



# 2013 Business in China Survey

Juan Antonio Fernandez | Bin Xu | Dongsheng Zhou | Maria J. Puyuelo | Junjun Li

## 2013 Swiss Business in China

Nicolas Musy | Zhen Xiao | Fanny Luongo



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A CEIBS – Swiss Center Shanghai Survey & China Integrated Analysis

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China Europe International Business School

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# THE RESEARCH TEAM

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**China Integrated** is a solution provider, designed to support international companies do successful business in China, whether their needs are market entry, growth or acquisition. Building on its **20 years of experience** and its internationally trained Chinese professionals in business research, Chinese law, recruitment, tax & finance, IT & ERP and PR, **China Integrated provides the expertise needed to ensure the long-term, superior success** of foreign businesses in China.

China Integrated has successfully served more than 200 International firms, large and small, with innovative solutions and cost-effective best practices developed through its decades of experience.

Based on its research, China Integrated regularly publishes several books and analyses, to facilitate the decision making of managers at international companies dealing with China. In 2007, China Integrated conducted the first business survey of Swiss companies in China, "Behind the China Kaleidoscope", highlighting success factors of local Swiss companies and offering a comprehensive roadmap for those planning to do business and operate in China. This was followed in 2009 by an analysis of human resources practices, the "China HR Paradox", identified as the key challenge and success factor in the 2007 research. Then, in collaboration with CEIBS, "2010 Doing Business in China: A Survey of European Companies" was published, integrating both analysis and contributions from experts. You can find more information on [www.ch-ina.com](http://www.ch-ina.com).



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**Fanny Luongo** is a Marketing Specialist at China Integrated. She has a Master in Management from HEC Lausanne ([www.hec.unil.ch](http://www.hec.unil.ch)). Experienced in marketing for service companies, she is passionate about strategy, marketing, entrepreneurship and cultures.



**Swiss Center Shanghai**  
[www.swisscenters.org](http://www.swisscenters.org)  
The Swiss China Gateway

Founded in 2000, Swiss Center Shanghai (SCS) is a non-profit organization supporting Swiss companies in business set-up, expansion and operations in China. SCS not only offers instant workshop, office and desk space, but also supports its members with government relations and a comprehensive network of experts. Together with its service partners, SCS served more than 200 companies in China – both SMEs and large enterprises. SCS is by far the largest cluster of Swiss companies in Asia, with 28 Swiss companies in one industrial park (SHXIP) accounting for over 50'000 sqm of industrial and commercial space and over USD 130 million of investments.



**Mr. Zhen Xiao** is the General Manager of Swiss Center Shanghai. Mr. Xiao obtained his engineering education from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. He then worked in Singapore and in Switzerland for more than 10 years as an engineer, researcher, and manager. He has been working with the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Lausanne since 2005 as China Relation Coordinator. In the past 3 years, he has advised and supported a dozen of Swiss companies and organizations in relationship building and business development in China.

# PREFACE & KEY TAKEAWAY

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In cooperation with the China Europe International Business School (CEIBS), the Swiss Center Shanghai and China Integrated are pleased to bring you the findings of Swiss respondents who participated in the **CEIBS Business in China Survey 2013**, to analyze them and draw conclusions that we hope will be useful for Swiss companies and their activities in China.

This latest CEIBS survey is of particular interest not only for its findings but also because:

- With 1369 responses it gathers the **largest amount of respondents in one such survey** (by comparison, 557 companies participated in the 2012 EU chamber survey and 420 in the 2012 American Chamber in Shanghai survey).
- It is the only survey that collects responses from **Chinese** as well as **foreign companies** in China.
- It allows **comparisons among firms of different national origins**, based on a sufficient number of replies for each origin.

For the Swiss business community, it is for the first time possible to understand how similar Swiss, European and American companies are. As a result, some findings on European and American companies can also be used to estimate and confirm Swiss companies' trends.

Globally speaking, Swiss, European and American companies in China are doing well. **On average they grew their profits by 9% in 2012** compared to 2011, even though the growth was slower than in 2011.

The confidence level of all foreign companies for 2013 is higher than it was for 2012. Interestingly, Chinese companies expect the opposite: their confidence in doing successful business in 2013 is slightly going down. As a result, we should **expect even better results for Swiss companies in China this year**.

Challenges are growing as well. *Hiring and retaining talents* is again the most important management challenge and competition is perceived to be increasing significantly, especially from private Chinese companies.

However, managers who are facing the market in China see different challenges than managers in the headquarters. Astonishingly and newly, **lack of understanding and support from the head office** is the **second most important management challenge**. This illustrates the widening perception gap between head offices and their subsidiaries operating in China.

In addition to the common misperception reported in the media about Swiss and foreign companies' lack of success and profitability in China, we find a **general overestimation** of the importance that **corruption, legal environment and IP infringements have on companies in China**.

Even though **Swiss SMEs are doing particularly well** in penetrating the market compared to European and American counterparts, the potential for their further development in China remains enormous.

In addition to an analysis of key answers from Swiss companies in China, you will find some **additional investigations** that we believe are of much interest. In particular the revenue and profitability of European companies in China compared to their profits in the rest of the world



show that **China operations are the most profitable**. You will also discover the **evolution we expect** in terms of **production costs** and **consumer market** for the current decade.

Following this first part emphasizing Swiss companies, the overall results of the **CEIBS survey and analysis of foreign and Chinese companies** are presented in the second part of the book.

Hopefully, this report will contribute to dispell mispreceptions and to **highlight the actual situation that Swiss businesses face in China**. Eventually, we hope that these facts and analyses as well as the benchmarks they provide will help Swiss companies to become even more successful in the coming years.

We also want to express our **sincere gratitude to all the respondents: thanks to them, a representative and objective point of view on Swiss-China business is available to all**. At the same time, we take the chance to encourage everyone to participate in the 2014 survey, to grow the knowledge pool available to do successful business in China.

# INCREASING REVENUES, PROFITS, INVESTMENTS AND REBOUND IN CONFIDENCE

## SALES AND PROFITS CONTINUED TO GROW IN 2012 BY AROUND 9%

In 2012, sales and profits have continued to increase for Swiss companies in China, though slower than in 2011<sup>1</sup>.

FIGURE 1: HOW DOES 2012 EXPECTED REVENUE IN CHINA COMPARE TO 2011?

