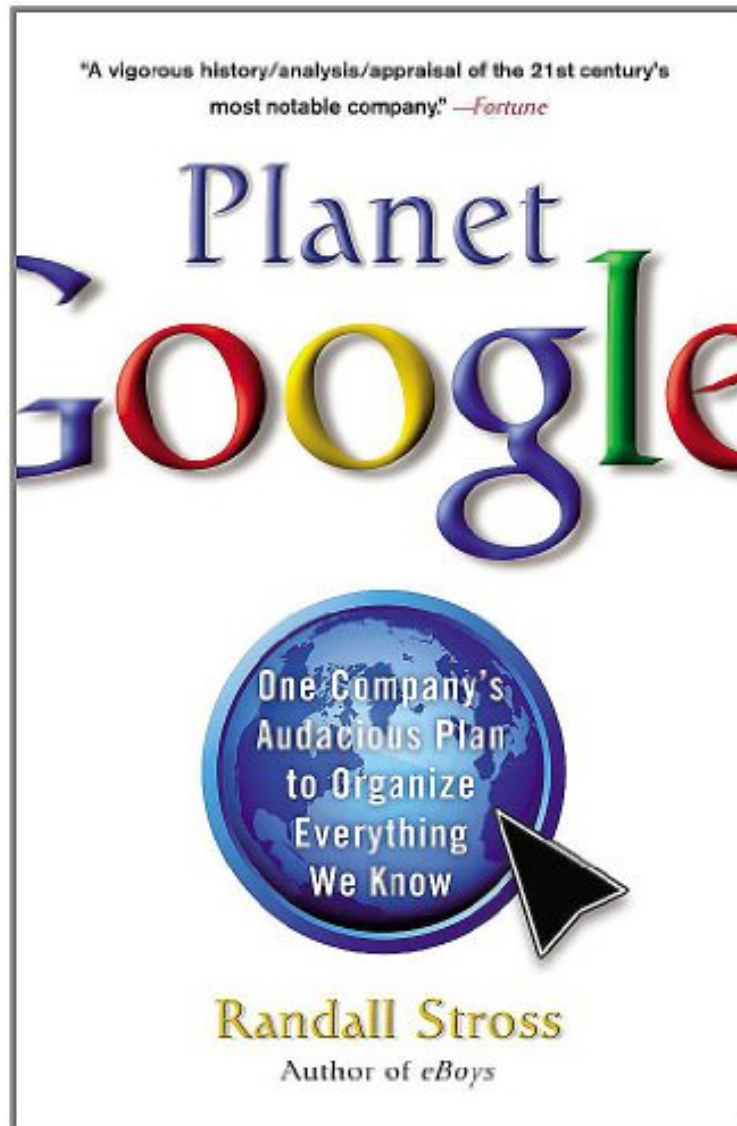


(Get free) Planet Google: One Company's Audacious Plan to Organize Everything We Know

# Planet Google: One Company's Audacious Plan to Organize Everything We Know

*Randall Stross*

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**Randall Stross : Planet Google: One Company's Audacious Plan to Organize Everything We Know** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Planet Google: One Company's Audacious Plan to Organize Everything We Know:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great analytical history of Google so far By Abacus This is a really informative well written book. The author has an excellent understanding of Internet trends. He gives you many insights new to any layperson. The chapters are well structured and often stand independently. So, if you are interested

