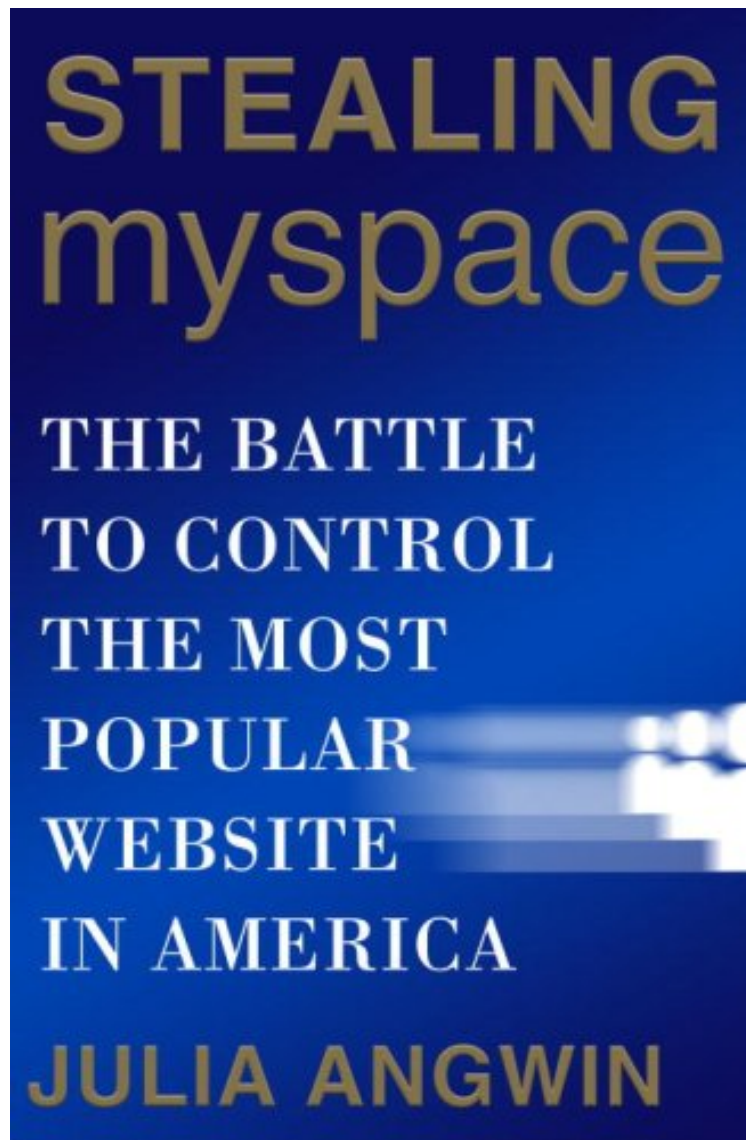


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## Stealing MySpace: The Battle to Control the Most Popular Website in America

*Julia Angwin*

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**Julia Angwin : Stealing MySpace: The Battle to Control the Most Popular Website in America** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stealing MySpace: The Battle to Control the Most Popular Website in America:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not a great bookBy Ian K.I read Stealing MySpace after reading The Facebook Effect, which is an excellent book. After reading the remarkable story of how Zuckerberg and Co built

