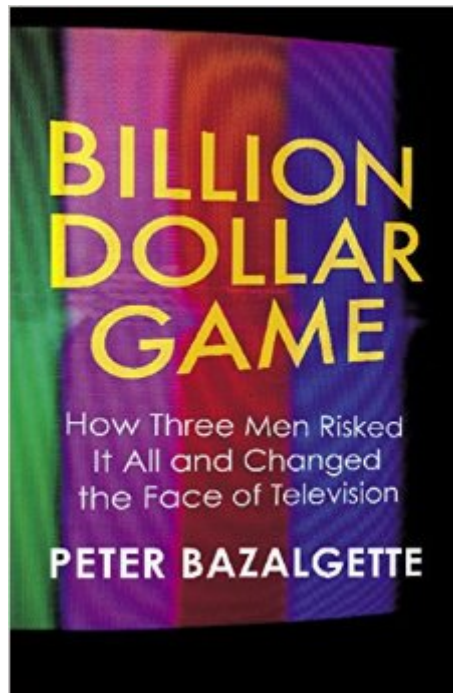


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# Billion Dollar Game: How Three Men Risked It All And Changed The Face Of Television



## Synopsis

In the mid-1990s, three men had three unique and revolutionary ideas for television shows entitled Cash Mountain, Survive, and Project X. Time and time again, they were each rejected by major the networks as their projects were declared unfit for production. Rather than give up on their dreams, Paul Smith, Charlie Parsons, and John de Mol instead pushed ahead and went on to produce shows which quickly became the biggest and most successful programs on Earth: Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?, Survivor, and Big Brother. This is the compelling story of how three men defied overwhelming odds to take the television industry by storm, make personal fortunes, and transform the map of popular culture.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Billion Dollar Game is a difficult book to pitch. On one hand it's the story of how 3 of today's most popular TV formats came into being. On the other it's a business study of the company Endemol and how John DeMol became a rich man. For this reason it's difficult to imagine who this book would appeal to most. As a member of the TV production industry I was fascinated by the story of the 3 shows - from initial ideas, to the constant rejection by networks and subsequent tweaks in format, to eventual success - Bazalgette gives a terrific insiders view. I was less interested though in the big business story - share prices, stock markets, deals and takeovers - all got in the way of the story I wanted to read. I'm sure there are many readers out there who would be fascinated by the business study Bazalgette presents - but it's equally possible that these people couldn't care less

about how a TV show comes into being. So Billion Dollar Game is really two books in one - or half a book, depending on your point of view. The book is actually broken into 2 parts. Part 1 is the story of the 3 formats and the rise of Endemol. Part 2 is a detailed look at Big Brother around the world - the characters and stunts, community reaction, and tales of sex and relationships in the various houses. I enjoyed the first series of my local edition of BB, but as each new series came round the housemates got more annoying and the stunts more contrived. The novelty of the show quickly wore off. So Part 2 really didn't appeal to me and I found myself skipping page after page. Big Brother fans will probably be enthralled - but then they too could well be put off by the earlier study of Endemol's share price and talk of the NASDAQ and the dot.com boom.

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