

Marketing

How to Succeed in the African Market: A Guide for the 2020 Businesspeople and Investors

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How to Succeed in the African Market was authored by Winfred Oppong-Amoako. He is a Ghanaian resident in South Africa. He holds a Master in Human Services degree, with a specialization in Executive Leadership Counselling and Marketing and Public Relation (London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 3rd Level), from Liberty University in the United States; a certificate in Health Systems Development: Health Systems, Policy and Research from Imperial College London, United Kingdom; a certificate in Epidemics, Pandemics and Outbreaks from the University of Pittsburgh, United States; a Postgraduate Certificate in Health Informatics from the University of Wales, United Kingdom; and a Bachelor of Arts in Art Communication degree from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana (Linkedin Oppong-Amoako, 2021; Wiki, 2021).

Oppong-Amoako has over 22 years of experience in coaching and advising entrepreneurs, government and non-governmental organizations, corporate organizations and private individuals on the ease of doing business in a competitive and ever-evolving global business environment. He is widely travelled, having visited over 40 countries including Ghana, South Africa, Singapore, the United Kingdom, and the United States. He has delivered successful lectures on “Doing Business in Africa” in reputable business schools such as the University of the Witwatersrand’s Wits Business School and the University of Cape Town’s Graduate School of Business. He is registered as an active member of many professional associations, including the Institute of Business Advisors Southern Africa (IBASA), Coaches and Mentors of South Africa (COMENSA), and International Coaches Register (ICR) where he has a voting seat on the International Certification Council. He is the founder of an international organization, 1LeadRoot, which is an accredited executive training and business advising company with offices in Africa, Europe, and the United States (International Coaches Register’s Website, 2021).

Oppong-Amoako’s research interests span the areas of small, medium and micro enterprises (SMMES) and African markets, cultural intelligence for doing business in Africa, etc. One of his books on these topics made it to the Top Reads by one of the Africa’s leading in-flight magazine, *Sawubona*, in 2017 (Famous Faces Management Website, 2021).

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Book Review

This great book was published in 2019 by Zebra Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House.

The book chronicles Africa's investment environment. The author culls from his experience as a business adviser and executive coach to vividly explain the risks, challenges, misconceptions and opportunities inherent in the African investment environment. The book is a step-by-step manual for investors and other businesspeople with intentions to venture into the emerging African market. The book is not only contemporary but also futuristic in its analysis (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

The author discusses pertinent topics that include informal trading, China's investment in Africa, the impact of recession on long-term gross domestic product (GDP) growth, as well as the factors that need to be carefully considered such as cross-border trading, corruption, permits and legal contracts before investing in the African market. The book is a practical guide for potential and successful businesspeople, students, and teachers with interest in investment in the rapidly growing African market (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

The author uses simple leading questions to discuss the contents of the book arranged in ten chapters. Chapter 1 explores the depth of Africa as the world's richest continent. It specifically examines the factors responsible for economic growth in Africa and the factors responsible for the continent's economic resilience (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

The second chapter articulates the real stories behind Africa's fast-growing economies. This chapter highlights the eight fastest growing economies in Africa mentioned earlier. The chapter further explores the implications of such rapid economic growths and the sustainability of Africa's economic boom (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

Chapter 3 x-rays the major threats to Africa's economic growth and trade standing. In this chapter, factors like Africa's political climate, especially the political instability in the continent; the changing face of politics and business; corruption; informal trade; and Africa's relationship with China are examined within the lens of threat or alliance (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

The fourth chapter analyzes the various misconceptions about doing business in Africa. It explains that many potential investors hold certain wrong notions about the continent's business environment. These misconceptions include the concerns that Africa's economy is volatile and unpredictable, Africa's economy not being competitive enough for business, and that Africa's market is not advanced enough for major products. Other negative perceptions include that Africa is only lucrative for quick investment returns and the difficulty in moving money out of Africa; while other misconceptions hold that investors can actually do businesses in Africa without being physically present and that Africa is a homogenous entity such that the same business strategy can work in all of the African countries (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

Chapter 5 brings to the forefront the business opportunities in Africa which reposition the continent as the last frontier for business. Factors like Africa's demography; investment prospects; future in mobile telecommunication and technologies; and industrialization as a result of trade, as well as how investors can take advantage of trade performance due to the opportunities highlighted above are extensively discussed (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

The sixth and seventh chapters pay particular attention to the economies of Nigeria and South Africa, respectively. The impacts of recession on the Nigerian economy in particular and Africa in general are examined in the sixth chapter. Specific discussion is also undertaken to explore South Africa's unique investment and regulatory framework, as well as the factors that still position South Africa as the business gateway of Africa, and what may possibly change in the nearest future is talked about in the seventh chapter (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

Chapter 8 focuses on how ready Africa's human capital is for business. The roles of culture, sourcing skill capacity, education, and leadership in driving the human capital and skill

sustenance in Africa are examined (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

The ninth chapter highlights the crucial issues to be considered before embarking on a business venture in Africa. Finally, Chapter 10 rounds off the discourse in the book by delivering the toolkits for preparing to invest and do business in Africa. The practical step-by-step guide to entering is given in this chapter. Other important points like how to take advantage of Africa's economic growth and consumer spending; sectors to invest in and, lastly, the investment opportunities in Zimbabwe are elaborately discussed in the chapter (Oppong-Amoako, 2018).

Book's Greatness

The book has received a 5-star (100%) customers' review from the Amazon book store, goodreads.com, and eBay as of August 15, 2021. The book is an impressive toolkit for investors as it was written with vivid practical illustrations backed with empirical data. The book readily pops up in a Google search of books in marketing and business investments in Africa. The book is also written using simple grammar, making it suitable as a learning material for students at all levels of tertiary education without sacrificing scholarly rigor.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The book reviewed here provides insight for the need of the African market to grow through sustained investment and constant market analysis, and the development of the African market and economy to meet the demands of the emerging trends in digital technologies. From the books it was gleaned that Marketing is an intrinsic social engagement that involves exchange of goods and services, and even ideas. The discourses in the book reinforced the fact that growing the African market is an indispensable thought. It was learnt from the book that this crucial aspect of human social interaction or activity has evolved apropos technological advancements and other innovations, thereby making changes in the African market inevitable. Current realities have exposed a market world that has grown more complex and sophisticated and, by extension, requiring improved strategies to adjust to the trend. African market is not left out from the rapidly changing global market. Thus, there is an urgent need for a manual to equip students, teachers, and practitioners in Africa to be better repositioned in the competitive and technologically advanced global market. Elaborate discussions on these facts mark the highpoint of the book reviewed in this essay.

The significance of this review essay, therefore, hinges upon the enormous benefits it stands to serve other researchers who could benefit from the book reviewed here as a reference material. Business and Marketing professionals could also draw from the strategies and practical guides outlined in the book to grow business, understand the emerging markets in Africa, and consider the critical factors that are imperative for investing in Africa. It is recommended that scholars and practitioners should conduct research for an empirical test of the key assumptions and prescriptions in the book, especially as it concerns the analysis of the African market and investments in Africa. Such studies will yield evidence-based data that could be utilized to translate the suggested strategies into action for optimal tangible results in the African market environment.

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