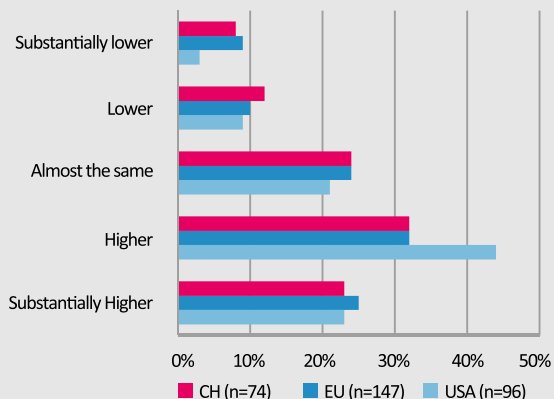
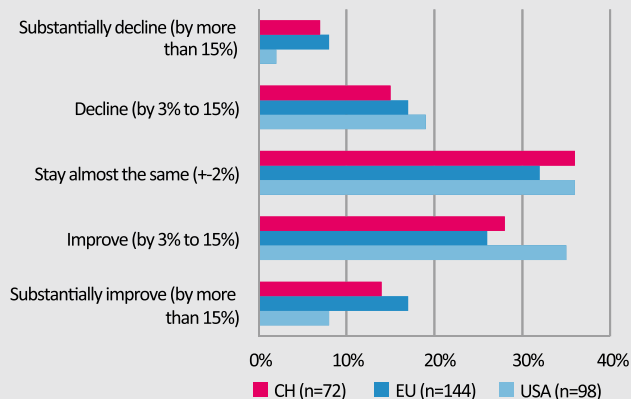


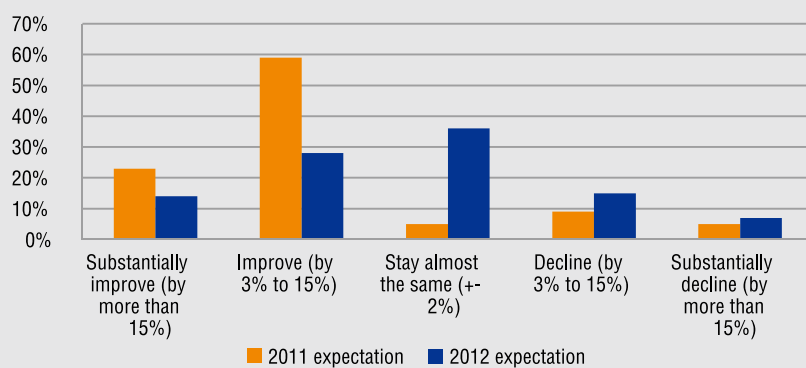
FIGURE 2: HOW DOES 2012 PROFIT LEVEL IN CHINA COMPARE TO 2011?



While American (USA) companies are increasing their sales faster, the answers of Swiss (CH) and European (EU) respondents are tightly matched both on revenue and profits. It shows that, in this respect, data from European companies' can provide very useful insights about Swiss companies. To understand how profits, revenues and investments of European companies have evolved in China over the last few years, please see page 27 *EU Firms profitability higher in China than in the rest of the world*.

Though profits have grown noticeably slower than in 2011, an estimate of profit growth based on the data shows that, on average, Swiss and European companies **have increased their profit level by an interesting 9% in 2012**.

FIGURE 3: 2011 VS. 2012 PROFITS EXPECTATION FOR SWISS COMPANIES



<sup>1</sup> The following abbreviations in the captions of the whole analysis: CH stands for Swiss companies, EU for European companies, USA for American companies and PRC for Chinese companies.

### INVESTMENT PLANS IN CHINA NATURALLY FOLLOW PROFITS AND REMAIN A TOP PRIORITY

Based on the profit and revenue picture, **it is not surprising to see growing investment plans and investments in China as a high priority.**

62% of the Swiss companies plan to increase investment in China in 2013 and more than half of them consider China as a top 3 investment destination.

Again the trend is similar for all western companies, while European firms are noticeably more aggressive, with higher increases and no company planning to reduce investments.

FIGURE 4: WHAT INVESTMENTS DO YOU PLAN FOR 2013 IN CHINA?

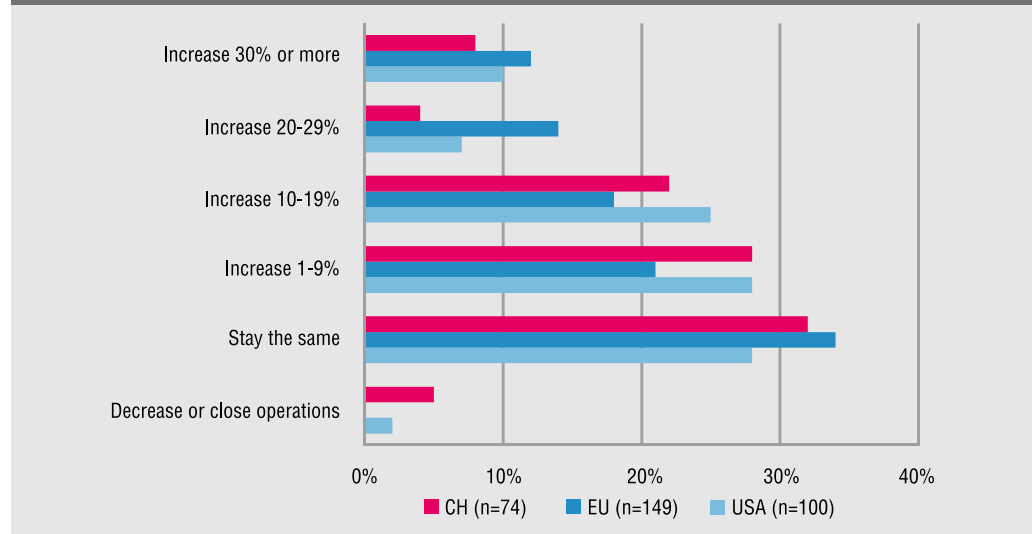
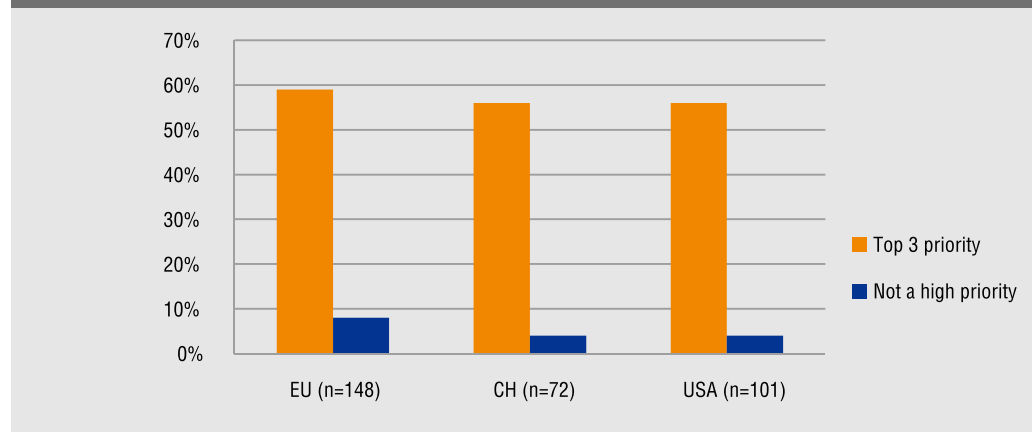


FIGURE 5: HOW DOES CHINA RANK IN YOUR GLOBAL INVESTMENT PLANS?



