

# Oversees overseas

## Bill Edwards' world of experience

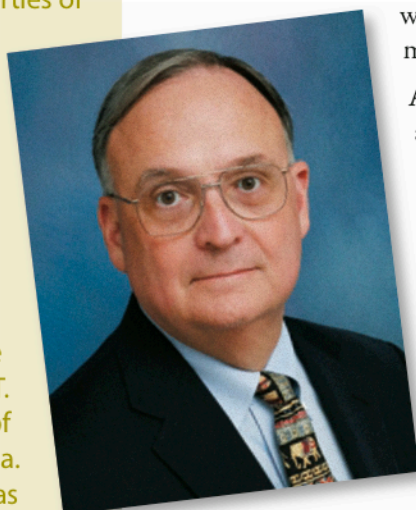
William (Bill) Edwards of Edwards Global Services helps take franchise companies overseas. "For many, we're their outsourced international department," he says.

He helps franchises decide which countries they should be in, plus finds the licensees.

So where does an international traveler, who has lived in seven countries, go on his own dime? In March, Edwards accompanied archeologists from the Smithsonian on a mission to Petra, Jordan, often described as "one of the most precious cultural properties of man's cultural heritage."

Edwards is a T. E. Lawrence scholar. "I've studied him for 40 years," he says. For those of us who are not scholars, we probably know T. E. as Lawrence of Arabia.

"It was astounding," he says about the archeological dig. "It's two weeks I'll never forget—ever. I've been extraordinarily lucky."



### Workstyle

**Most memorable overseas adventure:** Starting up oil exploration operations in a jungle camp in southwest China along the Vietnam border in 1983.

**I'd never go back to:** Nigeria

**Most surprising custom you've encountered:** The bowing deer in Nara, Japan—the deer outside a large castle-like temple are so tame that if you walk up to them they politely bow.

**Number of times you and your luggage have been separated:** An infinite number that is too hard to remember after 37 years of doing international business.

**Favorite airport:** Singapore Changi—if you've ever been there, you'll know why. It's incredibly efficient and modern.

**Airplane ritual:** Try to sleep at night after large time zone changes.

**Most beautiful country:** New Zealand—It's a small country, but the landscape varies from glaciers to volcanoes and hot bubbling mud.

**What concept are other countries hungry for?** It used to be food, now services are what's desired around the world. You know the world is growing up when people will pay for services they used to skip or skimp on.

**Worst advice you've been given:** The water is OK to drink!!!

**Advice you give:** Study the business culture before you go to a country.



**In May 1976,** Bill Edwards and wife Nancy lived in Jakarta, Indonesia, where he worked for an American oil company for 20 years. In this picture Nancy holds their newly adopted daughter, Heather. At the time, the nuns at the orphanage weren't sure a 20-something couple could be trusted with their baby. But when Nancy's instincts proved to be parental worthy, the couple was allowed to keep the baby they already loved.

### Lifestyle

**Hometown:** Shreveport, Louisiana

**Favorite restaurant:** Taco Rosa in Newport Beach

**Signature accessory:** iPhone

**Favorite indulgence?** Reading airport thrillers

**Most bizarre meal you've eaten:** In China - something that was still moving

**Where do you vacation?** Turkey—We lived there for two years, right after Hong Kong.

**Where do you donate your time?** Non-profit boards related to foster children