

barbarians at the gate cast

Ebook Description: Barbarians at the Gate Cast

This ebook delves into the captivating cast of characters behind the infamous leveraged buyout (LBO) of RJR Nabisco in 1988, as depicted in Bryan Burrough and John Helyar's bestselling book, "Barbarians at the Gate." The book, and subsequently the numerous adaptations, highlighted the excesses and ruthlessness of the 1980s corporate raiding scene. This ebook isn't just a list of names; it's an exploration of the personalities, motivations, strategies, and ultimate fates of the key players – from the titans of finance to the executives caught in the crossfire. Understanding their roles provides critical insight into the LBO phenomenon, its impact on corporate governance, and the lasting legacy of Wall Street greed. This is more than a cast list; it's a character study of a defining moment in American business history. The ebook's relevance extends beyond a historical account; it offers valuable lessons on corporate strategy, financial engineering, and the human element driving high-stakes business decisions.

Ebook Title: Decoding the Dealmakers: A Cast Study of RJR Nabisco's Buyout

Outline:

Introduction: Setting the Stage – The RJR Nabisco Buyout and its Significance
Chapter 1: The Players: F. Ross Johnson & RJR Nabisco Management
Chapter 2: The Raiders: Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. (KKR) – Henry Kravis, George Roberts, Jerome Kohlberg Jr.
Chapter 3: The Competitors: Shearson Lehman Hutton, Forstmann Little, and Others
Chapter 4: The Supporting Cast: Lawyers, Bankers, and Advisors
Chapter 5: The Aftermath: Consequences for RJR Nabisco and the LBO Market
Conclusion: Lessons Learned and Lasting Impacts

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Introduction: Setting the Stage – The RJR Nabisco Buyout and its Significance

The leveraged buyout (LBO) of RJR Nabisco in 1988 remains one of the most notorious and captivating corporate events in history. It epitomized the excesses of the 1980s, a decade marked by rampant deal-making, soaring debt,

and the rise of "corporate raiders." This \$25 billion deal, the largest ever at the time, wasn't just a financial transaction; it was a drama fueled by ambition, greed, and betrayal, played out by a cast of larger-than-life characters. Understanding this cast is crucial to understanding the deal itself and its enduring influence on the world of finance. The story, chronicled in the bestselling book "Barbarians at the Gate," offers invaluable lessons about corporate governance, the risks of excessive debt, and the human dynamics driving high-stakes business decisions.

Chapter 1: The Players: F. Ross Johnson & RJR Nabisco Management

F. Ross Johnson, the CEO of RJR Nabisco, was at the heart of the drama. His lavish lifestyle, extravagant spending, and ultimately, his attempt to engineer a management buyout, triggered the events that led to the epic battle for control. Johnson's actions, though ultimately self-serving, revealed weaknesses in corporate governance, allowing him to initially propose a buyout that prioritized his own interests over those of shareholders. The management team, initially supportive of Johnson's buyout plan, became pawns in a larger game, ultimately losing their positions and the company's control. Their complicity, or at least their initial lack of resistance, highlights the vulnerability of management in the face of ambitious financial maneuvering. This section will delve into Johnson's personality, his management style, and his ultimately flawed strategy, illustrating the human element behind corporate decisions and their consequences.

Chapter 2: The Raiders: Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. (KKR) – Henry Kravis, George Roberts, and Jerome Kohlberg Jr.

Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. (KKR), spearheaded by Henry Kravis and George Roberts, emerged as the ultimate victors in the RJR Nabisco auction. Their relentless pursuit of the company, fueled by their expertise in LBOs and their willingness to leverage massive amounts of debt, set a new standard for aggressive deal-making. This chapter will examine KKR's strategy, their financial engineering prowess, and the ruthlessness with which they pursued their objective. The personalities of Kravis and Roberts will be explored – their ambition, their calculated risks, and their eventual success – offering a glimpse into the mindset of the "barbarians at the gate." The role of Jerome Kohlberg Jr., the founding partner, albeit less directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the RJR Nabisco deal, will also be considered, showcasing the firm's overall ethos and approach to investment.

Chapter 3: The Competitors: Shearson Lehman Hutton, Forstmann Little, and Others

The RJR Nabisco auction wasn't a one-horse race. Several other investment firms, including Shearson Lehman Hutton and Forstmann Little, engaged in a fierce bidding war, each deploying unique strategies and pushing the price to unprecedented levels. This chapter will analyze the tactics of these

competing firms, highlighting the diverse approaches to LBOs and the competitive pressures driving the astronomical price tag. Examining the strategies of these competitors allows for a comparison of different styles of financial engineering and their relative effectiveness in the context of such a high-stakes transaction. The chapter will also consider the less successful bidders and what their failures reveal about the intricacies of this kind of financial undertaking.

Chapter 4: The Supporting Cast: Lawyers, Bankers, and Advisors

The success or failure of any major deal hinges on the expertise of the supporting cast – lawyers, bankers, and advisors. This chapter will examine the critical roles played by these individuals, highlighting their influence on the deal's progression and its ultimate outcome. This section will look at the legal maneuvering, the financial structuring, and the strategic advice that shaped the bidding process. The intricacies of legal frameworks, the creative deployment of capital, and the skillful guidance of seasoned advisors all contributed to the success (or failure) of different players involved in the deal. This casts light on the importance of skilled professionals in high-stakes financial transactions.

Chapter 5: The Aftermath: Consequences for RJR Nabisco and the LBO Market

The RJR Nabisco LBO had lasting consequences, both for the company itself and for the broader LBO market. This chapter explores the impact of the deal on RJR Nabisco's long-term performance, the changes in management and corporate strategy that followed, and the effects on its various product lines. Furthermore, it will assess the broader impact on the LBO market, examining the regulatory response to the excesses of the 1980s and the subsequent changes in deal-making practices. The long-term effects of this momentous event offer valuable insights into the sustainability of highly leveraged acquisitions and the enduring consequences of financial decisions.

Conclusion: Lessons Learned and Lasting Impacts

The RJR Nabisco story serves as a cautionary tale and a case study in high-stakes corporate finance. The personalities, strategies, and ultimate fates of the key players offer valuable lessons about corporate governance, the dangers of excessive debt, and the human element driving business decisions. This conclusion will synthesize the key takeaways from the previous chapters, emphasizing the lasting legacy of the RJR Nabisco buyout and its enduring relevance in the world of finance and business. It offers final reflections on the significance of the deal and the lasting lessons learned from its dramatic events.

FAQs:

1. What was the final price paid for RJR Nabisco? \$25 billion.
2. Who ultimately won the bid for RJR Nabisco? Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. (KKR).
3. What was the role of F. Ross Johnson in the buyout? He initiated a management buyout, which triggered the bidding war.
4. What were the main criticisms of the RJR Nabisco LBO? Excessive debt, lack of shareholder protection, and unethical practices.
5. What impact did the deal have on the LBO market? It significantly altered the landscape, leading to increased scrutiny and regulation.
6. How did the deal affect RJR Nabisco's long-term performance? It had mixed results, with some successes and some failures.
7. What were the key personalities involved in the deal? F. Ross Johnson, Henry Kravis, George Roberts, and others.
8. What is the significance of "Barbarians at the Gate"? It's a detailed account of the RJR Nabisco deal, providing insight into its players and strategies.
9. What lessons can be learned from the RJR Nabisco LBO? The dangers of excessive debt, the importance of strong corporate governance, and the human element in high-stakes business decisions.

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