

# [PDF] The New New Thing: A Silicon Valley Story

Michael Lewis, Bruce Reizen - pdf download free book

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**Description:**

Michael Lewis was supposed to be writing about how Jim Clark, the founder of Silicon Graphics and Netscape, was going to turn health care on its ear by launching Healthon, which would bring the vast majority of the industry's transactions online. So why was he spending so much time on a computerized yacht, each feature installed because, as one technician put it, "someone saw it on *Star Trek* and wanted one just like it?"

Much of *The New New Thing*, to be fair, is devoted to the Healtheon story. It's just that Jim Clark doesn't do startups the way most people do. "He had ceased to be a businessman," as Lewis puts it, "and become a conceptual artist." After coming up with the basic idea for Healtheon, securing the initial seed money, and hiring the people to make it happen, Clark concentrated on the building of *Hyperion*, a sailboat with a 197-foot mast, whose functions are controlled by 25 SGI workstations (a boat that, if he wanted to, Clark could log onto and steer--from anywhere in the world). Keeping up with Clark proves a monumental challenge--"you didn't interact with him," Lewis notes, "so much as hitch a ride on the back of his life"--but one that the author rises to meet with the same frenetic energy and humor of his previous books, and .

Like those two books, *The New New Thing* shows how the pursuit of power at its highest levels can lead to the very edges of the surreal, as when Clark tries to fill out an investment profile for a Swiss bank, where he intends to deposit less than .05 percent of his financial assets. When asked to assess his attitude toward financial risk, Clark searches in vain for the category of "people who sought to turn ten million dollars into one billion in a few months" and finally tells the banker, "I think this is for a different ... person." There have been a lot of profiles of Silicon Valley *companies* and the way they've revamped the economy in the 1990s--*The New New Thing* is one of the first books fully to depict the sort of man that has made such companies possible. --Ron Hogan --This text refers to the edition.

**From Publishers Weekly** While it purports to look at the business world of Silicon Valley through the lens of one man, that one man, Jim Clark, is so domineering that the book is essentially about Clark. No matter: Clark is as successful and interesting an example of Homo siliconus as any writer is likely to find. Lewis (*Liar's Poker*) has created an absorbing and extremely literate profile of one of America's most successful entrepreneurs. Clark has created three companies--Silicon Graphics, Netscape (now part of America Online) and Healtheon--each valued at more than \$1 billion by Wall Street. Lewis was apparently given unlimited access to Clark, a man motivated in equal parts by a love of the technology he helps to create and a desire to prove something to a long list of people whom he believes have done him wrong throughout his life (especially his former colleagues at Silicon Graphics). As Lewis looks at the various roles of venture capitalists, entrepreneurs and programmers and at how these very different mindsets fit together in the anatomy of big deals, he gives readers a sense of how the Valley works. But the heart of the book remains Clark, who simultaneously does everything from supervise the creation of what may be the world's largest sloop to creating his fourth company (currently in the works). Lewis does a good job of putting Clark's accomplishments in context, and if he is too respectful of Clark's privacy (several marriages and children are mentioned but not elaborated on), he provides a detailed look at the professional life of one of the men who have changed the world as we know it. (Oct.)

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