



Gates: How Microsoft's Mogul Reinvented an Industry--and Made Himself the Richest Man in America

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Gates reveals the guiding genius behind the unparalleled success of the Microsoft Corporation-- the biggest and most profitable personal computer software company in history-- and exposes the intensely competitive tactics that help it dominate the desktops of America. Chairman and co-founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates is the most powerful person in the computer industry and the youngest self-made billionaire in history. His company's DOS and Windows programs are such universal standards that more than nine out of ten personal computers depend on Microsoft software. Under the "Microsoft Everywhere" rallying cry, Gates intends to expand his company's worldwide dominance to office equipment, communications, and home entertainment. Vivid and definitive, Gates details the behind the scenes history of the personal computer industry and its movers and shakers, from Apple to IBM, from Steve Jobs to Ross Perot. Uncovering the inside stories of the bitter battle for control of the expanding personal computing market, Gates is a bracing, comprehensive portrait of the industry, the company, and the man-- and what they mean for a future where software is everything.

Gates: How Microsoft's Mogul Reinvented an Industry--and Made Himself the Richest Man in America Details

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Jbradley86 Bradley says

This book gives many details about what Bill Gates was like in his younger days, and how he rose to the top. The reader will get an idea of what it was like to work for Microsoft in those early days. It includes everything from Bill's temper tantrums to his hygiene habits, as well as romances with ex-girlfriends and his wife. Although this book was written about 14 years ago, I still think it is the best biography of Bill Gates on the market.

Mark Schomburg says

This is an excellent detailed story of the earliest days before Microsoft existed to its preeminence. To finally see the real path inside local Seattle that led to the beginnings is a real treat. Learn here why it wasn't necessarily a good strategy to learn computer science at the University of Washington in the 1980s under the assumption that it would lead to Microsoft. The truth about the invention of DOS and also the beginnings of the BASIC which was employed in early microcomputers is well covered. I recommend this as the book to read on the subject because it dispels a lot of myths and assumptions about early Microsoft, replacing them with facts.

Adam Lowe says

Brilliantly researched and written. A fair and objective insight into one of the most influential men of the 20th and 21st centuries. Highly recommended especially for those who grew up with the birth and rise of the PC.

Stephen says

I recently watched Pirates of Silicon Valley, a questionably-acted movie based on the rise of Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, and found myself curious about the facts. Did a young Bill Gates really race bulldozers and ram his buddy's sportscar? Gates is an astonishingly detailed biography of not just Gates himself, but of the computer industry as it developed throughout the seventies, eighties, and early nineties. The book culminates with the release of the then-revolutionary Windows 95, an OS that merited even Rachel and Chandler from Friends pitching it. The evolution of computing hardware and software overshadow Gates himself, not surprising given that developing software was his singular obsession from high school on. This mix of biography and technical history makes itself more attractive as computer history than personal, but it still presents a more interesting Gates than "Brilliant, Nerdy Billionaire". He really did race bulldozers, and they weren't his.

Gates is not a rags to riches stories, as young William Gates started off fairly comfortably: his parents sent him to a private school that exposed its older students to computer programming, and one of Gates' classmates there would become his partner in founding Microsoft later on -- Paul Allen. Both were enthusiastic members of a student club called the Lakeside Programmers Group, who were allowed free computer time -- back when computer users could be billed on how many seconds of computer processing they used -- in exchange for helping debug programs and machines. Being both self-confident teens and curious about what they could do, Gates and his friends also found ways to cheat the billing cycle outside their arrangement -- and when Gates took on the challenge of creating student schedules, he somehow found himself the only boy in a class otherwise filled with girls.

Even before they were out of high school, Gates and Allen were making a name for themselves as programmers, and exploring the possibilities of this for their future. Their first huge coup was writing a language to use with the first consumer-marketed microcomputer, the Altair. The Altair was amazing popular considering it had to be assembled, component by component, by the buyer, and that the finished product was initially only capable of blinking its lights. Programming was done not with a keyboard, but by flipping toggle switches. Although Gates and Allen did attempt building their own computer, one pitched at municipal governments for managing traffic, their talents lay in software. Gates was both obsessive and aggressive: he had no objections to working eighty hours a week trying to iron out bugs, and expected that from whomever he hired later on. Gates hated to lose, and if that meant selling products he hadn't even built yet-- hadn't even planned yet -- to prevent someone else from making the pitch, he would. (Hence the reason for those eighty hour workweeks..) Gates' success came not just from his gifts with programming language, but because he and his partners were so intent on making sales: one of Gates' tricks was to use one product to sell another. His dream was a computer in every home, on every desk, running Microsoft software. It didn't matter who the manufacturer was: Microsoft did work for both IBM and Apple, as well as smaller computer companies which have fallen away, and Gates' goal was to create a hardware ecosystem where everyone was using a common software, with the effect that devices would be cross-compatible. A monitor made by one manufacturer -- IBM, say -- would be compatible with a computer made by another firm, like Hewlett Packard.

