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US Growth Stocks: The Comeback After the Crash

After the late-2025 purge, fundamentals are reasserting themselves. Drones, space, and AI are soaring in an ideal macroeconomic context

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The opening weeks of 2026 have ignited a blistering rally for US growth stocks outside the megacaps - a universe spanning from disruptive innovators to established technology players.

SanDisk appreciated¹ by 127%, Red Cat Holdings surged 88%, while Applied Digital advanced 55%. This sharp rally stands in stark contrast to the November-December 2025 sequence, correcting a market dislocation where psychology had completely eclipsed fundamentals.

The Late-2025 Bloodbath: A Mechanical Dislocation

Between November and December, positions in the US growth segment suffered three converging shocks that triggered a brutal dislocation between prices and fundamentals, with no operational changes to justify it:

- The disorderly unwinding of the JPY/USD carry trade primarily drained global liquidity from high-growth segments, causing forced selling by hedge funds and professional investors who had borrowed in yen to invest in this asset class.
- The longest US government shutdown in history then froze institutional risk appetite and paralyzed complex investment decisions in tech.
- Finally, aggressive year-end tax-loss selling amplified the purge, as U.S. investors massively liquidated their losing positions to optimize their tax bills. This purely technical selling flow punished these stocks regardless of their operational progress.

Losses of 30% to 50% within just a few weeks were not uncommon, propelling CNN's Fear and Greed Index to a level of 5 out of 100 - a threshold rarely observed. The powerful early-2026 rally in these same stocks strongly suggests that the late-2025 weakness primarily corresponded to a capital flow anomaly, with prices now readjusting toward their underlying fundamentals.

High-Conviction Thematic Drivers

In this volatile yet opportunity-rich environment, several high-conviction themes are emerging for the medium term.

The drone supercycle stands out as a strategic imperative: AeroVironment, leader in military reconnaissance drones with a recent \$874 million contract from the US Army, and Ondas Holdings, specialized in autonomous drone solutions for critical infrastructure with its "Hijack Sentrycs" system - recently deployed at European civilian airports - should continue to appreciate with each announcement of new contracts or defense budgets.

¹ Performance from 12/31/2025 to 01/29/2026

Space innovation represents another major axis. Rocket Lab illustrates this momentum with 21 successful launches in 2025 and an \$816 million contract from the Space Development Agency for deploying hypersonic missile-tracking satellites. Similarly, Planet Labs saw its order backlog explode to \$734 million (+216%), driven by accelerated image decryption through embedded AI, validating the relevance of its business model.

The quantum computing sector is also bubbling, with D-Wave presenting an integrated cryogenic control system for qubits² at CES Las Vegas in early January - a major technical breakthrough - while announcing the acquisition of Quantum Circuits for \$550 million.

AI infrastructure represents a third strategic pillar, marked by a decisive pivot in capital allocation. Beyond computing power alone, the investment center of gravity is shifting toward the critical bottlenecks of memory and energy. Insatiable demand for high-performance storage solutions is propelling manufacturers like Micron, SanDisk, and Seagate, who have become indispensable for unleashing the power of Nvidia's new "Rubin" GPUs.

Significantly more power-hungry than the current Blackwell architecture, these next-generation processors are forcing a redesign of power strategies, placing energy efficiency players like Bloom Energy at the heart of the AI equation.

This surge is also orchestrating the nuclear renaissance, particularly through small modular reactors (SMRs). Oklo exemplifies this evolution with the recent formalization of a strategic agreement with Meta to deploy up to 1.2 GW of capacity: an alliance consecrating this technology as one of the innovative solutions to AI's energy voracity.

A Favorable Macroeconomic Backdrop

The current rally in US growth stocks outside mega-caps rests on a favorable macroeconomic backdrop. US inflation appears to be confirming its normalization trajectory, while the labor market finds a sustainable equilibrium. Acknowledging this price normalization and labor market resilience, the Fed maintained its rates (3.50%-3.75%) at the end of January.

Jerome Powell, judging monetary policy "well-positioned," nonetheless opened the door to further rate cuts, validating the scenario of two 25-basis-point cuts in 2026, potentially beginning in June.

As these pieces fall into place - gradual disinflation, a more accommodative Fed, resilient growth - the whole is beginning to look like a "Goldilocks" scenario.

Add the prospect of tax cuts and the equation becomes particularly favorable for small- and mid-cap growth stocks, these securities sensitive to the cost of capital and the slightest inflection in the cycle.

² Unlike a classical bit that can only be 0 or 1, the qubit exploits the laws of quantum mechanics to exist in a superposition of both states simultaneously, thereby multiplying parallel computing power.