

Michael J. Saylor (born February 4, 1965) is an American entrepreneur and business executive, who co-founded and leads [MicroStrategy](#), a company which provides [business intelligence](#), mobile software, and [cloud-based services](#). Saylor authored the 2012 book [The Mobile Wave: How Mobile Intelligence Will Change Everything](#). He is also the sole trustee of [Saylor Academy](#), a provider of free online education. As of 2016, Saylor has been granted 31 patents and has 9 additional applications under review.^[2]

MicroStrategy

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Life^[edit]

Saylor was born in Lincoln, Nebraska on February 4, 1965 and spent his early years on various [Air Force](#) bases around the world, as his father was an Air Force chief master sergeant. When Saylor was 11, the family settled in Fairborn, Ohio, near the [Wright-Patterson Air Force Base](#).^{[3][4]}

In 1983, Saylor enrolled at the [Massachusetts Institute of Technology](#) (MIT) on an Air Force ROTC scholarship.^{[3][4]} He joined the [Theta Delta Chi](#) fraternity, through which he met the future co-founder of MicroStrategy, [Sanju K. Bansal](#).^{[4][5]} He graduated from MIT in 1987, with a double major in aeronautics and astronautics; and science, technology, and society.

A medical condition prevented him from becoming a pilot,^{[3][4]} and instead, he got a job with a consulting firm, The Federal Group, Inc. in 1987, where he focused on computer simulation modeling for a software integration company.^[5] In 1988, Saylor became an internal consultant at [DuPont](#), where he developed computer models to help the company anticipate change in its key markets. The simulations predicted that there would be a recession in many of DuPont's major markets in 1990.^{[3][5]}

MicroStrategy^[edit]

Further information: [MicroStrategy](#)

Using the funds from [DuPont](#), Saylor founded [MicroStrategy](#) with [Sanju Bansal](#), his MIT fraternity brother.^[4] The company began developing software for data mining, then focused on software for business intelligence. In 1992, MicroStrategy won a \$10 million contract with [McDonald's](#) to develop applications to analyze the efficiency of its promotions. The contract with McDonald's led Saylor to realize that his company could create business intelligence software that would allow companies to use their own data for insights into their businesses.^{[4][5][3][6][7]}

Saylor took the company public in June 1998, with an [initial stock offering](#) of 4 million shares priced at \$12 each.^[8] The stock price doubled on the first day of trading.^[9] He owns over 39,521 units of the company worth over \$4,804,963.^[10] By early 2000, Saylor's net worth reached \$7 billion, and the *Washingtonian* reported that he was the wealthiest man in the Washington D.C. area.^[3]

In 1996, Saylor was named [KPMG](#) Washington High-Tech Entrepreneur of the Year.^{[5][11]} In 1997, [Ernst & Young](#) named Saylor its Software Entrepreneur of the Year, and the following

year, *Red Herring Magazine* recognized him as one of its Top 10 Entrepreneurs for 1998.^[12] Saylor was also featured by the *MIT Technology Review* as an "Innovator Under 35" in 1999.^[13]

SEC investigation^[edit]

In March 2000, the [U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission](#) (SEC) brought charges against Saylor and two other MicroStrategy executives for the company's inaccurate reporting of financial results for the preceding two years.^[14] In December 2000, Saylor settled with the SEC without admitting wrongdoing by paying \$350,000 in penalties and a personal [disgorgement](#) of \$8.3 million.^{[15][16][17]} As a result of the restatement of results, the company's stock declined in value and Saylor's net worth fell by \$6 billion.^{[18][19]}

COVID-19 response criticism^[edit]

In a 3,000-word memo to all MicroStrategy employees on March 16, 2020 entitled "My Thoughts on [COVID-19](#)," Saylor criticized countermeasures then being recommended against the disease, saying that it is "soul-stealing and debilliating [*sic*] to embrace the notion of [social distancing](#) & economic hibernation." Saylor also refused to close MicroStrategy's offices unless he was legally required to do so. The full content of the memo appeared on [Reddit](#) for only a few minutes and was reposted in the *Washington Business Journal*.^{[20][21]}

Bitcoin investment^[edit]

On MicroStrategy's quarterly earnings conference call in July 2020, Saylor announced his intention for MicroStrategy to explore purchasing [Bitcoin](#), [gold](#), or other [alternative assets](#) instead of holding cash. The following month, MicroStrategy used \$250 million from its cash stockpile to purchase 21,454 Bitcoin.^[22]

MicroStrategy later added \$175 million of Bitcoin to its holdings in September 2020 and another \$50 million in early December 2020. On December 11, 2020, MicroStrategy announced that it had sold \$650 million in convertible senior notes, taking on debt to increase its Bitcoin holdings to over \$1 billion worth. On December 21, 2020 MicroStrategy announced their total holdings include 70,470 bitcoins purchased for \$1.125 billion at an average price of \$15,964 per bitcoin.^[23] Saylor, who controls 70% of MicroStrategy's shares, dismissed concerns by observers that the move is turning MicroStrategy into a Bitcoin investment firm or [exchange-traded fund](#) (ETF).^[24]

The Mobile Wave^[edit]

In June 2012, Saylor released *The Mobile Wave: How Mobile Intelligence Will Change Everything*, published by Perseus Books, which discusses trends in mobile technology and their future impact on commerce, healthcare, education, and the developing world.^[25] The book appeared on the *New York Times Best Seller list*, where it was ranked number seven in hardcover non-fiction books in August 2012,^[26] and was ranked number five in hardcover business books on the *Wall Street Journal's* Best-Sellers list in July 2012.^[27]

Saylor Academy^[edit]

In 1999, Saylor established The Saylor Foundation (later named [Saylor Academy](#)), of which he is the sole trustee. To support his goal of making free education available to all students, Saylor.org was launched in 2008 as the free education initiative of The Saylor Foundation.^[28] The site now offers roughly 100 college courses that are supported by free content from universities including MIT and [Carnegie Mellon University](#), that students can access without having to pass through an admissions process.^[29]