

简明商务英语系列教程 ⑨

A SHORT COURSE IN

# INTERNATIONAL MARKETING BLUNDERS

## 国际营销失误案例解读

*Marketing Mistakes  
Made by Companies  
That Should Have  
Known Better*



**MICHAEL D. WHITE**

导读 杨伶俐

THE SHORT COURSE IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE SERIES



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## 出版前言

截至2008年,教育部已批准对外经济贸易大学、广东外语外贸大学和上海对外贸易学院三所高校设立商务英语本科专业。目前,全国已有近700所院校开设了商务英语专业方向或课程,商务英语教学内容由语言能力、跨文化交际、商科知识、人文素养四个课程群组成,如何建设和完善商务英语教材已成为办好商务英语专业的关键因素之一。

上海外语教育出版社经过精心策划,适时推出了商务英语知识群的教材——“简明商务英语系列教程”。这套原版商务英语专业知识阅读教材从美国世界贸易图书出版社最新引进,共12本,涉及商科知识的各个领域,包括国际经济学、国际贸易、管理学、营销学、国际商法、商务谈判、商业伦理、商业文化、商业合同、商业支付等。本系列教材的特点是:知识体系完整,内容简明扼要,语言文字流畅,理论联系实际。为了帮助读者更好地理解商务英语学习所必备的商务专业知识,本套教材组织了阵容强大的专家委员会,还特邀对外经济贸易大学商务英语的专家教授为本系列教材撰写导读,相信一定会对学习者的学习大有裨益。

本系列教材可以作为大专院校商务英语、国际贸易、工商管理等专业学生的相关课程的教材,同时也可作为企业各类管理人员的培训教材或辅导资料,以及广大商务英语学习者的自学教程或阅读丛书。

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## 1 国际营销概念

国际营销是指企业从事跨国界的营销活动,只要其营销决策具有“跨国”性质,其营销活动就属于国际营销范畴。

市场营销一般原理的应用可以跨越疆界,如同在国内市场上组织营销活动一样,国际市场营销同样需要市场调研、市场分析、市场细分、市场营销组合等一系列营销过程的战略确定及战术实施。国际市场营销与国内市场营销并无本质区别,只是特指超越国境的市场营销活动罢了。然而,并不能就此将二者简单地等同起来。国际市场营销较之国内市场营销具有以下三个特点:

### 1) 复杂性

各国由于特定的政治、社会文化和技术经济环境的不同,使国际市场营销的复杂性远远大于国内不同地区的市场营销。

### 2) 风险性

由于国际市场营销进行的是跨国界的交流活动,很多情况不易把握,不确定因素更多,所以其产生的风险,如信用风险、汇率变动风险、运输风险、政治风险、商业风险等,都远远大于国内市场营销。

### 3) 竞争激烈性

进入国际市场的企业大都是各国实力强大的企业,这使国际市场竞争比国内的竞争更为激烈,也更为残酷。

## 2 本书的特色

### 1) 作者简介

迈克尔·怀特是南加利福尼亚对外贸易协会的执行董事,拥有东京国际学院的文凭和加利福尼亚州立大学新闻学学位。在23年的新闻记者工作生涯中,他担任过《世界贸易杂志》的总主编、《国际商务杂志》和《太平洋航运商》以及国际汤姆森运输出版社的编辑,主要针对国际贸易相关问题进行报道与评论。

## 2) 本书特色

《国际营销失误案例解读》一书内容涉及公司在国际营销中出现的失误。与那些研究成功案例的书籍不同,本书为读者提供了从其他公司失败案例中获取经验和教训的机会。有一句老话:“成功有许多父亲,而失败是孤儿。”谁也不愿意接受失败。人们可能会以为那些拥有庞大营销预算的实力雄厚的跨国公司是不会失败的,然而令人悲哀的是正好相反,他们也会犯错。

事实上,许多公司花费巨资进行产品的设计、开发、销售和营销,但结果却是一败涂地。原因大多在于他们对其意欲渗透的目标市场缺乏最基本的了解。而对另外一些公司来说,失败的原因则是更深层次的。本书便是对这些失败案例的解读。

