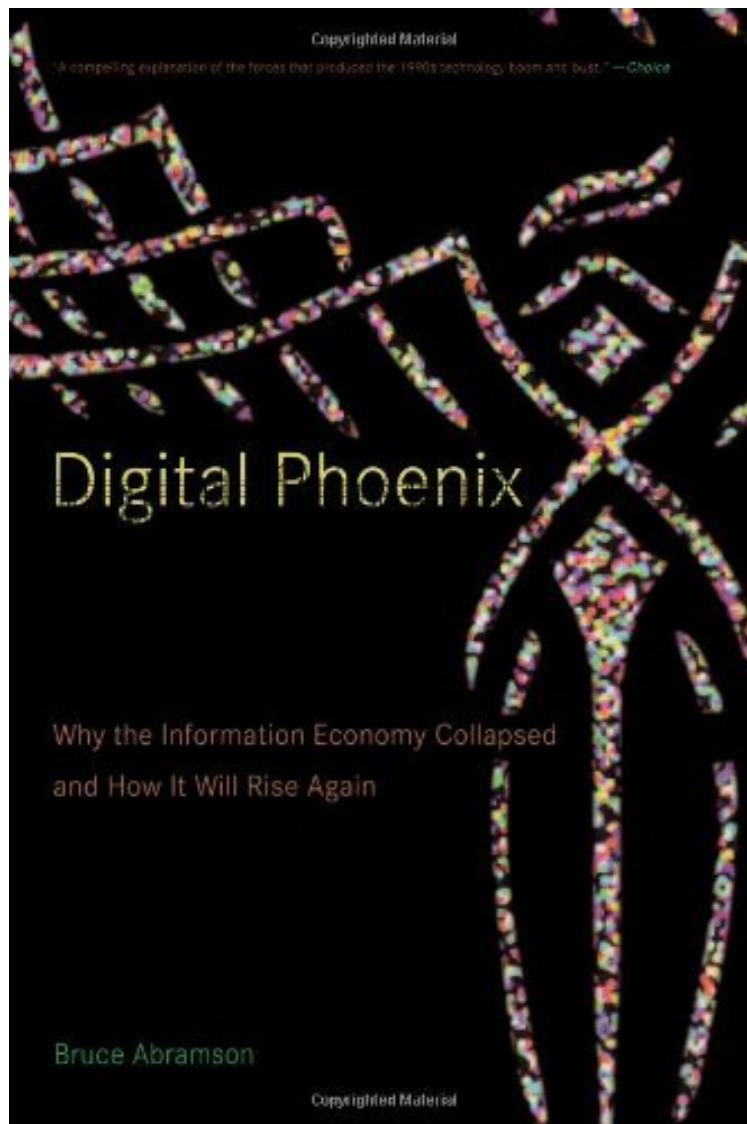


(Get free) Digital Phoenix: Why the Information Economy Collapsed and How It Will Rise Again (MIT Press)

## Digital Phoenix: Why the Information Economy Collapsed and How It Will Rise Again (MIT Press)

*Bruce Abramson*

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**Bruce Abramson : Digital Phoenix: Why the Information Economy Collapsed and How It Will Rise Again (MIT Press)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Digital Phoenix: Why the Information Economy Collapsed and How It Will Rise Again (MIT Press):

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Essential reading for anyone in the Information EconomyBy BabkahFinally, a book that explains what happened and where we're going. Abramson provides a lucid framework for

understanding the dynamics of the information economy--a virtual theory of everything. Innovation isn't enough; bubble's are normal; a regulatory and legal framework is necessary for consistent advancement; most important, the choices we make now as a society will affect the direction and growth of the information economy. Read this book-- then everything else you read about about the technology, law and economics of the information economy will make sense.2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Crash Course in the Information AgeBy Communications ProfAbramson is the ultimate story teller. This collection of essays provides a multi-disciplinary foundation to understanding how we became global citizens of the Information Age. Whether your interest lies in law, economics, politics or computer science, you will find the time invested in the book very worthwhile. Read it once for an overview; read it again to become truly knowledgeable. Keep it at hand as a reference.6 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Great storytellingBy Critical ReaderDon't be scared...this is MIT press, but popular writing. Abramson nails it: why it happened, what's apt to happen in the future. But most of all, this is a great read--the stories are told with such panache that you hardly realize that you are tackling cutting edge issues in law, economics and, yes, politics. Worthy of reading twice: once for the stories, once for the underlying arguments.

While we were waiting for the Internet to make us rich -- back when we thought all we had to do was to buy lottery tickets called dotcom shares -- we missed the real story of the information economy. That story, says Bruce Abramson in Digital Phoenix, took place at the intersection of technology, law, and economics. It unfolded through Microsoft's manipulation of software markets, through open source projects like Linux, and through the file-sharing adventures that Napster enabled. Linux and Napster in particular exploited newly enabled business models to make information sharing cheap and easy; both systems met strong opposition from entrenched interests intent on preserving their own profits. These scenarios set the stage for the future of the information economy, a future in which each new technology will threaten powerful incumbents -- who will, in turn, fight to retard this "dangerous new direction" of progress.Disentangling the technological, legal, and economic threads of the story, Abramson argues that the key to the entire information economy -- understanding the past and preparing for the future -- lies in our approach to intellectual property and idea markets. The critical challenge of the information age, he says, is to motivate the creation and dissemination of ideas. After discussing relevant issues in intellectual property and antitrust law, the economics of competition, and artificial intelligence and software engineering, Abramson tells the information economy's formative histories: the Microsoft antitrust trial, the open-source movement, and (in a chapter called "The Computer Ate My Industry") the advent of digital music. Finally, he looks toward the future, examining some ways that intellectual property reform could power economic growth and showing how the information economy will reshape the ways we think about business, employment, society, and public policy -- how the information economy, in fact, can make us all rich, as consumers and producers, if not as investors.