## SWISS RESPONDENTS ARE MORE CONFIDENT THAN CHINESE RESPONDENTS

Surprisingly, **Swiss respondents are noticeably more confident for 2013 and the future than their Chinese counterparts** who answered the survey.

The confidence of Swiss companies in doing successful business in China is comparable to what their foreign counterparts reported. The interesting part is that for 2013 Swiss confidence is rebounding while Chinese companies are slightly turning pessimistic.

The Swiss companies are also more positive than all others on the long term than on the short term: for the next 5 years, respondents are “confident” to “extremely confident”, on average, that their operations in China will be successful.

This view contrasts sharply with the one often generally presented in 2012 by Swiss media.

**How confident are you that your operations in China will be successful in the next year, and in the next 5 years? (0=Absolutely Not Confident, 3=Not Confident, 5=Neutral, 7=Confident, 10=Extremely Confident)**

FIGURE 6: SWISS COMPANIES

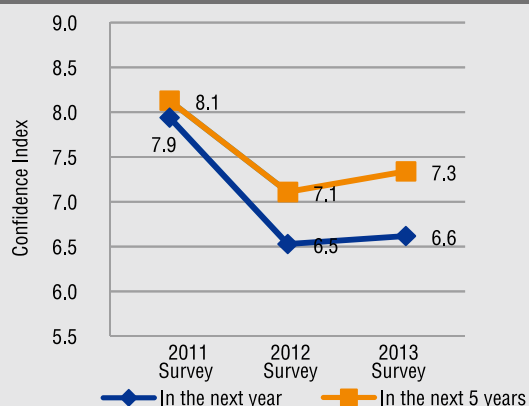


FIGURE 7: FOREIGN COMPANIES

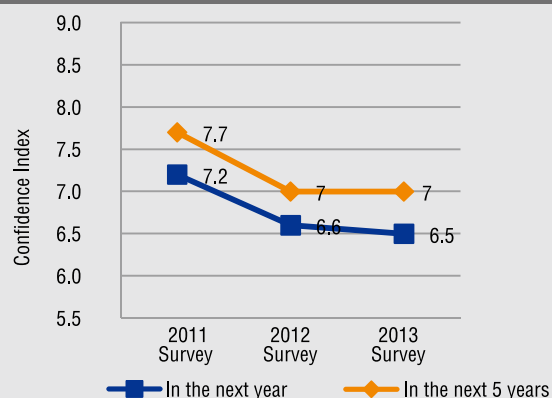
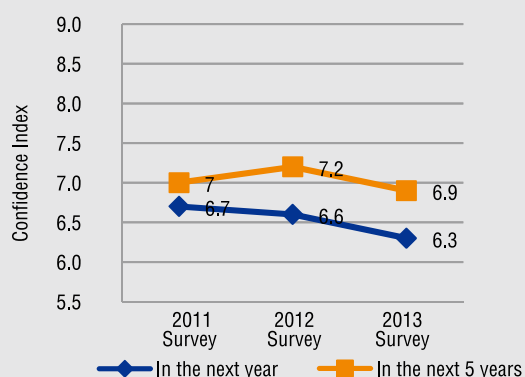


FIGURE 8: CHINESE COMPANIES

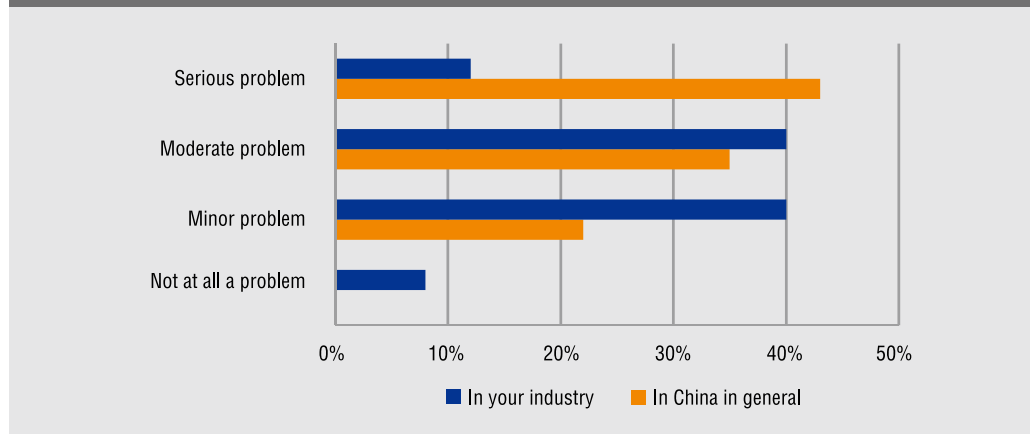


# A WIDE PERCEPTION GAP BETWEEN VIEWS FROM CHINA AND SWITZERLAND

## CORRUPTION & LEGAL ENVIRONMENT

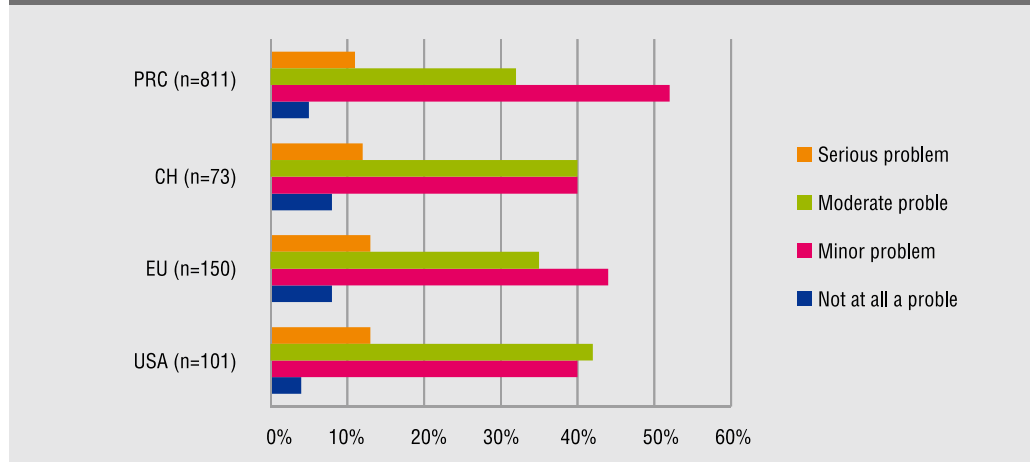
When asked if **corruption** is important **in China, in general**, a large majority (78%) of Swiss companies see it as a “serious” or “moderate problem”.

