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BUILT FOR SUCCESS

世界名牌之路

THE STORY OF

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SARA GILBERT

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亚马逊

SARA GILBERT 著

戴家琪 译

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| 11. Starbucks | 星巴克  |
| 12. Wal-Mart  | 沃尔玛  |



# Contents

<b>Chapter One</b>	Settling in Seattle .....	6
<b>Chapter Two</b>	Getting Big Fast .....	14
<b>Chapter Three</b>	Pushing for Profits .....	22
<b>Chapter Four</b>	Bigger and Better .....	30
<b>Chapter Five</b>	Kindling for the Future .....	38
中文参考译文	.....	46

## 出版前言

“世界名牌之路 (Built for Success)”丛书是我社从美国 The Creative Company 引进出版的一套介绍美国一些世界级知名企业成功历程的图书，其中包括亚马逊、苹果、可口可乐、迪士尼、脸书、谷歌、耐克、星巴克等众多我们耳熟能详的公司。书中讲述了这些公司如何创建，创建初期所经历的一些困难甚至纠纷以及创业者如何应对，如何面对竞争、开拓市场和不断变革创新，并最终如何取得成功的。阅读这些图书，不仅是一次愉快的英语阅读之旅，更是一场创业创新的精神激励。在鼓励大众创业万众创新的今天，我们的时代和社会呼唤和需要创业创新人才。这正是我们引进出版这套丛书的目的，希望能对诸位读者有所裨益、有所激励。

书中还讲述了许多有趣的小故事：比如，亚马逊、谷歌、沃尔玛、皮克斯等公司的名称是如何得来的？苹果、麦当劳、耐克、星巴克等公司的标志是如何设计的？可口可乐的秘方是受到何等严密保护的？联邦快递公司标志中那个不易察觉的代表快速和精准的箭头符号又是怎样产生的，等等。这些小故事，不仅让我们增长了知识，读来也饶有趣味，令人难以释卷。

为保证读者英文阅读的流畅，同时又提供必要的支持，本系列丛书我们采用英汉对照的出版形式，英文原文在前，辅以脚注对个别疑难词汇和文化背景知识加以简短注解，中文译文置于书后供读者参考。此外，我们还为丛书的英文部分配备了MP3录音，以满足读者移动学习的需求。

衷心希望读者朋友们会喜欢这套丛书。

上海外语教育出版社

# Contents

<b>Chapter One</b>	Settling in Seattle .....	6
<b>Chapter Two</b>	Getting Big Fast .....	14
<b>Chapter Three</b>	Pushing for Profits .....	22
<b>Chapter Four</b>	Bigger and Better .....	30
<b>Chapter Five</b>	Kindling for the Future .....	38
中文参考译文	.....	46