全球市场给人们提供了绝佳机会的同时也带来了难以克服的挑战。国际商务交易并不一定更难,但肯定是不同一般的。理解其运作方式至关重要。

## 3) 使用对象

本书为读者提供了一个国际的视角,书中内容适应所有商界人士的普遍需求,可供社会上广大读者使用,也适合作为商务相关专业教师的教学参考资料和学生的教材。

# 3 本书主要内容

## 第一章 国际营销失误的原因

为什么原本熟谙经营之道的企业管理者还是出现了众多失误,结果落得名誉受损、众叛亲离、市场和资金流失呢?本章列举并分析了如沃尔玛、可口可乐、麦当劳等众多公司的失误案例。作者剖析了这些案例中营销失误的根源并总结了经验和教训。作者认为导致公司失误的一个原因是骄傲自满。过去的辉煌成就使他们从骄傲转变为自负,成了他们成功的绊脚石。他们想当然地认为以他们过去的经验肯定能够成功,而忽视了不同市场的不同特点以及不同业务的不同潜在风险。其次,这些企业管理者没有理解“全球性意味着多样性而非同一性”。无论一个公司在国内还是向海外扩张,消费者的多样性应予以考虑。多样性也应反映在公司的战略和政策上。以美国迪斯尼在法国巴黎的经验为例,其经营失败的原因之一是没有考虑到欧洲生活方式的传统精髓,没有想到美国方式并非所有人的方式。其三,作者认为作为国际营销者,他们应熟悉和遵守地方规则。本章中的许多案例表明公司掌握了国际贸易的惯例却忽视了东道国的规则。另外,作者认为消费者是公司行动方案的最终评判者。消费者的信任需要很长的时间去建立,但可在顷刻之间崩



溃。在当今高度竞争的市场里,千万不要伤害消费者对你的信心,否则会留下永久性的伤痕。

## 第二章 语言和翻译失误

通过对许多参与全球竞争的美国企业的调查表明他们面临的第一大问题是沟通(包括对内和对外)。作者指出语言的千差万别构成沟通的一大障碍。而语言又是文化的一面镜子。为了达到沟通顺畅的目的,参与国际营销的人士应该熟悉并了解他国客户和贸易伙伴的文化环境。这一点至关重要是因为任何组织结构、人事政策、营销策略、人际交往等等都带有不可磨灭的文化烙印。因此,国际营销者不仅应注重语言的沟通还应了解语言背后的文化内涵,以避免误解所带来的尴尬。有时候,思想胜于言语。另外,在全球多语言背景下,翻译是必不可少的。同样翻译也不是简单的语言之间的转换,而是一种文化的交流。否则,误解将不可避免。作者通过众多跨文化沟通的失败案例充分地阐述了上述观点。

## 第三章 产品和服务的失误

一个公司要在国际或国内市场上取得成功应提供不同于竞争者的独特的产品和服务,而且这种产品和服务是客户愿意购买的。因此公司需要了解的不仅是自身的需要而且是消费者的需求。这就意味着产品不仅具有独特性而且应适应购买者的口味和偏好。国际营销者不仅要考虑东道国的文化、历史、宗教和社会体制,还要考虑其政治、经济和社会气候。如戴姆勒克莱斯勒、索尼、通用汽车等这些实力雄厚的公司有时失误就是因为他们只看到自己的需求,没有看到消费者的需求。

## 第四章 分销配送中的失误

如果一个消费者不能适时获得合适的产品,那么零售商和供给商就会失去这个客户。换句话说,公司应使产品通过合适的渠道适时抵达消费者手中。合适的分销渠道至关重要。决定分销渠道的因素有许多,包括市场地理位置、市场规模、基础设施、复杂程度以及竞争环境。一个公司的分销体系不仅应反映该公司自身的特点,而且应适应目标市场的特殊要求。此外,公司的分销渠道还要反映不断变化的需求,应随时调整,否则就有可能失去市场份额。

作者通过援引一系列公司失误的案例阐述了上述观点。

## 第五章 广告中的失误

广告关系到一个企业的品牌形象。每年,全球各大公司花费亿万美元进行广告促销活动,企图创造、改善和维护其在消费者心中的形象。国际广告和促销活动中最关键的因素在于全面了解目标市场消费者的偏好和细微差别。在



全球市场中获得成功的公司也应是那些仔细解读了目标市场并回避了敏感问题的公司。记住：广告必须以一种能被理解的语言传达给目标受众。如果他们笑，最好是他们和你一起笑，而不是他们嘲笑你。在某一个市场上的成功不会自动转换为在另一个市场上的成功。每一次促销都应考虑细分市场的需求及反馈。另外，广告目标的确定、广告媒体和机构的选择等具体策略也是广告成功与否的关键。

