

These 2 Stocks Just Raised Their Dividends by up to 114.3%

Description

Manulife Financial Corporation ([TSX:MFC](#))([NYSE:MFC](#)) and **Restaurant Brands International Inc.** ([TSX:QSR](#))([NYSE:QSR](#)) — two of the largest companies in their respective industries — just rewarded their shareholders by announcing dividend hikes. Let's take a closer look at each company and their new dividends, so you can determine if you should become a shareholder of one of them today.

Manulife Financial Corporation

[Manulife](#) is one of the world's leading providers of financial products and services with over \$1 trillion in assets under management. Its offerings include insurance, financial advice, and wealth- and asset-management solutions.

In its fiscal 2017 fourth-quarter earnings release on February 7, Manulife announced a 7.3% increase to its quarterly dividend to \$0.22 per share, equating to \$0.88 per share annually, which brings its yield up to about 3.5%.

It's important to make three additional notes about Manulife's new dividend.

First, the first quarterly installment at the increased rate is payable on and after March 19 to shareholders of record at the close of business on February 21.

Second, this dividend hike has the financial giant on track for 2018 to mark the fifth consecutive year in which it has raised its annual dividend payment.

Third, I think its consistently strong financial performance, including its 13.3% year-over-year increase in core earnings to \$2.22 per diluted share in 2017, and its growing amount of assets under management and administration that will help fuel future growth, including its 6.5% year-over-year increase to \$1.04 trillion in 2017, will allow its streak of annual dividend increases to continue for many years to come.

Restaurant Brands International Inc.

Restaurant Brands is one of the world's largest quick-service restaurant companies with over 24,000 locations in 100 countries. Its family of brands consists of Burger King, Tim Hortons, and Popeyes.

In its fiscal 2017 [fourth-quarter earnings](#) release on February 12, Restaurant Brands announced a 114.3% increase to its quarterly dividend to US\$0.45 per share, equating to US\$1.80 per share on an annualized basis, which brings its yield up to about 3.1%.

Foolish investors must make three notes about the new dividend.

First, the first payment at the increased rate will come on April 2 to shareholders of record on March 15.

Second, this dividend hike puts the restaurant operator on pace for 2018 to mark the fourth consecutive year in which it has raised its annual dividend payment.

Third, I think the company's very strong financial performance, including its 32.9% year-over-year increase in adjusted net earnings to US\$2.10 per diluted share in 2017, and its ongoing expansion efforts that will help fuel future growth, including its addition of 1,331 net new restaurants across its three brands in 2017 to bring its total store count to 24,407, will allow its streak of annual dividend increases to continue for another four years at least.

CATEGORY

1. Dividend Stocks
2. Investing

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2. NYSE:QSR (Restaurant Brands International Inc.)
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Date

2025/08/18

Date Created

2018/02/18

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