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Big Weed: An Entrepreneur's High-Stakes Adventures In The Budding Legal Marijuana Business



Synopsis

Legal marijuana is the hottest story in the US today. In the United States, 25 states and the District of Columbia have authorized sales in some form; Denver has more legal marijuana dispensaries than Starbucks franchises. We are witnessing the dawn of a new industry. And like the early days of gourmet coffee chains, the rules and players are being established on the fly. Christian Hageseth is the face of the revolution--an entrepreneur and father of three who worked in the white-collar professional world for 20 years before opening his first dispensary. The founder and chairman of Green Man Cannabis, the fastest-growing marijuana company in the country, he's the perfect tour guide through the wild frontier, where police hardly know what laws to enforce, or parents what to tell their kids. He paints a colorful picture not only of how he got into the business, but of the big interests that are eager to do the same--namely Big Tobacco, Big Agra, and Big Pharma. He predicts a future where the marijuana market splits in two: the high-end, artisanal market, supplied by individual growers and small farms, and the mass market, covered by the cigarette giants and anyone bold enough to compete with them. Much like beer and coffee, your brand of weed will be just one more reflection of your lifestyle. It's an entrepreneur's dream, and Hageseth invites us along as he pitches skeptical investors, negotiates a shaggy cast of colleagues, and builds the biggest business he can.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I was interested in this book because I live close to the Colorado border and also go to Denver three or four times a year. As a former criminal prosecutor I'm thrilled that pot is being taken off the books

in some states. It's disgusting how clogged up the system is with pot cases in so many places. Anyhow, I was interested to hear how the business end of pot was progressing up in Denver. This book does a fairly good job of describing certain aspects of the booming business. The book also offers amusing and brief 'history' snippets. The author's theory that pot has been historically marginalized in the US because of racism was interesting. Of course comparisons between weed and alcohol and Prohibition are inevitable, but the author keeps that short. The part of the book I found most annoying was the author's insistence on proving to the reader what a 'spiritual' journey his pot experience has been. Repeatedly the author tries to convince the reader that his motivations for developing a weed empire are somehow more organic and less greedy than his failed real estate business. I don't care either way, but I just don't appreciate a snow job, or an attempted snow job. Mr. Hageseth is in this business for the money -- that's what this guy DOES. He came to the whole pot thing pretty late (2009) unless you count smoking weed with his buddies back in high school. His interest in marijuana developed after the drug was legalized for medical use. I only point this out to distinguish him from the vast number of people who have been agitating for legalization for decades. Anyhow, I learned a lot of interesting facts reading this book. By far the most interesting part of the book -- to me -- was the federal government's attitude toward legalizing marijuana.

This book grows on you like weed! At first it reads like a man bragging about his fortunes in the MJ business, and in some ways, it is. Apparently the MJ business is the only truly profitable business the author has been in. Being a Colorado resident, he learns early to enjoy weed, going back to middle school. What this book is is a memoir of sorts, and is the story of how the author gets wealthy in the legal marijuana business and wins the first ever Cannabis Cup for his brand. It doesn't start out legally. The story quickly begins with a short biography of the author and how he started smoking MJ at an early age. Then the business side of him bites his butt and he wants to get into the market share when Colorado legalizes weed for recreational purposes. Here's where the writing gets laid back and quite witty, without being too boastful. This book is Christian Hageseth's story of how he breaks into the "weedery" business and learns to make a profit from it all, and most of the time, the transactions are in cash because marijuana profits on a federal level are still considered "drug money." He also likes to share his knowledge of marijuana, from both a user and a businessman's point of view. The biology of marijuana is quite interesting: there are perhaps around 5000 strains of marijuana, and the THC values of weed have grown from a mere three percent to over 20 percent since the days of Woodstock. Hageseth also goes into the more modern history of MJ in this country, saying the ban of the weed is a racist endeavor because it's popular with the

Mexicans who once lived in the Southwest when it was still part of Mexico. By chapter Three he's talking about how he gets into the MJ growing business, and this is an interesting read.

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