Facebook, I was curious about MySpace. MySpace predated Facebook and for some time had considerably more users. I wanted to learn about how MySpace was founded and why they lost their lead. Unfortunately *Stealing MySpace* is a weak book that is not very well written. I learned that MySpace was founded by people who were involved with building Malware and sending spam. MySpace was just a shot in the dark, that took off. But I never got a good feel for the personal and company dynamics. The book was so poorly written that I gave up about half way through. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Interesting, thorough, informative. By Eric Muttal I enjoyed this book and felt that it was thorough, covering most of what I wanted to know about MySpace (its initial founding, its subsequent sale and how it fared under its new owners). The biggest source of learning was in the details of the problems MySpace faced, everything from technical problems (such as the bug which allowed people to customise their profiles with HTML) to the community problems (such as sex offenders using the site). It is an easy read, it is carefully edited (I wasn't able to spot a typo anywhere in the whole book) and well worth the time for someone interested in building social networks. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Opposite of the Steve Jobs story By David Forel This book is long because it has painstaking detail of the path of MySpace from a kluge of ideas to (in its day) the web's #1 site. A small company made its daily money selling nearly worthless doo-dads by making fantastic claims about them. Happens all the time. One employee made a visitor web site where people could become members, then personalize their own page. "MySpace." Rather than the vision of a Steve Jobs, the creator, Anderson, merely made a variation of a few other sites (before Facebook). Over some years, Anderson customized the web site based on user feedback to slow but sure success. MySpace became a gold bar within a company that was used to managing fools gold. Eventually (inevitably), management worked to sell the company, to cash in the gold bar, while keeping the MySpace crew in the dark. The book is excellent for letting us see the players across the years and their very bumpy road.

A few years ago, MySpace.com was just an idea kicking around a Southern California spam mill. Scroll down to the present day and MySpace is one of the most visited Internet destinations in America, displaying more than 40 billion webpage views per month and generating nearly \$1 billion annually for Rupert Murdoch's online empire. Even by the standards of the Internet age, the MySpace saga is an astounding growth story, which climaxed with the site's acquisition by Murdoch's News Corporation in 2005 for a sum approaching one billion dollars. But more than that, it may be the defining drama of the digital era. In *Stealing MySpace*, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Julia Angwin chronicles the rise of this Internet powerhouse. With an unerring eye, Angwin details how MySpace took the Internet by storm by grabbing the best ideas from around the Web, encouraging pinup stars such as Tila Tequila to make their home on its pages and giving everyone freedom to experiment with online identities—including using somebody else's identity. *Stealing MySpace* introduces us to the site's founders, Chris DeWolfe and Tom Anderson, who dabbled in computer hacking, online pornography, spam, and spyware before starting MySpace. Although their street savvy, doggedness, and clubbing skills far eclipsed their tech prowess, they stumbled their way to success and soon found themselves at ground zero of a high-stakes war that pitted Rupert Murdoch against his frequent nemesis, the combative Viacom CEO Sumner Redstone. Angwin sheds light on the dizzying backroom deals that allowed Murdoch to snatch MySpace from Viacom's grasp even as the MySpace founders remained in the dark about their own fate. Then she takes us inside the Murdoch empire as DeWolfe and Anderson lobby furiously to regain control of their creation. Venturing beyond the business aspects of the story, Angwin also explores the Internet culture, a voyeuristic world in which MySpace must stay one step ahead of amateur pornographers, sexual predators, and "spoofers" who set up fake profiles (Rupert Murdoch himself tolerates dozens of phony "Ruperts" on the site) and cope with the general excesses and sometimes illegal acts of a community of account holders equal in number to the population of Japan. In *Stealing MySpace*, Julia Angwin dishes on the epic real-world battle for control of a virtual empire. In a savvy, smart, fast-paced narrative reminiscent of Bryan Burrough and John Helyar's *Barbarians at the Gate* and Michael Lewis's *The New Thing*, *Stealing MySpace* tells the whole gripping story behind a breakout cultural phenomenon. From the Hardcover edition.

