

## Paul Allen Biography

Paul Allen was born on January 21, 1953 in Seattle Washington. He was an American software engineer most known for co-founding Microsoft in 1975. He later founded Vulcan Inc. with his sister Jody Allen which was a company that managed his various business endeavours in many different sectors including technology, aerospace, filmmaking and sports. He had a wide variety of interests including sports, music and sea exploration.

Allen attended a private school called Lakeside School in Seattle. This is where he met Bill Gates who had a shared interest computing. They used the time sharing computers in their school to develop their programming skills. They also used a computer laboratory at the University of Washington but were banned from doing this for abusing their privileges there. After getting a perfect 1600 on his SAT, Allen was admitted into Washington State University. After two years, he decided to drop out of college in order to work as a programmer for Honeywell in Boston. His friend Bill Gates was now in college in Boston at Harvard University. He convinced him to also drop out so that they could work together.

In 1975, Allen and Gates began to market a BASIC programming language interpreter in Albuquerque, New Mexico and co-founded Microsoft. It was Allen who came up with the original name of Microsoft which is a combination of microcomputer and software. Later, Microsoft committed to deliver IBM a disk operating system for the original IBM PC. However, they had not yet developed one and in 1980, Allen spearheaded a deal for Microsoft to purchase a Quick and Dirty Operating System, which was invented by Tim Paterson. This deal led the company to be able to supply the Disk Operating System that would eventually run IBM's PC line. This contract proved to be a major breakthrough for Microsoft and led to Allen's wealth and success. Shortly after this, in 1982, Allen effectively left Microsoft after receiving a Hodgkin's lymphoma diagnosis. He went underwent several months of Chemotherapy. Allen kept most of his shares in Microsoft. However, he did give some of his shares to Gates when he asked to compensate for the higher amount of work being performed by Gates. Allen initially agreed to split the company 60-40 in Gates' favour which was later renegotiated to 64-36. Gates tried to buy all of Allen's shares at \$5 per share but Allen refused and left the company with his shares intact in 1983. This decision proved critical to Allen becoming a billionaire after Microsoft went public. Allen did not officially resign from his position until 2000 He was still the senior strategy advisor to the executives of the company.

In 1986, Allen co-founded Vulcan Inc. with his sister Jody Allen. Their mission was to find smart solutions for some of the world's biggest challenges. According to their website, the name was not inspired by the extra-terrestrial humanoid species from Star Trek. It was instead inspired by the Roman god of fire, Vulcan, who was known as a strong-willed outsider and a free thinker which helped him as a smith as he crafted things nobody else thought were possible. They thought this seemed fitting to their company's mission. Vulcan Inc. oversees a broad compilation of projects and companies all over the world. Some of these companies include Vulcan Real Estate, the Allen Institute for Brain Science, Vulcan Productions and Vulcan Sports & Entertainment.

Vulcan Capital is the investment arm of the company which managed his personal fortune. He opened a new Vulcan Capital office in Palo Alto, California to focus on making investments in emerging technology and internet companies. Allen also had a number of other investments such as Interval Research Corporation which he co-founded with David Liddle. It was a Silicon Valley- based

laboratory. It was disbanded in 2000 after making over 300 patents. Some of these were the subject of Allen's 2010 patent infringement lawsuit against AOL, Apple, eBay, Facebook, Google, Netflix, Office Depot, OfficeMax, Staples, Yahoo!, and YouTube. Also, in 1993, Allen invested 4243 million to acquire 80% of Ticketmaster. Under his leadership, Ticketmaster was moved to the internet by showing a searchable database. In 1996, its first transaction took place and the company was made public. Allen sold 47.5% of his stock in 1997 to Home Shopping Network in exchange for 209 million of their stock.

Allen had a passion for sports and when then owner Ken Behring threatened to move the Seattle Seahawks NFL team to Southern California, Allen bought them in 1996. In 2018, Forbes valued the Seahawks at \$2.58 billion. Under the helm of Allen, the Seahawks went to the Super Bowl three times (2006, 2014, 2015) and winning Super Bowl XLVIII in 2014. Allen also bought the Portland Trail Blazers NBA team in 1988 from Larry Weinberg for \$70 million. He helped develop the arena where the Blazers play, the Moda Center which was previously known as the Rose Garden. He then purchased the arena in April 2007. The Allen-owned Trail Blazers reached the NBA playoffs 19 times including reaching the NBA Finals 1990 and 1992. In February 2018, the Blazers were valued at \$1.3 billion. Allen's Vulcan Sports & Entertainment is also partly owns the Seattle Sounders FC that plays in the MLS. In 2009, they began to play at CenturyLink Field which is a stadium also controlled by Allen as it is home to the Seattle Seahawks. The Sounders set a MLS record for average match attendance in its first season as they sold out every home match.