## 第六章 日本：一个自成一体的国家

在日本经商的基本经验法则就是：耐心、毅力和投入。一个企业要在日本长期发展，需要耐心地应对陌生的商业环境，坚持不懈地与商业伙伴和客户建立稳固的关系，并不遗余力地投入时间、金钱和人力等资源，否则就无法在充满竞争的日本市场取得成功。要在日本经营成功，需要了解其市场结构、消费者偏好、国内外竞争状况、和国家的管制要求。进入到像日本这样的市场，有时可能意味着要重新开始，以一种全新的适用于日本的方式参与竞争。每一个国家，包括日本在内，有其独特的营销方式。要在该市场取得成功需要采用恰当的媒体、合适的分销渠道和零售点、正确的促销方案和适当的政府关系。本章提及宝洁公司进入日本市场遭遇失败就是因为美国管理者误解市场所致。他们忽略了日本的根深蒂固的分销系统而强加美国式的营销理念。总之，日本是一个具有挑战性的市场，经营者需要有一个长远的眼光。经营者若能攻克日本市场，攻克其他市场就容易多了。

## 第七章 国际营销的内部错误

国内市场的多样性也会导致营销失误，其产生的成本和声誉方面的代价不亚于跨国营销失误。一国内部也是一个多样性的世界。公司必须与本国的其他不同文化背景的公司竞争，同时要满足国内不同文化背景、教育程度、经济水平、年龄和性别的消费群体的需求。随着不同民族之间的频繁接触，文化意识也必须提高。随着国内市场人口的日趋多样性，国内市场也需要得到像海外市场一样的细致了解和关注。

## 第八章 应用所学的经验

学习的一条最佳途径是错误。错误提供教训，可帮助扫除前面道路上的障碍。我们应学会从错误中吸取教训。本章作者总结了如下一些经验：任何一个营销策略都应围绕“消费者的需求至高无上”这一前提；过去的成功不能成为良好判断的障碍；希望在国际市场中获胜的公司应该意识到影响产品消费的发展趋势；国际营销应得到和国内促销活动同等的时间和精力投入；文化在消费者决策中起重要作用；商业伙伴关系应建立在互利基础之上；一个想在全球市场上立于不败之地的公司应该让公司每一个人作为团队中的一员参与其中，为共同的目标而努力；与大的跨国公司建立伙

伴关系并非是一劳永逸的；不要为了处理公司其他内部事务而打破与消费者联系的分销链条；产品不应仅为了延长生命周期而被引入国外市场；每个公司应营造一个畅所欲言的氛围；全球化公司无论大小应具有社会责任心。

### 第九章 防止失误的国际营销方案

到底有没有一条避免失误的、简便易行的途径呢？没有。现在没有，今后也不会有。人类制订的任何计划都具有内在的瑕疵。但是有一个清晰的行动方案至少能降低本书中提到的失误案例重复发生的可能性。制订一个防止失误的国际营销计划的第一步就是要对目标国家和地区进行细致的分析。具体包括：评估目标市场的潜力；识别潜在市场存在的问题；确定产品或服务是否适应该市场的需求。其次，选择分销商，制订一个适合公司的完善的产品分销计划。另外，营销方案中应强调物流的重要性；加强对海外市场的针对性；保持产品开发和适应的灵活性；强调语言和非语言的沟通。

### 第十章 词汇表

### 第十一章 参考文献

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*For my Dad, who told me a long time ago that everyone has a story.*

PREFACE

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The research for this book was no easy chore given the fact that companies are not as willing to talk about their failures as they are about their successes. Many hours were spent poring over primary source materials such as books, magazines, newspapers, and business journals, while an equal amount of time was spent referencing, cross-referencing and verifying information gleaned from dozens of Internet web sites.

My reliance on a large number of independent, and sometimes contradictory and conflicting, sources was eased considerably by the help and encouragement rendered by a solid company of fellow “ink-stained wretches” who have, themselves, burned the midnight oil on countless occasions to meet deadlines over the years. I refer to Martha Celestino, Sherrie Zhan, and Steve Barth, all former fellow staffers at *World Trade* magazine and outstanding friends and writers, in their own right.

A very great debt of gratitude also goes to international business consultants Patty Hirahara and Michael Moretti, who helped me greatly with my research into the Japanese way of doing business; Kristin Murphy, deputy trade commissioner of Mexico in Los Angeles; Anja Halle, editor at the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development in Geneva, Switzerland; and George Marshall, now retired senior vice president of marketing for Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (America), my former boss during my tenure with the company, and a good friend.

