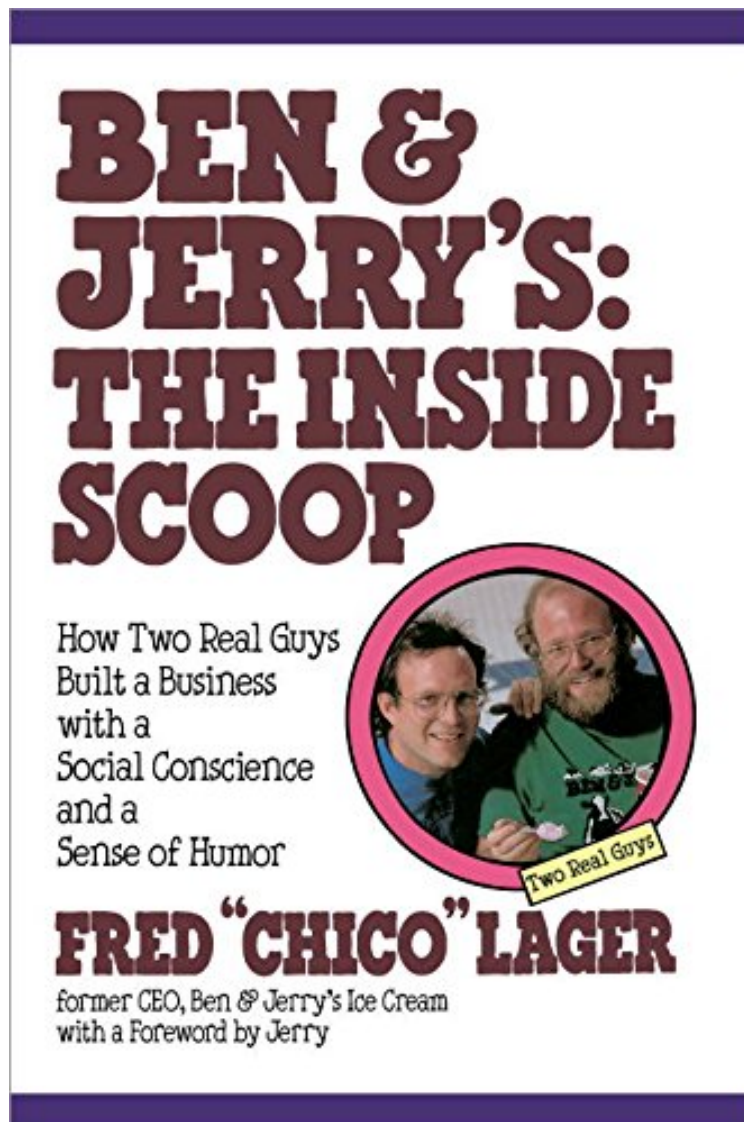


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Ben Jerry's: The Inside Scoop: How Two Real Guys Built a Business with a Social Conscience and a Sense of Humor

Fred Lager

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Ben Jerry's: The Inside Scoop: How Two Real Guys Built a Business with a Social Conscience and a Sense of Humor:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. As I Expected...By J. ErvinIt's a very good book about Ben Jerry's rise from a couple of hippies in an old gas station to the Ben Jerry's we know today. My husband and I are small business owners who manufacture another type of food product. The events in this book hit pretty close to home in terms of what we might run across or have already experienced. I must confess, however, I haven't finished it yet. The reason for this is that I mainly read before bedtime. I can't read this book then because it keeps me up at night worrying that our business might run into some of these same pitfalls!!! My mind starts spinning with what I've read and I have trouble falling asleep which is a good indication of how good the book is - I keep thinking about it!!0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Must read for any entrepreneur....or Ice cream lover!By Rob PiechotaWhile this can be viewed as a text book of sorts for the aspiring entrepreneur, it also reads like a fun non-fiction work whether you like ice cream or not. Chico did a great job, (although I don't know how he managed to recall with such clarity the very essence of each moment) of telling the story and communicating the emotions that prevailed. It was one of those books that I hated to finish. For those in the business world, it is a great source of lessons..."how to do great things", and "how to not do some things". Fred "Chico" Lager, Ben, and Jerry....Thank you.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A truly satisfying and insightful readBy Donovan PuntThis book is a backstage pass to everything Ben and Jerry's. It goes beyond many "formal" business books and you really get a chance to feel what it's like inside a socially responsible, beloved brand.