From Publishers WeeklyAbramson, a lawyer with a Ph.D. in computer science and an interest in microeconomics, has an explanation for the dot-com bubble's collapse based in classical economics: confused by network theorists, giddy investors assumed well-timed dot-com startups would reap monopoly profits from a geometrically expanding Web (hence the bubble), while, in fact, the Internet proved a hotbed of cutthroat price competition where profits are hard to come by (hence the collapse). With that out of the way, the bulk of Abramson's book is taken up with what he sees as the engine for new growth: intellectual property rights. Case studies include the Microsoft antitrust case, the rise of Linux as an open source alternative to Windows, and the recording industry's battle against free downloading channels like Napster. Abramson gives an intricate but lucid and engaging account of these controversies, illuminating the interplay of copyright and patent law, technology and marketing. He makes a case both for the government's role in policing abuses of intellectual property rights;Microsoft, he believes, is indeed a monopolist;and for a relaxed intellectual property regime that fosters competition and innovation. (June) Copyright copy; Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Abramson gives an intricate but lucid and engaging account of these controversies, illuminating the interplay of copyright and patent law, technology and marketing. He makes a case both for the government's role in policing abuses of intellectual property rights Microsoft, he believes, is indeed a monopolistand for a relaxed intellectual property regime that fosters competition and innovation." Publishers Weekly" Digital Phoenix is a brilliant explanation of the law, economics, and technology behind the information technology revolution in my view, the best book on this topic on the market." Robert Litan, Vice President, Research and Policy, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation"The Microsoft antitrust trial, the ascent of Linux, the rise and fall of Napster Abramson not only masterfully retells each of these foundational stories of the digital economy, he explains why they mattered, how they fit into the 'New Economy,' and what they portend for the next information technology boom. This is mandatory reading for anyone who wants to understand what makes our digital economy tick." Fred von Lohmann, Electronic Frontier Foundation"A compelling explanation of the forces that produced the 1990s technology boom and bust." Choice" Digital Phoenix is a brilliant explanation of the law, economics, and technology behind the information technology revolutionin my view, the best book on this topic on the market." Robert Litan , Vice President, Research and Policy, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation"The Microsoft antitrust trial, the ascent of

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"Stuart Biegel explores the dilemmas of present-day cyberspace with the confidence of a native Netizen, the sharp eye of an anthropologist, and the incisiveness of a lawyer. The result is a book that is true to the spirit of the Net without deifying it--a nuanced study that synthesizes the best understandings we have of when, where, and how to apply the elements of the contemporary regulatory toolbox to the global Internet."--Jonathan Zittrain, Professor of Internet Governance and Regulation, University of Oxford

"This is a timely and sophisticated study of how three multilateral development banks have dealt with demands to incorporate a serious environmental agenda into their lending strategies for Central and Eastern Europe. Gutner shows how each institution's shareholder commitment to a green agenda interacts with the overall development strategies of that institution to affect its ability to implement successful environmental projects in recipient countries. This is an important study of some of the challenges international institutions face in responding to increasingly diverse demands from their expanding constituencies."--Steven Weber, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley, author of *The Success of Open Source*

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*Communication Researchers and Policymaking* offers a rich and kaleidoscopic showcase of ways in which communications researchers can contribute to pressing telecommunications policy issues. In assembling this volume, Sandra Braman has sounded a call for the field to reinvigorate its goals and methods to suit a breathtaking set of cross-disciplinary challenges."--Jonathan Zittrain, Professor of Internet Governance and Regulation, University of Oxford

"*Digital Phoenix* is a brilliant explanation of the law, economics, and computer science behind the information technology revolution -- in my view, the best book on this topic on the market. Even readers who think they know something about IT will learn from it. Those who are less well acquainted with the subject but want to learn will find it a thoroughly enjoyable reference that will tell them what they need to know. It will also go a long way toward enabling them to catch up to what the 'experts' think they know about the IT revolution."--Robert E. Litan, Vice President, Research and Policy, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

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"Turow has beautifully sketched the rich history of customer categorization -- attempts both large and small to place consumers into boxes and then narrow their choices or fields of view accordingly. His analysis comes at a time when electronic commerce, both on- and offline, is poised to offer more boxes and do more with them. He offers valuable policy recommendations to help customers make sense of the corporate terrain they inhabit, and explains why 'privacy policy' won't solve most of these problems."--Jonathan Zittrain, Professor of Internet Governance and Regulation, University of Oxford

About the Author

Bruce Abramson received a PhD in computer science from Columbia University and a law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center. He has held positions with the faculties of the University of Southern California and Carnegie Mellon. His consulting and legal practice, based in Washington, DC, focuses on issues related to the digital economy. Abramson is also the author of The Informationist blog, which chronicles "life during the transition from industrial age to information age."