

Biography of Bill Gates

Short bio of Bill Gates

William Henry Gates was born on October 28, 1955 in Seattle, Washington)

As founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates is one of the most influential and richest people on the planet. Recent estimates of his wealth put it at \$56 billion, this is the equivalent of the combined GDP of several African economies. In recent years he has retired from working full time at Microsoft, instead he has concentrated on working with his charitable foundation “The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation”

Bill Gates foundation of Microsoft



Bill Gates founded Microsoft in 1976 when he formed a contract with MITTS (Micro Instrumentation and Telemetry Systems) to develop a basic operating system for their new microcomputers. In the early days Bill Gates would review every line of code. He was also involved in several aspects of Microsoft's business such as packing and sending off orders.

The big break for Microsoft came in 1980 when IBM approached them for a new BASIC operating system for its new computers. In the early 1980s IBM was by far the leading PC manufacture. However increasingly there developed many IBM PC clones; (PCs developed by other companies compatible with IBM's). Microsoft worked hard to sell its operating system to these other companies. Thus Microsoft was able to gain the dominant position of software manufacture just as the personal computer market started to boom. Since its early dominance no other company has come close to displacing Microsoft as the dominant provider of computer operating software.

Bill Gates – Windows

In 1990 Microsoft released its first version of Windows. This was a break through in operating software as it replaced text interfaces with graphical interfaces. It soon became a best seller and was able to capture the majority of the operating system market share. In 1995 Windows 95 was released, setting new standards and features for operating systems. This version of windows has been the backbone of all future releases from Windows 2000 to the latest XP and Vista.

Throughout his time in office Bill Gates has been keen to diversify the business of Microsoft. For example Microsoft's Internet Explorer has become the dominant web browser, although this is mainly because it comes pre installed on most new computers. In one area at least Microsoft has not gained Monopoly power, and that is in the area of search engines. MSN live search has struggled to gain more than 12% of market share. In this respect Microsoft has been dwarfed by Google. Nevertheless the success of Microsoft in cornering various aspects of the software market has led to several anti trust cases. In 1998 US v Microsoft, Microsoft came close to being broken up into 3 smaller firms. However on appeal Microsoft were able to survive as a single firm.

Philanthropic Activities – Bill Gates

Bill Gates is married to Melinda French (married in 1992). They have 3 children Jennifer (1996), Rory (1999) and Phoebe (2002). With his wife Bill Gates formed the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Bill Gates says much of the inspiration came from the example of David Rockefeller. Like Rockefeller, Gates has sought to focus on global issues ignored by the government; he also expressed an interest in improving the standards of public school education in the US. He has appeared with Oprah Winfrey to promote this objective. In respect to charitable, philanthropic activities Gates has also received encouragement from investor Warren Buffet. Recently Gates announced that from 2008 he would work full time on his philanthropic interests. Forbes magazine 2004 estimated that Gates has given over \$24 billion dollars in the 4 years from 2000 to 2004.

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