

Computer Science E-1

Understanding Computers and the Internet

Lecture 12: Transformis L.L.C.

Thursday, 15 December 2005

Omri Traub

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Mr. Omri Traub

Founder, Transformis L.L.C.

Mr. Omri Traub graduated from Harvard University in 1998 with a B.A. in Computer Science, summa cum laude. Subsequently, as a Ph.D. candidate at Harvard, Mr.

Traub did research on algorithms for more effective program compilation and code optimization. His research work has been published in major international conferences on programming languages and computer architecture.

Mr. Traub is a two-time winner of the International Student Research Competition, graduate and undergraduate divisions, sponsored by the ACM—the international organization of computer scientists. For his undergraduate research he received an honorable mention from the Computer Research Association's Outstanding Undergraduate Award, and an honorable mention from the Hoopes Prize for an Outstanding Senior Thesis at Harvard. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, a two-time winner of Harvard's Certificate for Excellence in Teaching, and a recipient of a Microsoft Technical Scholarship.

Mr. Traub's work experience is diverse. He has worked in Hewlett Packard's research labs, held a faculty position at the Harvard Summer School, and developed web sites for Harvard's IT division.

In September 1998, Mr. Traub founded Transformis L.L.C. to bring the power of XML technology to web developers. Transformis released the first Web development environment for the Extensible Stylesheet Language, entitled Stylus, in June 1999. He currently works at Liquid Machines Inc., a startup based in Lexington, Massachusetts, delivering data security software.

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Startup.com

"As an ailing economy reduces high-flying Internet companies around the country to bankruptcy, acclaimed documentary team Chris Hegedus, D A Pennebaker and newcomer Jehane Noujaim take a behind-the-scenes look at the volatile start-up phenomenon, chronicling the turbulent development of govWorks.com, an award-winning Internet site that facilitates interaction between local government, citizens and businesses. Turning a familiar headline story into a high-pressure personal odyssey, Startup.com follows the trials of partners Kaleil Isaza Tuzman and Tom Herman, best friends since childhood, as they progress from being rookies with only a business plan to assuming the leadership of a nationally recognized Internet company struggling to survive an inhospitable economy.

With millions of dollars of venture capital at stake, Isaza Tuzman and Herman wrestle with the growing pains of a new business in the fickle Internet community, tackling technical difficulties, chartering the unpredictable venture capitalist waters, and out-smarting copy-cat competition. In one tense sequence, the partners receive a \$17 million offer from a venture capital firm that they must sign that day, without leaving the office. There's only one problem: they can't locate their lawyer on the phone. GovWorks.com even becomes the victim of sabotage when its offices are broken into and valuable documents, outlining business and marketing strategies, are stolen. In the end, however, none of these challenges prepares Isaza Tuzman or Herman for their own conflict over the management of govWorks.com., a conflict that will not only endanger their company and their jobs, but will irrevocably alter their lifelong friendship.

Picking up where today's headlines leave off, Startup.com examines the current troubled state of the Internet revolution, in which inflated ideals and dreams of instant wealth have been supplanted by harsh economic realities and broken promises. Graced with sensitive storytelling and a dynamic, intimate cinema-verite style, the film also manages to personalize this crisis with intensely private views of the people involved. More than just an insider look at an industry in flux, Startup.com becomes a deft exploration of friendship and the conflict between personal and business relationships."



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