FIGURE 9: IN YOUR VIEW, HOW SERIOUS IS CORRUPTION IN CHINA IN GENERAL, IN YOUR INDUSTRY? (SWISS COMPANIES) N=73



However, when asked how serious corruption is **in their industry**, around 80% of the respondents see it as a “moderate” or “minor problem”. **Only 11% of Swiss companies say corruption is a serious problem** in their industry. Interestingly, the picture is very similar for other foreign companies as well as Chinese companies.

FIGURE 10: IN YOUR VIEW, HOW SERIOUS IS CORRUPTION IN YOUR INDUSTRY?



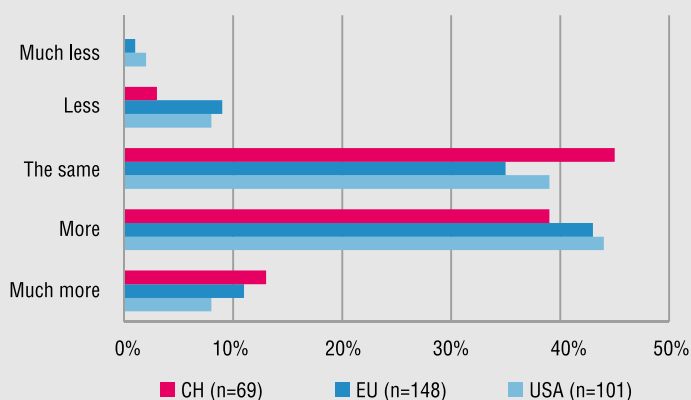
These paradoxical answers highlight a critical phenomenon.

On one hand, there is the general feeling that “China is corrupt”, fueled by scandals and countless anecdotes, which is also the aspect that foreign media report on. On the other hand there is the reality of doing business on the ground, where corruption is one of many issues to deal with, though certainly not the most important one.

However, this does not mean that companies do not pay much attention to their relations with their local government: a bit over 50% of Swiss respondents allocate more or much more resources to build these relationships than in their home markets.

That also means that close to one in two Swiss companies in China does not need to spend more time and efforts on their relationships with the government compared to what they do in Switzerland. In an environment pervaded by corruption, it could be expected that almost every company would have to devote more efforts on government relations than in its home country.

FIGURE 11: HOW MUCH RESOURCES DO YOU ALLOCATE TO BUILD/KEEP GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHINESE AUTHORITIES WHEN COMPARING TO YOUR HOME COUNTRY?

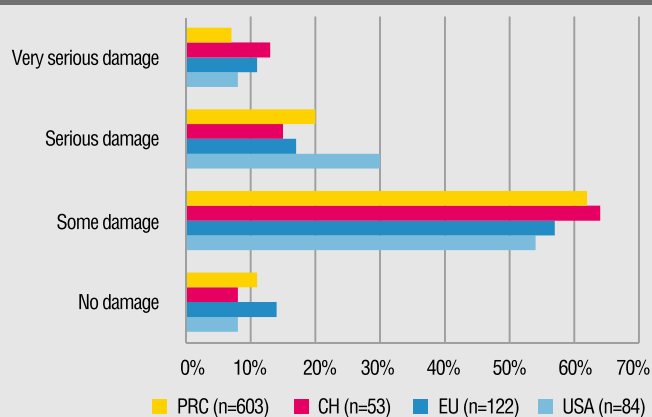


## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

A strong misperception that foreign companies are seriously affected by intellectual property infringements in China also prevails in home countries. While it is true that IP infringements occur in China more than elsewhere, the damage they generate is not as serious as one would expect. More than two third of Swiss companies report “some” or “no damage”.

More importantly, **Chinese, Swiss and European companies suffer from IP infringement in very similar ways.**

FIGURE 12: WHAT IS THE DAMAGE CAUSED TO YOU BY IP INFRINGEMENT?



Contrary to the general perception, **there is no discrimination against foreign companies in the protection of IP**. This is also illustrated by the judgement of IP court cases between foreign and Chinese companies. In 2011 in Shanghai, 86% of such cases were won by the foreign side<sup>2</sup>.

In our opinion, these survey results highlight the widening gap between the perception of China from abroad and the actual situation for managers on the ground. The following section, highlighting the *lack of understanding and support from the head office* as one of the most important challenges for foreign companies, further illustrates the perception mismatch between managers inside and outside of China.

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<sup>2</sup> Bouzy, Leonard: Vidon & Partners China IP newsletter (June 2012)

# CHALLENGES TO OVERCOME FOR SUCCESS

## LACK OF UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT FROM THE HEAD OFFICE

The key **management challenge** remains finding and retaining human ressources. As a consequence, HR is also considered central to success (see Figure 13).

**The surprise is the importance of lack of understanding and support from the head office** which is selected by 26% of Swiss respondents. In the previous CEIBS survey – though not totally comparable – this was a management challenge for 17% of the Swiss companies only and ranked behind three other concerns (*obtaining license, understanding of government regulations & services and materials not up to standard*).

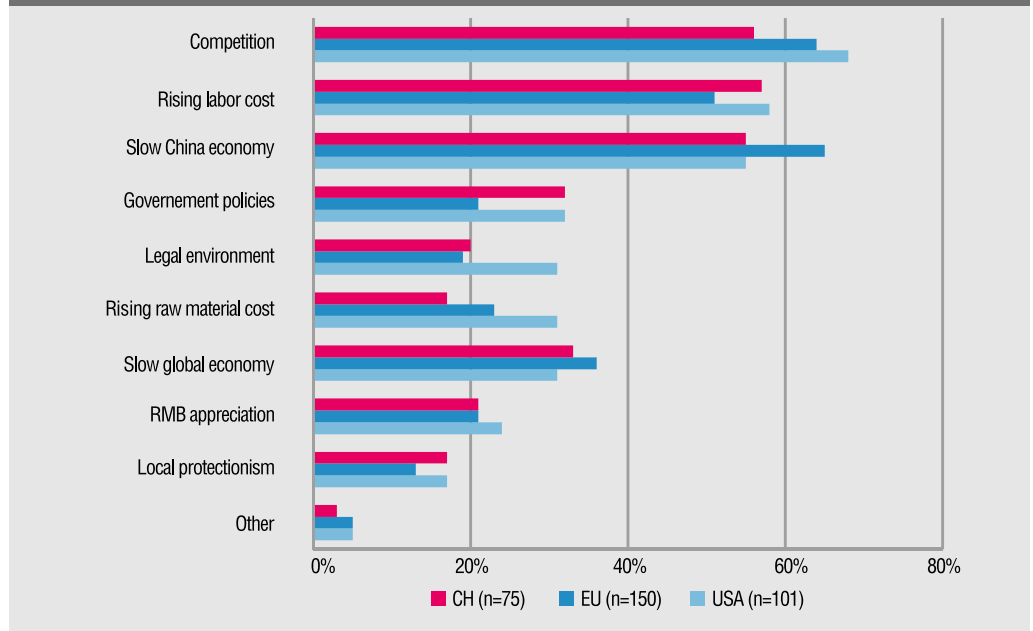
Bridging this understanding gap would certainly help develop the business of many companies in China.





