

software. It develops and sells software products for a wide range of computing environments in consumer and enterprise markets. Hardware products include the Xbox video game console and Surface laptops. Revenue sources in fiscal 2019: Productivity & Business Processes, 33%; Intelligent Cloud, 31%; More Personal Com-

6/30/19. Stock owners: William H. Gates, 1.34%;, other offs. & dirs. 0.05%; The Vanguard Group, 7.8%; BlackRock, Inc., 6.6%; (10/19 proxy). Chrmn: John W. Thompson. CEO: Satya Nadella. Inc.: Washington. Addr.: One Microsoft Way, Redmond, Washington 98052-6399. Tel.: 425-882-8080. Internet: www.microsoft.com.

has remained strong since then, with the

Current Liab ANNUAL RATES Past Est'd '17-'19 Past 10 Yrs. to '22-'24 of change (per sh) 5 Yrs. Revenues "Cash Flow 9.0% 10.5% 8.5% 10.5% 12.5% 13.5% 9.0% 14.0% 8.0% 12.5% Earnings Dividends Book Value 3.5% 16 0%

169662

8617

3998

28905 16968

58488

175552

9382 5516

32676 21846

69420

167074

8811

6247

27343 17239

59640

Current Assets

Accts Payable Debt Due

Unearned Revenue Other

Dook value		11.070		0 / 0 / 1	0.0 /0
Fiscal Year Ends	QUART Sep.30	ERLY REV Dec.31	ENUES (\$ Mar.31	mill.) A Jun.30	Full Fiscal Year
2017	22334	26066	23557	24700	96657
2018	24538	28918	26819	30085	110360
2019	29084	32471	30571	33717	125843
2020	33055	36906	34100	37089	141150
2021	36275	40500	38150	42075	157000
Fiscal	EARNINGS PER SHARE AB _Full .				
Year Ends	Sep.30	Dec.31	Mar.31	Jun.30	Fiscal Year
2017	.76	.83	.73	.75	3.08
2018	.84	.96	.95	1.13	3.88
2019	1.14	1.10	1.14	1.37	4.75
2020	1.38	1.51	1.27	1.34	5.50
2021	1.43	1.60	1.50	1.67	6.20
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID E				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2016	.36	.36	.39	.39	1.50
2017	.39	.39	.42	.42	1.62
2018	.42	.42	.42	.46	1.72
2019	.46	.46	.46	.51	1.89
2020	.51				

Microsoft should be able to weather the coronvirus pandemic nicely. The company has a very strong financial position, giving it the capability to withstand not only the initial disruption of economic caused by $_{
m the}$ COVID-19 pathogen, but also the recession that is to follow in its wake. To wit, although the way ahead is not yet clearly understood and any read on the severity and extent of the ensuing global economic slowdown is unknown at this writing, Microsoft's ability to generate cash flow should remain largely intact through the ordeal, putting it in an position accorded to only a handful of companies (high-tech, or not). The company recently noted that it has been able to maintain employee productivity in the wake of going fully remote due the pandemic, supporting our view.

Microsoft's cloud infrastructure and services businesses should continue to do well. True, the tech giant withdrew its revenue forecast for the More Personal Computing segment in late February. reflecting difficulties in the related supply chain in China. That said, the demand for its Azure platform and associated services

company reallocating access as needed due to high use. In addition, Microsoft is continuing to build out the system in order to meet customer needs, suggesting that it expects demand to remain elevated for some time. Meanwhile, the move to remote workspaces caused by the forced closing of many businesses should support the company's range of cloud-based productivity offerings. Indeed, our sense is this arena, which had been quite active prior to the current disruption, is likely to remain so. What about Microsoft stock? The shares have reclaimed a good portion of the decline that was registered with the sharp fall in the equity market, as investors have assessed the company's inherent strengths. Still, some of Microsoft's customers may find an extended economic recession (should it come to pass) quite challenging, and have to reallocate capital away from Microsoft and its products and services. Nonetheless, high-quality MSFT stock, though currently trading at a rela-

tive market premium, should continue to

be held in most subscribers' portfolios.

(A) Fiscal year ends June 30th.
(B) Diluted earnings. Quarters may not add to total. Excl. nonrec. items: '04, d29¢; '05, d4¢; '12, d72¢; '13, d7¢; '15, d\$1.17; '16, d70¢; \$5.50 a share.

'17, d37¢; '18, d\$1.75; '19, d33¢. Next earnings report late July. (C) In mill. (D) Includes intangibles. In 2019: \$42.0 billion, available. Special dividend of \$3.00 a share paid December 2, 2004.

Charles Clark

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 85 Price Growth Persistence **Earnings Predictability** 85

May 8, 2020