

"Microsoft"

Introduction:

Microsoft Corporation is a public multinational corporation headquartered in Redmond, Washington, USA that develops, manufactures, licenses, and supports a wide range of products and services predominantly related to computing through its various product divisions. Established on April 4, 1975 to develop and sell BASIC interpreters for the Altair 8800, Microsoft rose to dominate the home computer operating system (OS) market with MS-DOS in the mid-1980s, followed by the Microsoft Windows line of OSs. Microsoft would also come to dominate the office suite market with Microsoft Office. The company has diversified in recent years into the video game industry with the Xbox and its successor, the Xbox 360 as well as into the consumer electronics market with Zune and the Windows Phone OS. The ensuing rise of stock in the company's 1986 initial public offering (IPO) made an estimated four billionaires and 12,000 millionaires from Microsoft employees.

Primarily in the 1990s, critics contend the company used monopolistic business practices and anti-competitive strategies including refusal to deal and tying, put unreasonable restrictions in the use of its software, and used misrepresentative marketing tactics; both the U.S. Department of Justice and European Commission found the company in violation of antitrust laws. Known for its interviewing process with obscure questions, various studies and ratings were generally favorable to Microsoft's diversity within the company as well as its overall environmental impact with the exception of the electronics portion of the business.

History :

Paul Allen and Bill Gates, childhood friends with a passion in computer programming, were seeking to make a successful business utilizing their shared skills. The January 1975 issue of Popular Electronics featured Micro Instrumentation and Telemetry Systems's (MITS) Altair 8800 microcomputer. Allen noticed that they could program a BASIC interpreter for the device; after a call from Gates claiming to have a working interpreter, MITS requested a demonstration. Since they didn't actually have one, Allen worked on a simulator for the Altair while Gates developed the interpreter. Although they developed the interpreter on a simulator and not the actual device, the interpreter worked flawlessly when they demonstrated the interpreter to MITS in Albuquerque, New Mexico in March 1975; MITS agreed to distribute it, marketing it as Altair BASIC. They officially established Microsoft on April 4, 1975, with Gates as the CEO. In August 1977 the company formed an agreement with ASCII Magazine in Japan, resulting in its first international office, "ASCII Microsoft". The company moved to a new home in Bellevue, Washington in January 1979.

Microsoft entered the OS business in 1980 with its own version of Unix, called Xenix. However, it was DOS (Disk Operating System) that solidified the company's dominance. After negotiations with Digital Research failed, IBM awarded a contract to Microsoft to provide a version of the CP/M OS, which was set to be used in the upcoming IBM Personal Computer (IBM PC). For this deal, Microsoft purchased a CP/M clone called 86-DOS from Seattle Computer Products, branding it as MS-DOS, which IBM rebranded to PC-DOS. Following the release of the IBM PC in August 1981, Microsoft retained ownership of MS-DOS. Since IBM copyrighted the IBM PC BIOS, other companies had to reverse engineer it in order for non-IBM hardware to run as IBM PC compatibles, but no such restriction

applied to the operating systems. Due to various factors, such as MS-DOS's available software selection, Microsoft eventually became the leading PC OS vendor. The company expanded into new markets with the release of the Microsoft Mouse in 1983, as well as a publishing division named Microsoft Press. Paul Allen resigned from Microsoft in February after developing Hodgkin's disease.

Windows & Windows Live Division, Server and Tools, Online Services Division :

The company's Client division produces the flagship Windows OS line such as Windows 7; it also produces the Windows Live family of products and services. Server and Tools produces the server versions of Windows, such as Windows Server 2008 R2 as well as a set of development tools called Microsoft Visual Studio, Microsoft Silverlight, a web application framework, and Systems Management Server, a collection of tools providing remote-control abilities, patch management, software distribution and a hardware/software inventory. Other server products include: Microsoft SQL Server, a relational database management system, Microsoft Exchange Server, for certain business-oriented e-mail and scheduling features, Small Business Server, for messaging and other small business-oriented features; and Microsoft BizTalk Server, for business process management.

Business Division, Entertainment and Devices Division :

The Microsoft Business Division produces Microsoft Office including Microsoft Office 2010, the company's line of office software. The software product includes Word (a word processor), Access (a relational database program), Excel (a spreadsheet program), Outlook (Groupware, frequently used with Exchange Server), PowerPoint (presentation software), and Publisher (desktop publishing software). A number of other products were added later with the release of Office 2003 including Visio, Project, MapPoint, InfoPath and OneNote. The division also develops enterprise resource planning (ERP) software for companies under the Microsoft Dynamics brand. These include: Microsoft Dynamics AX, Microsoft Dynamics NAV, Microsoft Dynamics GP, and Microsoft Dynamics SL. They are targeted at varying company types and countries, and limited to organizations with under 7,500 employees.[49] Also included under the Dynamics brand is the customer relationship management software Microsoft Dynamics CRM, part of the Azure Services Platform.

The Entertainment and Devices Division produces the Windows CE OS for embedded systems and Windows Phone 7 for smartphones.[50] Microsoft initially entered the mobile market through Windows CE for handheld devices, eventually developing into the Windows Mobile OS and now, Windows Phone 7. Windows CE is designed for devices where the OS may not directly be visible to the end user, in particular, appliances and cars. The division also produces computer games that run on Windows PCs and other systems including titles such as Age of Empires, Halo and the Microsoft Flight Simulator series as well as a line of reference works that include encyclopedias and atlases, under the name Encarta, and houses the Macintosh Business Unit which produces Mac OS software including Microsoft Office 2008 for Mac. Microsoft's Entertainment and Devices Division designs, markets, and manufactures consumer electronics including the Xbox 360 game console, the handheld Zune media player, and the television-based Internet appliance MSN TV. Microsoft also markets personal computer hardware including mice, keyboards, and various game controllers such as joysticks and gamepads.