

Larry Page

Engineer, Inventor and Entrepreneur

What truly defines an “influential” software engineer. Is it someone who’s name is known to the common man. Or is it someone who’s amassed a vast amount of wealth over his or her career. To most people however, being influential is having their work make an impact or having a grand effect on those around them. In some cases, that could only be a few people. But when talking about the most influential of our time, it means having an impact on literally billions of people around the world. One man who fits this description is none other than Larry Page.

Larry Page was born in Michigan on the March 26, 1973. Both his parents had computing backgrounds, with his father holding a PhD in computer science and his mother an instructor in computer programming. It was no surprise that Page himself would follow suit into the computing field. It was evident from a young age Page’s interest in computers and technology, as Page in an interview recalled that his house was “was usually a mess, with computers, science and technology magazines and [*Popular Science*](#) magazines all over the place” during his childhood. Page later went on to obtain a Bachelor of Science in computer engineering at the University of Michigan before enrolling in a computer science PhD program at Stanford University, where he would meet future partner Sergey Brin in 1995.

While at Stanford, Page and Brin developed a search engine together as part of their research project which they named the “BackRub”. They developed the PageRank Algorithm which had the power to build a search engine eclipsing the ability of current ones in use. PageRank relied on a new kind of technology that analysed the relevance of backlinks that connected one Web page to another. A query input would be entered and a list of backlinks would be outputted in order of importance. This would prove to be the early foundations of Google. In 1998, Page and Brin formally incorporated the company and set up their first data centre in the garage of Susan Wojcicki, the first employee hired by Page and Brin. They named the company Google, coming from the word ‘googol’, meaning the number one followed by a hundred zeros.

The impact Page and Google have had since its inception has been nothing short of a phenomenon. People are more connected than ever before thanks to Page and Google. Finding information on an endless list of topics has been made easier than ever before. Access to billions of pages of information in mere microseconds was nothing but a dream before Page and Brin made it a reality. The pair's mission was: "to organize the

world's information and make it universally accessible and useful", a quote by Larry Page himself. Productivity undoubtedly increased for all those who used the Google search engine, another impact of Page's and Brin's work, as it can be used to find information on any problem of one's choosing, thus contributing greatly to the education field. By June 2000, Google had indexed one billion URLs, making it the most comprehensive search engine on the web at the time.

Over the next decade, Google expanded greatly and rose as a corporation at a staggering rate. Not only were they the most used search engine and visited website of all time, they had ventured into other projects, such as the creation of Gmail and their own Web Browser (Google Chrome), with many other online tools following suit, Drive and Maps to name but a few. While Page had been replaced by Eric Schmidt as CEO of Google by then, Schmidt always acted in consultation with Page as he embarked on major initiatives within the company. Page still remained as the boss of the company in the eyes of the employees, who had the final say on new hires while also becoming a billionaire at the age of 30 in 2004. Page was also notable for leading the acquisition of Android for 50 million dollars in 2005, another impactful action by him as by 2017 Android would have a market share of 81.7%. Page would become Google CEO once again in 2011, before leaving the role to Sundar Pichai in 2015 after he and Brin announced the creation of Alphabet, a new parent company which was to oversee Google and other subsidiaries. Page and Brin now serve as the company's CEO and president respectively.

Looking back Page's career, one can see the impressive effect Page has had on the world. The company he founded has grown to become one of the most powerful in the world in this day and age. What began as a simple search engine has delved into many other fields such as the ones mentioned earlier. Google has even been investing into the driverless car industry. It can be assumed that without Google society would be left with a massive void to fill. People use Google to travel with the use of Google Maps, to learn about the world around us with Google Earth and even monitoring the spread of flu and Influenza throughout the world through the use of Google Flu trends. It is clear to say that without Page's founding for Google back in the late 90's, it would be impossible to say what society would look like nowadays.

Despite all Larry Page has achieved over his career, he is still only at the tender age of 44. With the vast billions he has accumulated over the years, along with his willingness to innovate and benefit the lives of many, who knows what he can achieve in the coming future.

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