

software. It develops and sells software products for a wide range of computing devices. Also sells the Xbox video game console. Revenue sources in fiscal 2006: Client, 29.8% of total; Information Worker, 26.6%; Server, 25.9%; Home and Entertainment, 9.6%; MSN (Microsoft Network), 5.2%; Business Solutions, 2.1%; Mobile

Microsoft's earnings fell in the Decem-

rate: 12.5%. Has 71,000 employees. William H. Gates owns 9.7% of stock, other officers & directors 4.4% (9/06 proxy). Chairman: William H. Gates. CEO: Steven A. Ballmer. Inc.: WA. Address: One Microsoft Way, Redmond, WA 98052-6399. Telephone: 425-882-8080. Internet: www.microsoft.com.

Current Liab. 16877 22442 22215 ANNUAL RATES Past Past Est'd '04-'06 to '09-'11 of change (per sh) 5 Yrs. 12.0% 5.0% 7.0% Sales "Cash Flow" 19.0% 17.0% 17.0% 19.5% Earnings Dividends Book Value 14.5% 20.5% 6.5% 21.5% 24.0% 6.5%

48737

2086

14791

49010

2909

19533

45180

2944

19271

Current Assets

Accts Payable Debt Due

Fiscal Year Ends	QUA Sep.30	RTERLY S Dec.31		nill.) A Jun.30	Full Fiscal Year
2003	7746	8541	7835	8065	32187
2004	8215	10153	9175	9292	36835
2005	9189	10818	9620	10161	39788
2006	9741	11837	10900	11804	44282
2007	10811	12542	13900	13247	50500
Fiscal	EARNINGS PER SHARE A B				_Full _
Year Ends	Sep.30	Dec.31	Mar.31	Jun.30	Fiscal Year
2003	.25	.24	.26	.22	.97
2004	.24	.28	.29	.23	1.04
2005	.23	.32	.28	.33	1.16
2006	.29	.34	.29	.28	1.20
2007	.35	.26	.46	.38	1.45
Cal-	QUARTERLY DIVIDENDS PAID E				Full
endar	Mar.31	Jun.30	Sep.30	Dec.31	Year
2003	.08			.16	.24
2004			.08	.08	.16
2005	.08	.08	.08	.08	.32
2006	.09	.09	.09	.10	.37
2007					

ber quarter, as had been expected. To prevent a falloff in demand in advance of the rollout of the company's upgraded operating system, Vista, and its revamped suite of productivity programs, Office 2007, Microsoft, in the second quarter, offered discounted (or free) upgrades to customers who purchased older versions. That trimmed revenues in the December interim by \$1.64 billion, and earnings by 12 cents a share. Aside from that, it was a good quarter. Demand for the *Xbox 360* game console, personal computer software, and server programs was notably strong. With that temporary setback out of the way, the bottom line should

bounce back. Sales and earnings will get a big assist as the deferred revenues related to Vista and Office 2007 are booked in the March quarter. Too, demand for those products should be good since we think some potential customers postponed purchases until the upgrades were available. What's more, although there is something of a learning curve to switch to the new offerings, they do have features, such as better security, that should lead to con-

tinued good demand for the programs. Longer term, we look for Microsoft to enjoy a reasonable degree of success as it moves into new areas, such as its online business, the Zune personal music player, and the television and communications fields. Still, competition remains a threat, especially from the growing array of services that offer many of the productivity applications included in Office, often at low cost or even for free. And Microsoft is far behind market-leader Google in the fast-growing search field and the related advertising fees that search generates. On balance, though, we look for the company to post strong annual gains in share net through our 2009-2011 investment horizon.

We like Microsoft shares. The top-quality issue is a good choice for the year ahead, and also has above-average 3- to 5year appreciation potential. But investors should be aware of the risks of competition, and the legal challenges the company faces, notably its ongoing dispute with European regulators over giving competitors the ability to better mesh their products with Microsoft's programs. George A. Niemond February 23, 2007

(A) Fiscal year ends June 30th. (B) Primary earnings through fiscal '97, then diluted. Excludes nonrecurring losses: '98, 3¢; '01, 23¢; '02, 23¢; '03, 5¢; '04, 29¢; '05, 4¢; gain: '99,

2006: \$4.4 billion, 44¢ a share. (E) Dividends | December 2, 2004.

1¢; accounting charge, '01, 3¢. Next earnings report due late April. (C) In millions, adjusted for stock splits. (D) Includes intangibles. In able. Special dividend of \$3.00 a share paid

Company's Financial Strength Stock's Price Stability A++ 85 Price Growth Persistence **Earnings Predictability** 100

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