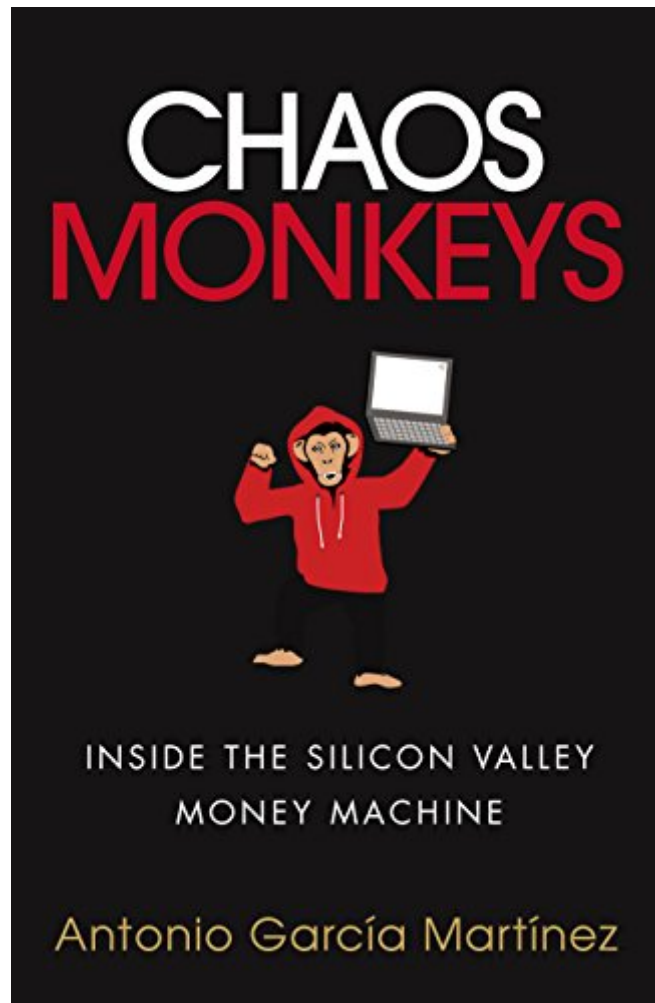


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Chaos Monkeys: Inside The Silicon Valley Money Machine



Synopsis

An adrenaline-fuelled exposé of life inside the tech bubble, Chaos Monkeys lays bare the secrets, power plays and lifestyle excesses of the visionaries, grunts, sociopaths, opportunists and money cowboys who are revolutionising our world. Written by startup CEO and industry provocateur Antonio García-Martínez, this is Liar's Poker meets The Social Network. Computer engineers use 'chaos monkey' software to wreak havoc and test system robustness. Similarly, tech entrepreneurs like Antonio García-Martínez are society's chaos monkeys – their innovations disrupt every aspect of our lives, from transportation (Uber) and holidays (Airbnb) to television (Netflix) and dating (Tinder) – all in search of the perfect business miracle. Describing himself as 'high-strung, fast-talking, and wired on a combination of caffeine, fear, and greed at all times', García-Martínez left Wall Street to make his fortune in Silicon Valley, becoming CEO of his own startup, before bailing and being poached by Facebook's nascent advertising team. Here he turned users' data into profit for COO Sheryl Sandberg and chairman and CEO Mark 'Zuck' Zuckerberg. Forced out of Facebook in the wake of a bitter internal product war, García-Martínez took his unique brand of entrepreneurial hyperactivity to rivals Twitter. Along the way, he got into a lot of trouble with a lot of people, brewed illegal beer on the Facebook campus (accidentally flooding Zuckerberg's desk), lived on a yacht, raced sport cars on the highway, and enthusiastically pursued the lifestyle of an overpaid Silicon Valley mercenary. In Chaos Monkeys he tells you HOW – and HOW NOT – to make a fortune through startups and digital marketing. Highly entertaining and always offering genuine insight, García-Martínez unravels the chaotic evolution of social media and online marketing. From startups and credit derivatives to Big Brother and data tracking, social media monetisation and digital 'privacy', he shares both his scathing observations and outrageous antics, taking us on a subversive and very funny tour of the fascinatingly insular and unbelievably wealthy tech industry.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Prepare to be taken on a personal deep-dive inside the Silicon Valley tech world, exposing you to some of the highs, lows and plainly bizarre things that can be commonplace there. This is no dry, theoretical read but an exposé from somebody who has been bouncing around many tech companies, some well-known, some less so, and has the battle scars to show for it. Yet this compelling, informative read does not turn you off, even if it doesn't automatically make you envy and crave its lifestyle either. Clearly written in an autobiographical style, the reader is treated to a bit of insider knowledge from the industry and given a fair bit of personal colour too with interesting side tales such as how the author brewed beer on Facebook's campus and flooded Zuckerberg's desk. There is a purpose to the book, of course, other than to entertain and that is how the reader may make a good living through start-ups and digital marketing, as long as they can avoid the negatives and cope with the often screwed-up, hype-driven behaviour they will experience. It is not a "How-to" guide in itself as the reader must do a lot of the legwork yet the determined, in-tune soul will be able to pluck out the knowledge data-points in-between laughing, crying and being shocked. It can form part of an attitudinal boot camp. Even if the actual subject is not interesting to the reader, perhaps because they know they NEVER want to work in this industry, the way things twist and turn and develop still can be. It is rather addictive and quite voyeuristic at times, such as reading about a somewhat strange hamburger eating game. An ideal book to take with you on your travels for a light, but shocking read. Just try not to drink and read at the same time if you don't want to snort liquid out through your nose. Should you have any intention on working within this industry then this book can provide some additional useful intelligence.

Many of us have started tech businesses all over the world. So heart warming and reassuring to relate one's own experiences to those in this book. Entrepreneurs in this segment tend to beat themselves up but after reading this book you can all be somewhat more easy on yourself. Easy to read and so funny but true in many ways.

Chaos Monkeys has some interesting insights into Silicon Valley start up and corporate culture, which makes it worth reading. However, the book is overly wordy, with many elaborate analogies used to hammer home points that are boring and superfluous at best, or demonstrate the author missing the mark when trying to deliver something profound. Some of the anecdotes (which were probably amusing or thrilling to the author at the time), don't add much to the narrative and come across as filler, or give the impression that "you had to be there" to really appreciate it. Overall, for what good content it does offer, the book could have been half the length.

This is a tremendous book!

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