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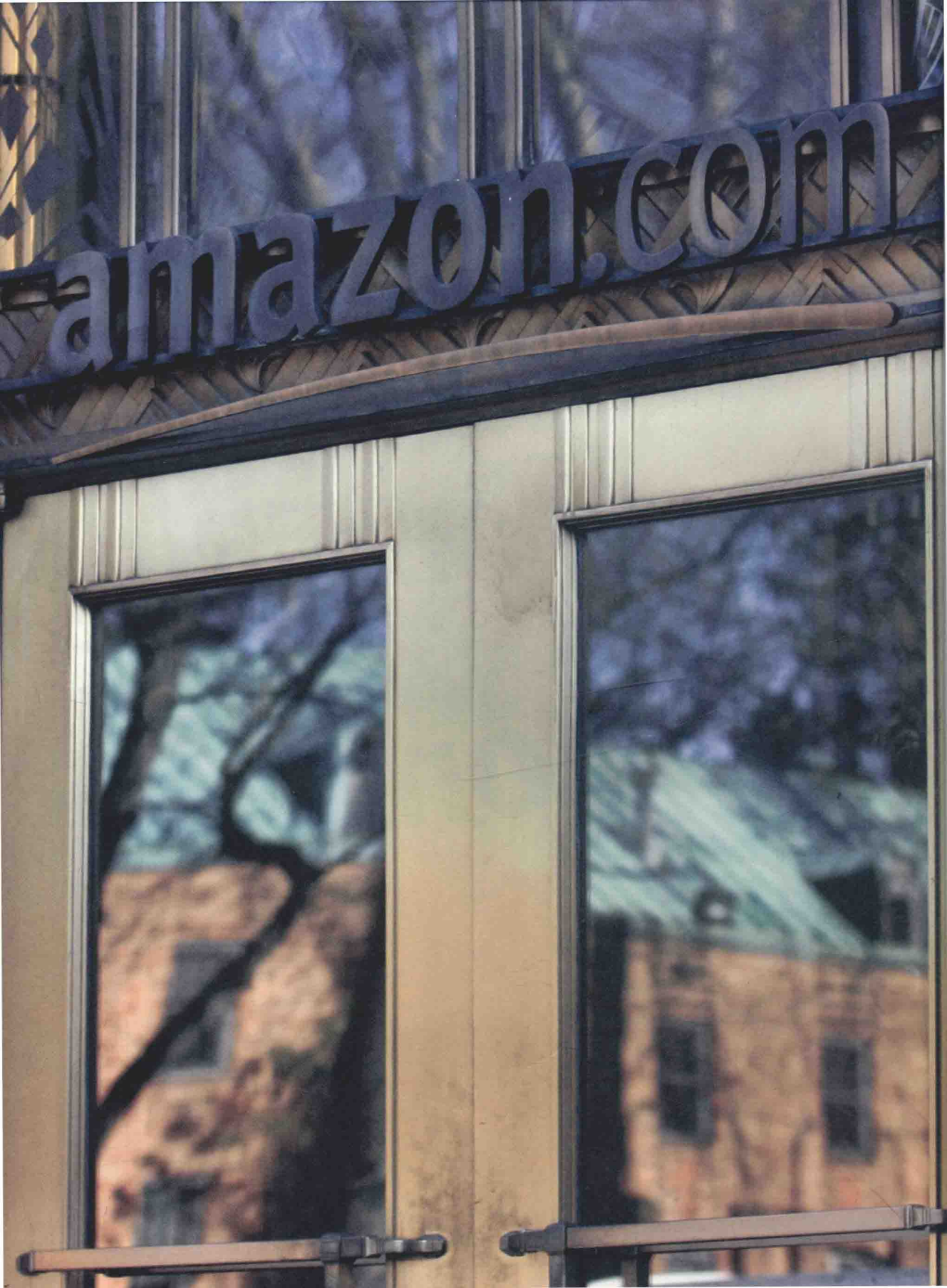
THE STORY OF

# Amazon.com



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SARA GILBERT



amazon.com

Shortly after the Amazon.com website launched on July 16, 1995, a loud beep echoed through the company's offices near downtown Seattle. The beep alerted the Amazon.com staff that the first customer had made a purchase, ordering a copy of the book *Fluid Concepts and Creative Analogies: Computer Models of the Fundamental Mechanisms of Thought* by Douglas Hofstadter. The beep sounded six more times that day and was accompanied each time by a **raucous**<sup>1</sup> cheer from Amazon employees. But those beeps quickly became more frequent—and more distracting to the small staff—as the company logged more than \$12,000 worth of purchases in its first week. As Amazon prepared for a continued **onslaught**<sup>2</sup> of orders, the beeping sound was deemed too annoying, and the function was disabled.

1 **raucous**: 喧闹的      2 **onslaught**: 猛攻



# Settling in Seattle

**T**he moving van filled with all of Jeff Bezos's belongings had left New York City on a summer morning in 1994 and driven westward for almost 24 hours before Bezos called to designate a final destination. Bezos had left his job as senior vice president at a prominent New York investment company to start a business of his own—but he wasn't quite sure where.

A day after giving up the Manhattan apartment he shared with his wife, Mackenzie, he made his decision. He called the movers, loaded a battered 1988 Chevrolet Blazer, and headed to Seattle, Washington.

