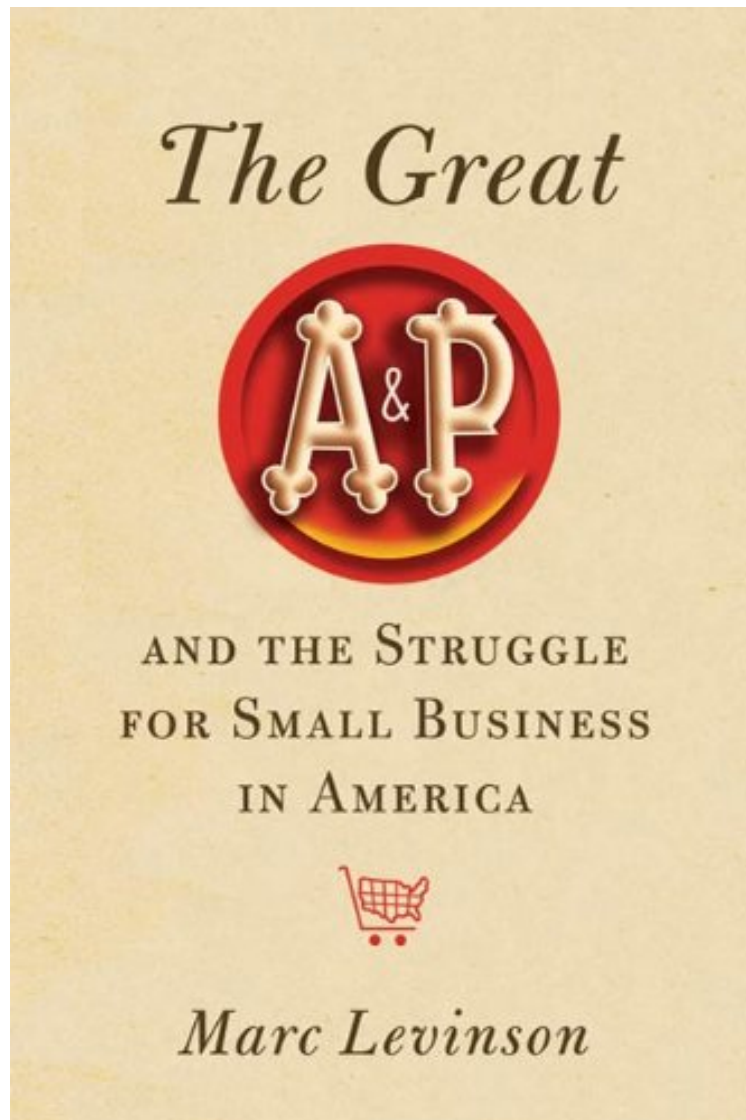


(Download) The Great AP and the Struggle for Small Business in America

The Great AP and the Struggle for Small Business in America

Marc Levinson

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Marc Levinson : The Great AP and the Struggle for Small Business in America before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great AP and the Struggle for Small Business in America:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. My old stomping grounds, the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Co. By iluvlvAs a former AP store manager I have always been interested in the history of the Company and was very excited to find this book. Setting some of the early history straight did not diminish my respect for the Hartford's, only reinforced it. To take a tiny company in NYC and turn it into a 15000 store powerhouse was no small feat. The constant interference from local, state and federal government along with independent special interest groups had to be

extremely trying for the brothers to take while still trying to run a business with the goal of selling the most product to the consumer at the lowest possible price. To imagine that the government would force a business to artificially raise prices and restrict its access to products in the most efficient way is just another example of government meddling where it shouldn't be. Had AP not fought hard to be successful it would have taken a lot longer for the cost of food as a percentage of people's income to drop to a reasonable level. It is very sad how such a successful company could fall so fast to the shell it is today. Not having the proper visionaries to carry on was probably the Hartford's greatest failing. Some may find some of the facts and figures a little dry but to anyone who has a history in food retailing or any chain store business will find this an interesting read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. AP was the original Walmart. By Topher Russo. What I loved about this book is that it is a tale of innovation, daring, persistence, and success--at least until the founders of AP died. Then the business declined till it went essentially out of business. It is a road map to how to take a business to dizzying heights. It is a cornucopia of interesting facts--food prices for all Americans dramatically dropped bc of the innovations AP brought to the food industry--especially as per distribution and production. Food was %50 of the American budget; now it is 8-10%? Thx AP. It is a tale of how Gov't interference is not a new thing with the current assault on Walmart. The Gov't went after AP for pretty much the same reason it goes after Walmart. It was thought AP hurt small stores--they actually grew in number until supermarkets dominated in the 50's. The book is a tale of how a company can go out of business if it does not innovate, does not bring in new and fresh blood, begins to believe its own hype without focusing on challenges, etc. If I had to criticize it--it can be repetitive on its theme's of gov't assault and company response to these assaults. It is a bit uneven. 90% of the book is the years 1859 to 1955. The last 35 years of the company are really given short shrift. Some more detail is needed--such as--how did AP morph into Super Fresh in the Mid-Atlantic area? etc. Hardly a word on the details of its break ups and morphings. Good book, though. Highly recommend it. Enjoy! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. From Revolutionary to Small Time Player. By radiationman. WalMart is frequently held up as a destroyer of small businesses and as an example of how big box retail is destroying America. But as it turns out, much of the practices of WalMart aren't novel or even pioneered by WalMart. Long before WalMart or even "discount" retailing there was The Great AP. Not once, or even twice, but four times in The Great AP's history the company re-invented itself, transitioning from a small mail order coffee and tea company, to a grocer, to a discount grocer, producer and distributor, to a supermarket chain. Along the way becoming the biggest retailer in the entire world and the first company in history to have over \$1 billion in sales. All the things that WalMart is known for today - from rigorously controlling their supply chain and production costs, driving down margins in order to lower prices, to boost volume and thereby boosting sales. Loss leaders, and discount store brands - AP did it before WalMart and other modern retailers. This is AP's rise from a bit player in the New York Coffee and Tea import business to a nationwide grocery chain that revolutionized food production and distribution in the United States to their stumble and fall to a small regional chain.

One of The Wall Street Journal's Best Non fiction Books of 2011. From modest beginnings as a tea shop in New York, the Great Atlantic Pacific Tea Company became the largest retailer in the world. It was a juggernaut, the first retailer to sell \$1 billion in goods, the owner of nearly sixteen thousand stores and dozens of factories and warehouses. But its explosive growth made it a mortal threat to hundreds of thousands of mom-and-pop grocery stores. Main Street fought back tooth and nail, enlisting the state and federal governments to stop price discounting, tax chain stores, and require manufacturers to sell to mom and pop at the same prices granted to giant retailers. In a remarkable court case, the federal government pressed criminal charges against the Great AP for selling food too cheaply--and won. The Great AP and the Struggle for Small Business in America is the story of a stunningly successful company that forever changed how Americans shop and what Americans eat. It is a brilliant business history, the story of how George and John Hartford took over their father's business and reshaped it again and again, turning it into a vertically integrated behemoth that paved the way for every big-box retailer to come. George demanded a rock-solid balance sheet; John was the marketer-entrepreneur who led AP through seven decades of rapid changes. Together, they built the modern consumer economy by turning the archaic retail industry into a highly efficient system for distributing food at low cost.

Praise for The Great AP and the Struggle for Small Business in America