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Regional marketing roles under the hammer

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Asia Pacific - Regional marketing roles are under more pressure than ever before and are changing rapidly, according to a new study by EffectiveBrands.

The Leading Global Brands study, which was completed at the end of 2008 with regional business heads and marketers based in Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, Australia and the Philippines, found that the spotlight is on regional marketing roles which are changing to be not based on geography, but on common market conditions like market maturity and brand equity.

The study found that only 36% of respondents in Asia feel that regional teams understand local challenges and opportunities, and just 33% of Asia-based respondents attest to sufficient trust between global, regional and local teams. It also found that 45% of Asia-based respondents agree with the statement that regional teams focus their efforts on where they can add the most value, while a 42% of Asia-based respondents disagree with the notion that regional teams build the required skill sets in-country.



EffectiveBrands states that the regional marketing role needs a makeover and Asia is the place with the most potential for a reconstituted role.

Its research paper claims that regional marketing roles need to cluster for local effectiveness, be very clear about the deliverables of the position, recruitment for the role needs to be done sensitively, regional and local teams need to be equipped with the right skills, and regional marketers must “live and work by the principle of servant leadership”.

“At the end of the day, the imperative of the regional role is to find that delicate equilibrium between relentless globalization and extreme localization,” the study states.

“Global teams must be assured that looking for similarities rather than differences has become local groups’ prevailing mindset. Local teams, on their part, must first be convinced that their market success is what drives the global team’s work. Somewhere along this global-local continuum is the point of interdependence. Here is where your team and company should drop anchor, for it is the home of true marketing effectiveness.”

EffectiveBrands is a global marketing consultancy with offices in New York, London and Amsterdam. It opened its Singapore office in May last year.