

Take a compelling journey

Luyton Driman's *Going the EXTRA mile: A guide to trading in Africa* takes you on a journey through Africa while handing out hints and tips of a practical nature that will prove invaluable for you as a trader in Africa.

Reviewing a book can be easy or not – it really depends on a number of factors such as the person reading the book, the style of the book, and of course the content. To convey a sense of a book is not easy and in this particular case I am going to “cheat” and instead of trying to describe to you the wonderful feelings and senses that this book invoked in me I am going to publish below, with the permission of the author and publisher, parts of the foreword. I was moved by the words of the foreword and after reading the book, and re-reading the foreword thought it captures completely the essence of “Going the extra mile”. So enjoy, and if this does not inspire you to firstly buy the book, secondly read it and thirdly export with enthusiasm, nothing will!

Denis Beckett wrote the foreword. He writes:

“It takes a wrench of memory now to recall the years of continental rift. North of the Zambezi was geographically the same landmass but humanly another planet. We couldn't even fly over it – not on our own airline anyway, the orange-blou SAA/SAL which valiantly schlepped us the long way round.

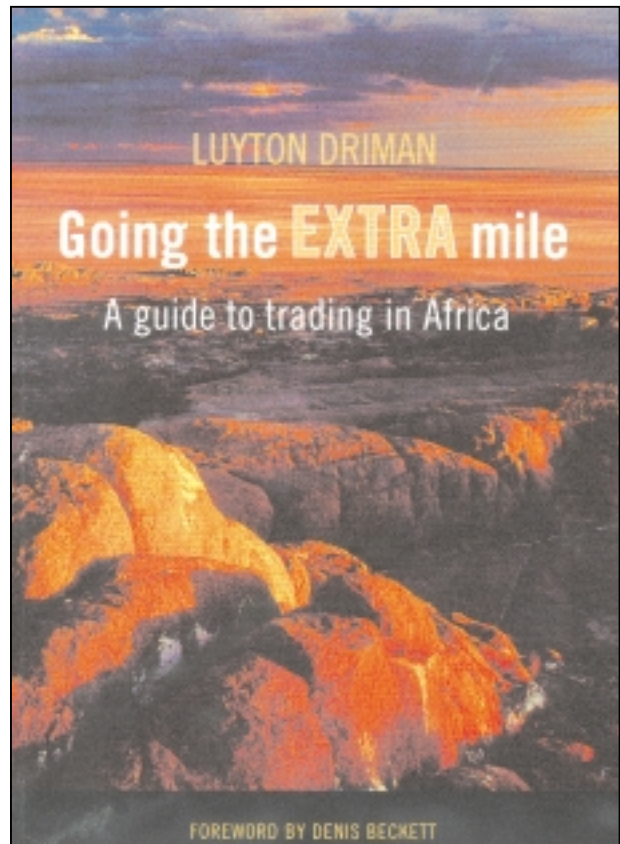
“It was a lousy reality that – Africa as an occasional patch of bare coastline, five miles down. It symbolised our pariahhood, and how at odds we were with each other. But now that is gone it makes a great memory, like a toothache. The fact that you had it and you have it no longer makes you happier than if you'd never had it at all.”

Beckett then goes on to talk about how it feels to travel these days, especially on the continent:

“We South Africans don't always love each other when we're at home: it's when we're travelling that our little differences vanish. Nor do we always love our continent, when we're reading the newspapers back in our easy-chair. We read of collapse in the Congo or scams in Nigeria or chaos in Liberia and it's a tad off-putting. But when we're surrounded by the crush and the courtesy, the friendliness and flavour of Africa, the statistical horror-stories are harder to see. We feel fine.

“Proud too, when we find our home-boys adding fire to the engine rooms of our continent. We sense a foretaste of a great day coming, when Africa is a united entity, moving into peace and prosperity with the days of corruption and incapacity dimming into the past.

“With this book, Luyton brings that day closer. He spells out Everything You'd Like to Know But Never Thought Of Asking About Doing Business in Africa. He distinguishes L/Cs from your T/Ts, explaining which matters where, and why. He reminds you that Malawi needs a Certificate of Origin; that if you don't insert an Override of Discrepancies in your contract you can grow old waiting for resolution; that South Africa's three-point round plugs don't work in classical British Africa, whose own three-point flat-pins



Luyton Driman, author of *Going the EXTRA mile: A guide to trading in Africa*

don't work in the Francophone's two-prong sockets. He tells you where to get software packages for Africa-tailored palletising, how the anti-laundering laws are acquiring teeth, and that it's a good idea to translate your owner's manual into Portuguese. He warns against the Briefcase Travellers who shmooze global markets for under-declared and under-invoiced goods to undercut the market that you put sweat and blood into building; he urges you to become your customer's shadow and sidekick, to walk each first shipment all the way through, and to be alert to incorporating a French message into your voice-mail.

“He covers, that is to say, the gamut. Speaking from experience, he conveys the joy he gets from tropical Africa and invites you to follow suit.”

Denis Beckett puts it in a nutshell so well, and you have to be inspired after reading that. And that's just the beginning, I would strongly recommend Luyton Driman's *Going the EXTRA mile: A guide to trading in Africa* to anyone who wants to, is, has been exporting into Africa. ■

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