



How Star Wars Conquered the Universe: The Past, Present, and Future of a Multibillion Dollar Franchise

Chris Taylor

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In 1973, a young filmmaker named George Lucas scribbled some notes for a far-fetched space-fantasy epic. Some forty years and \$37 billion later, *Star Wars*-related products outnumber human beings, a growing stormtrooper army spans the globe, and “Jediism” has become a religion in its own right. Lucas’s creation has grown into far more than a cinematic classic; it is, quite simply, one of the most lucrative, influential, and interactive franchises of all time. Yet incredibly, until now the complete history of *Star Wars*—its influences and impact, the controversies it has spawned, its financial growth and long-term prospects—has never been told.

In *How Star Wars Conquered the Universe*, veteran journalist Chris Taylor traces the series from the difficult birth of the original film through its sequels, the franchise’s death and rebirth, the prequels, and the preparations for a new trilogy. Providing portraits of the friends, writers, artists, producers, and marketers who labored behind the scenes to turn Lucas’s idea into a legend, Taylor also jousts with modern-day Jedi, tinkers with droid builders, and gets inside Boba Fett’s helmet, all to find out how *Star Wars* has attracted and inspired so many fans for so long.

Since the first film’s release in 1977, Taylor shows, *Star Wars* has conquered our culture with a sense of lightness and exuberance, while remaining serious enough to influence politics in far-flung countries and spread a spirituality that appeals to religious groups and atheists alike. Controversial digital upgrades and poorly received prequels have actually made the franchise stronger than ever. Now, with a savvy new set of bosses holding the reins and *Episode VII* on the horizon, it looks like *Star Wars* is just getting started.

An energetic, fast-moving account of this creative and commercial phenomenon, *How Star Wars Conquered the Universe* explains how a young filmmaker’s fragile dream beat out a surprising number of rivals to gain a diehard, multigenerational fan base—and why it will be galvanizing our imaginations and minting money for generations to come.

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