

software. It develops and sells software products for a wide range of computing environments in consumer and enterprise markets. Hardware products include Nokia mobile phones, the Xbox video game console, and Surface tablet. Revenue sources in fiscal 2015: Devices and Consumer, 44.3%; Commercial, 55.4%; Corporate

117,350 at 6/30/15. Stock owners: William H. Gates, 2.8%;, other offs. & dirs., 1%; BlackRock, Inc., 5.8%; The Vanguard Group, 5.2% (10/15 proxy). Chrmn: John Thompson. CEO: Satya Nadella. Inc.: Washington. Addr.: One Microsoft Way, Redmond, Washington 98052-6399. Tel.: 425-882-8080. Internet: www.microsoft.com.

ANNUAL RATES Past Est'd '13-'15 Past 10 Yrs. to '19-'21 of change (per sh) 5 Yrs. 9.0% 8.5% 7.0% 17.0% Revenues "Cash Flow 12.0% 11.0% 7.0% 7.0% 7.0% 11.0% 1.5% 9.5% 19.0% Earnings Dividends Book Value 17.0%

114246

7432

2000

13043

45625

124712

6591 7484

23223 12560

128421

6759 5498

20876 10921

Current Assets

Accts Payable Debt Due

Current Liab

Unearned Revenue Other

Fiscal Year Ends	QUART Sep.30	ERLY REV Dec.31	/ENUES (\$ Mar.31	mill.) A Jun.30	Full Fiscal Year
2013	16008	21456	20489	19858	77811
2014	18529	24519	20403	23382	86833
2015	23201	26470	21729	22180	93580
2016	21660	25693	22076	22201	91630
2017	22250	26250	23250	23500	95250
Fiscal	EARNINGS PER SHARE ABFull .				
Year Ends	Sep.30	Dec.31	Mar.31	Jun.30	Fiscal Year
2013	.53	.76	.72	.66	2.65
2014	.62	.78	.68	.55	2.63
2015	.65	.77	.62	.62	2.65
2016	.67	.78	.62	.59	2.66
2017	.69	.79	.69	.68	2.85
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID E				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2012	.20	.20	.20	.23	.83
2013	.23	.23	.23	.28	.97
2014	.28	.28	.31	.31	1.18
2015	.31	.31	.31	.36	1.29
2016	.36				

Microsoft's financial performance for its fiscal third quarter was respect**able, in our view.** (Years end June 30th.) That said, Wall Street had expected a somewhat stronger showing at the bottom line, and MSFT shares lost a degree of market support in the wake of the company's latest earnings release.

Cloud computing and cloud services are tremendous opportunities for Microsoft. The software giant is having good success in this regard, as demonstrated by the strong interest in its Azure platform and the deferred revenue accumulation in the commercial arena. Still, the transition to the cloud requires large investments on its part. In addition, the service orientation of the cloud requires Microsoft to recognize revenue from the contracts over time, rather than via a large upfront transaction. The combination has tended to act as a check on earnings growth, and the company has suggested that it will likely continue doing so into fiscal 2017. Nonetheless, we believe Microsoft is clearly headed in the right direction. The rapid adoption of its cloud platform and services should continue, with profit margins im-

as the rate of investment proving eventually moderates, allowing serviceoriented revenue and associated costs to better align.

Meanwhile, the company continues having good success with Windows 10. The new operating system is finding good demand. Corporate IT departments are also taking a close look at Windows 10, suggesting it will likely find a place in this arena. Moreover, the broader strategy behind the new system—aimed at countering the general decline in the PC market seems to be taking hold, as it is finding its way into a wider range of products, and application developers seem to be showing new interest Microsoft.

What about Microsoft stock? Despite the market's reaction to the company's March-quarter earnings report and forecast, we think it is well-positioned to prosper over the next few years. Accordingly, if timely MSFT shares are already owned we recommend to continue holding them, with the recent weakness making them moderately attractive for the longer term on a risk-adjusted basis. Charles Clark

May 13, 2016

(A) Fiscal year ends June 30th. (B) Diluted earnings. Quarters may not add to total. Excl. nonrec. items: '99, 1¢; '01, d26¢; '02, d23¢; '03, d5¢; '04, d29¢; '05, d4¢; '12, d72¢;

(D) Includes intangibles. In 2015: \$16.9 billion, \$2.11 a share.

'13, d7¢; '15, d\$1.17. Next earnings report, late July. (C) In millions, adjusted for stock split. (E) Dividends historically paid in March, June, Sept., and Dec. ■Dividend reinvestment plan available. Special dividend of \$3.00 a share paid December 2, 2004.

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 75 Price Growth Persistence 65 **Earnings Predictability** 90