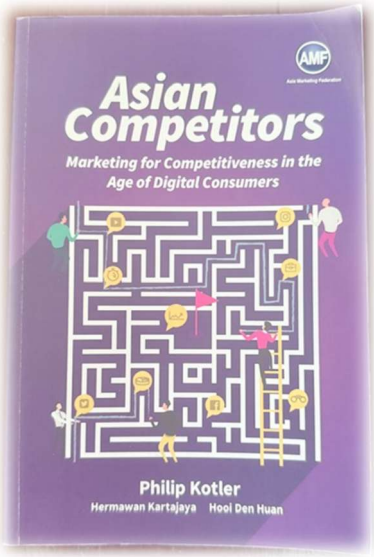
Book Review



Book Title: Asian Competitors: Marketing for Competitiveness in the Age of Digital Consumers

Author: Philip Kotler
Hermawan Kartajaya
Hooi Den Huan

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In this book, the leading author, Philip Kotler, who is the “father of modern marketing” teams up with Asian marketing experts Hermawan Kartajaya and Hooi Den Huan to provide a roadmap for the “Asian Century” where the Western brands often struggle to get in. The core theme is that the digital revolution has shifted marketing from a **vertical** (top-down) hierarchy to a **horizontal** (peer-to-peer) paradigm. In Asia, where mobile penetration is aggressive and the middle class is exploding, this shift is happening faster than anywhere else. The authors argue that to remain competitive, firms must transition through the "Marketing 4.0" framework, moving from traditional touchpoints to digital-human hybrid experiences.

Here are some key frameworks and concepts:

1. From the 4As to the 5As: Traditional marketing relied on the 4As (Aware, Attitude, Act, Act Again). Kotler and his co-authors argue that in the connected era, the path is more complex and social. The 5As (Aware, Appeal, Ask, Act, Advocate) should be conducted.
2. The “Glorecalization” Mindset-a blend of Global values, Regional strategy, and Local tactics. They categorize Asian winners into three groups: Local Champions, Reginal Players, and Multinationals (MNCs).
3. The Triple C Concept: To win in the "New Wave," companies must pivot their strategy: Communitization, Clarification, and Confirmation.

How’s about the real-world application of these concepts? Here is a case study of “Xiaomi” that Kotler uses illustrate Marketing 4.0 and Communitization:

- The Strategy: Instead of spending billions on traditional advertising (television or billboards), Xiaomi focused on their “Mi Fans”. They treated their customers as co-creators rather than just consumers.
- The “Ask” Stage: In the 5As framework, Xiaomi mastered the “Ask” phase. Before a new version of their MIUI operating system was released, they engaged fans on forums to vote on features.
- The Result: This created a massive army of Advocates. When a new phone launched, it wasn't just a company selling a product; it was a community celebrating a collective achievement. This allowed Xiaomi to scale globally with a fraction of the marketing budget of Samsung or Apple.

In summarize, this book is more of a strategic field guide, analyzing how companies across 18 Asian countries are leapfrogging Western traditionalism by embracing “New Wave” marketing and also essential reading for any business leader looking to enter or expand within Asia. It effectively dismantles the myth that Western marketing models are the gold standard, proving instead that Asia is now the primary laboratory for the future of global marketing. According to Kotler, please keep in mind that the “Age of Digital Consumers” in Asia isn't just about technology; it’s about a fundamental shift in power from the brand to the community. Whether you are a local startup or a global MNC, your competitiveness now depends on your ability to be horizontal, social, and human-centric.

Wanvitu Soranarak
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