about a specific topic you can jump ahead. The chapter titled "Unlimited Capacity" is a case in point. I had no idea Google ran such large computer farms in stealthy locations. Those cloud computing farms are populated by thousands of low cost computers that Google manufactures themselves! Who knew Google made their own computers! At the onset Google founders were hell bent not relying on advertising. They accidentally fell into the key word text driven advertising concept. Google search-text advertising has created and dominated an ad market and generated billions of dollars in revenues for Google. The latter supports all their other products that are unprofitable. Google has created several products to compete vs others. Most of them have failed. Google noticed that Wikipedia results ranked near the top of Google's search results. But, any search routed to Wikipedia represents lost advertising revenues for Google. So, Google created Knol where everyone can create articles just as in Wikipedia. But, with a Knol the author retains editing control. I have personally written and read articles at both websites. And, Wikipedia is far better and still does far better in search results. Google created Orkut, a social network, to compete with Facebook. And, Orkut has quickly become irrelevant. Google may have created a game changer with Docs. Google introduced "Documents" a free web based competitor to MicroSoft very expensive PC based Office Suite. It has forced MicroSoft to reduce its prices. I personally use Documents more and more. I now write all my book reviews using Documents that I find more straightforward than Word. I also use its spreadsheet application often. Google may succeed in creating a centrally based alternative to MicroSoft PC centric world where many predecessors such as IBM and Oracle failed. The chapter on "The Algorithm" confirms Google developed superior computer science behind its web search engine. Yahoo early on outsourced web searches to Google thinking web searches were worthless. The huge volume of web search Yahoo channelled Google's way became a competitive advantage for Google. Its search engine readily handles any scale, unlike its competitors who found the growing web overwhelming. And, the more data the algorithm crunched, the better its search performance. Google then tied the searches to text ads embedded on the side of searches and even figured for customers where to place adds to generate the most revenues for them and for Google. In doing that, Google leapfrogged the competition. And, the cash flow juggernaut (search text adds) was in place. Google's algorithm approach had erratic results outside searches. The author suggests it has not worked well in news information aggregation (I am surprised, as I feel Google News is one of their most successful applications). On the other hand, the author indicates the same algorithm approach has been unexpectedly effective in language translation. And, Google has reached the top rank in language translation software competition for the toughest languages: Chinese or Arabic. And, it has achieved this feat with no native speakers! Instead, it has simply fed its software algorithm billions of matched documents (one version in English and the other in Chinese or Arabic) and let the software figure out the corresponding linguistic patterns. This has left the competition bedazzled. The author indicates that several others of Google's ventures ran into difficulty. Google's ambitious goal of digitizing all the books in the World ran into copyright suits. It now lags far behind that has made many of its books searchable. Also, in video uploading and searches its product was so far behind YouTube that it decided to acquire YouTube for a staggering \$1.65 billion. However, Google has not yet figured out how to generate an attractive return on this investment. YouTube videos with often inappropriate content do not cater well to Google search-ad text. Google made another small acquisition that turned out hugely successful: Keyhole. The latter had developed the software capability to virtually fly and travel all over the world as shown in today's Google Earth. This allowed programmers to develop "mashups" that combine visual geographic information with data regarding restaurants, hotels, relevant ratings, home prices, etc... Successful users of such mashups include Zillow (home prices) and Yelp (consumer ratings of everything). 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. For those interested in what Google has been up to By Sanniyus Suwita For readers who appreciated The Search: How Google and Its Rivals Rewrote the Rules of Business and Transformed Our Culture, this book loosely picks up where the former book sort of left off. "The Search" (by different author and published in 2005) covers the origin and growth of general Web search technology and the rise of Google the company up to the point shortly after its IPO. "Planet Google" mainly takes a look at what the company has been doing since (circa 2004-08) and focuses on Google's many attempted forays into products and technologies beyond the core Web search. A chapter is dedicated for each of Google's better-known endeavors, namely book digitization, video/YouTube, Google Earth/Maps, datacenter buildup, Gmail and privacy issues, the go for open-source everything, and the debate of machine-only vs. human-assisted search algorithm. The author claims to enjoy fairly generous access to Google's facilities and some of its top executives, including CEO Eric Schmidt. The book provides a quick read and is much shorter than the number of pages would suggest as the last 75 pages contain only massive amount of footnotes. It will certainly delight those who have always been fascinated by everything Google. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. excellent overview of an amazing capitalist success story By Adam Thierer An interesting look at what an amazing capitalist success story Google has been and how lucky we are that they have been at least a little bit successful in their mission "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful." Each chapter discusses a different part of Google's growing family of services -- Gmail, Google Maps, Google Earth, Book Search, and YouTube. Of course, it all started with search and Stross does a good job explaining how the ingenious Google search algorithm has grown from dorm room project to the greatest aggregator of human knowledge that the world has ever known. Importantly, Stross doesn't shy away from highlighting some of the mistakes Google

has made, and he also goes into great detail about the privacy concerns raised by the sheer volume of information the company is now collecting. Although I personally believe most of these privacy fears are overblown, Stross does a nice job explaining why Google is likely going to attract more attention in coming years -- from users and policymakers alike -- as its search algorithm and other applications grow more powerful and comprehensive. Stross also notes that Google's growing clout in the marketplace will likely invite more calls for antitrust intervention as the company gradually replaces Microsoft as the new King of the Tech Hill. I think those market power concerns are overstated as well, but Stross rightly points out that making so many enemies so quickly is bound to come back to haunt Google in the long run (or perhaps even the short run). In sum, Planet Google is a fine early history of the company and the new era of computing it has ushered in. Recommended. My complete review of Planet Google is here: [..]