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us to the site's founders, Chris DeWolfe and Tom Anderson, who dabbled in computer hacking, online pornography, spam, and spyware before starting MySpace. Although their street savvy, doggedness, and clubbing skills far eclipsed their tech prowess, they stumbled their way to success and soon found themselves at ground zero of a high-stakes war that pitted Rupert Murdoch against his frequent nemesis, the combative Viacom CEO Sumner Redstone. Angwin sheds light on the dizzying backroom deals that allowed Murdoch to snatch MySpace from Viacom's grasp even as the MySpace founders remained in the dark about their own fate. Then she takes us inside the Murdoch empire as DeWolfe and Anderson lobby furiously to regain control of their creation. Venturing beyond the business aspects of the story, Angwin also explores the Internet culture, a voyeuristic world in which MySpace must stay one step ahead of amateur pornographers, sexual predators, and "spoofers" who set up fake profiles (Rupert Murdoch himself tolerates dozens of phony "Ruperts" on the site) and cope with the general excesses and sometimes illegal acts of a community of account holders equal in number to the population of Japan. In *Stealing MySpace*, Julia Angwin dishes on the epic real-world battle for control of a virtual empire. In a savvy, smart, fast-paced narrative reminiscent of Bryan Burrough and John Helyar's *Barbarians at the Gate* and Michael Lewis's *The New New Thing*, *Stealing MySpace* tells the whole gripping story behind a breakout cultural phenomenon. Julia Angwin on *Stealing MySpace* Porn. Hacking. Spyware. Spam. Spy cameras you can hide in your shoe. Prior to launching MySpace, the founders dabbled in all of the above. Relentless marketers and knockoff artists, their story also included a boardroom coup, broken friendships, betrayals, litigation and a pair of feuding media moguls--Sumner Redstone and Rupert Murdoch. When I stumbled on the history of MySpace, I quickly realized it was not your typical Silicon Valley saga. There were no computer geniuses dropping out of prestigious universities, no fancy algorithms, no computers in garages. In short: The MySpace tale was manna from journalistic heaven--I had to write it. It was also a serious lesson about the evolution of the Internet. The success of these ragtag marketers from Los Angeles demonstrated an important change in our culture: Technology had finally become relatively easy to use. Innovation was no longer confined to the digital elites. MySpace's success was largely due to the fact that it put its customers first, and technology second. Still, as it grew, MySpace's lack of tech savvy has been its Achilles Heel. Today, MySpace is being forced to play technological catch-up to rival social networking site, Facebook, and it's not clear if it will succeed. The final chapter of the MySpace story has not yet been written. But the unlikely tale of how MySpace was born is one that begged to be told. --Julia Angwin

From Publishers Weekly

Angwin, an award-winning journalist for the Wall Street Journal, recounts the history of MySpace.com in this well-written, entertaining and drama-filled chronicle. From its founding by Chris DeWolfe to its surprising purchase for nearly \$600 million by Rupert Murdoch and NewsCorp., Angwin takes the reader through the company's tumultuous journey to the top. Readers will learn how Eliot Spitzer's spyware lawsuit nearly devastated the company and how Richard Blumenthal's investigation into the site's lack of protection of minors resulted in a blindsiding public assault. An array of personalities populate the book, including Viacom chairman Sumner Redstone, Bill O'Reilly and Tila Tequila, who was one of the earliest to use her popularity on the site to generate a successful business. Angwin also describes the massive defection of MySpace users to Facebook and leaves the reader to wrestle with the issue of digital identity. Attesting to the depth of her research, Angwin also includes a lengthy notes section. This engrossing look at how MySpace became a media powerhouse will find a solid audience of business history, technology and entrepreneurship readers. (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

From Booklist

MySpace, the most popular social-networking site on the Internet, was not created by the likes of the high-tech engineers and computer geeks who created Google and Yahoo! but by two marketing executives with no technical prowess who ran a shady company called eUniverse, which sold wrinkle cream and ink-jet cartridges over the Internet. Founders Chris DeWolfe and Tom Anderson simply copied most of the features of MySpace from an earlier site called Friendster, but users flocked to the site because they were allowed to use fake identities and to customize their pages any way they wanted. Angwin traces the development of the company from its roots in the spam and porn industries to one of the most popular sites on the Internet going public and sold to Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. Angwin, who has written on technology and media for the Wall Street Journal for six years, does an excellent job sorting out the details of this convoluted journey, addressing issues such as privacy and anonymity and the tentative nature of all things on the Internet. --David Siegfried