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Business & Economics

BOLD: How to Be Brave in Business and Win
Andy Milligan
Shaun Smith
Kogan Page
978-0-7494-6344-1
(April 30, 2011)

When it comes to writing an interesting business book, it's hard to go wrong with compelling case studies. *BOLD* makes the most of this approach.

Experts on brands and customer experience, the authors have selected fourteen companies that are "bold" in different ways, but all "have an unshakeable belief in what they stand for and let their actions follow their beliefs," write Smith and Milligan.

Each company is covered in a separate chapter in which the authors provide a brief introduction as well as edited interviews with company principals. These interviews lend an insightful first-person perspective about the particular organization. The reader gains access to several different viewpoints, since individuals are selected from various operational areas. Also included are a bulleted list of "Bold practices" and a summary section at the end of each chapter describing "Bold lessons" to be learned from the company.

The text is easy to read owing to the judicious use of color sub-heads, bold and italic type, and excellent photography and graphics that enliven each story. Within each chapter, the authors also include what they call "e-features"—links to websites and online video to enhance the text.

The companies themselves run the gamut from large to small and from recognizable to obscure, making the book all the more interesting. For example, the authors, who are British, pay homage to the visionary Sir Richard Branson, of the Virgin empire, but they focus on the lesser known Virgin Galactic, a fledgling company involved in commercial space travel. The reader hears what Branson has to say, of course, but they also get the perspective of Will Whitehorn, the president, Stephen Attenborough, the commercial director, Trevor Beattie, the prospective passenger, and Brian Binnie, the pilot.

Other unique companies include the Brazilian fashion accessory retailer Chilli Beans, the

American computer service Geek Squad, and the Australian transportation company TNT.

At the end of the book the authors include a chapter that offers readers advice for “how to be Bold,” covering vision, marketing, customer experience, innovation, culture, human resources, measurement, and more. They close with a “Bold practice survey” that helps companies quantify eight specific practices and includes an action plan for how to build a bold brand.

While the book itself is graphically appealing, Smith and Milligan have taken an even bolder step by creating a *BOLD* iPad application that allows users to interactively compare their companies to bold brands. The book is further enhanced by an engaging website.

Smith and Milligan have put together an intriguing package that celebrates companies that are succeeding by being brave and different. Their book is brave and different, too, and one most every business reader will find of great interest.

Barry Silverstein