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The stock market--the virtual "place" where corporations raise capital--has come to symbolize business more profoundly than any other entity or institution. This book provides a glimpse into the history, development, regulation, and increasing importance that the stock market plays in business and economic growth, as well as the investment strategies of individuals--in the U.S. and around the world, including Europe, Japan, Hong Kong, and "emerging markets" in the developing world that are rapidly integrating into the global economy. To explore the roles and workings of the stock market, the authors trace its evolution from its origins on Wall Street in the 1700s to the present, and examine the varied ways in which it is used to generate economic value. From initial public offerings (IPOs) to hedge funds to American Depository Receipts (ADRs) to options and more, the authors go beyond basic stocks and bonds to highlight the development and current applications of a wide variety of financial instruments that are used to raise capital. Featuring examples, graphics, illustrations, glossary, index, and references and on-line resources, this volume offers an accessible and engaging introduction to the world of investment and corporate finance, while illuminating one of the icons of capitalism.