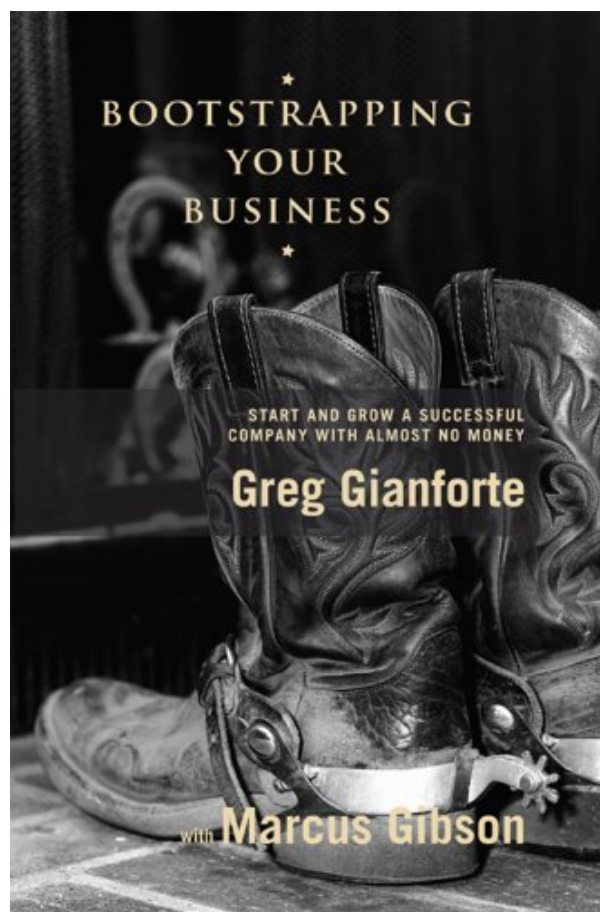
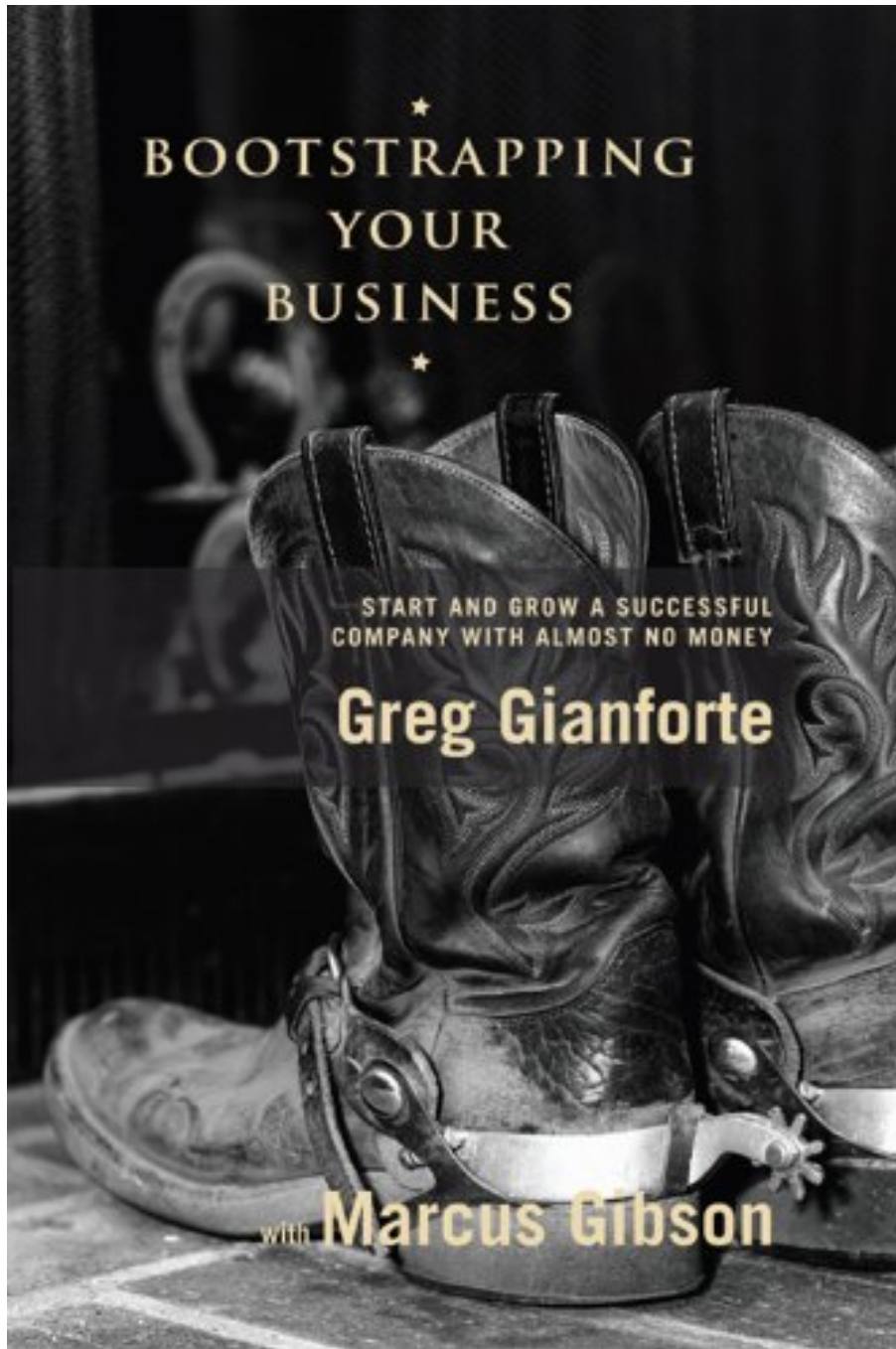


