Microsoft Corporation is an American [multinational technology company](https://www.bloomberg.com/quote/MSFT:US#xj4y7vzkg) that develops, manufactures, licenses, supports, and sells computer software, consumer electronics, personal computers, and related services.

Founded in 1975 by [Bill Gates](https://www.forbes.com/profile/bill-gates/)and [Paul Allen](https://www.google.co.in/books/edition/Idea_Man/I2XUC0mp4wIC?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=isbn:0141969385&printsec=frontcover), Microsoft is best known for its Windows operating system, Office suite of productivity software, Xbox gaming console, and Azure cloud computing platform. Microsoft also creates and sells hardware, including the Surface laptop and tablet, [HoloLens augmented reality headset](https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/hololens), and Surface Hub interactive whiteboard. The company also runs the LinkedIn professional networking platform, as well as a range of apps and services for businesses, developers, and consumers.

Earlier dethroned by Apple in 2010, in 2018 Microsoft reclaimed its position as the most valuable publicly traded company in the world. In April 2019, Microsoft reached the [trillion-dollar market cap](https://www.theverge.com/2019/4/25/18515623/microsoft-worth-1-trillion-dollars-stock-price-value), becoming the third U.S. public company to be valued at over $1 trillion after Apple and Amazon respectively. As of 2022, Microsoft has the fourth-highest global brand valuation.

**History**

Microsoft was founded on April 4, 1975, by Bill Gates and Paul Allen, two childhood friends who shared a passion for computer programming. The company was [initially based in Albuquerque](https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/microsoft-founded), New Mexico, and focused on developing software for the emerging personal computer market.

In 1976, Microsoft released its first product, [a programming language called BASIC](https://time.com/69316/basic/), which was designed for the Altair 8800, one of the first personal computers. BASIC became popular among hobbyists and computer enthusiasts, and Microsoft quickly gained a reputation for developing high-quality software.

Over the next few years, Microsoft continued to expand its product line, releasing versions of BASIC for other computers and developing new [programming languages](https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/introduction-to-programming-languages/), such as FORTRAN and COBOL. In 1980, the company struck a landmark deal with IBM to develop an operating system for the company's new personal computer, which was set to revolutionize the computer industry.

The operating system, called [MS-DOS (Microsoft Disk Operating System)](https://www.britannica.com/technology/MS-DOS), quickly became the dominant operating system for [IBM](https://www.openbusinesscouncil.org/wiki/ibm)-compatible personal computers, and Microsoft's fortunes skyrocketed. In 1983, Microsoft released its first version of Windows, a graphical user interface that made it easier for users to interact with their computers.

In 1985, Microsoft released the first version of Windows, a graphical user interface that made it easier for users to interact with their computers. Windows quickly became the dominant operating system for personal computers, and new versions were released regularly throughout the 1990s.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, Microsoft continued to expand its product line, developing new software products like Microsoft Office, a suite of productivity applications that included Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. The company also released development tools like [Visual Basic and Visual C++](https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/cpp/windows/latest-supported-vc-redist?view=msvc-170), which allowed programmers to create software for Windows.

In 1995, the company [launched Internet Explorer](https://blog.tcea.org/remembering-internet-explorer/), a web browser that quickly became the dominant browser on the market. Microsoft also entered the gaming industry with the l[aunch of the Xbox gaming console](https://www.cnet.com/tech/gaming/microsoft-xbox-at-20-looking-back-at-the-original-2001-review/) in 2001.

Microsoft also continued to invest in new software products, including the [.NET Framework](https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/dotnet/framework/install/dotnet-35-windows), a development platform that made it easier for programmers to create applications for Windows. The company also launched a range of online services, including Hotmail (later known as Outlook.com) and MSN, which provided users with news, entertainment, and other online content.

Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, Microsoft was one of the most successful and influential technology companies in the world, with a wide range of products and services used by millions of people every day. Its continued success paved the way for its expansion into new markets and technologies in the years to come.

In 2000, [Bill Gates stepped down as CEO](https://www.forbes.com/2000/01/13/mu7.html?sh=57e7badd5d83) of Microsoft and was replaced by Steve Ballmer. Under Ballmer's leadership, Microsoft continued to expand its product line and invest in new technologies. The company released new versions of Windows, including Windows 2000 and Windows XP, which became some of the most popular operating systems of all time.

In the early 2000s, Microsoft faced increasing competition from new technology companies, including [Google](https://www.openbusinesscouncil.org/wiki/google) and [Apple](https://www.openbusinesscouncil.org/wiki/apple), which challenged its dominance in the personal computer market. To stay ahead, Microsoft invested heavily in research and development, focusing on new technologies like cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and mobile devices.

In 2001, Microsoft released Windows XP, which became one of the most popular operating systems of all time. The company also launched the Xbox gaming console, which quickly became a major player in the video game industry.

After a lengthy legal battle, Microsoft agreed to a settlement in 2001 that included provisions for increased competition in the software market and restrictions on the company's business practices.

In 2006, Microsoft unveiled Windows Vista, a major update to the Windows operating system. However, Vista was plagued by performance issues and other problems, and it received mixed reviews from users and critics.

Despite these challenges, Microsoft continued to innovate, releasing new versions of its Office productivity suite, developing new technologies like Bing search and Windows Live, and investing heavily in cloud computing.

