

Minitrends: How Innovators & Entrepreneurs Discover & Profit from Business & Technology Trends

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John Vanston, who has spent over thirty years in trend analysis and exploitation, defines a “minitrend” as a trend that is “just beginning to emerge” with “the potential to become significantly important in a reasonably short time.” Typically, he says, a minitrend is “not recognized” and its “potential importance is not appreciated.”

In *Minitrends*, Vanston begins by discussing the value of minitrends, the role they play in making businesses successful, and the consequences of failing to recognize them. Next, he offers a comprehensive process for “uncovering” minitrends, providing detailed instructions for how to search for them, and including potential sources where they can be found.

The third part of the book includes “some attractive minitrends” that the author has discovered. For each of nine specific items, which Vanston targets to either individuals, small to medium-size businesses, or large companies, the author describes the minitrend, discusses current trends, and details business opportunities related to the find.

Vanston concludes the book with a discussion of how to prosper from minitrends. He includes a strategy for selecting one for exploitation, developing an exploitation scheme, and putting that scheme into action.

Throughout the book, Vanston uses minitrend examples that will make the reader understand their importance. He points out, for instance, that Southwest Airlines, Dell Computer, and YouTube were all founded as an outgrowth of their founders’ ability to understand and capitalize on minitrends.

One of the more creative techniques the author uses is concluding each chapter with a section titled, “All Very Interesting, But Frankly, So *What?*” Clearly intending to assuage the fears of skeptics, Vanston shares his own experiences with minitrends and offers some valuable guidance for pursuing them with a minimum of risk.

Vanston wraps up the book with a closing chapter titled “Here’s the *So What!*” He concludes by urging readers to “adopt a mindset” that predisposes them to following minitrends. “Minitrend followers,” writes the author, “are dreamers looking for adventure, and commitment to the concept can make the adventure intriguing, exciting, and lucrative.”

Vanston has the ability to discuss minitrends conceptually, as well as describe specifically how the reader can discover and potentially profit from them. The author’s enthusiasm for the subject is infectious, and readers looking for new business opportunities are likely to share that enthusiasm. This is a book that should inspire many readers to take action.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (January 3, 2011)

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