

William “Bill” Edwards of Edwards Global Services: “Here Are The Top Challenges and Opportunities of Doing Business In China”



Chaya Weiner [Follow](#)
Jan 27 · 4 min read



William “Bill” Edwards of Edwards Global Services: “Here Are the Top Challenges and Opportunities of Doing Business in China”



Since we are focused on establishing consumer focused brands in China, a major challenge is keeping up with the technology being developed in China, and the desires of the rapidly growing middle class. Also, the Chinese government is constantly developing and fine-tuning regulations that relate to licensing and franchising. This requires constant research and the use of good advisors in the country. Finally, Chinese brands that compete with U.S. brands are constantly evolving and becoming better brands. Today, it’s vital for U.S. brands to have clear differentiation in their respective markets to succeed in China.

I had the pleasure of interviewing William “Bill” Edwards the CEO of Edwards Global Services, Inc. (EGS). He has developed and trademarked detailed and proven step-by-step processes for international business development based on his extensive

background and a 45-year track record of success growing businesses abroad. With living experience spanning China, the Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Iran, Turkey and the United States, Edwards has directed projects in 68 countries and is known as a guru of global business. He has worked with Fortune 100 companies to identify global market opportunities and drive them forward with the analysis, wisdom, foresight and team strategy required to maximize success and avoid pitfalls.

Thank you so much for doing this with us! Can you tell us a story about what brought you to this specific career path?

I started my international career 45 years ago while working in the oil and gas exploration industry. I spent the first 20 years stationed in Iran, Indonesia, Alaska (twice), Hong Kong, China and Turkey. Then I left the oil industry and went back to China and Turkey to develop a U.S. quick print franchise. My last international living assignment was in Prague, running a master franchise for three countries in eastern Europe. Over this time, my wife and I raised two daughters who traveled and lived with us abroad.

Are you working on any new or exciting projects now?

We are currently taking a number of U.S. franchise brands to countries in the Asia Pacific region, including: Australia, China, Indonesia, Philippines and Thailand.

None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Is there a particular person who you are grateful towards who helped get you to where you are? Can you share a story about that?

It has been an honor to have several mentors throughout my career. In the oil and gas business, I had two senior managers who helped me focus on where to go to get the best experience as I moved up the ladder — from exploration geophysicist, to exploration manager, to country resident manager. In the international franchise sector, my mentor for many years has been Phil Zeidman, the world renowned global legal expert.

What do you think are the new untapped markets in China that may become the next “big thing”?

We are focused on taking U.S. brands into China that are consumer faced, such as education, food and beverage, senior care, auto care and fitness. The future of China is

the middle-class consumer family, which places greater value in brands and quality for middle-class parents and their children.

What challenges does that new market face? How would you address it?

Since we are focused on establishing consumer focused brands in China, a major challenge is keeping up with the technology being developed in China, and the desires of the rapidly growing middle class. Also, the Chinese government is constantly developing and fine-tuning regulations that relate to licensing and franchising. This requires constant research and the use of good advisors in the country. Finally, Chinese brands that compete with U.S. brands are constantly evolving and becoming better brands. Today, it's vital for U.S. brands to have clear differentiation in their respective markets to succeed in China.

We keep hearing about the “Trade War”. What are your thoughts about it? Given the unknowns, how do you plan to pivot?

I recently traveled to three cities in China, meeting with 25 companies who were interested in three of the U.S. franchise brands I represent. In only two of these meetings did the trade issues come up. The companies we met with take a long view at these issues and feel, like I do, that the trade issues will work themselves out over time.

Can you please give us your favorite “Life Lesson Quote”? Can you share how that was relevant to you in your life?

When I was managing geophysical exploration on the north slope of Alaska, we had major success in adding oil reserves for our company. The regional manager congratulated us and I said we were lucky to get this result. He told me that “smart people are often lucky, because they put themselves in the path of luck”. As I have started companies and done business around the world, this has proven true time and time again.

You are a person of great influence. If you could inspire a movement that would bring the most amount of good to the most amount of people, what would that be? You never know what your idea can trigger. :-)

By taking proven U.S. franchise brands to emerging countries, we establish U.S. business systems and processes, creating a large number of trained, well paid jobs that contribute to people and their families having a better life. This is very important to me, as I reach this stage of life.