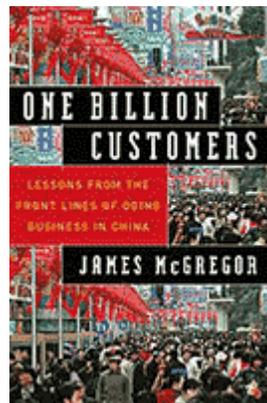


These days, self-proclaimed China experts are a dime a dozen. As businesses all over the world focus their attention on the country's red-hot economy, there is an almost insatiable demand for insights from anyone who's been to the country at least once, or so it seems. That has many claiming expertise without having much of it, and many writing books about China who should not.

Then, there is James McGregor.

The former chief of the *Wall Street Journal's* Beijing office, head of Dow-Jones China, Chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China, venture capitalist and government advisor has spent almost all of his professional life working in or with China. He has been in the middle of the country's political and economic transition, observing and participating all the way from its modest beginnings in the early 80's until today's inflationary wave of Chinese mega-deals. Not surprisingly, his book *One Billion Customers* is easily one of, if not **the**, best business books devoted to helping readers understand how to succeed at doing business in China without getting tangled up in bureaucracy, censorship, fraud, or otherwise falling victim to the many pitfalls of the country's challenging business environment.



A great storyteller, McGregor tells the sagas of eight major business engagements across a diverse range of industries, from investment banking to aircrafts and airlines, news and entertainment media, telecommunications, food and beverage, and education. He presents the cast of characters, analyzes their motivations, describes economical and political factors, and suggests how cultural forces bias decision making and how foreign companies may leverage them to influence it. Each of these stories is well-researched, entertaining, and full of lessons to learn.

Adding further value, each of the book's chapters ends with an analysis of "What this means for you" and a compilation of recommendations the author calls "The Little Red Book of Business." They give practical advice such as "You don't win in China by getting only to the top guy. You win by enlisting supporters at all levels." Some of the more tongue-in-cheek gems, like "If your boss wants to make a quick deal in China, lose his or her visa", are almost priceless.

It's hard to find much to criticize. Maybe the book's title is a bit misleading, since it implies a focus on consumer-oriented businesses that seems much narrower than the actual content is. In any case, *One Billion Customers* is an encyclopedia of insights into Chinese culture, politics, and practices that illuminates the path to success for any foreign company, no matter what its playing field. This is a must-read book for anyone doing, or preparing to do, business in China.

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Lothar Katz is the founder of Leadership Crossroads. He has a wealth of experience in achieving productive cooperation across cultures and driving business success on a global scale.

A seasoned former executive of a Fortune 500 company, he regularly interacted with employees, customers, outsourcing partners, and third parties in more than 25 countries around the world. These included many parts of Asia, e.g., China, India, and Japan. Mr. Katz is the author of "Negotiating International Business – The Negotiator's Reference Guide to 50 Countries Around the World".

