走向全球去开展业务

Explore Global Market

**企业领导人如果不能在日常经营中意识到全球化的内涵并培养全球思维
他们可能会逐步陷自己于不利和麻烦之中**

Entrepreneurs may have trouble if they fail to think in a global perspective in their daily work.

今天，世界经济进入了又一个快速增长阶段，那些曾坚决反"全球化"的企业也将不得不面对来自国外的竞争，这是全球经济发展的必然趋势。

中国企业当然也不例外，事实上，在过去20年内，中国企业比来自全球的任何其他企业都更深切感受到了崭新的、开放的市场经济给它们带来的巨大影响。在这20年内，很多外国企业也一直试图进入中国市场以把握中国市场的巨大商机。

2003年12月，我曾接受过《新华航空》杂志的专访，很荣幸地向读者及中国的经理人阐述了一些营销战略方面的观点及我的一些想法，并特别指出了中国企业应通过"增值战略"来抵御折扣战和价格战的方法。由于全球有很多企业成功地执行了这些战略，上述信息对深陷价格战泥潭的中国经理人来说非常重要、及时。

我是一个全球化和建立全球经济体系的鼓吹者。在我的一部近作——《全球趋势：无国界经济下的业务拓展》里面，我向所有企业（尤其是中小型企业）展示了企业向全球发展的途径。在接下来的几个月内，我将通过《新华航空》杂志陆续阐述一些新观点和新策略，其中有很多策略将有助于中国公司在亚洲、美国、欧洲乃至全球的海外市场上获得成功。

中国企业如果想从低成本的制造业向行业价值链的高端延伸，就必须精通营销策略和品牌创建之道（这些道道也将有助于企业往利润链的高端延伸）。不要再满足于做低利润的制造商了（尤其是大众用品制造商）！中国企业应该掌握、运用全球领先的营销观点和营销策略！只有赢得了与国内同行及在华跨国公司的竞争，才具备成功进入海外市场的能力！

问题是：应该如何着手推行其全球化战略？简单地说，任何希望在全球获得成功的领导人首先得具备全球化思维，然后再采取全球化行动来使之实现。在具体开展这项工作时，他们得先建立全球业务思维、全球业务领导力和全球企业文化，这些工作可以赋予企业"摸石头"的能力。

今天，没有企业能够不受全球化的影响。这迫使各类企业的领导人开始调整本企业以便在新经济环境下继续获得成功。企业领导人如果不能在日常经营中意识到全球化的内涵并培养全球思维，他们可能会逐步陷自己于不利和麻烦之中。

尽管在国内市场上仍有量的拉动（但利润通常很低），部分中国企业还是已经把目光投向了国际市场，这些有着全球思维的企业有的是顺应全球经济扩张的潮流，有的则是受行业本身具有全球化特征的推动。

在走向国际市场的具体做法上，一批成功走向海外的中国企业之前并没有把自己限制在传统的"大量供应"游戏中，它们凭借所掌握的关键技术直接向某些高价值、高利润的细分市场进军；有些企业则大张旗鼓、不遗余力地与国外机构建立紧密的联盟和伙伴关系，或通过兼并竞争者直接向价值链和利润链的高端延伸。

在未来几年内，中国将逐步摆脱其单一的差异化竞争优势（如低廉的成本导致的低廉的价格）。中国制造业的品质和产品质量正在迅速改善。未来3～5年内，在越来越多的行业里，"中国制造"将成为中国企业的优势。在10年内，中国将不仅会在领先的行业内获得良好的质量口碑（质量优势），还将拥有至关重要的价格优势。

关于全球品牌合作，中国企业在价格上的长期竞争优势为其与美欧企业建立合作关系提供了巨大的机会，西方及工业化国家的企业可以有选择地与质量能力不断提升但参与高端市场竞争能力依然缺乏的中国公司结盟——采用"附加价值"及"价格最低"的价值诉求，这为双方企业建立新的合资公司和策略联盟提供了依据。