Based on unprecedented access he received to the highly secretive "Googleplex," acclaimed New York Times columnist Randall Stross takes readers deep inside Google, the most important, most innovative, and most ambitious company of the Internet Age. His revelations demystify the strategy behind the company's recent flurry of bold moves, all driven by the pursuit of a business plan unlike any other: to become the indispensable gatekeeper of all the world's information, the one-stop destination for all our information needs. Will Google succeed? And what are the implications of a single company commanding so much information and knowing so much about us? As ambitious as Google's goal is, with 68 percent of all Web searches (and growing), profits that are the envy of the business world, and a surplus of talent, the company is, Stross shows, well along the way to fulfilling its ambition, becoming as dominant a force on the Web as Microsoft became on the PC. Google isn't just a superior search service anymore. In recent years it has launched a dizzying array of new services and advanced into whole new businesses, from the introductions of its controversial Book Search and the irresistible Google Earth, to bidding for a slice of the wireless-phone spectrum and nonchalantly purchasing YouTube for \$1.65 billion. Google has also taken direct aim at Microsoft's core business, offering free e-mail and software from word processing to spreadsheets and calendars, pushing a transformative -- and highly disruptive -- concept known as "cloud computing." According to this plan, users will increasingly store all of their data on Google's massive servers -- a network of a million computers that amounts to the world's largest supercomputer, with unlimited capacity to house all the information Google seeks. The more offerings Google adds, and the more ubiquitous a presence it becomes, the more dependent its users become on its services and the more information they contribute to its uniquely comprehensive collection of data. Will Google stay true to its famous "Don't Be Evil" mantra, using its power in its customers' best interests? Stross's access to those who have spearheaded so many of Google's new initiatives, his penetrating research into the company's strategy, and his gift for lively storytelling produce an entertaining, deeply informed, and provocative examination of the company's audacious vision for the future and the consequences not only for the business world, but for our culture at large.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . In this spellbinding behind-the-scenes look at Google, New York Times columnist Stross (The Microsoft Way) provides an intimate portrait of the company's massively ambitious aim to organize the world's information. Drawing on extensive interviews with top management and his astonishingly open access to the famed Googleplex, Stross leads readers through Google's evolution from its humble beginnings as the decidedly nonbusiness-oriented brainchild of Stanford Ph.D. students Sergey Brin and Larry Page, through the company's early growing pains and multiple acquisitions, on to its current position as global digital behemoth. Tech lovers will devour the pages of discussion about the Algorithm; business folk will enjoy the accounts of how company after company, including Microsoft and Yahoo, underestimated Google's technology, advertising model and ability to solve problems like scanning library collections; and general readers will find the sheer scale and scope of Google's progress in just a decade astounding. The unfolding narrative of Google's journey reads like a suspense novel. Brin, Page and CEO Eric [Schmidt] battle competitors and struggle to emerge victorious in their quest to index all the information in the world. (Sept.) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Stross, a college business professor who writes the New York Times column "Digital Domain," conveys how, in its overreaching pursuit of growth, Google continues to offer unprecedented access to information while raising questions about copyright and privacy issues. The goal of Google, founded by two engineering graduate students 10 years ago, is to organize and profit from the entirety of the world's information. With its self-proclaimed "Don't Be Evil" corporate mantra, Google also plans on unseating archrival Microsoft as king of the hill by introducing "cloud computing," whereby the Internet becomes the operating system, software, and storage medium, thereby eliminating the need for software upgrades. Google has made its fortune on the unobtrusive text ads that appear to the right of search results, using a complex, self-evolving system called the Algorithm to both match ads to the search parameters and auction those ads to the highest bidder. As the first outsider to receive unfettered access to Google's headquarters, top management, and company meetings, Stross has provided the most in-depth look at the company to date. --David Siegfried "A computer enthusiast who wants to Google Google couldn't find a more dedicated guide than Stross.... Stross's access to the company pays off nicely for both Google's fans and people who read books on paper." -- Time "[An] even-handed and

highly readable history of the company." -- Wall Street Journal "Stross tells the epic info-opera of Google simply and swiftly. He provides elegant microhistories of familiar subjects...and sprinkles just about every page with unexpected tech facts." -- New York magazine "In this spellbinding behind-the-scenes look at Google, Stross provides an intimate portrait of the company's ambitious aim to 'organize the world's information.'...The narrative reads like a suspense novel." -- Publishers Weekly "A vigorous history/analysis/appraisal of the 21st century's most notable company." -- Fortune