



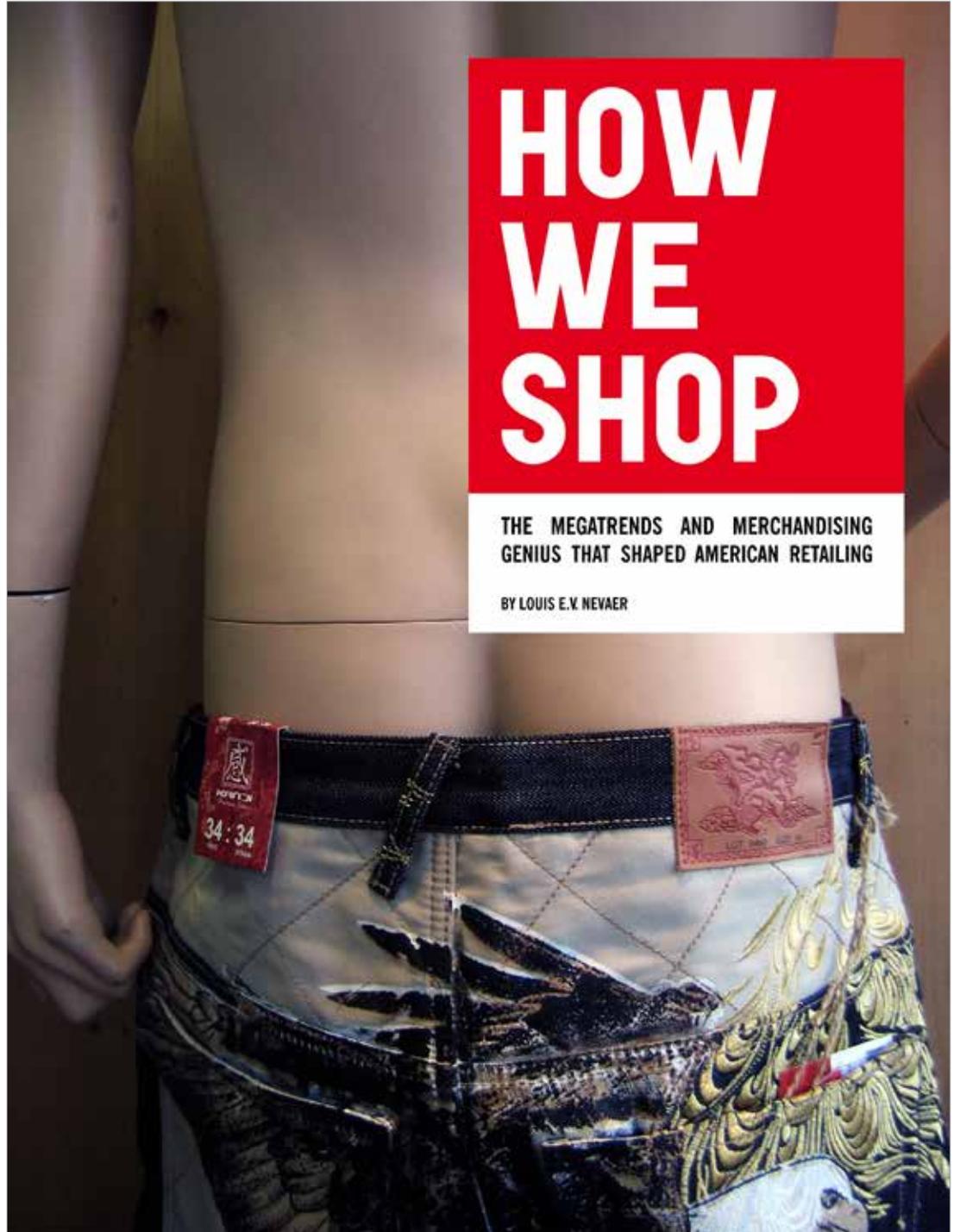
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BOUTIQUE BOOK PACKAGERS

HOW WE SHOP

THE MEGATRENDS AND MERCHANDISING
GENIUS THAT SHAPED AMERICAN RETAILING

BY LOUIS E.V. NEVAER



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Book Proposal
by Louis E.V. Nevaer

PROPOSED SPECS:

Hardcover/Paperback
7 x 9 inches (17.78 x 22.86 cm)
over 200 color photographs
256 pages

ABOUT HOW WE SHOP

How We Shop tells, and illustrates, the story of how American retailers have used culture-shaping megatrends to create the iconic companies that have changed the way America, and the rest of the world, shop. Journalist Louis E.V. Nevaer begins his exploration of retail trends with the transcontinental railroad at the end of the nineteenth century and follows the tracks it laid to the instant messaging of the early twenty-first century. Nevaer will show how, why, and in what ways, companies like Montgomery Ward, Sears, Macy's, L.L. Bean, Tiffany, and Home Depot reshaped themselves, as America itself became reshaped—and in doing so, how they came to reflect not only the profound changes that have occurred in American consumer taste, but in consumer tastes throughout the world.

