

Flat World Navigation: Collaboration and Networking in the Global Digital Economy

Kim Chandler McDonald

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Flat World Navigation is an indispensable text for aspiring entrepreneurs.

To ignore the unceasing democratization of digital technology, information, and capital is to slowly render yourself and your business model obsolete. It's a point that business strategist and digital innovator Kim Chandler McDonald makes more than once in her timely and expertly written new book, *Flat World Navigation: Collaboration and Networking in the Global Digital Economy*.

McDonald takes her title from Thomas Friedman's best seller *The World Is Flat* and its premise that digital technology has leveled the economic playing field so that anyone anywhere in the world can get online and compete in the global marketplace. McDonald doesn't only explore the concepts of DACE (Digital, Attention and Collaboration Economies) throughout the eight chapters of her book, but offers direct, actionable advice on how to navigate the crowded and often bewildering landscape of digital commerce, a methodology she describes as "an enterprise in engagement."

Besides including her own expertise, McDonald incorporates factoids relevant to each topical section—from the demographics of millennials to broadband use in developing countries—as well as incisive stories and interviews with industry leaders. These elements transform the book from a personal, how-to narrative into a comprehensive, authoritative text. For instance, we hear from female executives of Disney and IBM on how to build authentic and meaningful relationships with coworkers, customers, and everyone in between. McDonald concisely summarizes key lessons from each contributor. She also includes an "actions with intent" breakout box at the end of each chapter, which readers can easily refer back to.

Particularly illuminating is the author's emphasis on the human aspects of the so-called flat world, how old, male-dominated business models of divide-and-conquer are giving way to economies that reward cooperation, collaboration, empathy, nuance, and genuine understanding of the consumer. "Rather than focusing on marshalling 'the art of war' the future of business is likely to lean towards learning how to strategically work the windfall of win-win," McDonald writes. Successful business models will focus on emotional capital and "return on involvement," she argues. These new economies will resemble ecosystems of "credibility, clarity, respect and shared revenue."

McDonald effectively deconstructs preconceptions of what constitutes good business. She fills in the ensuing blanks with specific and evidence-based advice, using not only industry experts but examples of business models that have succeeded and failed in the new flat world. *Flat World Navigation* is an indispensable text for aspiring entrepreneurs. It's also an engaging and insightful read for the layperson.

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