

Thomas J. Watson, Sr Encyclopedia Article

Thomas J. Watson, Sr

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1874-1956

American businessman who established the International Business Machines Corporation (IBM). In 1913 Watson left a sales manager position at the National Cash Register Company (NCR) to become president of the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company, which made electrical punch-card computing systems. In 1924 the company changed its name to IBM, and went on to dominate the business machine industry in the 1930s and 1940s. In 1952 Watson turned the company over to his son, Thomas Jr. At the time of the elder Watson's death in 1956, IBM had 200 offices throughout the country and employed 60,000 people.