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I also want to acknowledge those who spoke with me on the condition of anonymity, sharing their “blunders from hell” stories that their employers, or former employers, would have rather swept under the carpet. My interviews with them were always tinged with their profound sense of sadness at stupid mistakes — sometimes repeated over and over — that squandered opportunities, alienated employees and customers alike, and, in several cases, resulted in basically good companies being irreparably trashed. I hope they can read this book and derive some comfort in the hope that someone, somewhere, might learn from their own companies’ blunders.

Also much gratitude to my wife Pam, and my sons Matthew and Nathaniel, for their help and support during another project “with a really tight deadline.” It wasn’t the first, and it probably won’t be the last.

Michael White  
Los Angeles California 2001

## INTRODUCTION

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### THE ORIGINAL COLD CALL

In the mid-1990s, the petrified remains of a man were found in a frozen Alpine pass on the border between Italy and Switzerland. Scientists speculated that the man, who died some 2,000 years ago, was walking from his home village in what we now know as Italy to trade with or buy goods from the inhabitants of a village situated on the shore of Lake Geneva — most likely wheat or corn, as one of the artifacts found on his body was a bag of seeds slung over his shoulder.

The man, whoever he may have been, was obviously the kind of international business manager that many modern-day companies would kill for — willing even to freeze to death to make sure the goods got into the right hands.

No master's degree, no cell phone, no laptop computer. Pure business, no more, no less.

But if the eons that have passed since the "Iceman" set off on what was to be his final sales call have taught us anything, it's that everything old is, at some juncture, new again.

### OLD OPPORTUNITIES IN NEW TIMES

Over the last decade, the world has seen what could, arguably, be called the most dramatic series of events in the history of global economics.

The political tensions that gripped the world since the end of World War II were, to a great extent, diffused with the rise of global capitalism. These evolutionary events have fused over the last decade with the growth of free-market economies, the tectonic shift of market forces in Asia and Latin America, and the increasing dependence of the world's lesser-developed nations on trade.

At the same time, new transportation systems and the surge of telecommunications technology have radically impacted how people and products move from place to place, while the Internet, satellite communications, and the ubiquitous personal computer have created a web of global connectivity unparalleled in history.

I can remember the days of the early 1990s when the Soviet Union was coming apart. It seemed that suddenly, almost ethereally, former vassal states — from Moldova and Latvia to Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan — found themselves thrust upon the world stage. In a flash, 15 new countries were created.

Further to the west, as students and border guards danced atop the Berlin Wall, East Germany ceased to exist. Close-by, Yugoslavia splintered into four autonomous states, while, elsewhere, two former enemies — the US and Vietnam — found themselves, after years of bitter animosity, laying a foundation that would eventually lead to the establishment of both diplomatic and trade ties. Free trade agreements and trade blocs such as the European Union (EU) and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) have focused trade to directly impact both national and local economies, while, most recently, talk is rife of the US ending its four-decades old trade embargo on Cuba; while at least one press report, commenting on the growing possibility of détente between North and South Korea, stated that "Coca-Cola has trucks already lined up at the border."

Simply put, there's a bigger world out there today than there was just ten years ago.

At last count, some 6 billion people populate 191 countries. Each of these countries has its own distinct culture, language, politics, and circumstances that have a direct impact on how, what, and why people buy certain products and reject others.

This makes marketing in an ever expanding and diverse world a critical issue to any company wanting to remain competitive in an increasingly globalized economy.

More opportunity to succeed, but more opportunities to fail, as more and more companies shift gears and move into the global trade fast lane — a fact underscored by a report in *Industry Week* magazine, showing that multi-nationals based in the US are likely to do business in 50 or more foreign countries, while American small- and medium-sized firms — which number about 202,000 and account for 97% of the country's exporters — are pursuing business in as few as two and as many as 40.

The potential, they say, is limitless.

There's an old saying that "Success has many fathers, but failure is an orphan." While one might expect that established multi-national companies with huge marketing budgets would be immune from failure, the sad, but sometimes humorous, truth is that they're not.

In fact, many companies spend millions on product design, development, sales, and marketing only to fail miserably. Generally because they didn't do basic homework on the target market they were trying to penetrate. For others, the reasons for failure went much deeper.

This is a book about those failures.

