

Steve Jobs' and 9 Other Humble Garage Beginnings

By LYNEKA LITTLE
Oct. 7, 2011

Some of the world's greatest business minds began their companies inside the confines of garages, dorm rooms and even a church crypt.

Steve Jobs, who passed away on October 5, began his craft in a minimum amount of space. While the Apple campus in Cupertino, Calif., is the current headquarters for the company, before introducing the world to the iPod, iPhone, and iPad, the Reed College dropout would operate his tech company from a family garage in California.

Jobs knew how to "think different." The innovator was one of a few entrepreneurs that believed in thinking big inside small digs.

Here's a look at Apple's humble beginnings and that of nine other successful companies. You'll never guess which billionaire began his company inside a church crypt.

1. Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak, co-founders of Apple Inc.

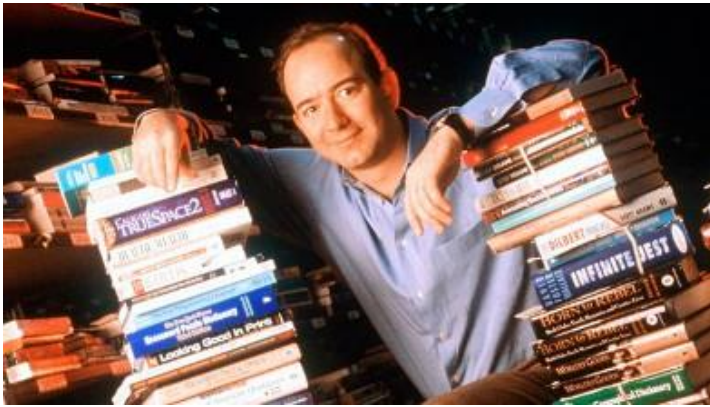


Apple, the company that would grow to become one of the most valuable tech companies in the world, has its roots in the family garage of co-founder Steve Jobs. Thirty-five years later, Jobs would push for the town of Cupertino to approve a space-ship type structure to house the growing Apple staff. During a City Council meeting, Jobs would state, "We're the largest taxpayer in Cupertino, so we would like to continue to stay here and pay taxes."

Founded: April 1, 1976

Market Cap: \$350 Billion

2. Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon.com



After a trek from New York to Washington, Bezos would set up shop for Amazon.com in the garage of an apartment. The company's meteoric rise includes an entry into selling tablets. In September, the company would introduce the Kindle Fire, which combines e-book features and tablet computing.

Founded: 1994

Market Cap: \$101 Billion

3. Larry Page and Sergey Brin, co-founders of Google



The business that would become the top internet search company was operated from a garage at the home of Susan Wojcicki, currently a VP at the company. Wojcicki, a recent homeowner at the time, would rent garage space in her Menlo Park home to the Stanford students for \$1,700 a month, according to USA Today. The company now has locations all over the world including France, China and Kenya.

Founded: 1998

Market Cap: \$166 Billion

4. Elliot and Ruth Handler and Harold Mattson, co-founders of Mattel



The creators of Barbie and Ken did not have a dream house or space when it came time to launch what would become the nation's top toy company. Instead, the three utilized the garage space of designer and co-founder Harold Mattson to kick start Mattel, according to the Los Angeles Times. With locations scattered around the world, the company's corporate headquarters in El Segundo, Calif., has 2,000 employees.

Founded: 1945

Market Cap: \$9 Billion

5. Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard, co-founders of Hewlett-Packard



The Stanford University graduate students worked out of a garage in Palo Alto in 1939 building their first product: an audio oscillator. The two youngsters had a good start by selling eight of the devices to Walt Disney Studios.

Founded: 1939

Market Cap: \$50 Billion

6. Bill Gates and Paul Allen, co-founders of Microsoft



The duo that introduced the world to Windows teamed up in a garage work on what would grow into the most popular software company.

Founded: 1975

Market Cap: \$221 Billion

7. A group of friends founded Columbia Winery, one of Washington state's top wineries.



The premium wine company was founded by 10 friends, including six University of Washington professors. The group did not have a state of the art home to make wine. In the early days, Dr. Lloyd Woodburne would create the wine in a garage in Seattle's Laurelhurst neighborhood.

Founded: 1962

Market Cap: N/A

8. Michael Dell, founder of Dell



A \$1,000 investment helped Dell founder Michael Dell launch the technology company from his dormitory at the University of Texas. The then [19-year-old](#) would grow the operation into a multibillion dollar corporation.

Founded: 1984

Market Cap: \$28 Billion

9. Mark Zuckerberg, co-founder of Facebook



The story of the creation of the largest social network in the world was made a part of popular culture in the film "The Social Network." The 20-something co-founder of the company that boasts of more than 800 million users began the project in a dorm room at Harvard University.

Founded: 2004

The company's current valuation is at around \$77 billion, according to the Wall Street Journal.

10. Richard Branson, co-founder of Virgin Group



In 2003, Richard Branson shared the origins of the Virgin Group's humble beginnings with *The Evening Chronicle*. The man that wears many hats told the paper, "It is easy to forget that Rolls Royce started as a workshop at the turn of the century, Marks & Spencer started up as a market stall and the Boots family had a little chemist shop in Birmingham," Branson told the *Evening Chronicle*.

"Indeed, such are the origins of almost every large British business of the 21st century, including the Virgin group, which now consists of several large companies employing 30,000 British people, but was started by four of us in an old church crypt in the late 60s," he continued.

Founded: 1970

The private company has revenue of approximately \$18 billion.