

CHAPTER 8**The Global Business Community****A Snapshot of the United States**

Land Area	3,717,812 sq. mi. (9,629,091 sq. km)
Largest Cities	New York (8,008,278), Los Angeles (3,694,820), Chicago (2,896,016), Houston (1,953,631), Philadelphia (1,517,550)
Population	293,027,571
Projected Population	346,000,000 (by 2025)
Urban Population	75%
Gross Domestic Product	\$10.99 trillion (\$37,800 per capita)
Major Industries	Petroleum, steel, motor vehicles, aerospace, telecommunications, chemicals, electronics, food processing, consumer goods, mining, lumber
Natural Resources	Coal, copper, lead, molybdenum, phosphates, uranium, bauxite, gold, iron, mercury, nickel, potash, silver, tungsten, zinc, crude oil, natural gas, timber
Major Exports	Capital goods, automobiles, consumer goods, industrial raw materials, agricultural products
Major Imports	Crude and partly refined petroleum, machinery, automobiles, consumer goods, industrial raw materials, food and beverages
Languages	English (and Spanish for a significant minority group)
Currency	U.S. dollar

Microsoft

Computer technologies affect almost everything Americans do today. Small business owners advertise on the Internet. Database technologies bring stock quotes, weather reports, and airline reservations to our fingertips. Microsoft is one of the companies that has made this technology revolution possible.

In 1975, Bill Gates started Microsoft with a friend, Paul Allen. The partners believed that every business and home would one day have a personal computer. Rather than building the computer itself, they decided to focus on the software that would run the computer.

At the time, computers were much more difficult to operate than they are today. Microsoft worked to make technology more accessible, offering applications that increased the reliability and usefulness of personal computers. By 1985, Microsoft's total revenue was \$140 million.

Today, Microsoft's Windows operating systems run personal computers around the world. In 2004, Microsoft's total worldwide revenue was \$36.8 billion. Microsoft estimates that 600 million computers are now in use worldwide—a figure the company only expects to grow.

More and more non-English speakers are using computers for the same reasons Americans do. Microsoft products are available in 40 languages and are sold in more

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than 60 countries. The company's ability to tailor its programs to different language needs has helped the company take advantage of this explosive worldwide growth.

Microsoft "localizes" its products to reflect the languages and conventions of various international markets. The company has built research facilities in the U.S., China, Ireland, Denmark, India, Israel, and England that make it easier to predict the needs of its international market. These international researchers develop products that will appeal to consumers around the world.

Interpreting the Reading

1. Compare Microsoft's revenues in 1985 and 2004. By what amount and percent did they increase?

2. How many countries outside the United States has Microsoft chosen as sites for research and development facilities?

Critical Thinking

Computers have changed dramatically since Bill Gates and Paul Allen first entered the business. Some might argue that Microsoft has helped make those changes possible. What impact has Microsoft's role in fostering worldwide innovation had on the company's revenues?
