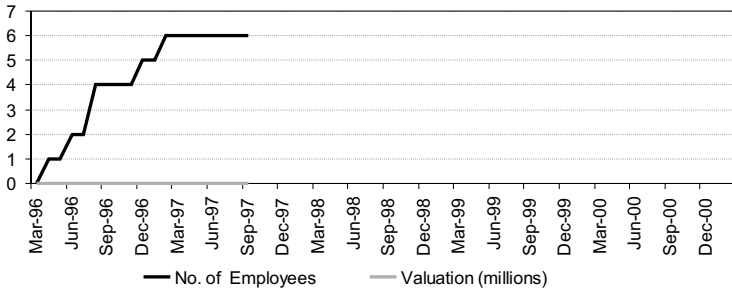


# September 1997



## New Rules for the New Economy

Twelve dependable principles for thriving in a turbulent world  
... 12: The Law of Inefficiencies ... In the Network Economy,  
don't solve problems, seek opportunities.

*Wired*  
*September 1997*

# Top Billing



It made sense at the time. We made practical decisions and underwent simple transitions. I'm not sure it could have gone any other way.

I was getting frustrated, and a little bit insecure. Thousands of people—the keepers of the world's health—were telling us that we were helping them. The demand for information from our website went well beyond our projections. *Certainly, our service to the world's hospitals should be valued by someone? Aren't successful businesses built on satisfying needs? Why—if I believed so much in Neoforma—couldn't I convince investors as well as I could effectively anticipate customer needs?*

In our early days, I had taken the lead over Jeff in talking to potential investors during our presentations. I knew more about the details of our services and I was good at convincing investors of the value of our services. But it had become clear that I was not as effective at promoting the financial potential of Neoforma.

Potential investors wanted us to show them that we were going to build a huge demand, very quickly, for something very expensive. Ultimately, that's what I wanted too, but in a much more organic way. I wanted to build the value for the customers, then prove the value to the company. Investors wanted us to prove the value to the company, then build it for the customers.

Jeff was much more adept at telling investors what they wanted to hear. With stunning aptitude, he became skilled at using the investor's language, painting pictures of what we would grow into and how we would leverage the huge size of the healthcare market. He was comfortable with the lack of connecting dots to a particular destination, such as an IPO. I was not.

We argued about whether it was right for us to project an image of ourselves as a very large corporation selling hundreds of millions of dollars of software and services each year. We didn't doubt that this