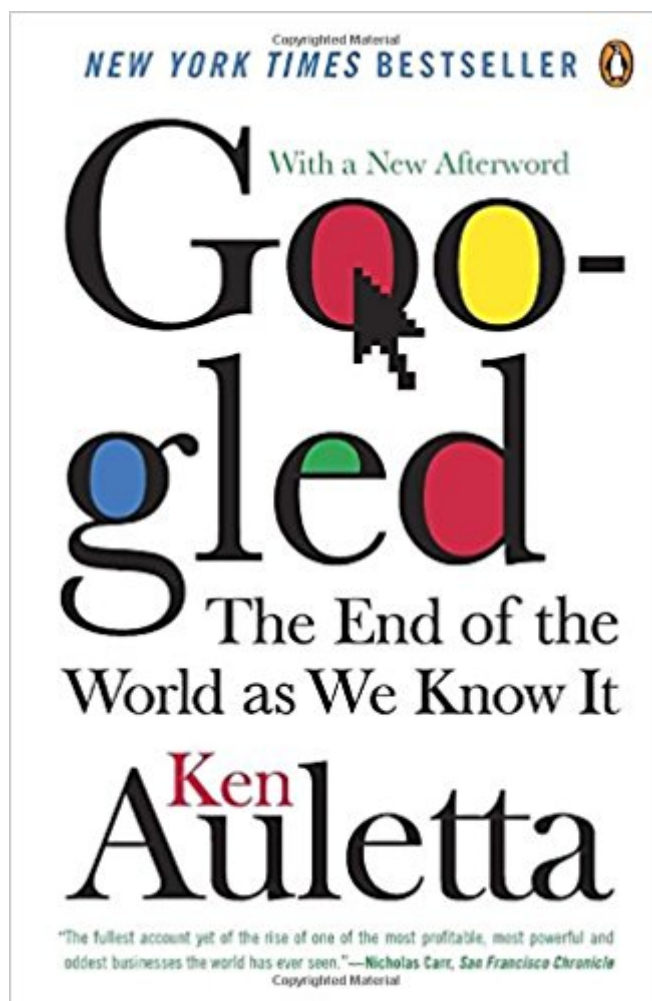


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Googled: The End Of The World As We Know It



Synopsis

"The fullest account yet of the rise of one of the most profitable, most powerful, and oddest businesses the world has ever seen." -San Francisco Chronicle Just eleven years old, Google has profoundly transformed the way we live and work-we've all been Googled. Esteemed media writer Ken Auletta uses the story of Google's rise to explore the future of media at large. This book is based on the most extensive cooperation ever granted a journalist, including access to closed-door meetings and interviews with industry legends, including Google founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin, Marc Andreessen, and media guru "Coach" Bill Campbell. Auletta's unmatched analysis, vivid details, and rich anecdotes illuminate how the Google wave grew, how it threatens to drown media institutions, and where it's taking us next.

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Customer Reviews

Two Googles emerge in this savvy profile of the Internet search octopus. The first is the actual company, with its mixture of business acumen and naïve idealism (Don't Be Evil is the corporate slogan); its brilliant engineering feats and grad-students-at-play company culture; its geek founders, Sergey Brin and Larry Page, two billionaires who imbibe their antiestablishment rectitude straight from Burning Man; its pseudo-altruistic quest to offer all the world's information for free while selling all the world's advertising at a hefty profit. The second Google is a monstrous metaphor for all the creative destruction that the Internet has wrought on the crumbling titans of old media, who find themselves desperately wondering how they will make money off of news, music, video and

books now that people can Google up all these things without paying a dime. The first Google makes for a standard-issue tech-industry grunge-to-riches business story, its main entertainment value being Brin's and Page's comical lack of social graces. But New Yorker columnist Auletta (World War 3.0: Microsoft and Its Enemies) makes the second Google a starting point for a sharp and probing analysis of the apocalyptic upheavals in the media and entertainment industries. (Nov. 3) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

“This is an engrossing look at Google and the broader trends in information and entertainment in the Internet age.”
•Booklist, Starred Review “[A] savvy profile of the Internet search octopus...[and] a sharp and probing analysis of the apocalyptic upheavals in the media and entertainment industries.”
•Publishers Weekly “Auletta uncovers some endlessly colorful material and assesses [Google’s] prospects critically but fairly.”
•Kirkus Reviews “Auletta has captured something critical and true about the tribe that made the enormous success of Google possible. His understanding is critical and essential for anyone trying to predict how long this run of enormous success will continue. Bottom line: Not forever, and maybe not much longer. Here’s exactly why.”
•Larry Lessig, author of Remix: Making Art and Commerce Thrive in the Hybrid Economy and Free Culture: The Nature and Future of Creativity “A uniquely incisive account of the new Internet revolution, powered by Ken Auletta’s unparalleled access. Essential reading.”
•Marc Andreessen, founder of Netscape and co-founder of Ning “Ken Auletta has produced the seminal book about media in the digital age. It is a triumph of reporting and analysis, filled with revealing scenes, fascinating tales, and candid interviews. Google is both a driver and a symbol of a glorious disruption in the media world, and Auletta chronicles, in a balance and thoughtful way, both that glory and that disruption.”
•Walter Isaacson, author of Einstein: His Life and Universe and Benjamin Franklin: An American Life