After a preface, foreword, and introduction by legendary contemporary merchants, the book will contain a series of narrative surveys illustrated with photographs, megatrend by megatrend, and show how merchandisers

of genius seized opportunities to mold and re-invent American retailing.

The combination of anecdote and analysis illustrates how each of these companies invented and pioneered a whole new shopping experience, a “culture,” in fact, from which today's retailers and entrepreneurs can learn tremendous lessons about the future of retail shopping.

How We Shop demonstrates—in an incisive, readable, journalistic style illustrated with archival illustrations and commissioned photography—how these companies have succeeded in exporting the culture of America itself. The megatrends and merchandisers of genius together tell the social history of American retailing—and what the future holds.





MEGATRENDS & SHOPPING AS THE AMERICAN EXPERIENCE

How We Shop identifies ten megatrends, featuring interviews, case studies, and informative and arresting illustrations.

1. MEGATREND: THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION BRINGS AMERICANS FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE AND INTO THE CITIES.

It was Montgomery Ward that pioneered “layaway,” the first financial credit program for consumers. As cities swelled with new arrivals, both from outlying rural areas and other countries, a way of assessing a person’s “credit-worthiness” was essential in expanding retailing. A Singer sewing machine or a Schwinn bicycle could now be “set aside” just for you, while you paid it off little by little over a period time.

2. MEGATREND: INDUSTRIALIZATION ALLOWS THE NATION TO MOVE WEST.

It was Sears which, after watching these revolutions in technology and transportation take place, invented mail order. The Sears “Wish Book” made it possible for people throughout rural America to have access to the same merchandise that residents of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia

had. How? By standardizing consumer products, they were made affordable to almost anyone anywhere. For the first time, standardized consumer goods were available across the nation.

3. MEGATREND: BANKING AND FINANCE CHANGES COMMERCE BETWEEN THE GILDED AGE AND WORLD WAR I.

It was Macy’s that took the leap from “store credit” to a “charge card,” making instant gratification possible. Buy now and pay at your leisure. This model would be emulated to the point where Sears would launch its own credit card, the Discover card, for use apart from its store. Today, Wal-Mart strives to establish its own bank.

4. MEGATREND: THE AUTOMOBILE GIVES RISE TO HIGHWAYS AT THE CONCLUSION OF WORLD WAR II.

It was L. L. Bean that used direct mail as no one had before. Bean created a retailing empire that did not even have a single store—until popular acclaim forced it to open one in Freeport, Maine.

5. MEGATREND: THE G.I. BILL FUELS THE CREATION OF THE AMERICAN SUBURB.

It was the suburb that gave rise to shopping malls, and anchor stores defined the suburban landscape. With department stores anchoring one section of the mall, Target and Best Buy balanced its appeal. One firm specialized in everyday household products, while the other brought the latest in technological innovations to consumers.

6. MEGATREND: TELEVISION AND HOLLYWOOD CREATE A MEDIA ENTERTAINMENT CONSUMER ECONOMY.

It was Tiffany that used popular entertainment to link glamour, status and its high-end products in the public imagination—innovations in merchandising that have subsequently been adopted by Hollywood celebrities for their own purposes. The emergence of branding, the media and consumerism has its origins in the innovations Tiffany pioneered.

7. MEGATREND: THE SIXTIES GIVE RISE TO CASUAL LIVING, FREEING AMERICANS OF THE SOCIAL CONSTRAINTS OF CLOTHING.

It was the Gap which, for the first time, presented clothing stacked

on tables and chairs, and ushered in the casual look. Gone were hats, gloves, corsets, ties, and even stockings, and the way we dressed, freed from the constricting bolts of cloth, reverberated throughout society.

8. MEGATREND: GLOBALIZATION CHANGES THE ECONOMIES OF SCALE IN AMERICAN RETAILING.

It was Home Depot that, for the first time, brought everything in the way of home fix-up materials under a single roof, an idea that seems so simple today but when it was introduced was hailed as revolutionary. Equally intriguing is the story of Costco's decision to limit the number of goods it sells, differentiating itself from its behemoth competitor, Wal-Mart. Delivering exceptional value on a specific number of products is a strategy that continues to succeed; Costco's inventory control is exceptional, thus it contains costs and its customers save both time and money. Global sourcing and vendors has changed the world's commerce.

