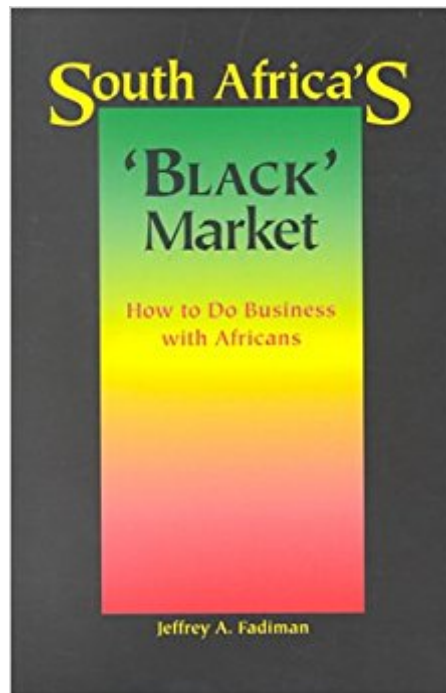




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South Africa's 'Black' Market: How To Do Business With Africans



Synopsis

Western investors, project managers and business pioneers who wish to tap this dynamic market must master African marketing methods. Author Jeffrey A. Fadiman considers Africa as the West's commercial blind spot. We have ignored it since the 1960s and thus have never learned how Africans do business. This book sets out to fill this void, describing how one can use African methods to market African-style. It should be useful for the commercial explorer who wants to venture beyond South Africa's small White market into the huge Black market of over 40 million with another 400 million beyond its borders. South Africa is the launch pad for the continent.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is scary! It tells you just what to do in order to penetrate South Africa's largest market of 40 million people, huge but chaotic. That's daunting to the commercially timid, but the text is geared to business pioneers who by nature defy discouragement. Fadiman tells us what's actually happening in the "Black" market, even the politically incorrect things that are often left out of books about controversial places. Then, having described how the local business games are actually played, he graphically delineates the rules so that an outsider can understand and participate. Essentially, he has created the ultimate business map. His first chapter describes the national social geography, including both the visible and invisible sections of every major South African city. We all know of the visible, city names such as Johannesburg and Durban. The invisible sections are the African townships that surround each city -- which until recently were on no official maps. The townships contain millions of potential clients who were long dismissed as oppressed. I skipped part

of the long history lesson in Chapter 2, but as I read further I was glad it was there, up front. Here are some unforgettable concepts to consider. For instance, Fadiman argues that South Africa's whites did NOT create apartheid just to separate the races, but to reduce the millions of blacks to PULP (Permanent Underpaid Labor Pool), so as to maximize their private profit. Nowadays, these same millions can afford to buy the goods and services once reserved for whites. Fadiman's goal is to teach us how to sell to them. One huge market that Fadiman explores is the African black market. It is untaxed, vast and completely unregulated. That suggests it should be chaotic as well. But he shows it to be highly structured, essentially efficient, and quite penetrable by Western marketers with open minds and imaginative methods. His examples of methods draw on either his own local experiences or on techniques that have worked in other emerging markets. Thus he describes a tactic used by James Thompson, the legendary silk king of Thailand, arguing that what works for Thai silk could do wonders for African wool. The book pulls no punches in describing the risks of entry into the market. It's the old Wild West, but with carjackers instead of cowboys. Yet for every risk Fadiman offers practical personal action suggestions. I now know, for instance, that I have to see the bottom of the tires on the vehicle in front of me to have enough space to spin away from potential carjackers. Unusual stuff from a biz-school academic. One structural criticism: The very last section should stand by itself. Although written in business prose, it's a short elegant poem, a tribute to the beauty and wonder of this unusual country by an author who does not ignore its problems. Readers of this book however will be mostly concerned with how to make money in a country with 60 million inhabitants who show another 400 million throughout Africa how to do things. Fadiman gives them the answers they need, but he also makes sure that they know, in colorful and often striking detail, why his answers will actually work.

This book is more than just another lay-of-the-land, how-to for international business. Offering usable insights into the Sub-Saharan African culture, this text proved invaluable in establishing lasting African relationships... both personal and professional!

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