**Competition**, closely followed by *rising labor costs* and a *slow China economy* are the biggest external challenges that companies report. While labor costs and China economy are well-known, simple factors, it is definitely worthwhile to better understand the characteristics of competition.

FIGURE 14: WHAT ARE THE GREATEST EXTERNAL CHALLENGES FOR YOUR COMPANY?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)

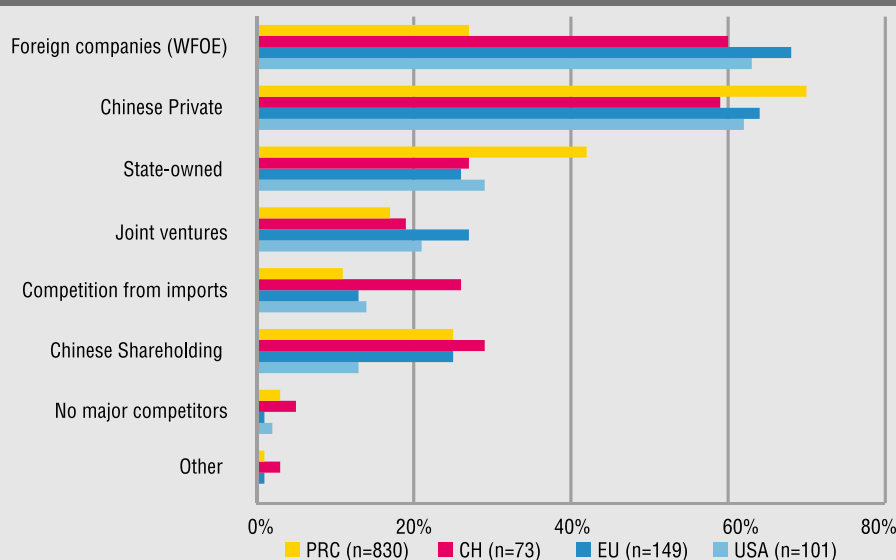


### COMPETITION: A GROWING AND KEY CHALLENGE

Foreign companies see other foreign companies as key competitors, closely followed by the Chinese private companies, while Chinese companies see Chinese private companies as their most important competitors by far.

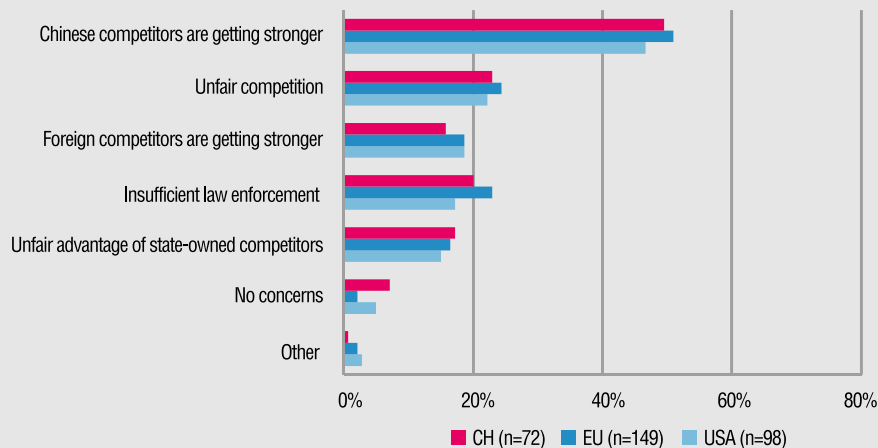
This clearly indicates that Chinese private companies have become serious players in the competitive landscape. They are now considered by the Swiss, European and American companies as equal competition to foreign companies, while in previous surveys, foreign competitors were by far ranked higher than their Chinese counterparts.

**FIGURE 15: WHO ARE YOUR MAJOR COMPETITORS IN CHINA?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)**



This fact is additionally illustrated by the strong concern about the growing strength of Chinese competitors:

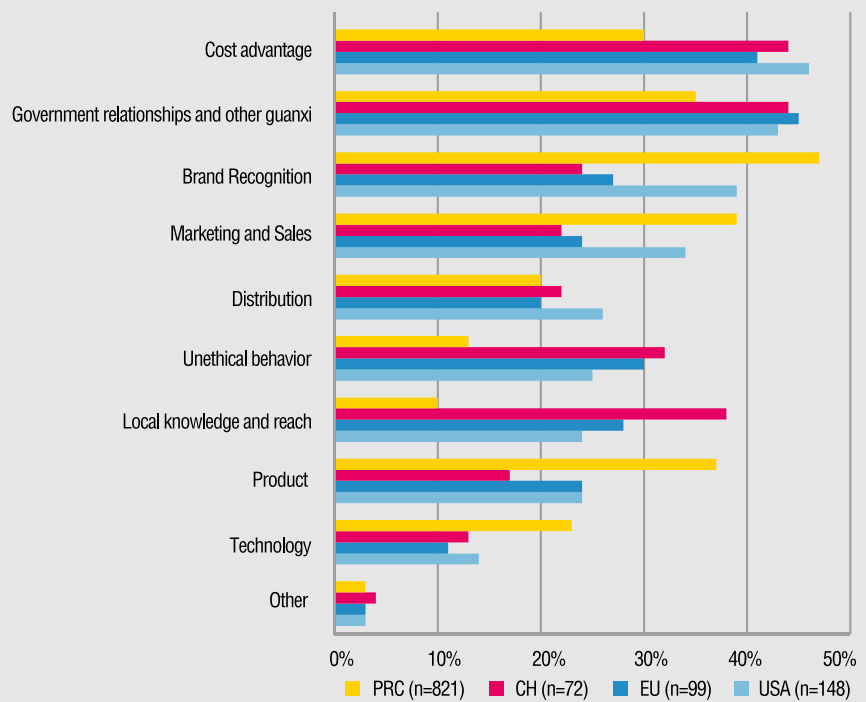
**FIGURE 16: WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN CONCERNS REGARDING COMPETITION?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)**



For Swiss companies particularly, *pricing* followed by *cost advantages*, *government relations & network* (guanxi) are clearly perceived as competitors' main advantages. These answers are coherent with the top importance given to rising labor costs as an external challenge. The picture is however very different for Chinese companies, who see the main advantages of their competitors to be *brand recognition*, *marketing and sales* as well as *product*.

