

How Jeff Bezos is Taking the World into the Future

While most entrepreneurs are limited to disrupting and advancing a single industry in marginal steps by their resources or interests, others are determined to push humanity forward as a whole. Some, like Elon Musk, aim to do this by simultaneously transforming multiple industries, while others, such as Boyan Slat and others with fewer resources, pursue more targeted projects with the aim of triggering global change. Arguably the greatest of these visionary super-entrepreneurs is Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon, and briefly the richest man in the world early in 2017 when his net worth broke \$90 billion US dollars.

Through Amazon, Bezos disrupted the retail industry and transformed how hundreds of millions of people buy products online, but that was only the beginning. He also launched Blue Origin, a secretive competitor to Elon Musk's SpaceX and Richard Branson's Virgin Galactic, all while proving himself as a driving force behind other unrelated disruptive businesses.

Bezos' Big Picture Vision

As the valedictorian of his class in 1982, an 18 year-old Bezos gave [an interview](#) to the Miami Herald that must have sounded more like an expression of naive optimism, rather than the ambitions of what would become one of the most powerful people on earth. In it, Bezos talked not about becoming a wealthy, successful CEO, but about the future of humanity. He dreamed of evacuating humans from the Earth entirely, turning the planet into a sort of nature preserve, while humanity expanded into space.

While the Jeff Bezos of today is certainly more focused on the business of doing business, he's still a big believer in thinking big. His broader goals and long-term vision have been instrumental in the success of Amazon as well as his other ventures. He believes that great businesses should focus on goals that reach beyond themselves. After all, the simple pursuit of short-term profit isn't nearly as inspiring or conducive to disruptive innovation as the goal of reinventing the world for your customers.

Driving disruption

Amazon opened its doors in Jeff Bezos' garage in 1994. It began as an online bookstore, but expanded to provide products of all kinds after experiencing rapid growth in its first few years. Since that time, Amazon has disrupted brick-and-mortar shopping, transformed how we find and acquire the products we need, and changed how and how quickly goods are delivered all over the world. Even now, Amazon is testing even faster drone-delivery systems. If Amazon were content to simply continue to dominate online shopping, many of these globally disruptive advancements would never have been made. That drive to always push forward into the future was the root of Amazon's success, and it's this force that will keep Amazon at the forefront for the foreseeable future.

Thinking even bigger with Blue Origin

While it's unlikely that Bezos will ever try to fulfill his childhood dream of seeing the planet as a park, he has proven to be completely serious about bringing the space age to the general

public. With the founding of Blue Origin in 2000, he has begun to pursue his dreams of commercialising space, and bringing about “an era when millions of people would be living and working in space.” 17 years later, Blue Origin only just landed its first paying customer earlier this year.

Despite this, the company has made steady developmental progress and enjoyed stable funding out of Bezos’ own pocket. He views his project as a powerful long-term investment that will allow for the commercial usage of space for resource acquisition, energy production, and manufacturing. This is in contrast to SpaceX’s greater mission, which is primarily centered around transportation and colonisation, and places Bezos in a unique position to expand the global economy beyond the globe itself.

Giving a leg up to progress

While most entrepreneurs might feel more than occupied by their own ventures, Bezos continuously works to advance other disruptive businesses besides his own. Many of these have become household names, and some have become integral presences in the lives of everyday consumers. In 1998, Bezos became the fourth angel investor to help launch Google with an investment of \$250,000. Later, he would also invest in Airbnb, Twitter, and Uber, among many others.

Over the course of his career, Jeff Bezos has directly and indirectly affected many aspects of the lives of consumers, from how we commute and travel, to how we buy our products, to how we communicate with both friends and strangers online. Along the way, he has amassed an incredible net worth of over \$83 billion US dollars, and has positioned himself as one of the world’s most influential figures in the global economy. His example serves to show entrepreneurs that mundane business goals are often best achieved in the pursuit of larger ambitions.

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