世界已经开始看到这样一种趋势：在未来10年内，关于中国的业务战略将很快成为全球业务战略的主流。越来越多的有战略思维的中国企业将开始在全球范围内开展并购活动，以此来避免与尚在持续增加的仿制型企业为伍。

可以预言，21世纪前10年后半部分的主旋律将是："不向美国和欧洲企业出口，直接买下他们！"

撰文／约翰·卡斯林
翻译／芮新国　程　杨
（本文作者为国际知名营销专家）

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"Going Global: How to Develop a Successful Global Business"

In today's fast-growing world economy, even the most stubborn companies who refuse to accept globalization will eventually have to face competition from abroad. It is inevitable. Global competition is everywhere and will ultimately impact all companies – large and small – and in all countries.

Chinese companies are certainly no exception. In fact, during the past decade it has been Chinese companies who have felt the impact of the opening of the new market economy in China more than any other companies in the world. Countless foreign firms have sought to enter China to take advantage of the tremendous new opportunities that China represents to them. Whether it is to sell their products to business and industry or to consumers, foreign firms perceive business opportunities that are until now unprecedented in the world.

Foreign manufacturers each day attempt to enhance their competitive positions in their industries by sending their manufacturing to China to exploit Chinese manufacturers' low cost of labor and manufacturing. And despite objections from certain organizations and politicians in the USA and Europe who complain of Chinese manufacturers' "unfair" competitive advantage, privately many of these same people will admit that the world is a much better (and more affordable) place with the entry of China into the new global economy.

In the December 2003, I was interviewed “Expression” magazine. It was a great honor for me to speak to the readers of “Expression” magazine and to present to the Chinese business community my thoughts and strategies on marketing, and especially how a company can build value into its products and to compete successfully against discounting and low prices. Having successfully implemented these strategies in almost countries in the world – including China – it was a very important and timely message for Chinese business people who each day are fighting the battle of aggressive price discounting. I have presented this message many times in many cities in China.

It is no secret to any of my readers of my books and articles through the years that I am a strong proponent of globalization and building a strong global economy. In my latest book, *Global Manifest Destiny*, I present a road map for all companies – and especially for small and middle size companies – to become global companies. In the months to follow, I will present many new ideas and leading edge strategies to Chinese business people such as building strong marketing, creating and promoting new brands to be successful here in China – and many of these same strategies will help Chinese companies to be successful outside of China as they venture into other markets in Asia, the USA, Europe, and eventually globally.

For Chinese businesses to move up the value chain from the low-cost manufacturing capital for the world, Chinese business must begin to master marketing strategy and brand building – all of which will help Chinese companies to also move up the margin chain. No longer satisfied with the low margins typical of manufacturers – especially commodity manufacturers, Chinese companies must understand and embrace leading-edge ideas and strategies from all around the world. Once Chinese companies are able to compete more successfully in China against both Chinese companies *and* multinationals doing business in China, then they will be capable to venture successfully outside of China. Despite the temptation to expand business outside of China, for Chinese companies to "go global' successfully they must first be successful in China.

Many Chinese business people already know this. In fact, of the 191 countries now represented in the United Nations today, there are only one people who populate *all* 191 of these countries. These are Chinese people. While in the past the Chinese business people who have been the most global of all business people have been almost exclusively Hong Kong or Taiwan Chinese, it is now the time for *all* Chinese to achieve success in the new global marketplace.

But the question now is, "Where do Chinese companies begin?" There is only one place to begin and that is to build and create a global business culture in your company. Simply, the leaders of any successful business who want to successfully "go global" must first *think globally* then they must begin to *act globally* before it becomes an operating reality. They must do this to *feel the stones as they cross the river*. Building a global business mindset, global business leadership and a global business culture gives the firm the ability to be able to *feel the stones.*

Global Leadership & Global Culture

The reality of business today mandates that companies and the people who lead them must look at their entire organization within a global context – if not today, then tomorrow. Even if a Chinese company chooses *not* to “go global.” the never-ending search for continuing lower costs from companies all around the world have put pressure on Chinese companies – many of who have already lost business from foreign firms to other Chinese companies who have lower costs from more low-cost regions in China or to even other low-cost countries like India or Indonesia. The reality is that *no company* can escape the hand of globalization – either directly or indirectly – and *all* serious-minded businesses in China will be impacted.

