Stephan (Steve) Wozniak (Woz)

Born August 11, 1950, San Jose, Calif.; loner/whiz kid who developed a personal computer in his garage and, with the assistance of Steve Jobs, founded the Apple Corporation.

Education: electrical engineering, University of Colorado, 1968-1969; electrical engineering, De Anza College, 1969-1970; electrical engineering, University of California at Berkeley, 1970.

Professional Experience: Hewlett-Packard Corp.; founder, Apple Computer Corp.

Woz built his first computer when he was 13 and took top prizes in a science fair. At 19 he met 14-year-old Steve jobs and the two built an electronic "blue box" enabling them to make free phone calls by seizing phone-company lines. The two entrepreneurs sold 200 boxes to fellow students at $80 each. Working at Hewlett-Packard Corporation and a member of the Homebrew Computer Club at the same time as Steve jobs, Woz's involvement resulted in the design of their first Apple microcomputer (later called a personal computer). In 1976, the Byte Shop in Mountain View ordered 50 copies and the home computer business industry was founded. The following year Woz designed the Apple II and the incredible growth of the Apple started. After a near-fatal plane crash in 1981, Wozniak, using a pseudonym, entered the University of California at Berkeley to earn a degree in computer science. He gained notoriety by producing two rock festivals that lost $25 million and made generous donations of his Apple stock to employees.

QUOTATIONS

"I'd rather be liked than rich."

"I was self-taught; I discovered manuals about mini-computers. It was an internal puzzle for me-I didn't get a grade for it.... I sat down with a piece of paper and started to draw-with only imagination to guide me. I drew designs of various mini-computers.... My best friend and I ... dreamed of owning our own computers-in those days, a mini-computer (consisting of 4k memory) cost almost as much as a house.... [When] I set out to design my own, I discovered something very shocking: the various components, connected together directly, came out to half as many as other computers. Here was a computer that could do as much as any other, was just as good, but had half the number of parts.... This principle of elegant, simple lines became my guiding force." (The Commonwealth Club, February 27, 1987)

About Wozniak: "In many ways, Woz was ... Apple's conscience. When the company was up and running, and it became evident that some early employees had been treated more fairly than others in the distribution of stock, it was Wozniak who played the peacemaker, selling cheaply 80,000 of his own Apple shares to employees who felt cheated and even to those who just wanted to make money at Woz's expense." (Robert X. Cringely 1992)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Biographical

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Cringely, Robert X., *Accidental Empires*, Williams Patrick/Addison-Wesley, Reading, Mass., 1992.

UPDATES

Portrait added (MRW, 2013)