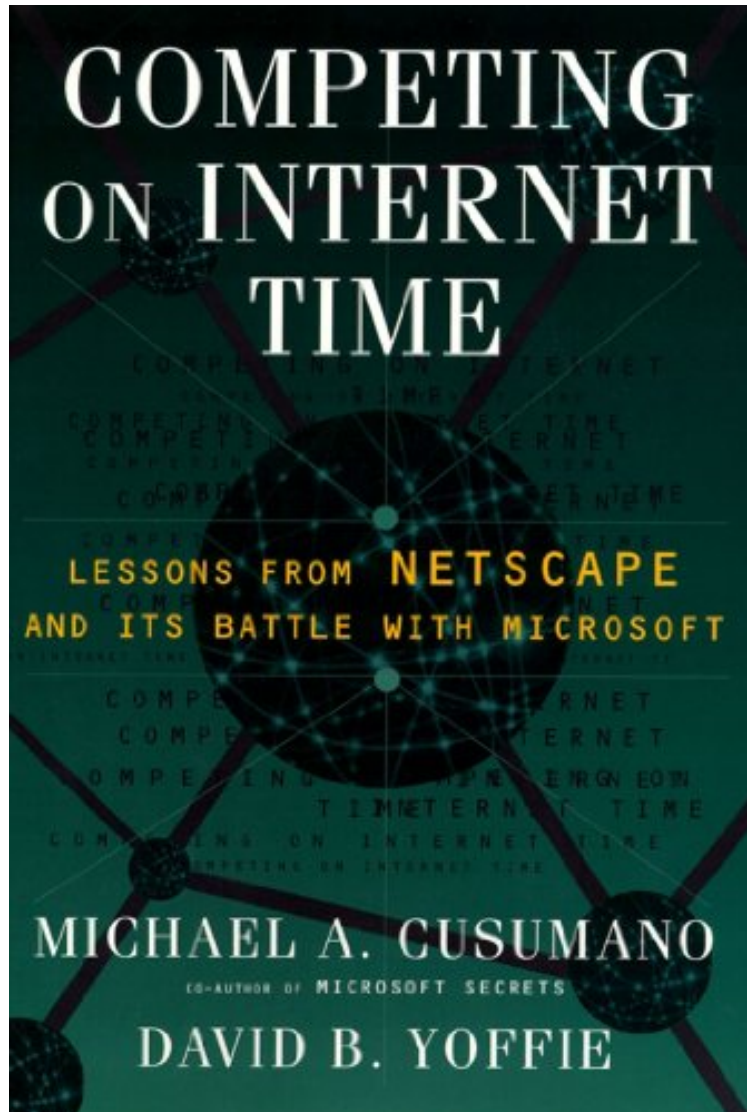


Competing On Internet Time: Lessons From Netscape and Its Battle With Microsoft

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David B. Yoffie, Michael A. Cusumano : Competing On Internet Time: Lessons From Netscape and Its Battle With Microsoft before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Competing On Internet Time: Lessons From Netscape and Its Battle With Microsoft:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good at times, but lacking the technical perspectiveBy Bas Vodde"Competing on Internet Time" is about Netscape, the company that brought the world the Netscape browser, became huge and had one of the largest IPOs. Was eventually told and then disappeared. Although, the book only covers the first 2 of these, the bringing the Netscape browser and the becoming huge.The authors studies Netscape

