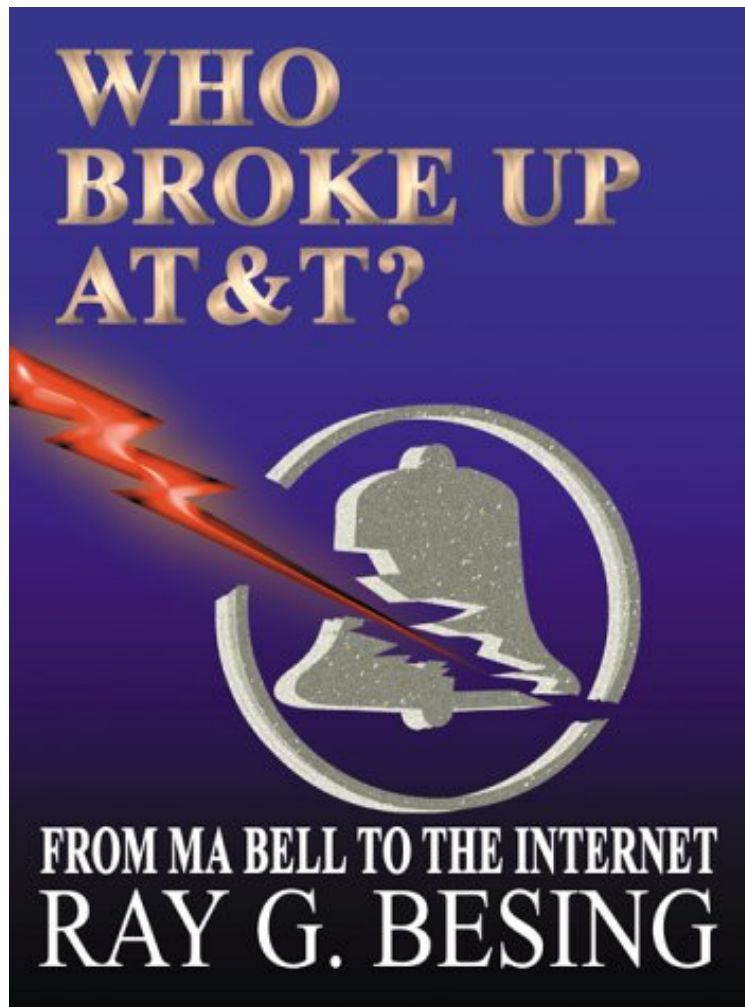


Who Broke Up ATT?: From Ma Bell to the Internet

Ray G. Besing

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Ray G. Besing : Who Broke Up ATT?: From Ma Bell to the Internet before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Who Broke Up ATT?: From Ma Bell to the Internet:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A great Guide to Telecommunications for LaymenBy Maria T. StennisMr. Besing's book is a great guide to telecommunications in the U.S. for laymen. It is a history of the Bell telephone monopoly and how that monopoly was broken up by the author and other attorneys representing small companies who simply wanted to compete with the ATT and the Bell Telephone System. Most of us do not know or understand what happened to convert an enormous industry from a pervasive monopoly to real competition. As the attorney for two of the little guys who took on ATT, then the largest company on Earth, the author gives a blow-by-blow account of the long struggle over a 20-year period in the U.S. to bring lower prices and technological innovation to the industry which affects everyone, everyday. It is truly amazing that these "little people" were able, against

overwhelming odds, to transform our communications world, from telephones to the Internet to I-phones. Without this book the public could never know how dominant and self-serving the Bell System was for almost a century or how difficult it was to change the industry by using fundamental laws which Congress and the Administration should have employed to break the unlawful monopoly. A truly moving story all of us should know.² of 6 people found the following review helpful. Less Than One Star By A Customer This book is poorly written, terribly long, and woefully boring and written by an "author" for lack of a better word whose arrogance shines through the each and every word. Don't read it.

Many members of the public have wanted to understand what happened to the telephone business and why all the confusion over the past 15 years. It has been a very frustrating and confusing time for millions of telephone subscribers and, now, the users of PCs and the Internet. This book is a popular history of the dramatic struggles by one lawyer to represent basically broke small businessmen who wanted to take on ATT and the Bell Telephone System in the United States, simply because the little guys wanted to compete against the ATT telephone monopoly. Bell had run one competitor, Tom Carter, out of business and almost closed the doors of another competitor, MCI. The author, Ray G. Besing, formerly a trial lawyer for a small Dallas law firm, spent over 29 years of his career in a seemingly unending battle against ATT. The focus of his struggle was to force ATT to allow competition in what had been the completely monopolized telephone industry. Besing's Carterfone v. ATT case was the first dramatic victory, breaking ATT's telephone equipment monopoly. Then, in a series of cases, Besing greatly aided MCI in opening ATT's monopoly long distance services to competition. These battles led directly to the breakup of ATT and the Bell System in 1984. Consequently, as competition in communications expanded in the 1980s and 1990s, this led to a new Information Age and a technological revolution that forever changed telecommunications, computers, the Internet and, indeed, the national and world economies far into the twenty-first century.

