



Losing My Virginity: How I've Survived, Had Fun, and Made a Fortune Doing Business My Way

By Richard Branson

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"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,

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

In this autobiography, Virgin Group founder Richard Branson says one of his prime business criteria is "fun." Fun made Branson a billionaire, and few business memoirs are one-billionth as fun as Branson's, nor as niftily written. Not only does it relate his side of near-death corporate experiences, it tells how the chairman literally cheated death by gun, shipwreck, and balloon crash.

Branson's empire--now encompassing interests in an airline, pop music, soda pop, e-commerce, and financial services--began when the dyslexic 16-year-old dropped out of school in 1968 to found the British magazine *Student*. His headmaster said, "I predict that you will either go to prison or become a millionaire." Briefly imprisoned for dodging customs selling records, Branson got his first million by releasing *Tubular Bells*, a maverick recording all the stuffy executives rejected. (1998's *Tubular Bells III* puts the series' sales over 20 million.)

Despite wild tales of Branson's wife-swapping and Keith Richards fleeing naked from Branson's studio at gunpoint with another man's woman, the most shocking parts of the memoir concern British Airways' James Bond-like "dirty tricks" campaign against Virgin Atlantic, resulting in the biggest award for damages in English history.

Though it's filled with famous names, witty quotes, and pulse-pounding accounts of lunatic balloon adventures, it is as a business thriller that the book really scores. His instinctive bet-the-ranch tactics could cost him all, or earn another billion. Either way, Branson will likely remain the most entertaining entrepreneur in Europe. --*Tim Appelo*

Review

"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

From the Inside Flap

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sonia Shipley:

This Losing My Virginity: How I've Survived, Had Fun, and Made a Fortune Doing Business My Way book is simply not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is usually information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This Losing My Virginity: How I've Survived, Had Fun, and Made a Fortune Doing Business My Way without we know teach the one who looking at it become critical in pondering and analyzing. Don't possibly be worry Losing My Virginity: How I've Survived, Had Fun, and Made a Fortune Doing Business My Way can bring when you are and not make your bag space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it within your lovely laptop even cellphone. This Losing My Virginity: How I've Survived, Had Fun, and Made a Fortune Doing Business My Way having very good arrangement in word and layout, so you will not experience uninterested in reading.

Jerri Montgomery:

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Kimberly Dyer:

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Stephen Porter:

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