9. MEGATREND: THE INTERNET REVOLUTIONIZES HOW MERCHANDISERS CAN PRICE GOODS AND SERVICES.

It was Barnes & Noble that saw the Internet as an ally, not an enemy. More than any other "real world" retailer, B&N has successfully combined "clicks and bricks"—an innovation that we all benefit from today. Its counterparts on the "clicks" side of the equation are eBay and Amazon, both of which are pioneers, the former in creating a marketplace for and by consumers and the latter in establishing regional distribution centers for order fulfillment.

10. MEGATREND: A HIPSTER CULTURE IS EMPOWERED BY TECHNOLOGY, CREATING A RADICALLY SEGMENTED CONSUMER ECONOMY.

It was the effervescent appeal of eternal youth, and how merchandisers of genius are using technologies that is the megatrend shaping the future of American retailing. In the science fiction film "Minority Report" people's retinas can be read by computers placed throughout a city. As the main character walks by a billboard, the billboard speaks to him personally, reminding him that the product he sees advertised is the one he's been meaning to purchase. Although retailers can't yet read retinas, they can detect cell phone signals. That technology, by which retailers' points of sale displays can detect a consumer's cell phone and recognize if a person

has signed up for a certain product, is already being test marketed. American Eagle Outfitters, Abercrombie & Fitch and J. Crew are at the cutting edge of using technological innovation to foster a hipster consumer culture.



AUTHOR BIO

Louis E.V. Nevaer is a contributor to Pacific News Service and New American Media. He is the author of over a dozen books, including *HR and the New Hispanic Workforce*, *The Rise of the Hispanic Market in the United States*, *Backgammon: A Cultural History of the World's Favorite Pastime* (Chronicle, 2011), *The Dot-Com Debacle and the Return to Reason* (Praeger, 2002), and *Into and Out of—The Gap: A Cautionary Account of an American Retailer* (Praeger, 2001).



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MARKET ASSESSMENT

Consumer culture keeps apace with technological developments: While several books exist that plumb the depths of consumer psychology, *How We Shop* is the first book to extensively explore the development of retail consumer trends as a continuum of the technological trends that shape culture.

Emphasis on the visual: The illustrations and photography accompanying the incisive text show the importance of how the visual informs and influences both retailer and consumer behaviors.

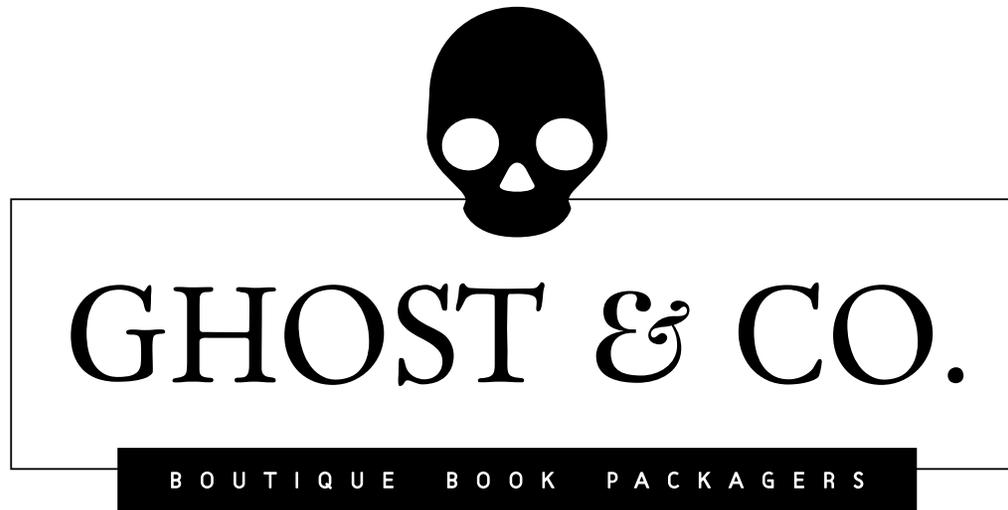
Fascinating cultural history: The examination of the trends that shaped American, and global, retail sales paints an intriguing cultural history of the country and the development of its retail economy.



SIMILAR TITLES

- *Buyology: Truth and Lies About Why We Buy* by Martin Lindstrom (Crown Business, 2010)
- *Retail Superstars: Inside the 25 Best Independent Stores in America* by George Whalin (Portfolio Hardcover, 2009)
- *Why We Buy: The Science of Shopping* by Paco Underhill (Simon & Schuster, 2008)
- *1001 Ideas to Create Retail Excitement* by Edgar A. Falk (Prentice Hall Press, 2003)





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