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## About the Author

Greg Gianforte is a highly successful entrepreneur and bootstrapper who has built one of the fastest-growing companies in America, the Bozeman, Montana-based RightNowTechnologies. Gianforte's entrepreneurial career started in high school, when he wrote software for assembling mailing lists on a Radio Shack computer. "A lot less work than mowing lawns," he says. He graduated from Stevens Institute of Technology with dual degrees in electrical engineering and computer science and joined Bell Laboratories as Member of Technical Staff. Then in 1986 Gianforte gave into an entrepreneurial itch and started Brightwork, an innovative network management company based in Tinton Falls, New Jersey. With starting capital of just a few thousand dollars, Gianforte got his first real experience of bootstrapping. He proved so adept at building a company with little cash that eight years later computer security company McAfee Associates bought Brightwork for \$10 million. In 1995 Gianforte relocated to Montana and spent three years refining his ideas on bootstrapping while he advised other entrepreneurs on starting their businesses. In 1997 he put those ideas to the ultimate test when he started RightNow. A leading customer service software company, RightNow has 1200 clients today, including British Airways, Medicare, and Proctor & Gamble, and annual sales of \$60 million. Gianforte has been profiled in Inc, Entrepreneur, and Forbes.com. Gianforte regularly counsels other entrepreneurs, and he is an experienced public speaker who gives frequent presentations on bootstrapping and entrepreneurship.

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Greg Gianforte, the nation's top Bootstrapper, shows you the advantages of Bootstrapping vs. traditionally financed start-ups. You'll also learn how the unconventional Bootstrapping mindset-inventive, pioneering, and skeptical of conventional wisdom-applies to you and your business. With Bootstrapping Your Business at your side, you'll gain the advantage you need to outperform the competition-and succeed in today's take-no-prisoners marketplace.

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## Most helpful customer reviews

43 of 45 people found the following review helpful.

A good book for those with no business background - from someone who is "bootstrapping"

By Kyung Hei

After reading a few of the other reviews for this book, I had to leave my own. First of all in response to the complaint about this book not being about "online businesses", this book is about starting a company without any outside investors, no angels, using only your own cash and whatever loan you could squeeze from the bank (otherwise known as "bootstrapping"). This book was not marketed as a book about online businesses so I don't understand where such an expectation could come from. I mean, just read the title. However, many

of the examples in the book involve people who have online businesses and I found those examples to be interesting and illustrative of the points that were made in the book.

We come from a background of very little business experience, but a lot of experience with technology. A lot of our business education has been through trial and error. If I had read this book earlier I would have avoided a lot of those errors.

I haven't read Inc a lot or a lot of other business books so I don't know if the information in this book was recycled from those, but that is irrelevant to me. I only care if this book is a good one and in my opinion, it is.

All the other books I have bought on starting and growing a tech business spent too many pages on how to get venture capital, how to find investors, how to please investors, how to solve problems with investors, etc. We have none of those problems. This was the first book that addressed the exact problems that we have had - about 10 problems that have caused us a lot of headache - that we would have avoided if we had read this book earlier. The book offered solutions that I had not thought of but wish I had. From my own experience with the problems that this book warns new business owners about, I think the advice in this book is astute.