In 2012, Microsoft released Windows 8, a radical redesign of the Windows operating system that focused on touch-based interactions and mobile devices. However, the new design was criticized by many users and failed to gain widespread adoption.

In 2014, [Satya Nadella](https://www.openbusinesscouncil.org/wiki/satya-nadella) took over as CEO of Microsoft, succeeding Steve Ballmer. Under Nadella's leadership, Microsoft began to shift its focus towards cloud computing and other emerging technologies. The company also began to embrace open-source software and other new approaches to software development.

In 2015, Microsoft released Windows 10, which was designed to be a more user-friendly and versatile operating system than its predecessor. The company also continued to invest in new technologies like artificial intelligence and virtual reality.

In 2016, Microsoft acquired LinkedIn, a major social networking site for professionals. The company also released the HoloLens, a groundbreaking augmented reality headset.

In 2018, Microsoft surpassed Apple as the most valuable publicly traded company in the world. The company also announced plans to [acquire GitHub](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-switch/wp/2018/06/04/why-microsoft-is-buying-github-in-7-5-billion-deal/), a popular platform for software developers.

Throughout the 2010s, Microsoft continued to expand its product line and invest in new technologies. In 2019, the company launched Microsoft Teams, a collaboration platform for businesses, and announced plans to develop a new version of Windows specifically designed for dual-screen devices.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic forced many businesses and individuals to rely on technology more than ever before. Microsoft responded by launching new products and services, including [Microsoft 365 Personal and Family](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/what-s-the-difference-between-microsoft-365-and-office-2021-ed447ebf-6060-46f9-9e90-a239bd27eb96), which provided users with a range of productivity tools and other services for working and learning from home.

Today, Microsoft is one of the largest and most influential technology companies in the world, with a wide range of products and services used by millions of people every day. Its continued success is a testament to its ability to innovate and adapt to changing market conditions.

**Mission**

Microsoft's mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. The company is committed to achieving this mission by creating [innovative technologies and solutions](https://www.intelligenthq.com/innovative-business-solutions-for-the-21st-century/) that help people and businesses be more productive, efficient, and successful.

Microsoft believes that technology has the power to transform the way people live and work, and it is dedicated to using its resources and expertise to create products and services that have a positive impact on society.

To achieve its mission, Microsoft is focused on several key areas, including cloud computing, artificial intelligence, productivity, gaming, and more. The company is constantly exploring new technologies and applications, and it is committed to working with partners and customers to [create solutions](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/industrysolutions/solutions) that meet their specific needs.

Through its mission, Microsoft seeks to create value for its shareholders, customers, and employees, while also contributing to the betterment of society as a whole. The company believes that by empowering people and organizations with the tools they need to achieve their goals, it can help to drive progress and make the world a better place.

**Vision**

Microsoft's vision is to create technology that empowers individuals and organizations to achieve more, and to use technology to make a positive impact on the world.

Microsoft's vision is to empower individuals and organizations to reach their full potential through technology, by developing innovative products and services that are accessible, secure, and easy to use. This includes products such as the Windows operating system, the Microsoft Office suite, the [Azure cloud computing platform](https://azure.microsoft.com/en-in/), and the Xbox gaming console.

Additionally, Microsoft is committed to using technology to solve global challenges and make a positive impact on the world. This includes initiatives in areas such as education, [healthcare, and sustainability](https://news.microsoft.com/en-cee/2023/05/25/accessibility-solutions-and-eaa-legislation-in-focus-at-microsofts-innovation-for-accessibility-forum/), where Microsoft aims to use technology to create positive change and improve people's lives.

**Key Team**

Satya Nadella (Chief Executive Officer)

Kathleen Hogan (Chief Human Resources Officer)

Judson Althoff (Chief Commercial Officer)

Chris Caposella (Chief Marketing Officer)

Amy Hood (Chief Financial Officer)

Brad Smith (President)

Bill Gates (Founder)

Paul Allen (Founder)

**Recognition and Awards**

Microsoft has received numerous awards and recognition over the years, including Fortune's Most Admired and Innovative Companies list and Glassdoor's Best Places to Work. In addition to these awards, Microsoft has been recognized for its products and services, including the Surface, Xbox, and Office Suite, among others.

**Products and Services**

Microsoft Corporation offers a diverse range of products and services across various verticals. In the hardware segment, they provide devices like smartbands, HoloLens smartglasses, Lumia smartphones, Surface tablet and notebook PCs, Xbox video game consoles, Zune portable media players, and more.

In terms of software development, Microsoft offers a comprehensive suite of tools and platforms including Azure, GitHub, Visual Studio, TypeScript, VBScript, Windows API, and Xbox Development Kit. These tools enable developers to create and deploy applications for various platforms and devices.

Microsoft Office is a popular productivity suite that includes Microsoft 365, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, and more. It offers a wide range of applications for document creation, communication, collaboration, and project management.

Microsoft's web and subscription services encompass Bing, LinkedIn, MSN, Microsoft 365, Outlook.com, Skype, and Yammer. They also provide subscription-based services like Microsoft 365, Xbox Game Pass, and Xbox Live Gold.

In terms of maintenance and administration, Microsoft offers security essentials such as anti-virus software for Windows, Defender, and other security tools to ensure the protection of devices and data.

For gaming enthusiasts, Microsoft's video game offerings include popular titles such as the Halo series, Flight Simulator series, Mahjong, Minesweeper, Solitaire collection, and ultimate word games.