

## BOOKWORM SEZ

“Accidental Branding” by David Vinjamuri

c.2008, Wiley

\$24.95 / \$26.99 Canada

212 pages, includes index

For the last three or four days, it's been driving you nuts.

Around and around and around in your head, some slogan or jingle has been swirling like brandy in a sniffer. You can't shower, you can't sleep, it's relentless. Just when you think it's gone, someone says something that reminds you of it, and you're off again.

You've been branded, my friend. Now how can you do that same thing to your customers or clients? Author **David Vinjamuri** recently studied entrepreneurs to find out why some brands succeed in ways that are a little out of norm. In his new book “**Accidental Branding**”, you'll read seven case studies of businesses and the people who started them.

As a marketing teacher at a New York University, author David Vinjamuri asked his students to write profiles on people who weren't schooled marketers or MBAs, but became successful nonetheless. His students didn't disappoint him; in fact, they stunned him.

Vinjamuri realized that there were more stories than most people probably knew, and he wondered what attributes made these entrepreneurs so successful. What moxie was inherent in Roxanne Quimby (of Burt's Bees) that made her go from a single mom living in a tent with her children to a New England philanthropist and millionaire? How did a biker living in a garage with his dog become the owner of Clif Bars, the energy food used by elite bikers? Was their success as accidental as it seemed?

By studying these entrepreneurs and spending time with them, Vinjamuri discovered that most Accidental Branders share traits that gave them a leg-up. All were focused on the small details in their businesses: Gert Boyle of Columbia Sportswear personally signs every check that goes out. All were willing to pitch in: J. Peterman never does something he wouldn't ask someone else to do. All were willing to take risks: Myriam Zaoui and Eric Malka of The Art of Shaving planned a second store within three months of opening the first one.

And shortly after Julie Aigner-Clark released *Baby Mozart*, a scientific study was released that indicated listening to Mozart helped a baby's brain develop. That example, among others, pointed Vinjamuri at one more thing: Accidental Branders are the fortunate recipients of timing and a little luck.

Although the title of this book is somewhat of a misnomer (it's more about Accidental Brands than Accidental Branding), it's hard to ignore success stories like the ones author David Vinjamuri uncovered. I enjoyed how he steps aside to let us see entrepreneurs and their companies intimately, including heart-in-the-throat moments of near-disaster and the single-mindedness of those who simply could not let failure happen.

I think you'll love “Accidental Branding” so much that you'll shut the back cover of this wonderful book with renewed excitement about your own endeavors, and you'll be looking for a sequel.

If you've ever wondered how a favorite brand “made it”, or if you're an entrepreneur who wants some motivation, grab “Accidental Branding”. It's definitely a book to read on purpose.