



## **The Electric New Paper:**

TOUCH-BUTTON SAILOR

**Q: How does an uber zillionaire sail the high seas?**

**A: Without getting one precious finger wet. Here's how**

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Mr Tom Perkins resigned from HP's board in May in protest over how the company had hired private investigators that used questionable tactics to obtain his personal phone records and those of his colleagues to see if they were leaking news to the media.

But as the HP case proceedings move on in the US, Mr Perkins, 74, is enjoying the luxury and attention his new mega yacht is attracting.

He is on vacation somewhere in the Mediterranean sailing his pride and joy - a 88m superyacht named the Maltese Falcon.

The US\$100-million (\$158m) superyacht is believed to be the largest and fastest privately-owned sailing yacht in the world.

According to Yachting Magazine, it took about 300 workers to build this floating marvel.

### **NOT JUST BIG**

And although it is believed to be the largest sailboat in its class, size is not its only claim to fame.

One of the stars at last month's Monaco Yacht Show, the Falcon boasts a unique computer-controlled rig and mast system that allows the 1,300-tonne super yacht to be piloted by just one person.

Unlike regular sailboats, whose sails require several crew members to raise, align and bring down, the Falcon's 15 sails can be controlled by just one person from a single touch-screen display.

'I can teach anyone to sail this boat in 30 minutes,' Mr Perkins told Yachting Magazine.

He hopes to break a few sailing records with his new toy - it can reach speeds of up to 30 knots (56kmh) - and he plans to do

it in style.

The Falcon is decorated by noted yacht stylist Ken Freivokh, who peppered the Falcon with luxurious amenities like leather floors and a spiral staircase spanning its three decks.

That's why Mr Perkins had no qualms about packing up his huge home in San Francisco, including his antiques and Persian carpets.

'I don't need this anymore,' he said.

'I'm going to spend most of my time on the Maltese Falcon.'

The HP incident and the Maltese Falcon are not the only claims to fame for the colourful multi-millionaire venture capitalist.

Mr Perkins began his career as the first general manager of HP's computer division in 1963.

He is also considered a legend in Silicon Valley, where his venture capital firm, Kleiner, Perkins, Caufield & Byers, helped fuel the dotcom boom by backing start-ups that would go on to become household names (online retailer Amazon, Web browser pioneer Netscape, and search engine Google, to name a few).

Mr Perkins was also briefly married to romance novelist Danielle Steele for about a year.

In January this year, he made a splash in literary circles when he decided to take a break from the corporate world to try his hand at writing a fiction book.

## **BOOK MAN**

The idea for the book, titled 'Sex and the Single Zillionaire', came to him after he was approached to star in a reality TV show where he would be asked to date a series of women and choose one to marry.

He turned down the offer, and initially tried to persuade his ex-wife Steele to write about it.

When she declined, he decided to pick up the pen himself and wrote the book in 10 days.

"She basically said, 'I know you're not busy, and if you don't do it, it's because you're lazy.'" he told CNN in a previous interview.