The rise of the global economy compels business leaders in companies large and small to viscerally recognize the inherent inevitability of global competition and begin to prepare their companies to be successful in such a new environment.

While *all* companies must earn profits today and that short-term results are intricately tied to long-term performance, failures on the part of business leaders to recognize the indispensable nature of the global component are setting themselves up for potentially very troubled and difficult times.

Despite the pull of the high volume (but oftentimes low margin) domestic market, some Chinese companies have set their sights squarely on the external global market. These globally-minded companies were probably motivated by the prospect of reaping global economies of scale or the knowledge that competition in their businesses was inherently global. Some of them attacked the overseas market from the start while others, which were subcontract manufacturers to big international companies, had to first think small in the beginning to ensure that they didn't jeopardize or damage their then current supplier relationships.

Some of China's successful global companies also have not confined themselves to purely the traditional high volume sales game. As these firms developed expertise with crucial technologies, they migrated to specialized, high-value and high margin segments. The more enlightened companies have not been unnecessarily shy about developing close alliances and partnerships or even acquiring competitors to successfully move up the value and margin chains.

Here are case study examples of domestic Chinese companies who have successfully broken into the global marketplace *and* did it in less than five years:

Pearl River Piano:

One of these successful domestically-focused Chinese firms is Guangzhou-based Pearl River Piano. Pearl River began to plan its global business strategy in the early 1990s by first breaking into mass markets where they enjoyed a competitive price advantage due to their low production costs. Pearl River then set up one of the world's largest piano-manufacturing facilities in 1992. With annual revenues of less than US$ 20 million when it began its globalization strategy, the company began to establish its reputation as a reliable supplier of pianos in the local Chinese market. The company's leadership also began its planning to enter the U.S. market by the year 2000 years before it actually did so by thinking globally first, then by beginning to behave globally.

By 1999, Pearl River's leaders had correctly concluded there was demand in the U.S. for a high-quality, inexpensive, entry-level piano – a gap in the market it could easily fill as one of the world's lowest cost piano manufacturers. The next year, the company sent a four-member team to sign up distributors to help build the brand and launch the product in the United States.

Despite the global recession, Pearl River increased its share of the U.S. market from 5% in 2001 to 10% in 2002 and is now planning to capture more than 25% by 2005. Not only is Pearl River investing more in its brands than their more established global competitors in the U.S. market, it is also building a new state-of-the-art design center in Germany as a prelude to a European launch.

Wanxiang Group Corporation:

Wanxiang Group Corporation is one of the top 500 companies in China. In the automotive parts industry, Wanxiang is a reliable supplier of universal joints, bearings, and CV joints to customers in over 40 countries around the world. Wanxiang America Corporation provides full-line customer service to the United States, Canada, Latin and South America and all of Europe.

Wanxiang started out in 1969, with barely $500 in capital, as a repair shop for bicycles and farm tractors. Now it is China's third largest privately owned company. Wanxiang, based near Hangzhou, in Zhejiang province, controls or has stakes in over 100 companies that deal primarily in auto parts, both in China and overseas. Last year, it earned $165 million in pretax profits on $1.8 billion of sales, including $380 million in parts exported or produced abroad. The company employs 31,800 people, 920 of them in the United States and Europe.