Glad I finally got around to this one. Much of Google's history has become pretty public knowledge but Auletta dives deeper than most. Whenever a company becomes as powerful as Google (i.e. Microsoft, GM, GE, Disney, etc.) there is so much to be learned in their history, successes and failures. I think society has accepted the value of biographies but these company profile/expose books or whatever you want to call them are becoming equally valuable. Just breaking down the theory and negotiation of some of Google's biggest acquisitions was worth the admission price

alone. Hearing the stories of incumbent media companies doubting and then fearing Google is priceless. If you're an Android nerd like I am you will love the origins of the mobile OS and the struggles with carriers and FCC regulations. Who knew that was all it took to establish a dominant mobile empire without even really trying that hard? The sub-title is a little misleading. Never did I feel like Auletta really believed that Google was changing the world in an evil way. And for what it's worth, the book goes on lots of useful tangents about companies other than Google. This isn't a prophetic call to arms to stop a monopolistic monster. But it is a fantastic examination of the the most fascinating company of the digital generation. I hope my review has been helpful to you. It encourages me to continue writing and updating my reviews. Please leave a comment if you have any questions, I will be more than happy to answer if I can be of help.

Maybe the best book I've read about Google and tech culture. It has made me think - despite many who are using it to herald the decline of Google - to further invest in the company. I think it's interesting how rarely writers call these businessmen out on their conflicts of interest or accurately contextualize their position. It bothers me how little real knowledge most of these tech writers have about the companies they cover. Auletta seems to think that Google's engineering culture is problematic because it leads to PR blunders or angers competitors. The problem is really that an engineer is almost an alien compared to most people - people who think emotionally or practically instead of systematically. Robert Greene has a very good chapter about this, about knowing your audience and feeling connected to it. A product like Google Wave solves a problem that no has complained about and its launch makes sense only to someone who takes communities and groups for granted. This is what an engineering culture does to you - it deprives you of common sense and of a direct kinship with the people whom you're trying to serve.

An excellent read, with many insightful observations and surprisingly candid quotes from Google executives and other insiders about Google's disruptive role in the advertising, media, and technology worlds. While the trends in the book have advanced in the years since it was written, the core challenges of Google's business model, its relationship to its users and competitors, and Google's corporate culture, remain largely the same.

I just finished *Googled, The End of the World as We Know It*, by Ken Auletta, arguably the best media critic of our times. The book is chock full of anecdotes, insights and implications for any company that wants to compete on the new media battlefield. There are amusing yet telling stories,

like Mel Karmazin's first visit to Google in 2003, when he actually declared that measurement was "f@#\$ing with the magic," implying that ad dollars should go to the best sales person not the most effective medium. Lesson: arrogance can't win in the new digital democracy. Throughout the book readers find constant reminders (AOL, Excite, Lycos, Digital, Wang) that we can't predict; we can only prepare. Combine them with great examples of what Clayton Christenson labeled the "innovator's dilemma," (NY Times, network television, music industry) and chances are you'll do a better job of identifying your own tendency to defend existing business models at the expense of embracing necessary change. Lesson: don't hold on to the past with too tight a grip. Through Auletta's filter we discover all that Google did right (20 percent, belief in the wisdom of crowds, do no evil mantra) as well as where they failed (China censorship, for one) and what their greatest challenges maybe in the years to come (trust, privacy, government intervention). Impressive is Google's willingness to experiment, take risks and innovate and along with their relentless standard of hiring only "spectacular" people, even if it means Sergey and Larry have to interview every single engineering applicant. Lesson: first, create a culture. And finally, while Auletta gets to Google's shortcomings and excesses, this book is as much about those of us who aren't Google. Why didn't the NY Times invent CNN or become a search engine? How is it Sports Illustrated didn't start ESPN? What about AOL the company that launched Instant Messenger losing that space to Facebook? Lesson: even if you're a media company find a way to hire engineers and developers. The end of the world as we know it can be interpreted any number of ways. From our loss of privacy, to the concentrated control of one company, to the need for the rest of us to think differently. You may finish the book angry, concerned, or inspired. But either way, you should finish it.

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