About the Author Ray G. Besing, a top trial lawyer in Dallas for 36 years, specialized in antitrust cases and securities fraud litigation. He represented small business people against very large corporations, with groundbreaking victories for hometown Carter Electronics and Washington-based MCI--cases paving the way for ATT's breakup and the advent of true competition in Twenty-First Century technologies. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. Yet, in 1965, all telephone services of every kind, and every piece of telephone equipment--whether a cable, wire, switch, submarine cable, telephone pole, central office building, or truck, and on a coast-to-coast basis--were owned and exclusively operated by the largest corporation on earth, ATT. ATT, with its wholly-owned subsidiaries comprising the Bell Telephone System, provided all local telephone service in virtually all cities of any size in the United States, leaving the "bones" of small-town telephone service to family-owned local phone companies. ATT, the twenty-two Bell Telephone subsidiaries, Western Electric (the manufacturing arm) and Bell Laboratories (the research and development arm), were known as "the only phone company in town" or, simply, Ma Bell. Ma Bell did not permit or tolerate any other person or company providing either telephone equipment or telephone services anywhere in the nationwide Bell Telephone System, from Boston to San Francisco. ATT had, during the first twenty years of the 20th century, established a complete, pure monopoly over the only existing network to transmit first voice, and then data, and then TV signals, from one point to another. Prices for phone services were exorbitant and technological innovations in the Bell System network ranged between few and none. But one of the dominant features of the American experience in the 20th century was a passion for economic freedom in an open, competitive marketplace--whether for ships, plane travel, shoes or toys. Free market competition, however, was unheard of in the hallways of ATT, of Congress and of the federal and state regulatory agencies, and throughout the broad and powerful telecommunications industry which permeated the nation's social and economic fabric. ATT acted as if its monopoly over the largest industry in the country was perhaps written in the Constitution; ATT seemed invincible. But some small entrepreneurs and their lawyers, including the author, commenced an attack on the ATT citadel starting in 1965. Those early attacks triggered an all out war wherein the incumbent monopoly, ATT, and a largely compliant set of federal and state courts and agencies, fought mightily against any competitive inroads. Hundreds of millions of dollars were spent by ATT to protect its turf, and the lawyers' fees and related expenses were promptly passed on to the public; the ratepayer paid for ATT's war against competition. ATT utilized deception and falsehoods in a thoroughly immoral war conducted in what was otherwise a moral and open society. This book speaks to the present and the future regarding the most dynamic and explosive development in the world economy in decades: the rapid deployment of cutting-edge technologies, while looking back to the painful struggle of a few good people who changed the definition of communications in America and in the world from a system wrought by Ma Bell to a new, competitive communications environment which unleashed those same cutting-edge technologies and created the Information Age. This book will explain, in laymen's terms, the significant events in telecommunications and, consequently, in the development of the Internet, from the creation of the ATT monopoly to the present; from the 1984 break-up of ATT and the Bell Telephone System to the January 10, 2000 announcement of AOL's \$166 billion acquisition of Time-Warner. It will cover these dramatic events over the past thirty years, from the famous Carterfone and MCI decisions,

which broke the ATT monopoly, to MCI's \$37 billion merger with Worldcom; the larger, \$115 billion dollar acquisition by MCI Worldcom of Sprint; and the largest acquisition in history, AOL's \$166 billion acquisition of Time-Warner. The book will discuss the "merger mania" of virtually every major player in telecommunications and the Internet, such as Southwestern Bell's acquisitions of Pacific Bell, Southern New England Bell and Ameritech-creating a conglomerate known as SBC, Inc. which is now the largest local telephone company in the United States. The book discusses the view of most market analysts that the outstanding and unprecedented performance of the U.S. economy throughout the 1990s was in large measure due to the explosive growth of technology and, specifically, the Internet stocks group. Thus, in 1999 alone, there were 290 initial public offerings of stock (IPOs) by Internet companies, who collectively raised over \$24 billion dollars in new capital. The book looks at the historical ATT monopoly arising in the early days of the 20th century, which resulted in ATT 's enormous economic and political power-an institution Sonny Kleinfeld of The New York Times described in his book, "The Biggest Company on Earth." ATT was a corporate giant which had an annual gross domestic product which was greater than most nations of the world. And the book will describe how, in the last third of the 20th century, some small entrepreneurs and their attorneys, including especially the author Ray Besing, were the Davids who brought down the ATT Goliath.