

# SIR RICHARD BRANSON

## Founder of the Virgin Group

In this personal fireside chat, Branson imparts the life lessons and reveal his innovative and inclusive vision for the future. Branson redefines capitalism and flips it on its head - evolving shared values and switching from a just profit focus, one which will position people, communities and the planet as the focus. This session highlights how capitalism is able to be used as a tool for social benefit.



Sir Richard Branson was born in 1950 and educated at Stowe School. It was here that he began to set up Student Magazine when he was just 16. By 17 he'd also set up Student Advisory Centre, which was a charity to help young people.

In 1970 he founded Virgin as a mail order record retailer, and not long after he opened a record shop in Oxford Street, London. During 1972 a recording studio was built in Oxfordshire, and the first Virgin artist, Mike Oldfield, recorded "Tubular Bells" which was released in 1973.

The album went on to sell over 5 million copies! Since then many household names, including Belinda Carlisle, Genesis,

Phil Collins, Janet Jackson and The Rolling Stones have helped to make Virgin Music one of the top six record companies in the world. The equity of Virgin Music Group - record labels, music publishing, and recording studios was sold to THORN EMI in 1992 in a US\$1 billion deal.

The Virgin Group has now expanded into international music Megastores, air travel, mobile, financial, retail, music, internet, drinks, rail, hotels and leisure, with around 400 companies worldwide.

Virgin Atlantic Airways, formed in 1984, is now the second largest British long haul international airline and operates a fleet of Boeing 747 and Airbus A340 aircraft to New York, Miami, Boston, Los Angeles, Orlando, San Francisco, Hong Kong, Johannesburg, Tokyo, Las Vegas, Delhi, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Shanghai and the Caribbean. The airline is based on the concept of offering a competitive and high quality Upper Class, Premium Economy and Economy service. The airline has won many major awards, including Airline of the Year Award several times.

In July 2012 Branson announced plans to build an orbital space launch system, designated LauncherOne. Four commercial customers have already contracted for launches and two companies are developing standardised satellite buses optimised to the design of LauncherOne, in expectation of business opportunities created by the new small sat launcher.