Aerospace was another one of Allen's many interests. In 2004, he confirmed that he was the sole investor behind Burt Rutan's SpaceShipOne suborbital commercial spacecraft. The craft flew at an altitude of 377,591 over the Mojave Air and Space Port. SpaceShipOne was the first craft to successfully put a civilian in suborbital space. It won the Ansari X Prize competition as it was a reusable manned spacecraft that was launched twice in two weeks. They received the \$10 million prize. It was considered one of the greatest breakthroughs in the space industry and is now displayed in the Milestones of Flight in the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. His investments into space travel did not stop there as in 2011 he announced the creation of Stratolaunch Systems. This proposed system includes a large plane taking off from a runway carrying a rocket to high altitude which is then released. The rocket would fire its own engines to complete its climb into orbit. If successful it would be the first privately funded space transport system. It eventually plans to host six to ten missions per year.

Allen had a huge interest in Philanthropy. He gave more than \$2 billion towards the advancement of science and technology, education, wildlife, and the arts during his lifetime. He founded the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation to administer his philanthropic contributions. This foundation donated a lot of money to non-profit organizations and in 2010, Allen signed The Giving Pledge, pledging at least half his wealth to philanthropic causes. Allen's largest philanthropic recipient was the Allen Institute for Brain Science. This research organization has helped accelerate a better understanding of how our brains work. He also founded an Institute for Artificial Intelligence which is working to build an AI system capable of passing an 8<sup>th</sup> grade science exam. In 2014, Allen donated over \$100 million towards the fight to end the Ebola virus outbreak. He also awarded seven grants in 2015 totalling \$11 million to prevent future widespread outbreaks of the virus. Allen gifted more than \$100 million to support the arts. This included establishing several institutions such as the Museum for Pop Culture and the Flying Heritage Collection. He also donated a vast amount of money to various educational institutes. He donated \$2 million to the University of Washington to construct the Allen

library in 1989. In 2002, Allen donated \$14 million to the University of Washington to construct the Paul G. Allen Center for Computer Science and Engineering. He also donated \$40 million to their Computer Science and Engineering department in 2017.

Allen and his sister Jody Allen owned Vulcan Productions which was a television and film production company. Their films have received many awards and recognition including Grammys and Emmys. In 2014, Allen's film 'We the Economy' won 12 awards including a Webby award for best Online News & Politics Series. Their films and documentaries include Far from Heaven (2002), Rx for Survival: A Global Health Challenge (2005), Judgment Day: Intelligent Design on Trial (2007), We The Economy (2014) and Oscar-nominated Body Team 12(2015). Along with his interest in films, Allen also had a passion for music. He received his first electric guitar when he was sixteen years old. His inspiration for playing the guitar was Jimi Hendrix. He later played rhythm guitar on the Grown Men album in 2000. He also released 'Everywhere at Once' with the Underthinkers in 2013.

'Octopus' is a 414 foot yacht owned by Allen. It is equipped with two helicopters, a submarine, a remotely operated underwater vehicle (ROV), a swimming pool, a music studio and a basketball court. Allen loaned this yacht for a number of operations including the search for a missing American pilot and two officers whose plane disappeared off Palau. It is also a member of AMVER which is a voluntary group ship reporting system that assists those in distress at sea. Allen purchased a vessel named RV Petrel and in 2017 it found the USS Indianapolis (CA-35), USS Ward (DD-139), the wrecks of the Battle of Surigao Strait and the Battle of Ormoc Bay. Another yacht owned by Allen allegedly damaged coral in the Cayman Islands but he aided in the restoration plan for the coral.

Although Bill Gates is the first name you think of when talking about Microsoft, Paul Allen also had a huge influence on the company as co-founder. Their goal for Microsoft was to put a PC on every desk and in every home. This goal has been largely realised. There are over a billion PCs in use in the world. However, Allen also had a huge impact on the world a variety of other ways. Allen received commendations for his philanthropic commitments including the Andrew Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy and Inside Philanthropy's "Philanthropist of the Year". He used his money to make the world a better place. He also had a big impact on the sporting world as he owned three professional sports teams, leading all of them to success. Furthermore, he had an impact on space travel, film and music winning the 2005 National Air and Space Museum Trophy for Current Achievement and the Vanguard Award from the National Cable & Telecommunications Association on May 20, 2008. Because of all of these achievements and many more, Allen was listed among the Time 100 Most Influential People In The World in 2008.

In 1982, Allen was diagnosed with Stage 1-A Hodgkin's lymphoma. He underwent several months of radiation therapy and it was successfully treated. He was then diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma in 2009 and again the cancer was successfully treated. It returned in 2018 and it caused his death by septic shock on October 15, 2018. He was 65 years old.

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