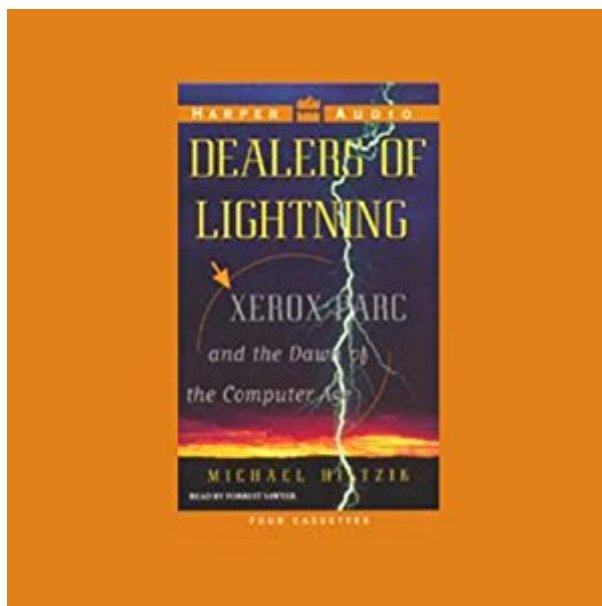The book was found

Dealers Of Lightning: Xerox PARC And The Dawn Of The Computer Age

Synopsis

In the bestselling tradition of The Soul of a New Machine, Dealers of Lightning is a fascinating journey of intellectual creation. In the 1970s and '80s, Xerox Corporation brought together a brain-trust of engineering geniuses, a group of computer eccentrics dubbed PARC. This brilliant group created several monumental innovations that triggered a technological revolution, including the first personal computer, the laser printer, and the graphical interface (one of the main precursors of the Internet), only to see these breakthroughs rejected by the corporation. Yet, instead of giving up, these determined inventors turned their ideas into empires that radically altered contemporary life and changed the world.Based on extensive interviews with the scientists, engineers, administrators, and executives who lived the story, this riveting chronicle details PARC's humble beginnings through its triumph as a hothouse for ideas, and shows why Xerox was never able to grasp, and ultimately exploit, the cutting-edge innovations PARC delivered. Dealers of Lightning offers an unprecedented look at the ideas, the inventions, and the individuals that propelled Xerox PARC to the frontier of technohistoiy--and the corporate machinations that almost prevented it from achieving greatness.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Due to his journalistic background, I suppose, each chapter weaves an interesting tale; however, the book doesn't gel as a complete story. The book jumps forward and backward in time so much, it is difficult to follow exactly what happened when. Even worse, we learn of the characters and some of their conflicts, but we never really learn much of their back stories. They never truly become

people we can love, hate or relate to in any way. Xerox PARC was a unique environment with obtuse individuals that created wonders, but this book won't give you that story easily, if at all.

This is a good story and therefore a good read - the fact that is is true, giving a version of history, also makes it really interesting. Since I worked at Xerox, I actually knew a number of the people mentioned, adding to my own enjoyment. The story is about the early days of creating the internet, networked computers using Ethernet, graphical user interface, the mouse, the PC and the laser printer among other things.If you like 'how it all started' stories, this is a good one.

A thorough and details read. Lots of behind the scenes and insider information about a very important group - Founders of the Information Age. these men made our present world, and to see them up close and personal only deepens my appreciation and gratitude for their contributions to this age.

I am a retired electronics engineer whose career spans the period of time covered by this book. i truly enjoyed reading of the accomplishments and foibles of this amazing group of engineers.

This is a wonderful account of what it was like to be at and around Xerox Parc back in its heyday. If you liked Soul of a New Machine or Dreaming in Code, you'll appreciate this.This book is as much about the people as the technology and it does a great job of balancing the ideas, politics and excitement of the times. There is also a lot if insight into how large corporations operated at the time (and likely still do) and how infuriating bureaucracy can be, especially to technical and creative people such as engineers.I spent a long time after completing the book researching various technologies, people and things that were brought up and covered.The only downside with books like this is that they make me wish I was just a little older and was there in the early days of computing to share the passion and excitement.

This book is to blame for a serious phase of insomnia. It kept me up at night reading, and once I finished reading it kept me up thinking. A very well written true tale. I'd read so much about PARC in books and articles - this myth of the computer revolution. Hiltzik made it come to life, and he pointed out some of those realities of business. I think it's wrong to call this book a demystifying of PARC, though somehow it is.It gave me, a person unfamiliar with the computer industry and its history, a very objective and interesting look inside. I believe the insights I gained from this book will be

extremely helpful for many in businesses outside high tech and computers.

Dealers of LighteningXerox PARC and the Dawn of the Computer Ageby Michael HiltzikHow did Xerox go so wrong? According to Steve Jobs in 1996 "Xerox could have owned the entire computer industry today. Could have been, you know, a company ten times its size. Could have been ...". Published in 1999 "Dealers of Lightening" is an insight into how Xerox squandered a golden opportunity to monopolize the personal computer business - that it "fumbled the future".So much for that - did the author see the future in 1999 more wisely than Xerox in the 1970 - 80's?In 1999 the author summed up:- "Apple committed a series of management blunders that today leaves its very existence in doubt."- "At this writing Microsoft remains the single most formidable force in the computer industry."- "For the science of computing is no longer at the historic inflection point it occupied at the start of the 1970's, when every step on the road of discovery was the equivalent of a giant leap into a new world."- "This does not mean that great discoveries, even surprising ones, will not be made here and there by researchers working for corporations. It simply means that a certain quality once possessed by PARC in its extraordinary early years seems to have departed from the world of science and technology, perhaps forever. Call it magic."Xerox got it wrong as skillfully and entertainingly chronicled in this book. But have sympathy and understanding. So, charmingly, did the author in this Epilogue "Did Xerox Blow It?".Malcolm Cameron28 May 2012

I really enjoyed this book a lot. I've read some of the critique around the author's lack of understanding of the underlying technology and of software, in particular, but I think those are largely irrelevant points. This is a great story about people and also about the interaction between people and companies. I found it hard to put this book down.I might have considered five stars, but the editing is appalling, actually. Also, I did find that the names and timelines started to get confusing and blurred quite a bit. A table or two would have been helpful. It may be that the problem is just that these are not included in the Kindle version, I don't know.

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