

Microsoft CEO Ballmer's salary up 4 percent in '09

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The Apple iPod Nano, top, and the Microsoft Zune HD are shown in San Francisco, Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2009. (AP Photo/Jeff Chiu)

(AP) -- Microsoft Corp. raised CEO Steve Ballmer's salary by 4 percent at the start of fiscal 2009, a year in which the software maker's profit declined 17 percent as the economic meltdown decimated personal computer sales.

Ballmer's salary rose to \$665,883 from \$640,833, according to a preliminary filing Friday with the [Securities and Exchange Commission](#).

Last year, the [CEO](#) earned a \$700,000 bonus. [Microsoft](#) did not disclose

Ballmer's 2009 bonus, stock awards or other performance-based pay in this draft of its proxy statement.

The filing also laid out proposals to be voted on at Microsoft's next shareholder meeting, which is scheduled for Nov. 19.

In an uncommon move, the company's board proposed a "say-on-pay" measure that would give shareholders a chance to weigh in every three years on executive compensation. The advisory vote would be nonbinding.

Such proposals usually come from shareholders, not the board itself. In drafting its proposal, Microsoft said the board considered proposals from several shareholder groups, as well as proposed federal legislation requiring say-on-pay for public companies.

In a blog post, Brad Smith, Microsoft's general counsel, and John Seethoff, deputy general counsel, wrote that some stockholders pushed for an advisory vote every year, but that the longer period is better for evaluating long-term incentives. Smith and Seethoff also wrote that it would be hard for the board to rejigger its compensation program on such short notice.

A final version of Microsoft's proxy statement with more details on executive compensation is expected around Oct. 1.

Microsoft's 2009 earnings fell to \$14.6 billion from \$17.7 billion in 2008. Sales dropped 3 percent to \$58.4 billion, the first time its revenue declined since it went public in 1986.

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