Former Google CEO Eric Schmidt to leave Alphabet board of directors

Google parent Alphabet today announced that Eric Schmidt would be leaving the board of directors after 18 years. The company said he would not seek reelection after his current term expires in June. He joined the board in 2001, shortly before becoming the company's CEO.

Ten years at the controls. Schmidt served as Google CEO for a decade, from 2001 until 2011, when co-founder Larry Page reclaimed that position. After that, Schmidt was Executive Chairman until early 2018. Since then he has served and will continue to serve "as a technical advisor" to Google and Alphabet.

In 2015, Google became a business unit of Alphabet, Inc. and co-founders Page and Brin became CEO and President of the new company. They then turned over daily operational control of Google to Sundar Pichai, who became CEO and who later joined the Alphabet board of directors in 2017.

Adult supervision. Eric Schmidt joined Google to provide "adult supervision" to young co-founders Page and Brin. He presided over hyper-growth and Google's IPO and amassed a significant personal fortune in the process. Forbes estimates his net worth to be nearly $14 billion.

Schmidt helped guide Google through its early days as a small tech startup to become one of the world's dominant companies and brands. He was a thoughtful and careful chief executive, but at times he made awkward comments, some of which survive in the culture to this day. Most infamous among them was "The Creepy Line" (clip below).

Presided over billions of user products. Most of the iconic acquisitions and product launches that have contributed to Google’s staggering success were made during Schmidt’s tenure as CEO. Among them Android, YouTube, Gmail, Google Maps and AdSense.

[embedded content]

About The Author

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