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Front row (left to right): Bill Gates, Andrea Lewis, Marla Wood, and Paul Allen. Middle row: Bob O'Rear, Bob Greenberg, Marc McDonald, and Gordon Letwin. Back row: Steve Wood, Bob Wallace, and Jim Lane. Not pictured is Miriam Lubow. Microsoft

## [The Return of the Original Microsoft Geek Icons, 30 Years Later](#)

### *Meet eleven of Microsoft's twelve original employees*

Microsoft was founded in 1975 by Bill Gates and Paul Allen and until 1979, it was located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. 33 years later, Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates is ready to step down from his day-to-day role with the company he co-founded. Tomorrow, June 27, 2008 is Gates' last day at Microsoft. In honor of this occasion, the Redmond giant recreated the Iconic Albuquerque photo featuring eleven of the twelve employees that the company had at that time. The images included with this article bear testimony over how time has passed over the people that virtually gave birth to Microsoft. The original photo dates back all the way to 1978, the last year that Microsoft was based in Albuquerque. As of January 1, 1979, the company was moved to Bellevue, Washington, and then to the Redmond campus on February 26, 1986. "We thought, wow, God, if we're successful, maybe we'll have 30 people," Allen recalls, now that Microsoft has reached 80,000 employees worldwide. "Bill was Bill," Allen added. "I think Bill tried to set a very high benchmark. He wanted to make sure everybody emulated that work ethic." Albuquerque was not only the birthplace of Microsoft, but also of the company's now world famous mantra 'A computer on every desk and in every home running Microsoft software'. And even though today there are not many people around the world who can stand along Bill Gates and not be overshadowed, back in Albuquerque, the Microsoft co-founder was nothing more than a kid. All the original employees had left the company by the mid 1990s, even Bob Wallace, who is not featured in the latest images because he passed away in 2002. But someone who appears in the re-created images, but is missing from the original pictures is Miriam Lubow, Microsoft's receptionist. "One morning in comes this kid, sneakers and blue jeans and hair disheveled, and I'm thinking this kid doesn't belong here, what is he doing? He runs by my office and goes into the computer room that Steve said 'nobody should go in there; it's private. Don't let anybody in there.' I said, look Steve, this kid runs in there, and he's in that room, and he's working like he owns this place, and Steve says, 'Well, you know what, he does. He's your boss. He's the president.'" Microsoft was moved from Albuquerque because it had problems finding qualified people. The original group photo came courtesy of Bob Greenberg. The portrait was done by a local photographer in Albuquerque. "It does capture a moment in time and the spirit that we had there in the office," Allen said. "You see we're all smiling. We're all really having fun. When you try to explain to people about the early days of Microsoft, it's just hard to explain how much fun it was. Some people, especially Bill, would sleep in the office. You'd come in the office, sometimes you'd see his feet sticking out the door."