

Accidental Empires: How the Boys of Silicon Valley Make Their Millions, Battle Foreign Competition, and Still Cant Get a Date

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Insider Look at Silicon Valley Scheduled for Updated Paperback Robert X. Cringely paints a witty, irreverent, and revealing portrait of the personal computer industry in the updated paperback edition of *Accidental Empires: How the Boys of Silicon Valley Make Their Millions, Battle Foreign Competition, and Still Cant Get a Date*. Cringelys astute analysis of the PC business is the subject of a 3- hour PBS Television miniseries titled *Triumph of the Nerds*. Hosted by Cringely himself, the miniseries, like the book, reveals the circumstances that allowed a major industry to grow up largely by accident under the guidance of a group of inexperienced nerds, misfits, and social outcasts. According to Cringely, former gossip columnist for the computer trade weekly *InfoWorld*, one of Americas largest industries has been shaped by the quirks and insecurities of its leading figures, from Steve Wozniaks invention of the Apple to impress his friends in the Homebrew Computer Club, to Microsoft founder Bill Gates single-minded quest for monopoly over all aspects of the fledgling industry. Cringely describes the engineers who launched the computer revolution as insecure and socially inept nerds, with little or no business experience. They made up their rules as they went along, resulting in Silicon Valleys notoriously laid-back corporate culture, but also in companies that frequently reflect the shortcomings of their founders. Cringely describes these erratic, but often brilliant, amateurs with sympathy, insight and illuminating anecdotes. In the process, he also traces the history of the industry, from its initial outgrowth from the semiconductor industry, to the astounding innovations of the Xerox PARC research group (most of which the copy machine giant failed to follow up on), to the growth of such key companies as Apple, Microsoft, and Adobe, to the dramatic claim by Larry

Ellison of Oracle Systems that the personal computer is merely a transitional technology. Cringelys appreciation of the eccentricities of individuals is matched by his grasp of the dynamics of the industry as a whole.

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