So, in conclusion, this book was everything I've been looking for. It is perfect for me because it taught me a lot of things I've needed to know.

34 of 35 people found the following review helpful.

No nonsense how-to-guide with dozens of case studies

By Lifelong Learner

The first time I read this book was about six years ago and reading it was extremely validating. My only regret is that I hadn't read it sooner, because it literally maps out exactly what you should do when starting a business. I've built, ran, or been involved in sales of or IPO of half dozen companies and bootstrapped my latest business, raised angel, raised VC, and then reverted to bootstrapping (came to my senses). After years "in the trenches" I decided to re-read this book as a refresher and I can honestly say as someone who's "been there, done that" it still rings true today.

I had been in business my entire life (family business, then others) and then started my own profitable, work from home, business but yearned to do something more. I stepped out from my comfort zone and had an idea from my enterprise consulting days on a product that would be needed by every business with a website in the future. Instead of calling around to refine the idea, I spent the money from my original profitable business investing in R&D and prototyping and working insane hours for over five months and through the holidays before I ever called a potential customer. I had some remedial demonstrations and then started identifying and pursuing potential customers. My contacts at some very large companies loved the idea but I learned the painful truth outlined in Greg's book - although they loved the idea, I couldn't get anyone to buy it. My discussions ultimately led to a consulting arrangement which brought in some much-needed cash, but I couldn't get the product sold and had to shelve it. Had I read Greg's book and tested my idea first before my investment, things may have been much different, and I could have lasted longer to get through the sales learning curve. Even worse, three years later a company called Ribbit was purchased by the same company I was pitching for over \$105 million that offered essentially the same product I invented four years earlier - ouch!

Flush with cash from a 6-figure, 3-month consulting contract, I was able to bootstrap my next idea which was actually my REALTOR's idea while hanging out at his pool that summer. I worked with my local real estate agent to design a product, and gained early customer commitments to buy if I built it, including his,

and even gained press before the product was finished. One of the largest real estate firms in the area contacted me after reading the news article and wanted a demonstration. I scrambled to get our product demonstrable and the presentation went horribly, first with too short of cord for my projector and having to borrow theirs, and next with a database field too short to collect the user agent strings of some new cell phones and crashing my app. I literally had to log into the server and reboot mid-demo (same thing happened at my first trade show conference in San Francisco).

I didn't win that customer, but learned some valuable lessons before spending much money, and then completed the product. Shortly after, one of their largest competitors instead bought our service and has been a customer for over 4 years. We continued to listen to customers and stay small, and this allowed us to survive the recession and industry turmoil. Once we landed some larger, multi-year contracts, I raised some capital and it's been a roller coaster ride ever since. I still revisit this book to keep focus on the basics, however, and sometimes still kick myself for not sticking to the basics and letting the allure of venture capital use up valuable time that should be spent selling. If you do that well, you won't have to work nearly as hard "selling" to potential investors - they'll be selling to you.

From the most experienced executive, to the most green would-be entrepreneur, I would recommend you buy this book and read it a couple times. It is designed as a guide with examples and case studies to justify the advice, and easy-to-remember numbered lists of sales practices, myths, etc. Even after several decades of financial management and years of accounting in college, etc. I still find the example cash flows and balance sheets in this book a good refresher without having to dust off my college textbooks. I consider this book my "bootstrapped business degree" as well.

I now own the hard copy and recently downloaded the Kindle copy. The print on the Kindle copy is a little off (at least for me on the Kindle Fire HD) but reducing the font size helped, by the way. I think that's an Amazon thing and may just be my device. Regardless, get this book!

31 of 32 people found the following review helpful.

Quality read & learning a sustainable business model

By Kiah

I picked up this book after hearing Greg speak at a Startup Weekend in Missoula, MT. His book outlines the real life experience and process of starting a business from the ground up without financial backing from VCs or seed funds. My take away was how to create a company that can sustain growth, scale when it needs too, & keep your people engaged. This is a must read for those who think they want to start a business and have a desire to maintain control of the company's direction. Being in the middle of a bootstrapped business myself I was able to take this to heart and implement it on Monday. It provides info on how to sell, stay sane in a startup, and keep moving forward.

See all 36 customer reviews...

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