All in all, foreign companies clearly compete on product and brand performance against their Chinese counterparts having cost and relationship advantages.

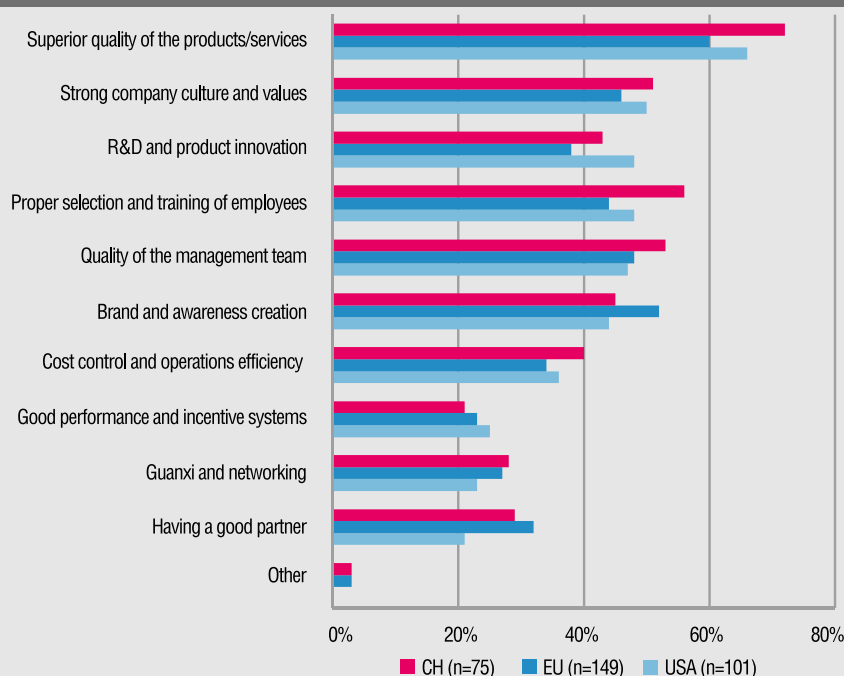
FIGURE 17: WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF YOUR MAIN COMPETITORS IN CHINA?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)



### THE KEY SUCCESS FACTORS: SUPERIOR PRODUCT QUALITY AND HUMAN RESOURCES

**Key factors of success** clearly are first the *superior quality of the products/services*, and **Human Resources** (HR) referring to the three factors *proper selection and training of employees*, *quality of the management team*, and *strong company culture and values*. This is coherent with HR being singled out as the greatest management challenge (See Figure 13).

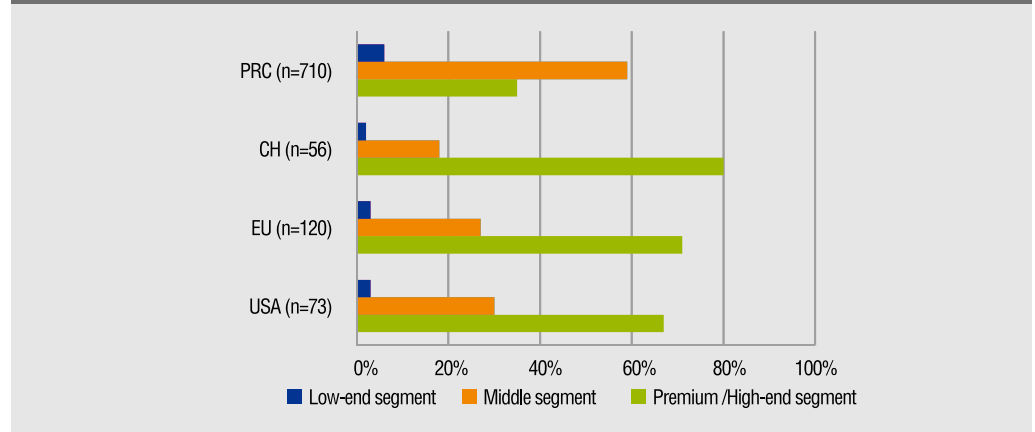
FIGURE 18: WHAT ARE THE MAIN SUCCESS FACTORS FOR YOUR COMPANY?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)



The focus on superior products/services by foreign companies is understandable when keeping in mind the heavy competition and the need for differentiation through quality versus price. Foreign companies maintain market shares and profits by offering products that Chinese companies will find difficult to match in terms of quality. This also explains why foreign companies in China compete as much with foreign competitors as with Chinese ones.

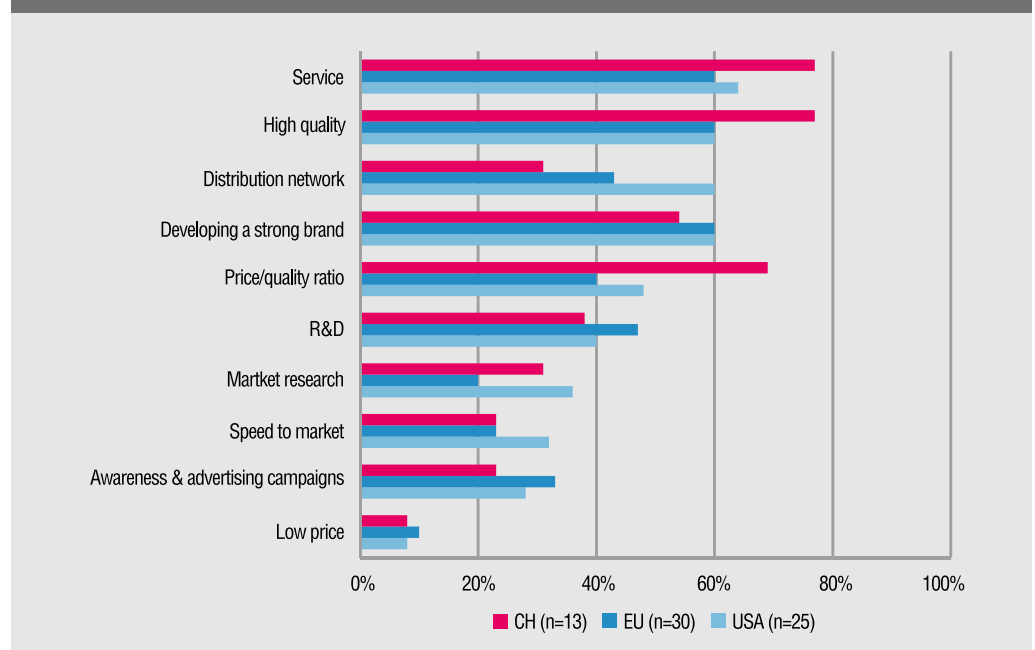
The high-end focus is also clearly illustrated by the market segments targeted by the different companies. Swiss companies are by far mostly focused on the premium segment.