While Mackenzie drove, Bezos spent the time it took to cross the country working on a rough business plan for the Internet-based bookstore he had spent months researching. He saw enormous potential for growth in the Internet and the World Wide Web, which had only begun to be used by the general public in the fall of 1993. By the spring of 1994, hundreds of thousands of people were already using the Web—and usage was growing at an incredible rate of 2,300 percent per year. “Things don’t grow that fast outside of **petri dishes**,<sup>1</sup>” Bezos said. At that rate, he believed that the Internet could be “invisible today and **ubiquitous**<sup>2</sup> [everywhere] tomorrow.”

<sup>1</sup> **petri dish**: 皮氏培养皿（实验室用于培养细菌等的有盖小玻璃盒）

<sup>2</sup> **ubiquitous**: 无所不在的



Seattle is known for its numerous technology companies, frequent rain, and iconic Space Needle



Bezos knew that he had to build his Web-based business quickly, before every other **entrepreneur**<sup>1</sup> in the world figured out the Web's potential to reach consumers as well. He chose books as his business because they were an almost universal product, with more than three million titles available worldwide. Books were relatively easy to acquire, either directly from publishers or from one of the large distributors already supplying **brick-and-mortar bookstores**<sup>2</sup>. He also knew that individual books were reasonably priced, making them affordable to most people. And Bezos was confident that building his bookstore on the Web, without the costs of maintaining a physical store, would enable him to cut prices more deeply than traditional booksellers could.

Seattle's proximity to one of the largest book distribution centers—Ingram Book Group, in nearby Roseburg, Oregon—played a role in Bezos's decision to move there. Seattle was also gaining prominence as a high-tech city, with such businesses as Microsoft, Nintendo, and other software development firms nearby, making it a great place to find talented computer engineers.

When Bezos started looking for a home to rent in Seattle, he had one primary requirement: It needed a garage. Many of his entrepreneurial heroes had started their businesses in garages, and he wanted to do the same. The house he and Mackenzie found had a one-car garage that had been converted into a family room. Although Bezos joked that it wasn't a completely legitimate garage, that's where he set up his office in November 1994. Together with the two software programmers he had recruited—Sheldon Kaphan and Paul Barton-Davis—he filled the room with file cabinets, bookshelves, a large round table, and two desktop computers. On the walls, the men hung white drawing boards on which they could create visual maps of how the website would work.

Then they got busy working out the technical details of the website, including what it would look like and how it would store information about customers' orders. Relying heavily on open-source software, which programmers write and then make available to other programmers around the world at no charge, Bezos,



**1** entrepreneur: 企业家

**2** brick-and-mortar bookstore: 砖和砂浆砌成的书店, 实体书店



Amazon was originally built around books, soon promoting itself as "the world's largest bookstore"



Kaphan, and Barton-Davis developed the framework for the online bookstore.

At the same time, Bezos consulted catalogs from publishing companies to compile a list of books available for purchase in the United States and around the world. He also tried to secure financial backing for the company, since he had been **footing**<sup>1</sup> all the bills for the business himself. In February 1995, Bezos's father invested more than \$100,000 in exchange for stock in the business, which was incorporated as Amazon.com that same month. Later that year, his mother authorized another stock purchase through a family trust that brought in almost \$150,000.

That addition of cash was enough to hire a few more employees. It also helped move Amazon's operations out of the garage, where all the equipment had pushed the space's sole electrical **circuit breaker**<sup>2</sup> to the limit, and into a larger space in Seattle's industrial district. Bezos joked that they needed access to additional outlets more than they needed additional space. "I know why people move out of garages," he said. "It's not that they run out of room, it's that they run out of electrical power."

