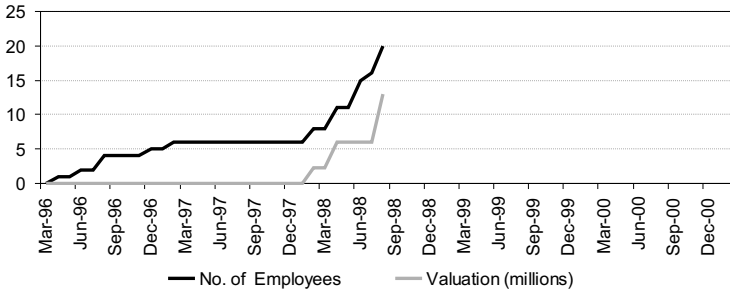


August 1998



Online bookseller Amazon.com said Tuesday it agreed to buy Junglee, a software company that makes it easy to comparison shop on the Web, and PlanetAll, a Web-based address book and reminder service.

Under terms of the transactions, Amazon will issue 1.6 million of its shares—worth \$173.2 million based on Monday's closing stock price of \$108.25—for all shares and options of Junglee . . .

*Wired News Report
August 4, 1998*

A Flashback



A company's psyche develops slowly, imperceptibly. Old patterns merge with new traditions to form an entirely new cultural tapestry.

Just before graduating from architectural college, I burned out of school in spectacular fashion. I used the excuse that I had run out of money and jumped into a chaotic cycle of exploration. I was convinced that the key to discovering life's internal mysteries and potential was buried under the comfortable assumptions I had come to rely on. I broke up a long relationship with the woman I had lived with. I drifted from job to job. I spent every spare moment reading, thinking, and drawing.

While I was very efficient at my day jobs, my real interest was in my evening explorations. Each new discovery brought renewed vigor to my pursuit of life's secrets. Work became increasingly distracting. In an attempt to break completely with my natural tendencies, I moved through a series of increasingly dire living situations, at times going for days without money or food.

While designing a restaurant in a Southern California tourist beach community, I met two quirky local craftspeople, a married couple. They liked the odd, and strangely controversial, wooden sign I had designed for the restaurant and asked them to build. We kind of hit it off.

Vern, the wood carver, was an edgy, evasive man, with a persistent skin condition that changed the way he looked from day to day. Mary, the painter, was a thin, effusive, New Age woman, with curly hair and desperate eyes. They lived with their seven-year-old son and two-year-old daughter.

When they learned that I was sleeping on the restaurant owner's living room floor with restaurant staff, they offered to rent me the empty room under their rented house. I knew that they lived near the