FIGURE 19: WHICH IS YOUR MAIN MARKET SEGMENT IN CHINA?



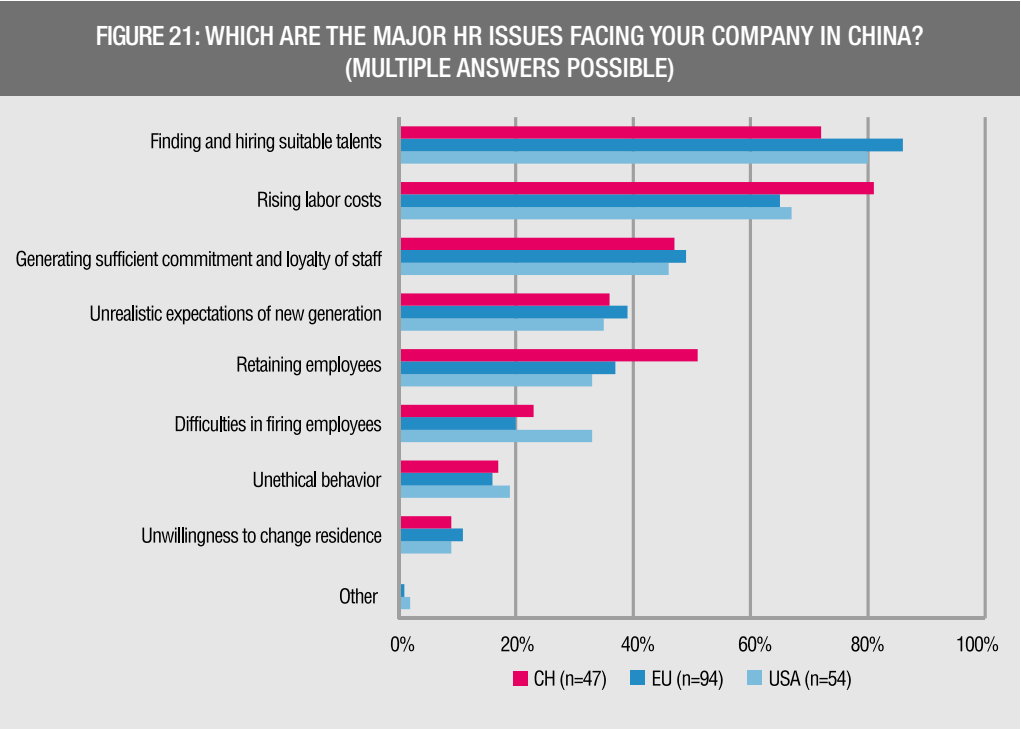
Swiss companies clearly have a stronger focus on *service*, *high quality* and *price/quality ratio* than their western counterparts (See figure 20). Understandably, while providing superior quality and service, they come under higher cost pressure and therefore rank price/quality ratio more importantly than others as well. This however indicates that price competitiveness cannot be ignored in China.

FIGURE 20: WHAT ARE THE KEY FACTORS FOR THE SUCCESS OF YOUR SALES?  
(MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)



While offering a superior product is essential for success, **having - and keeping - the right people is crucial.**

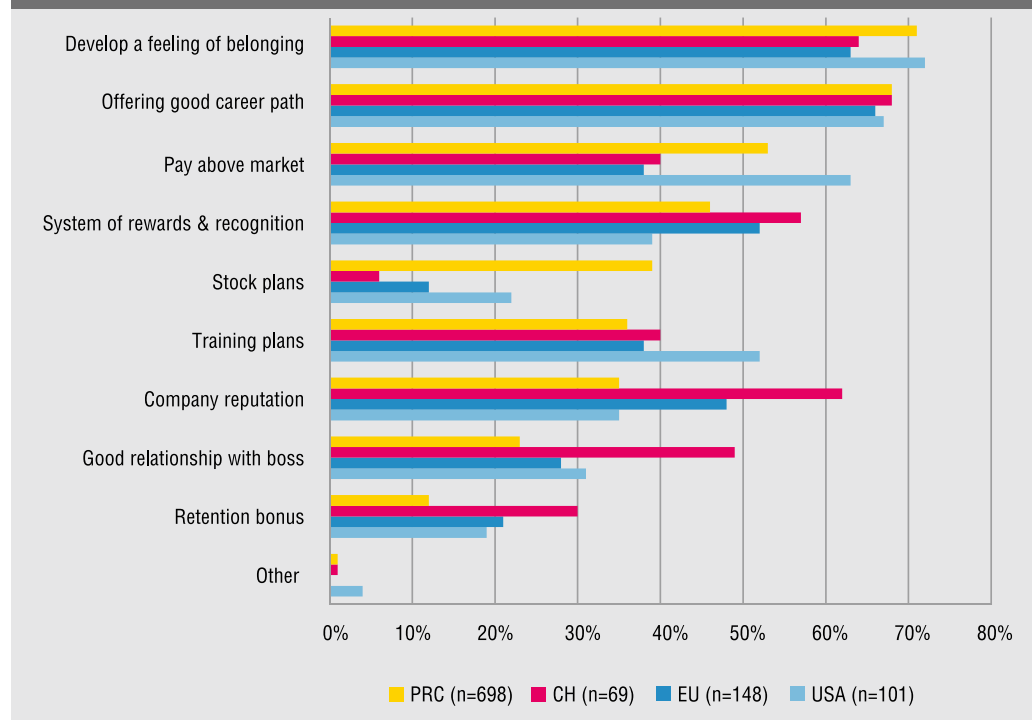
In addition to the typical issue of recruiting suitable talent and retaining them, Swiss companies feel a particularly strong pressure from labor costs.



In order to retain employees, *paying above the market* is not the main solution used by foreign companies. Actually, *offering a good career path and develop a feeling of belonging* appear to foreign and Chinese companies as a more efficient tool for retaining employees, as it offers opportunities for promotions and the perspective of salary improvements. Practically as important is to provide rewards and recognitions to those who deserve it.