over a significant amount of time and had dozens of interviews on which they base this book. The book contains 6 chapters and (my version) contained an important afterword that described what happened after the first version of the book was published. The first chapter is an introduction to the book whereas the last chapter is more or less a "what can we learn from the story" chapter that summarized the earlier made points and tries to give concrete advice based on that. The second chapter describes how Netscape got started and was how it quickly grew into a rather large company for one that lasted so short :) From the beginning it hired experienced people (especially from a start-up perspective) and it tried to build the organization and infrastructure based on the assumptions that it would be large. This is something I personally question whether this is a good idea as it seems to be the authors' assumption that this is a good idea. In fact, throughout the book there are many assumptions about X is good "when in business" which at times felt annoying. Chapter 3-5 discusses strategy from 3 different perspectives. 3) The competitive strategy, 4) the design strategy and 5) the development strategy. The competitive strategy described the decisions Netscape took on which markets to operate, how to price their products, etc. It kind-of gives the super-senior-management impression where the management of the company had the perfect view and "on purpose" made these decisions, as if you truly have that amount of control over a company. Also, the Judo/Sumo analogies to martial arts, started to annoy me at this time... that is... the authors explained that Netscape used "judo" strategy where they used "the strength of the opponent" to their own advantage, whereas Microsoft could use "Sumo" strategy because they are big. These analogies felt unrealistic to me (very business-school like, which isn't a surprise considering the authors are business school professors). Chapter 4 and 5 talked a bit more about the technical decisions made (e.g. the support of Java) and how they were right or wrong and about how the company actually developed the product. The chapters are interesting, yet they reflect very strongly that the authors actually don't have much technical skill and seem to be unaware of what happened on a code level within Netscape or how the company was managed on a low-level. In fact, these chapters feel somewhat contradicting to posts on the internet from ex-Netscape developers who "left the sinking ship". Still, most of the information was summarized from the interviews which made it still an interesting read. That brings me to the conclusion. In retrospect, a book about how the company and strategy of Netscape works is amusing as the company was bought and most of its technology (meaning the software) has ceased to be used... all, the client, the servers and the web-site. Of course, Netscape did give us technologies that are still in active use, some positive like Javascript and some which I'd rather wish they would have never gone that road, like LDAP. Most of the book describes Netscape as this great and successful company which, on the long-term, turned out to be untrue. That said, Netscape is an interesting company to learn from and the book gives probably one of the best pictures of how Netscape worked. From that perspective, it was definitively an interesting read. Unfortunately, there are so much "business school" assumptions that makes reading the story of Netscape every now and then... difficult. Also, the lack of technical knowledge of the authors was (for me) fairly obvious and made the quality of certain chapters a lot worse. In conclusion, not a bad book, yet not a book I'd quickly recommend unless you want to know exactly what happened to Netscape (and even then, I suggest to supplement the book with other sources such as posts and reports on internet. Therefore, 3 out of 5 stars. 4 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Focus and Execution (not!) By Benjamin Slivka These two business school professors (...) interviewed many people at Netscape and elsewhere. Though the conclusions do not come through as strongly in the book as they might, we learn that Netscape made three major mistakes: 1) it did not focus and execute on a long-term strategy, 2) its software engineering practices were not as good as Microsoft's, and 3) its software engineers were not as talented as Microsoft's. The biggest mistake was Netscape kept changing its mind about what business it was in. As a result, it was not able to execute hard enough and long enough to win. Focus and Execution are key elements of any business success! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Donovan Reese Fine

Competing on Internet time means competitive advantage can be won and lost overnight. In this penetrating analysis of strategy-making and product innovation in the dynamic markets of commercial cyberspace, bestselling Microsoft Secrets co-author Michael Cusumano and top competitive strategy expert David Yoffie draw vital lessons from Netscape, the first pure Internet company, and how it has employed the techniques of "judo strategy" in its pitched battle with Microsoft, the world's largest software producer. From on-site observation and more than 50 in-depth interviews at Netscape and other companies, Cusumano and Yoffie construct a blueprint meticulously detailing how the fastest-growing software company in history has competed on Internet time by moving rapidly to new products and markets, staying flexible, and exploiting leverage that uses the weight of its giant rival Microsoft against it. The main source of Netscape's leverage, they argue, has been its skill in designing products that run on multiple operating systems. Microsoft has responded with judo techniques in kind. Managers in every high-tech industry will discover a wealth of new ideas on how to create and scale-up a new company quickly; how to compete in fast-paced, unpredictable industries; and how to design products for rapidly evolving markets. The lessons that Cusumano and Yoffie derive from Netscape's contest with Microsoft go far beyond start-ups and Internet software. Small companies in any industry and powerful, established firms alike will welcome the principles the authors formulate from this David-and-Goliath-like struggle. Competing on Internet Time is essential and instructive reading for all managers,

engineers, and entrepreneurs who want to succeed in ultra-fast-paced markets.