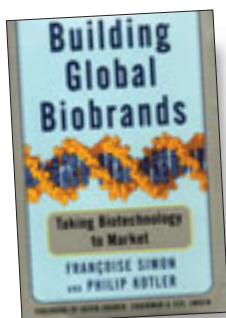


► **Building Global Biobrand: Taking Biotechnology to Market**

FRANÇOISE SIMON AND PHILIP KOTLER

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“The dominant science of the twenty-first century will be biology.”

Starting with this simple but powerful quote from Freeman Dyson, the authors of *Building Global Biobrand* take the reader on a journey

from the birth of biotech to a synopsis of where the field stands today and speculation about where it is going. Along the way, the reader is introduced to a variety of characters who helped formulate the industry’s personality and will shape its future development.

The youngest of the major industries—alongside information technology and awaiting the arrival of nanotechnology—biotechnology is reaching a critical stage in its development, defining itself as much by what it is not as what it is. According to the authors, even at this nascent stage, biotech accounts for almost one-third of world gross domestic product and affects an array of industries, including chemicals, food, and materials. But with this massive growth spurt comes both opportunities and responsibilities that will determine its final impact on human society. Starting as a field largely dominated by ivory tower scientists, biotech is rapidly changing into a business, and it is this metamorphosis the authors address. And Françoise Simon and Philip Kotler come naturally to this field.

Simon has been a leading biotech strategist for more than 20 years and, as a professor of business of public health at Columbia University, she has coauthored several books about the field. She is also the

president of SDC Consulting Group, which has a worldwide clientele. Kotler is a marketing guru, having authored several seminal marketing texts. He is the S. C. Johnson & Sons Distinguished Professor of International Marketing at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. He is also founder of the Kotler Marketing Group, a company that specializes in high-tech industries, including biotech and pharmaceuticals. Together, they bring their decades of experience to help readers understand the biotech industry.

The authors break *Building Global Biobrand* into three main sections. In the first section, Navigating the Global Biosector, the authors largely set the stage for how biotechnology came to grow from a research endeavor to a business model. They compare the biotech timeline with that of the computer industry and show how biotech has come to influence fields as varied as medicine, agriculture, materials science, and nanotechnology. Likewise, they discuss the various factors that have transformed this field, which would be impossible without the coincident advances in information technology, consumer awareness campaigns (both good and bad), and the newly arisen field of systems biology. The authors then consider the business model of biotechnology and how the pharmaceutical industry is looking to fill its innovation gap with products through biotech mergers and acquisitions.

In *Leveraging the Power of Biobrand*, the next section, the authors examine the marketing history of biotech—although the line between biotech and pharmaceutical development becomes very blurred. Biotech companies learned their lessons from earlier fiascos in the agricultural sector—for example, the mismanaged concern over GMO (genetically modified organism) foods—and have been more proactive in redefining human disease and therapies, as well as targeting new market segments. The authors support their analyses with examples, both well known and more obscure, of drugs that have been brought to market and how, in some cases, compa-

nies have created markets de novo. They then examine the strategies companies are using to manage their product portfolios, ensuring they are prepared to maintain their pipelines and stave off competition from generics, subjects that are foremost in the minds of most industry executives.

In the final section, Meeting the Global Challenge, the authors focus their efforts on discussions of pricing models and the challenges companies face in the various regulatory and reimbursement environments. They examine the balance between national and global pricing strategies and the impact of product and/or customer segmentation practices. This is followed by brief discussions of how the Web can be used to push the health message and facilitate the integration of the industry value chain.

Throughout, the book is filled with insightful commentary and examples. As a sign of how rapidly this industry is changing, however, even though the book was published this year and is based on information that reaches into 2003, there are several examples of discussions about mergers or business plans that have been made obsolete by recent events. Ironically, this problem just accentuates the argument the authors are making, which is basically to get in front of the situation or get out of the way.

—REVIEWED BY RANDALL C. WILLIS ■

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