

Larry Page

For this essay, I chose Larry Page as the software engineer I wanted to do a biography on. I chose him because I, like many people who were born in the early 2000s, grew up using the Google Search Engine. It's been a constant part of my life and the way I interact with the internet and I wanted to research more into the people who created it.

Introduction

Larry Page is one of the most successful software Engineers on the planet. He is best known for co-founding Google alongside Sergey Brin on September 4, 1998. In the year 2021 he was ranked as being in the top 10 wealthiest people alive by Forbes. Alongside Brin, he developed the PageRank algorithm which was a key feature in Google's rise to prominence. (Forbes, 2021)

Early Life

Page was born on the 26th of March 1973. He was born in the state of Michigan in the United States. Both of his parents had a background in Computer Science with his father being a professor at Michigan State University and his mother being an instructor for computer programming. (Achievers, 2021)

Page also studied music when he was growing up and attended music camp. He studied musical composition and played several instruments including the flute and saxophone. He would later say that music had an important impact in the choices he made at Google. It caused him to care about the speed and timing of the search Engine when working. (Helft, 2014)

He originally studied at the University of Michigan where he received a Bachelor of Science in computer Engineering. After completing his studies at the University of Michigan he decided to do his PhD and enrolled in a Computer Science program at Stanford University. It was at Stanford where he met Google's other co-founder Sergey Brin. (Achievers, 2021)

Life at Stanford and The PageRank Algorithm

While studying at Stanford, Page began doing a research project that centered around looking at the links between web-pages and while doing that, he was joined by fellow student Sergey Brin and together they published their own research paper called "The Anatomy of a Large-Scale Hypertextual Web Search Engine" which became very popular. (Achievers, 2021)

During their research they alongside someone called Scott Hassan developed something called the PageRank Algorithm to help them determine how important a webpage was. This algorithm returns a probability distribution that shows how likely it is that any one person clicking on any one link will be brought to a webpage. It works with the assumption that the more important a webpage is, the more likely it is that there are more links to it from other important webpages. (GeeksForGeeks PageRank Implementation, 2018)

Development of the Google Search Engine

Using the PageRank Algorithm, Page and Brin believed they would be able to create a faster and more accurate search engine than the ones currently existing. Previously, many of the search engines of that time ranked webpages by how many times the words being searched appeared on the page and they would often give incorrect or irrelevant results. They created a basic search engine prototype and connected it to the campus network at Stanford University. They made the initial version of the Google search engine available on the Stanford website in 1996. (Wired, 2005)

Life while Working for Google

In 1997, Page and Brin registered the domain name "google.com" and the following year they created the company Google Inc after raising a million dollars in funds. Page became the first CEO of the company (Biography.com Editors, 2021). As the CEO, Page focused on making the Google Search Engine as fast as possible. (Helft, 2014)

By the year 2000, Google had indexed around a billion webpages. Page stepped down as CEO in 2001 to allow Eric Schmidt to become the new CEO and Page became the President of Products instead. (Achievers, 2021)

In 2004, Google had its initial public offering of shares and Page became a billionaire due to how highly the shares were valued. (Duggan, 2020)

He married a woman named Lucinda Southworth in 2007 and they have had two children together. (Biography.com Editors, 2021)

In 2011, Page was appointed CEO again when the previous CEO Eric Schmidt stepped down. As CEO, he focused on more freedom for executives and tried to develop increased collaboration and communication between teams. He would continue as CEO all the way up to 2015 where Google would be restricted. After the restructuring Page became the CEO of A Google's new parent company Alphabet Inc. In 2019 Page stepped down as the CEO of the company. Although he is no longer the CEO, he still sits on the board of Directors and owns a significant number of shares in the company. (Achievers, 2021)

Medical Issues

Page suffered from an illness that caused his vocal cords to become paralysed and by 2013 both were paralysed. (Guglielmo, 2013)

Impacts on the World

When Page and Brin first set up Google, their companies mission statement which has remained the same this day, was:

“to organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and use ful.” (Google Inc, 2021)

Now, Google is the most visited webpage in the world (Alexa, 2021)and is the most popular search engine available in terms of market share (Stat Counter Global Statistics, 2021). Pages work at Google helped make that mission statement a reality and now anyone who owns a computer can benefit from the work he has done.

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