

## The Google Story

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Publisher: Bantam Dell, New York

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Who are the Google Guys? What's a Google Doodle? What is the Googleplex? And why would anyone want to search the Internet in Pig Latin or Elmer Fudd? The answers to these and other compelling questions make up the content of this eminently readable, highly entertaining account of the birth and phenomenal growth of one of today's leading technology companies.

In 1998, after reluctantly dropping out of the doctoral program at Stanford University, Sergey Brin and Larry Page founded Google on some very basic principals that remain at the heart of the company's success today. To quote authors David Vise and Mark Malseed, "Google's transcendent and seemingly human qualities give it special appeal to an amazingly wide range of computer users, from experts to novices, who trust the brand that has become an extension of their brains." Google is so innately "human" because the programmers behind its functionality have remained true to the founders' vision of a search engine whose focus is entirely on the end user. They favor "pull" technology and marketing versus "push" and believe that the quality of their product will compel their users to "tell a friend". Again to quote the authors, in the early days "Google grew in popularity and recognition without spending a dime."

Of course, Google eventually needed to attract investment capital, and it did, but Brin and Page have never compromised their integrity and vision and the result is a company that went public in 2004 at a price of \$85 a share and now trades well over \$450 a share. Though they are millionaires several times over, the founders have remained personally involved in nearly every aspect of the business. To illustrate the sense of humor that pervades the entire corporate culture, in August, 2005 Google sold 14,159,265 additional shares in a secondary stock offering. Why the unusual number of shares? They represent the first eight digits after the decimal point for pi (3.14159265), completely appropriate for a company run by two mathematicians.

From an auspicious misspelling to an entity that for millions of people around the world has become synonymous with the Internet, Google has transformed the way we search for information. And the founders' "Don't Be Evil" motto continues to ensure that they won't sell out to the mass marketers who want to capture the hapless web searcher – their marketing/advertising strategy is unique in the industry. Thus it is that what began as a misspelling of a very large number (a "googol") has been so embraced by the world that it has become a verb in the American lexicon as we google our way around the Internet on a daily basis.