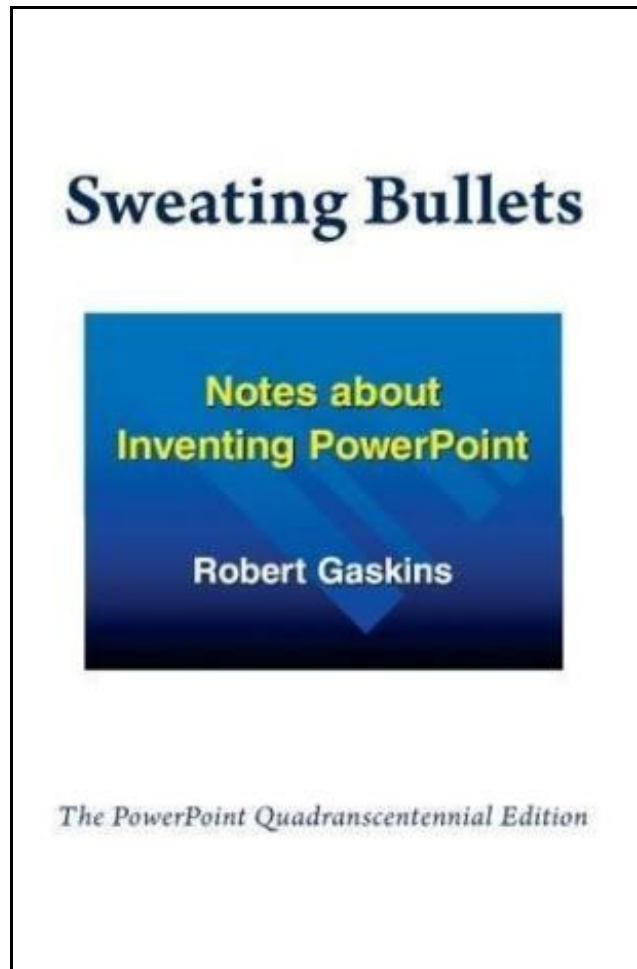


Sweating Bullets: Notes about Inventing PowerPoint



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(Dr. Rowena Wiegand)

SWEATING BULLETS: NOTES ABOUT INVENTING POWERPOINT



Vinland Books. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 512 pages. Dimensions: 9.0in. x 6.0in. x 1.3in. PowerPoint was the first presentation software designed for the new generation of graphical personal computers such as Macintosh and Windows, and was first shipped to customers in 1987. This book tells the story of the creators of PowerPoint as they evaded great dangers twice, each time pulling out an improbable win. First, as a startup named Forethought, they nearly died many times, but gained an investment from Apple (its first) and managed to ship an acclaimed product. Second, now sought by many suitors, they were an acquisition by Microsoft (its first, also), where they contrived to become an independent business unit and to remain in Silicon Valley, so that product development could continue under control of the original group until success was assured. We look back now from a time when primary school children must pass exams in PowerPoint because their teachers believe that knowing it will be vital to their future success at all levels of education and in their careers. Steven Pinker says that these days scientists . . . cannot lecture without PowerPoint. Sermons are delivered using PowerPoint in church buildings rebuilt to incorporate large screens for the purpose. The Secretary of State uses PowerPoint to address the United Nations on questions of war and peace. Newspapers and magazines and books mention PowerPoint casually with no explanation needed. Novelists write chapters of their books in PowerPoint. In a world of 7 billion people, Microsoft says that PowerPoint is now installed on more than 1 billion personal computers. You would expect that PowerPoint must always have been obviously a great idea. But Robert Gaskins, writing here from his notes made at the time, describes how, while the product was being developed, almost everyone (including nearly all...



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