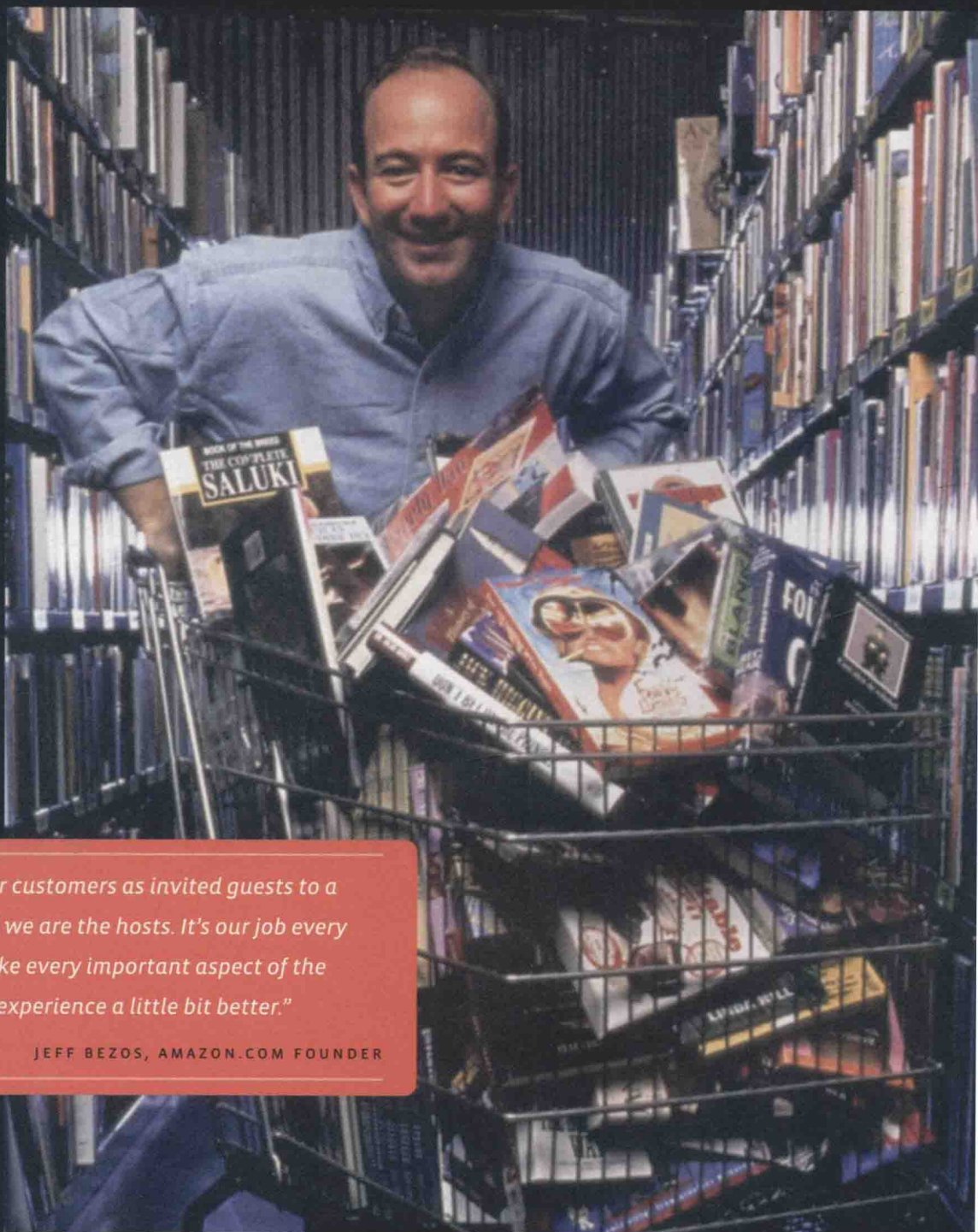
By the time Amazon.com had moved into its new location, all software testing had been completed, and the company was ready to launch its site. On July 16, 1995, the Amazon.com website went live with a bold **tagline**<sup>3</sup> typed underneath its logo: "Earth's Biggest Bookstore." The homepage invited visitors to "Search one million titles" and to "Enjoy consistently low prices."

Although the company was known primarily by word of mouth at that point, sales started trickling in immediately. Then, three days after the launch, new Web search engine Yahoo! placed Amazon.com on its "What's Cool" list, and the amount of traffic on the site expanded rapidly. By the end of the first week, Amazon.com had tallied \$12,438 in orders.

1 **foot:** 支付（帐单或费用）

2 **circuit breaker:** 断路器，断路开关

3 **tagline:**（尤指广告中的）引人注意的话，口号



*"We see our customers as invited guests to a party, and we are the hosts. It's our job every day to make every important aspect of the customer experience a little bit better."*

JEFF BEZOS, AMAZON.COM FOUNDER

Jeff Bezos went to college at Princeton University, studying computer science and electrical engineering