



## The Reviews



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Pitch People gives a behind-the-scenes look at those fast-talking, genial people who peddle Veg-o-matics, Salsa Masters and Wonder Scoopers at home shows, state fairs and on TV infomercials. Jacobs looks at a band of hucksters, who go back to traveling medicine man shows in the Old West, and discovers that they're not like you or me at all. They're showmen who travel a circuit whose "bigtime" was the Boardwalk at Atlantic City and is now hour-long shows on vacant cable TV channels, where they pitch viewers everything from knives strong enough to saw through a steel-headed hammer to static dusters, mops, non-stick cookware, slicers, dicers and weight-loss programs.

As much entertainers as they are salesmen, they also still travel from town to town, setting up tables at home shows and fairgrounds, trying to entice passersby to stop, look, listen and hand over their dollars. Jacobs interviews a dozen or so of the legendary kings and queens of pitch in the United States and United Kingdom. For some it's a calling that's been handed down through generations; some are related to each other. Some, like Ed McMahon, still pitch products. It must be in the genes.

Most of these characters are fascinating and lively, especially when they describe how they get excited when they know they've got the public in their pockets. And certainly their vast array of slicing, dicing, handy-dandy gadgets are fun, especially when we see them or their predecessors advertised in old TV commercials.