially or reputationally—in this new coronavirus world in which we’re living – NYTimes

Today’s installment of unexpected Covid-19-related side-effect: the resurgence of mainstream beer – WSJ

For those rapidly running through your standard Spotify playlists, here’s a nice little collection of under-the-radar winners from the late-70s and early 80s to get you through your Tuesday – NYTimes

Stay safe,
MDR