



The Weather Channel

Frank Batten, Jeffrey L. Cruikshank

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Twenty years ago, who'd have believed that millions of viewers would follow the twists and turns of storms developing across the globe with the rapt attention once reserved for thriller movies? And that a single television channel could simultaneously inform and entertain us, enrich our lives and, at times, help save them? This is the remarkable story of The Weather Channel, a cable network that succeeded when almost all the experts predicted it would fail. Told by one of the key figures in the network's success, former Chairman and CEO Frank Batten, this is at once a deeply personal account of high-stakes entrepreneurship and a fascinating case study of a media business both experiencing and driving major change. There are colorful personalities—from the on-camera meteorologists to the whiz kids recruited to help build the company's core technology. There are adventures and dramas—from the glitch-filled national launch that was saved by luck and a mysterious stranger to The Weather Channel's near-death experience as its owner, Landmark Communications, was poised to lose its entire \$31 million investment in the network. There are unexpected plot twists, risky ventures, failures, and victories. Batten's engrossing narrative reveals for the first time how The Weather Channel works its magic—and the technological, meteorological, and business innovations that have made it all possible. He takes us behind the scenes as his unique network evolved from struggling start-up to media powerhouse, from editorial cartoon fodder to vital public service. Along the way, he shares hard-won business lessons on breaking from convention and taking educated risks; bringing a great idea to market; strengthening a brand; leveraging disruptive technologies; managing through failure; preserving a spirit of risk-taking through periods of intense growth; and more. An absorbing tale of success against the odds, this book will appeal to entrepreneurs in all industries, as well as to the millions of fans of The Weather Channel. Frank Batten is the retired Chairman and CEO of Landmark Communications, Inc., a private media company that owns newspapers, specialty publications, television stations, and The Weather Channel. Jeffrey L. Cruikshank is the founder of The Cruikshank Co., Inc., and the author or coauthor of numerous business books.

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