Gates delves into an astonishing amount of detail both on the technical hurdles and on the business deals that Gates made: there's an entire chapter on a font battle with Adobe, for instance. Readers do see the man behind the machine, however: Gates the crazy-competitive, Gates the parsimonious executive who regarded hotel rooms and first class as decadent, Gates the teenage millionaire, Gates the spectacularly reckless driver, Gates the bellicose boss who liked people who stood up and yelled right back at him. Although Gates is not necessarily the ideal book for someone merely curious about the man, its depth of technical and business history would recommend to those interested in the microcomputer revolution. Oh, and the bulldozers? Gates literally saw them sitting in a rural construction yard, discovered the keys were in them, and decided to figure out how they worked. Then he and a buddy drove them around and raced, because that's what you do when you're twenty and it's 3 am.

David says

This is one of my favorite books - I loved the story of how Microsoft came to be and how Gates manipulated everyone, including the Execs at IBM. If you enjoy reading about how companies are made, and the risks that are taken, this is a MUST read.

Slavi says

Well researched book on early days of Microsoft.

Prabowo Shakti says

Witness the transformation! It was the theme of the day, the slogan for the biggest, splashiest software rollout yet concocted. It was emblazoned on posters, flyers, buttons. It sounded like the mantra of some bizarre religious cult— which in some ways it was. When you got right down to it, this whole Windows thing had been basically an act of faith, Bill Gates's faith in this vision of the future of computers— a faith that had taken him to the very top of the industry and transformed him into a national figure in the class of such inventor-promoter plutocrats as Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, and Howard Hughes. As the throng of press, industry-watchers, analysts, and customers filed into the auditorium, the giant screen above the stage displayed only the classic C:\> prompt that signified dull old MS-DOS. That essential "operating system" software served as a sort of butler for other programs, controlled virtually every IBM PC and compatible ever made, and had long been the underpinning of the Microsoft fortune. Now Windows was designed to wipe that prompt off the screen and take DOS into the future. With Japanese long-term tenacity, Bill Gates had steered this pet project through half a dozen incarnations over seven itchy years to response that had been anything but deafening. It wasn't easy to get people excited about a program designed, like DOS, mainly to run other programs, and that was pretty much what Windows was. Yet as he waited near a loudspeaker pumping out the mindlessly hard-driving music common to porn films and business "events," the high-stakes poker player in Bill Gates knew he was about to turn up an ace.

G a t e s Dapatkan di sini

Simon Klaver says

Good background stories on how Microsoft got started. I never knew that early Ms products were not written on PC s themselves, but actually created on PC emulators on a VAX or other mainframe. This allowed them to have software ready as soon as a new machine was available for the market. And stories about Gates' fast driving habits are fun. Too bad the book ends mid-90-ties, I think an 2nd part about the more recent period (revival of Apple, philanthropic work) will be as interesting.

Bryan Kim says

Incredibly well researched and detailed book, almost to a fault. The 460 page tome spares nary a detail or characters from the life and times of Bill Gates and Microsoft... so much so that it becomes specific names, projects and programs start "compositing" themselves into one another, difficult to keep track of individually. Still, the writing is superb, following a tightly chronological timeline, and effortlessly tying in detail and contexts from a wide variety of primary sources. The narrative flow never gets bogged down in too much bibliographical concerns, and at times feels like a well written fiction.

More than the writing, the account is a fascinating look at a fascinating life in technology. The authors clearly have respect for their subject, but honestly present Gates in all this many quircks and insecurities.

Great business book profiling the very uncertain dealings and situations that seem so storybook today, without ever casting Gates in a heroic or stereotypical mold.

Good quote from epilogue:

"Business? Business was interesting, but it certainly wasn't pure, and as Gates told one interviewer, 'The business side is easy - EASY!' Businessmen were interesting, but Gates had no illusions about their general level of brilliance. For him, it was no contest, the reason he could sell them on almost anything. As former IBMer Ed Iacobucci said, 'Put a middle manager on one side of the table and Bill on the other, who can deal with technical issues: WHO wins that deal?'"

Otis Chandler says

I picked this up in a Library in Big Sur, expecting to learn about Bill Gates, and instead found it was about the history of the PC industry. A fascinating history, and still a very relevant read, even though the history stops at 1995. There have been just a few developments since then!

Jason David says

This is still the definitive account about the rise of Microsoft. I really like how the author deals with the evolution of programming languages and how Gates redefined the whole idea of software. I can appreciate from this history just how hugely innovative Windows was. It provides a very favorable view of Gates and especially his technical skills. Yet, it also shows how rapid growth led to a corporate culture that in some ways stymied coordination and collaboration, embodied in the company's inability to meet release deadlines.