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# The Why of International Marketing Blunders

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## WHY SINK WHEN YOU COULD FLOAT?

IN MANY WAYS, A COMPANY IS LIKE A SHIP. No matter what specific purpose a ship was designed for — whether to carry cargo, passengers, or weapons of war — the vessel is compartmentalized, completely reliant on an efficient chain of command and responsibility, the smooth functionality of its machinery, and the competence of its crew. Every business enterprise, like each ship, has its own personality. The famous Liberty ships of World War II were, as one writer said, “built by the mile, and cut off as needed.” They were all made to the same specifications and dimensions; in other words, basically, identical. But if you ask anyone who sailed on more than one of them, they’ll say that each had its own personality and way of handling in similar sea and weather conditions.

The same is true for a company or business enterprise of any size. It is designed for a purpose, as well — to produce a product or provide a service and to generate a profit for its owner and shareholders. Like a ship, its success — and survival — depends on its ability to adapt, adjust to changing conditions, weather the rough spots, and optimize opportunities. The commanding management structure must constantly communicate, and, above all, always be aware of where the company has been, where it is, and where it’s headed.

## The Siren Call of Disaster

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Just before midnight on July 25, 1956, two stately passenger ships were sailing through the fog near Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, the North Atlantic front gate to New York, at that time the busiest port in the world. The 697-foot-long *Andrea Doria*, pride of the Italian merchant marine, was on the last leg of a 4,000-mile transatlantic crossing to New York from her home port of Genoa. The sleek, white-hulled *Stockholm*, flagship of the venerable Swedish-American Line, was outbound from New York with a full manifest of 534 passengers headed for business or pleasure in the Scandinavian ports of Gothenburg and Copenhagen.

Nothing was amiss and the same scenario had been played out countless times before: ships inbound and outbound from a port pass each other every hour, following navigational “rules of the road” that govern their operation whenever another vessel comes into view, whether visually or on radar. Nothing indicated that the passing of these two ships would be any different from the passings of dozens of other ships that had sailed either in or out of the Port of New York that day.

Both ships were captained and officered by professionals with more than a century of combined experience on the high seas. Both ships were new, boasting the latest in radar and navigational equipment. Neither were hindered by any equipment breakdowns or malfunctions.

But what happened sent the elegant *Andrea Doria* to the bottom of Nantucket Sound and 57 people to their deaths; the *Stockholm* suffered severe damage that took six months to repair. Neither shipping company ever recovered its good reputation. More than 1,200 damage claims were registered for deaths, personal injuries, lost cargo and personal baggage — totaling a then-record \$6 million. The controversy about the “whys” and “hows” continues to this day, still shrouded, like the disaster itself, in a blanket of fog.

Sailing through dense fog, each ship had the other clearly on its radar screen. Officers on both bridges knew of the other ship’s presence, speed, and course. Each expected the other to reduce speed and apply the “rules of the road,” which would have required the two ships to maintain a wide berth and pass each other showing the correct navigational lights. That awareness continued right up to the moment the *Stockholm* stabbed into the starboard side of the *Andrea Doria* — causing immediate flooding and a severe list. She sank the following morning and still rests today on her side, 235 feet beneath the surface of the North Atlantic.

“It was as if they [the ships’ officers] were mesmerized,” according to a marine underwriter involved in the disposition of the affair. “The people who should have known better and could have acted to remedy the situation as it was developing allowed themselves to become transfixed by the circumstances of the moment.” As he described it, “the siren call of arrogance” combined with circumstance to create a situation that paralyzed their better judgment.

True, the tragedy of the *Andrea Doria* and the *Stockholm* literally was one of life and death, but the sum total of what happened on that cold, foggy night decades ago holds valuable lessons for international businesspeople who want to expand their companies in this culturally diverse and complicated world. Quite simply, incorrect assumptions and a failure to rely on accumulated experience combined with muddleheadedness to create a lamentable disaster. Their experience and their professionalism should have led to another outcome.

And no one is immune.

## McDonald’s and Coca-Cola: the Statement of Faith

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McDonald’s Corporation and the Coca-Cola Company certainly don’t rank as amateurs in international marketing: a majority of each company’s total annual revenue is derived from international sales. In fact, both firms — with a four-decade-old supplier-buyer relationship — have become cultural archetypes for generations of consumers around the world. Both have spent hundreds of millions of dollars penetrating new markets, even modifying their core products to fit the widely divergent culinary tastes of consumers around the globe.