Microsoft Secrets: How the World's Most Powerful Software Company Creates Technology, Shapes Markets and Manages People

Michael A. Cusumano

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Today, Microsoft commands the high ground of the information superhighway by owning the operating systems and basic applications programs that run on the world's 170 million computers. Beyond the unquestioned genius and vision of Bill Gates, what accounts for Microsofts astounding success?

Drawing on almost two years of on-site observation at Microsoft headquarters, eminent scientists Michael A. Cusumano and Richard W. Selby reveal many of Microsoft's innermost secrets. This inside report, based on forty in-depth interviews by authors who had access to confidential documents and project data, outlines the seven complementary strategies that characterize exactly how Microsoft competes and operates, including the "Brain Trust" of talented employees and exceptional management; "bang for the buck" competitive strategies and clear organizational goals that produce self-critiquing, learning, and improving; a flexible, incremental approach to product development; and a relentless pursuit of future markets.

Cusumano and Selby's masterful analysis successfully uncovers the distinctive way in which Microsoft has combined all of the elements necessary to get to the top of an enormously important industry -- and stay there.

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