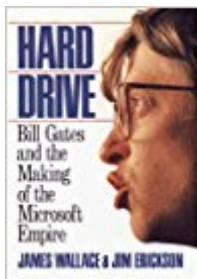


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# Hard Drive: Bill Gates And The Making Of The Microsoft Empire



## Synopsis

This biography chronicles William Gates' rise as the most powerful player in the computer industry--a man who has revolutionized the software industry with the incredible growth of his Microsoft company, that now threatens gigantic IBM. Reveals Gates' personal quirks and idiosyncrasies which helped fuel his fierce competitive spirit. Interviews Gates' closest friends, associates and former employees, and details IBM's as well as Apples' efforts to topple his Microsoft empire.

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## Customer Reviews

Hard Drive charts Gates's missteps as well as his successes: the failure of OS/2 and the embarrassing delays in bringing Windows to the marketplace; the highly publicized split with IBM, which then forged an alliance with Apple to battle Microsoft; the public relations fallout over various exploits of Gates; and the investigations by the Federal Trade Commission. Wallace and Erickson also examine the combative, often abrasive side of Gates's personality that has alienated many of Microsoft's rivals and even employees, and led to his being labeled "The Silicon Bully" by Business Month Magazine. They report: In the early 80's, Microsoft's Multiplan lost out to Lotus 1-2-3 in the marketplace. According to one Microsoft programmer, a few of the key people working on DOS 2.0 had a saying at the time that "DOS isn't done until Lotus won't run." They managed to code a few hidden bugs into DOS 2.0 that caused Lotus 1-2-3 to breakdown when it was loaded. "There were as few as three or four people who knew this was being done," the employee said. He felt the highly

competitive Gates was the ringleader. The first two female executives hired at Microsoft in 1985 were recruited to meet federal affirmative action guidelines so that the company could qualify for a lucrative Air Force contract. One source says, "They would say, 'Well, let's hire two women because we can pay them half as much as we will have to pay a man, and we can give them all this other crap work to do because they are women.' That's directly out of Bill's mouth...." Gates treated one of these executives so badly that she asked to be transferred away from him. Microsoft managers used the company's e-mail system to secretly spy on employee work habits. Only those employees who worked weekends could collect bonuses. In time word got out and some employees logged into their e-mail on weekends with a modem from home so it would appear they had come in. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In a biting biography and computer-industry expose, two Seattle Post-Intelligencer journalists here relate in dramatic detail how a moody, computer-dazzled prep-school whiz kid, a Harvard dropout at age 19, formed his own company, now Microsoft Inc., with a few friends. They developed and marketed in aggressive style a series of personal-computer software applications and operating systems, the phenomenal sales of which by some accounts have made 37-year-old William H. Gates Jr. the richest person in America. Alternately cooperating and competing with industry giants Apple, Xerox and IBM, "Chairman Bill" worked 20-hour days in Levis and loafers and relaxed by driving his Mercedes at speeds up to 150 mph, as Microsoft set industry standards in desktop-computer languages and programs. Driven and hard-driving, Gates has engendered admiration, envy, imitation, complaints of unfairness and an FTC investigation. \$60,000 ad/promo; author tour. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"Hard Drive" does not tell the story of rotating disk memory! Rather, it tells the story of Gates' drive and motivation to push MicroSoft forward in the competition of the day! The book gives some insight into the shenanigans of Gates to keep the lead in the PC Software market place. This goes from rewriting DOS to cripple other vendors' products, to not documenting APIs to provide an edge to MicroSofts products over competitors. Have you heard of Vaporware? Dirty tricks? This book tells a good history of the many moves of Gates in keeping the lead! PS: The book describes OS/2 as a failed product! This is not true. It was a beautiful operating system, years ahead of MicroSoft Windows. Its problems: 1. MicroSoft kept changing APIs to cripple OS/2 so that MicroSoft software would fail on OS/2. OS/2 was designed to be cross compatible with Windows and DOS products. 2. IBM lost interest in keeping OS/2 up-to-date. Otherwise, if IBM kept interest in the OS/2, and was

willing to spend the money in constant development of OS/2, the product might now be considered the premiere operating system compared to Windows!PS: However, there is Linux! IBM supports Linux! Cross pollination would have been beneficial with some of the jewels of OS/2. These jewels may have made the landscape of Linux more verdant!

Delightful book. Its one flaw is its addictiveness, I couldn't put it down which did cost me sleep (I'm an IT professional with an entrepreneur spirit- your results may vary).The Microsoft/Gates biography is impeccable in its wealth of interesting details and engaging story-telling.Bill Gates is a fantastic decision maker. He would be as successful selling water or space suits, he just happened to be at the right time in the right booming industry and pushed with his business-business mentality to the limit. Right decision after right decision, the Microsoft journey is a story that any entrepreneur should nitpick and absorb as much as possible.Of course, his terrible capitalistic drive is a perfect subject for a discussion on morals, social responsibility and related matters, but without a doubt when it comes to maximizing outcome while playing by our economic rules, Hard Drive tells a tale of epic proportions featuring a superhero / villain that rivals the best of science fiction.

Great book

The greatest biography that I've ever read, I recommend it to anyone who loves hearing about a true hustle day-in and day-out, harder than you even dream about..literally.It's almost discouraging to hear that he worked this hard because you know that you'll never be able to match it and you're not nearly as smart as him, but nevertheless it's amazing.

A fabulous and well written biography on Gates and the people and companies that he worked in and with. A must read on my recommended reading list!

I normally read Steve Jobs books, but this was recommended. It's a good read.

This book "flows" easily and it does a great job covering the meteoric rise of both Bill Gates and Microsoft. The narrative is never dull and both, the man and his company, are given a fair treatment. This book was published in 1993 and a lot of interesting stuff remains to be told. Wish the authors would team up for a sequel. This is a well written and authoritative account of Microsoft and its founder.

One of my preferred books. I usually write notes on my books as I read. Since this book is no longer in print (I bought it used, but in excellent condition), and it's on a theme on which I have a lot of interest (IT history), I didn't want to write on it at all. I did take notes but on separate blank cards. The book itself is very well written. I don't recall any spot on which I got bored or that I felt the narrative slowed down. I had read before the Steve Jobs bio book by W. Isaacson. In a sense, this book is the equivalent for Bill Gates. Yup, if you ever wished there was a similar one of Gates, well surprise, there is one and it's this. (Not that couldn't be another one since it covers Bill Gates birth and childhood, Microsoft beginnings and up to early 90's.) One of the most interesting aspects of it is the details on which the author describes Gates personality; which most times is impressive. Try and get it if you can, excellent book on a young, business aggressive and very smart Gates.

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