There are challenges, however. A global glut of production capacity is forcing automakers to put heavy pressure on suppliers to reduce costs. In China, seven new companies have entered the auto market since 2001, and several more have announced plans to do so. Once this new production capacity comes on line, utilization at auto factories with foreign investment could dip below 60 percent, so automakers would put even more pressure on their suppliers to reduce prices. And although Wanxiang does have a labor cost advantage over many of its auto parts competitors in the West, they have strengths of their own, such as more advanced technology and much larger scale.

But Lu Guanqiu, Wanxiang's founder, continues to see opportunity in the face of difficulties. For the past several years, he has been on an acquisition spree, buying auto parts makers in the United States and Europe to plug gaps in his company's technology, markets, and brands. To tap into businesses with higher profit margins and funnel funds back into the core auto parts business, Wanxiang has also acquired stakes in several services firms. In addition, Lu is developing plans to fuel growth and profits by building a complete automobile, with the ultimate goal of manufacturing autos bearing with the Wanxiang brand. An important part of his strategy is the development of an electric car, which he hopes will help address the problems of higher fossil-fuel consumption and air pollution. Whether or not he eventually succeeds in moving his company up the value chain, Lu is still committed to his core auto parts business: "As long as cars are being made somewhere in the world, we'll be making parts."

China FeiYue Group:

FeiYue Group, a Chinese sewing machine manufacturer located in Zhejiang province, is founded and managed by folks in Zhejiang. Its products have managed to enter into most of the Chinese households, and the overseas market of more than 100 countries. It has opened 18 branch companies in Japan, Germany, etc.

Managing culture difference of its overseas markets and fostering a global culture is the key to its success today. Starting with Japan, in order to comprehensively learn about its culture as well as its advanced manufacturing technology, Feiyue purchased a small sized Japanese manufacturing factory and eventually established its own R&D center in Japan.

Today, More than 200 employees from different countries are hired by Feiyue to facilitate the local business as well as to contribute fostering a true global culture.

Alone or Partnered – China Companies Go Global

In a matter of a few years, China will begin to break out of the confines of its sole market differentiation advantage, i.e., low prices as a result of its exceptionally low cost of manufacturing. Manufacturing and product quality in China is increasing monthly. Soon the issue of Chinese quality will to dissolve into a distant memory. In increasing numbers of industries over the next three to five years, “Made in China” will become an advantage versus a liability. Before the decade is out, China will have both the advantage of a level playing field with respect to quality amongst leading industry competitors *and* the critical competitive advantage of significantly lower pricing – an advantage much greater than Japan ever had and sustainable for a *much* longer period of time.

Like joint global branding, China’s long term global competitive pricing advantages offers tremendous opportunities to companies from both sides of the U.S.-Sino and EU-Sino relationship. Companies from western and industrialized markets can preempt their traditional competitors today by partnering with selected Chinese domestic companies with growing competencies in quality, but still lacking the ability to position their products at higher price levels to compete, vis a vis, an added-value vs. lowest price value proposition. This provides strong justification for new joint ventures and strategic alliances for companies on both sides.

The world is now seeing the beginning of a trend that will soon become “main-stream” in Chinese business strategy in this next decade. The more strategically-minded Chinese companies will begin to make outright acquisitions of businesses all over the world, and especially in the U.S. and in Europe, to escape the ever-increasing hoards of copycat companies in China that are undeservingly reaping profits from merely copying successfully establish products and brands in China.

In fact, during the current economic uncertainties in the U.S. and European economies, domestic company valuations are lower than they have been in more than a decade and represent great value for an acquiring Chinese firm. And as more U.S. and European companies fall on hard financial times, do not be surprised if we begin to see a trend of Chinese companies queuing up to rescue floundering and troubled U.S. and European firms of all sizes.

The new mantra in the second half of this decade will be, “Don’t export to U.S. and European companies – buy them!”

You are kindly invited to read Dr John Caslione’s insightful and valuable articles that will appear each month in “Expression” magazine in his column entitled, “Caslione’s Marketing.” Dr Caslione’s new ideas and strategies will assist your company to grow and prosper successfully in the new global economy.