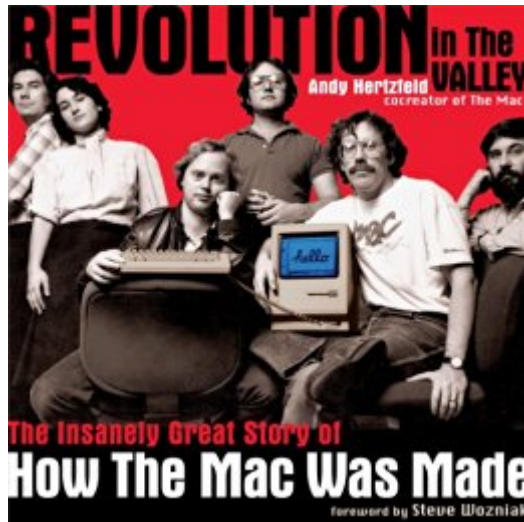


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Revolution In The Valley [Paperback]: The Insanely Great Story Of How The Mac Was Made



Synopsis

There was a time, not too long ago, when the typewriter and notebook ruled, and the computer as an everyday tool was simply a vision. Revolution in the Valley traces this vision back to its earliest roots: the hallways and backrooms of Apple, where the groundbreaking Macintosh computer was born. The book traces the development of the Macintosh, from its inception as an underground skunkworks project in 1979 to its triumphant introduction in 1984 and beyond. The stories in Revolution in the Valley come on extremely good authority. That's because author Andy Hertzfeld was a core member of the team that built the Macintosh system software, and a key creator of the Mac's radically new user interface software. One of the chosen few who worked with the mercurial Steve Jobs, you might call him the ultimate insider. When Revolution in the Valley begins, Hertzfeld is working on Apple's first attempt at a low-cost, consumer-oriented computer: the Apple II. He sees that Steve Jobs is luring some of the company's most brilliant innovators to work on a tiny research effort the Macintosh. Hertzfeld manages to make his way onto the Macintosh research team, and the rest is history. Through lavish illustrations, period photos, and Hertzfeld's vivid first-hand accounts, Revolution in the Valley reveals what it was like to be there at the birth of the personal computer revolution. The story comes to life through the book's portrait of the talented and often eccentric characters who made up the Macintosh team. Now, over 20 years later, millions of people are benefiting from the technical achievements of this determined and brilliant group of people.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

How wonderful is this book? That will depend on several factors. I've read a lot of books that claim to dish out the real dirt about Apple, and this book impressed me because Andy Hertzfeld didn't write all the anecdotes himself. Instead, he created a web site at [...] and encouraged any and all persons involved with the creation of the Macintosh to document their own recollections of how it all went down. Those essays, along with dozens written by Hertzfeld himself, are now the basis of this new book, mixed in with pencil sketches, historical photos, and old ads. This book is not about grinding axes or settling grudges. It merely documents in an objective fashion how the whole team came together, and the many many ups and downs encountered in bringing this wonderful computer to life. What I like about this book can be summed up in two phrases. First, none of the essays exceeds five pages (roughly the length of my attention span), so I easily breezed through ninety pages of historical material without losing interest. I found myself laughing outloud at times. Second, because of the way Hertzfeld collected these stories, I truly believe that this book is not an attempt to re-write history so as to exalt himself as the God of Macintosh. While I have seen reviews of this book describe it as a coffee table book, I don't view it as a coffee table book. The essays cover technical details about how the Macintosh was prototyped and debugged, and these technical details will be above 95 percent of the people who pick up this book. Not to mention there is a lot of text. The anecdotes in this book read quite true to me. We follow Hertzfeld from his initial hire at Apple through to his maneuvers to get himself onto the Macintosh development team.

Apple is a special company and the Macintosh was a pivotal product that is still at the heart of its success today. Yet if you were to look inside the original Macintosh you would find something even more remarkable than technical innovation and creativity. Past the intuitive graphical user interface, behind the first 3.5" floppy drive in a personal computer, and over the novel logic board was something that most users never knew was there. Inside the case of every Macintosh was a collection of signatures. Just as an artist would sign a canvas, the team that put together the first "insanely great" computer signed their masterpiece. The Macintosh was a special product because of the amazing team that took it from conception to retail. Revolution in the Valley is the story of

their achievement. It is a sturdy and attractive hardbound book with a modern and approachable layout, relevant illustrations, and highlighted summary quotes from team members and the minds that inspired them. Under the dust cover it is adorned with stills taken from the infamous 1984 commercial announcing the Macintosh. Though the book touches on parts of the larger Apple story - such as the exile and return of Steve Jobs, the development of the Lisa, and the great initial success of the Apple II - it maintains its focus on the Macintosh throughout. It follows the project from Jeff Raskin's research project, to Steve Jobs' adoption as the future of Apple, and through the first time the world said "'hello' to Macintosh." Rather than offering a "monolithic narrative," Revolution is presented as a compilation of short stories. Most are the work of Andy Hertzfeld, a key personality in the development of the Macintosh system software, but some are submissions from other team members.

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