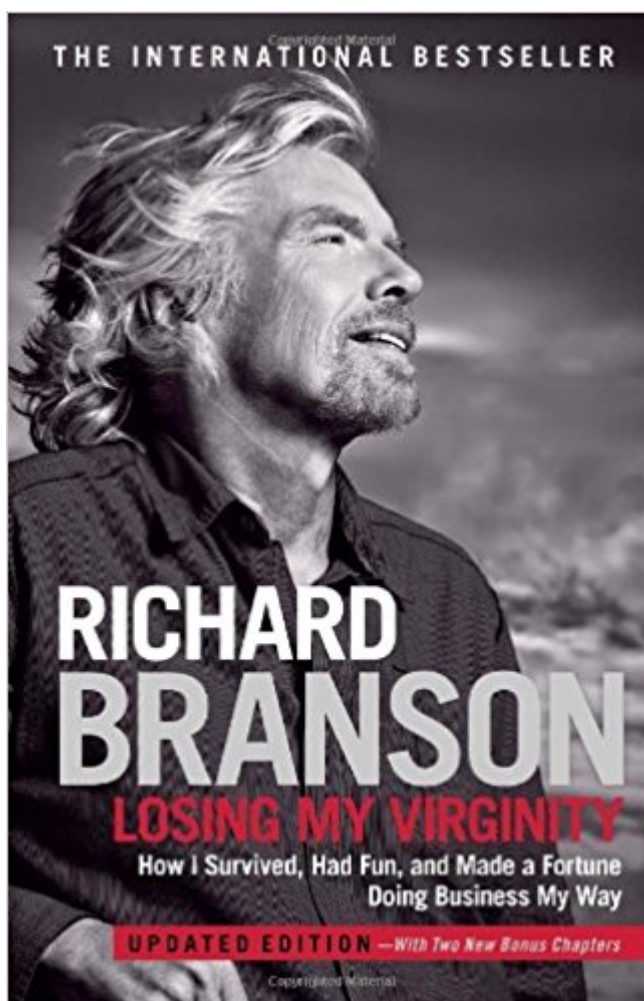


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Losing My Virginity: How I Survived, Had Fun, And Made A Fortune Doing Business My Way



Synopsis

"Oh, screw it, let's do it." That's the philosophy that has allowed Richard Branson, in slightly more than twenty-five years, to spawn so many successful ventures. From the airline business (Virgin Atlantic Airways), to music (Virgin Records and V2), to cola (Virgin Cola), to retail (Virgin Megastores), and nearly a hundred others, ranging from financial services to bridal wear, Branson has a track record second to none. *Losing My Virginity* is the unusual, frequently outrageous autobiography of one of the great business geniuses of our time. When Richard Branson started his first business, he and his friends decided that "since we're complete virgins at business, let's call it just that: Virgin." Since then, Branson has written his own "rules" for success, creating a group of companies with a global presence, but no central headquarters, no management hierarchy, and minimal bureaucracy. Many of Richard Branson's companies--airlines, retailing, and cola are good examples--were started in the face of entrenched competition. The experts said, "Don't do it." But Branson found golden opportunities in markets in which customers have been ripped off or underserved, where confusion reigns, and the competition is complacent. And in this stressed-out, overworked age, Richard Branson gives us a new model: a dynamic, hardworking, successful entrepreneur who lives life to the fullest. Family, friends, fun, and adventure are equally important as business in Branson's life. *Losing My Virginity* is a portrait of a productive, sane, balanced life, filled with rich and colorful stories: Crash-landing his hot-air balloon in the Algerian desert, yet remaining determined to have another go at being the first to circle the globe; Signing the Sex Pistols, Janet Jackson, the Rolling Stones, Boy George, and Phil Collins; Fighting back when British Airways took on Virgin Atlantic and successfully suing this pillar of the British business establishment; Swimming two miles to safety during a violent storm off the coast of Mexico; Selling Virgin Records to save Virgin Atlantic; Staging a rescue flight into Baghdad before the start of the Gulf War . . . And much more. *Losing My Virginity* is the ultimate tale of personal and business survival from a man who combines the business prowess of Bill Gates and the promotional instincts of P. T. Barnum. Also available in the UK from Virgin Publishing, and in Canada from General Publishing, From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

“Richard is good-looking and very smart, which is sexy to start with. He also makes a billion dollars before breakfast and still knows how to have fun.”-- Ivana Trump
“Few people in contemporary business are as colorful, shrewd, and irreverent, and probably no one’s nearly as much fun to be around. . . . Branson embodies America’s cherished mythology of the iconoclastic, swashbuckling entrepreneur.”-- GQ
“Branson wears his fame and money exceedingly well: no necktie, no chauffeur, no snooty clubs. . . . What continues to set Branson apart is the unique -- and, to some, baffling -- nature of his ambition. . . . He isn’t interested in power in the usual sense of influencing other people. . . . Boiled down to its singular essence, Richard Branson just wants to have fun.”--