"Deftly and compassionately captures [Ben's] genius in all its entrepreneurial splendor...This tale will keep you entertained."--New York Times Book Review.A former CEO of Ben Jerry's tells how two '60s holdovers built a single ice cream store into one of America's hottest companies. From modest beginnings--opening their first ice cream shop in a renovated gas station--to entrepreneurial challenges, including their clash with Hagen-Dazs, to becoming a multimillion dollar company, Lager provides an insightful insider's account of Ben Jerry's ice cream empire.

From Library JournalCan a business succeed if it is being run by someone who thinks a meeting is valuable when it produces good lines for his company-inspired screen play? Well, yes. In spite of a sometimes slapdash operation, a superior product and hard work save the day in the case of Ben Jerry's ice cream. This presentation is not a guide for entrepreneurs. Rather, it is a case study of the problems an owner-operated company faces while evolving into a large corporation. Ben and Jerry have tried, with difficulties, to implement their liberal social agenda through the business. For example, they buy some food products through a company operated by homeless persons. The account is interesting rather than educational and may appeal more to Ben Jerry's ice cream lovers than businesspersons. Reader Joseph Campanella narrates well. Recommended for public libraries in areas where Ben Jerry's products have a high profile.Mark Guyer, Stark Cty. Dist. Lib., Canton, OhioCopyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistWhile Ben Jerry's is one of the leading innovative and socially responsible businesses, this tale is as much an example to young entrepreneurs of what not to do as it is a model of exactly what to do. Lager, former CEO of Ben Jerry's, was one of the company's early players, leaving in the 1990s, and he writes a captivating story about the \$200 million, publicly traded enterprise, which originated in a rehabbed gas station where its founding fathers once ate saltines and sardines and slept on freezer chests all winter to be able to open by spring. Ben Cohen's dedication, marketing brilliance, and creativity and Jerry Greenfield's burnout, resignation from the company, and return are all faithfully documented, along with the dedication of the production workers to the ideal that has characterized Ben Jerry's. Lager captures the sense of humor that kept the company going through rough times, but that humor dissipates into whining when the author reaches the years when he and Ben were at ideological odds. Those few chapters aside, this business history will be an inspiration to those struggling with their own young businesses as well as a great read for those who just love ice cream. Caroline AndrewFrom Kirkus sAn insider's engagingly informal history of Ben Jerry's Homemade Inc., a Vermont-based enterprise known for its scrumptious ice cream, profitable growth, and idiosyncratic brand of socioeconomic responsibility. Lager starts with a once-over-lightly version of how two childhood pals, Ben Cohen (a Colgate dropout) and Jerry Greenfield (an Oberlin grad who couldn't gain admission to med school), joined forces to open an ice cream parlor in an abandoned gas station in Burlington, Vt., in the spring of 1978. Against the odds, their venture prospered, and in 1982 the countercultural founders persuaded the author (an MBA who then owned a local nightclub) to give them a hand. He stayed until 1990, retiring as CEO in his 30s while remaining on call as a consultant and member of the publicly held company's board of directors. Despite its lucrative niche in the super-premium sector of the ice-cream market, enviable income statements, and attention-grabbing promotional campaigns that have helped make the corporate name recognizable on Wall Street as well as in New Age circles, Ben Jerry's was by no means an overnight success. Initially, Lager makes clear, expansion capital was hard to come by; in addition, the fledgling firm had to compete with the formidable likes of Pillsbury (Hagen-Dazs) and Kraft (Frusen Gldj). While the entrepreneurial principals earned a well-deserved reputation for hang-loose management, they worked long and hard to gain acceptance in mainstream retail outlets. Nor, by the author's authoritative account,

was the company's high-profile commitment to a two-part bottom line (which measures not only financial results but also the degree to which concern for the community figures in business decisions) reached without often acrimonious debate. A diverting take on a flourishing concern that, if not precisely a commercial paradigm, does its own thing with considerable style and gusto. (Author tour) -- Copyright 1994, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.