Newsweek
“Branson, a self-described adventure capitalist, is a business-creation engine who was clearly born in the wrong place. . . . Those business instincts are matched by an ability to motivate people who work for him. And who wouldn’t want to -- Branson seems hell-bent on making sure that everybody, but everybody, is having as much fun as he is.”-- Time
“Richard Branson . . . is dressed to the nines: in a \$10,000 white silk bridal gown with a traditional veil and train and acres of lace. . . . Branson is expected to do the unexpected, even the bizarre -- anything to publicize his latest venture. . . . The fact is, Branson’s widely reported stunts seem almost staid compared to the unconventional way he manages his burgeoning empire.”-- Forbes ASAP

Richard Branson, the founder and chairman of the Virgin Group of Companies, was born in 1950 and started his first business, a magazine called Student, when he was sixteen. Virgin began in 1970 as a mail-order record company and has since expanded into over a hundred businesses in areas as diverse as travel, entertainment, retailing, media, financial services, and publishing. He

lives in London and Oxfordshire with his wife, Joan, and their children, Holly and Sam. From the Hardcover edition.

A great read. I enjoyed learning the genesis of the early recording industry and particularly Branson's struggle to establish Virgin Atlantic Airlines. Evokes the memory of Juan Trippe and Pan American Airlines. I had been looking for a good bio on Branson; this seemed to be the most complete and recent, with a final chapter taking us to about 2010 in sketch detail. Otherwise most of the storyline ends in the late 1990s. On some level I was surprised at the young scoundrel he somewhat was, but recognize how important that became to Branson's entrepreneurial drive. The man has guts, wish him the best to get Virgin Galactic soaring again soon!

Great book! I was able to find the adventurous spirit of Sir Branson in the first few pages - especially with his attempt to be the first hot air balloonist in the world. The book really got down to the minute details of what drives him and what his mindset is like when facing challenges. A definite must-read for any aspiring entrepreneur!

What an enjoyable read. So many things I never knew about such a great man. Thank you Sir Richard for always keeping your integrity, family and honor first in your life. Money turns so many people ugly. This is a journey about a man who has taken his power and wealth to give back to the communities. He also teaches his employees how to think outside the box, to lead and survive on their own. Most employers try to keep their staff "trained". Highly recommended book!

Felt humiliated with the challenges I had to go through with my business after reading what Sir Richard had gone through! This book will inspire you! Push you through tough times and to start dreaming of your own legacy! A legacy not for your own but for your childres as well.

Great book. Follows the key points in Branson's life and entrepreneurial career with plenty of fun anecdotes to keep things interested, with a shift in the last few chapters toward Branson's humanitarian efforts (understandably so, as he begins to consider those efforts a more important part of his life). Even in these last few chapters, the text is interesting and sprinkled with fun stories to keep things exciting. As someone hoping to get involved in entrepreneurship, this book was not any sort of primer on good startup practices, but there are valuable lessons to be learned from how Branson built his empire and I would recommend this to anyone else hoping to be an entrepreneur.

Amazing life. I learned so much from this book. On life and how Richard does many of his business deals by partnerships. Very eye opening. If you like reading about business people, as I do, this is a must read. I put it up there with the books about, John D. Rockefeller, Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, Steve Jobs etc. I actually enjoyed it more because Richard is very out going and tries adventurous things as I do. He talks about his hot air balloon adventure around the world, his boat race across the Atlantic etc.

Ms. here, I read all sorts of books and I did enjoy reading this. It's certainly not a page turner, but there is enough there to keep most reader's interest. It's interesting to me to read the real story behind very famous people. The most interesting things reading his story was to find out he wasn't born "into" money. He worked hard for everything he's ever done...and that's been a lot. Kudos to Richard Branson.

I have just finished reading Richard Branson's autobiography, 'Losing My Virginity'. This was a refreshingly candid glimpse into Branson's heart, revealing his early hopes and dreams, describing his entrepreneurial mind and his motivations. It is a chronological progression, beginning with motivating challenges from age eleven, moving through teen-age endeavours right through to recent developments. I was fascinated by how he would look for solutions to challenges in one area and see opportunities through that for significant change or at times even a completely new venture. As an example; he couldn't raise the finance to upgrade the seat-back entertainment systems for the handful of planes of his airline at the time, so he called the CEO of Boeing to talk about it and ended up ordering 16 new planes. It was easier to finance that expansion than the simple upgrade, so Virgin found itself with the newest planes of any other airline at the time. Talk about leaps of faith! In the latter pages he describes his growing awareness of the precarious state of our world, and realises his unique position to take tangible, constructive action. In particular, he assembled a significant group of 'Global Elders' (including Nelson Mandela and other world-changing names) to address some of these world problems and find viable solutions. I was hooked here because I have written about this extensively myself in my non-fiction book 'FutureQuest'. Branson puts the rubber to the road himself by ensuring that all his business enterprises aim for highest possible sustainability with smallest possible ecological footprint. I thoroughly enjoyed the read and learned valuable lessons in the process. I realised early that I needed to give this book priority time, to get the most out of it. Highly recommended.

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