Specifically, Swiss companies consider *company reputation* and *good relationship with boss* as other efficient tools to retain employees.

FIGURE 22: WHICH IS MOST EFFICIENT TO RETAIN EMPLOYEES? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)



# SWISS SMEs ARE FASTER TO ESTABLISH IN CHINA THAN EU AND US COUNTERPARTS

## SWISS COMPANIES DERIVE PROPORTIONALLY MORE GLOBAL REVENUE FROM CHINA

Swiss companies derive proportionally more global revenue from China

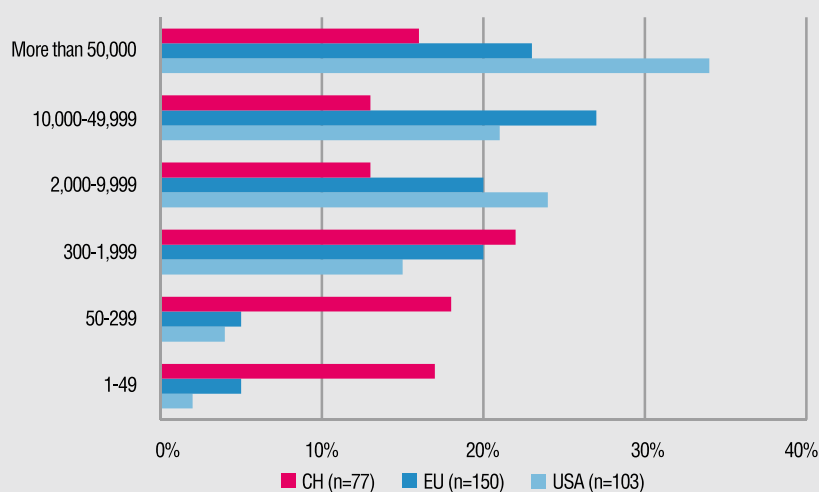
Looking at the charts below, about 35% of Swiss respondents can be classified as Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) defined as companies with less than 300 employees globally; and close to 30% are large companies with over 10'000 employees worldwide.

By comparison, other western SMEs are much less represented with only 10% of European and 6% of American companies having less than 300 employees.

We cannot show that the firms who responded to the survey are representative in terms of size of the total Swiss, European and American population. Indeed, small Swiss companies could have answered the survey more than EU and US ones, therefore giving a biased picture. Still, the difference is striking and gives ground to believe that Swiss companies have been comparatively faster at establishing SMEs in China than their counterparts from Europe and America.

It is also consistent with the fact that Swiss SMEs, due to the small size of their domestic market, are more adapted and geared towards internationalization than their counterparts.

FIGURE 23: HOW MANY EMPLOYEES GLOBALLY? FOREIGN COMPANIES ONLY



43% of the Swiss companies employ less than 50 employees with 38% reporting sales of RMB30 million or less, while the figures are respectively 16% and 18% for the European respondents.



FIGURE 24: HOW MANY EMPLOYEES DOES YOUR COMPANY HAVE IN CHINA?

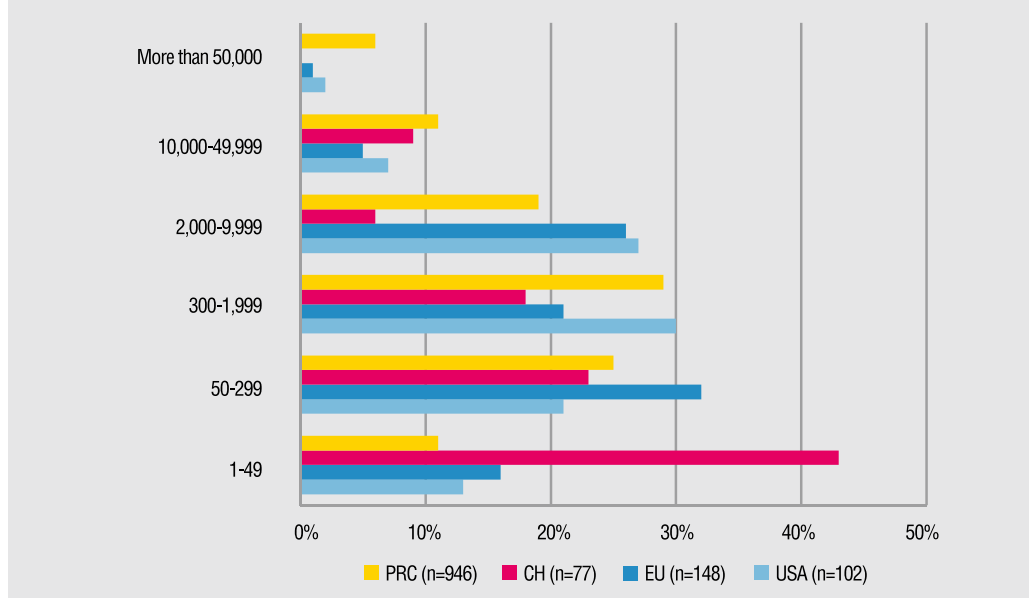
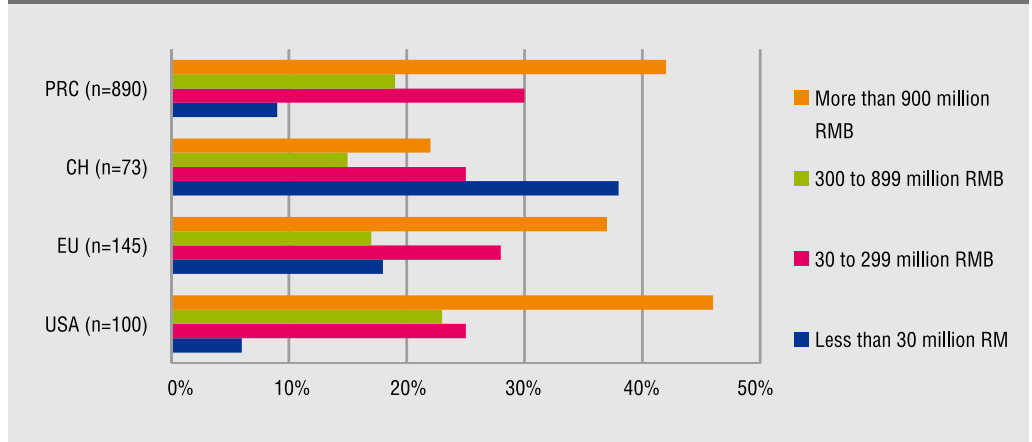


FIGURE 25: WHAT ARE YOUR COMPANY FORECASTED TOTAL CHINA REVENUES FOR 2012?

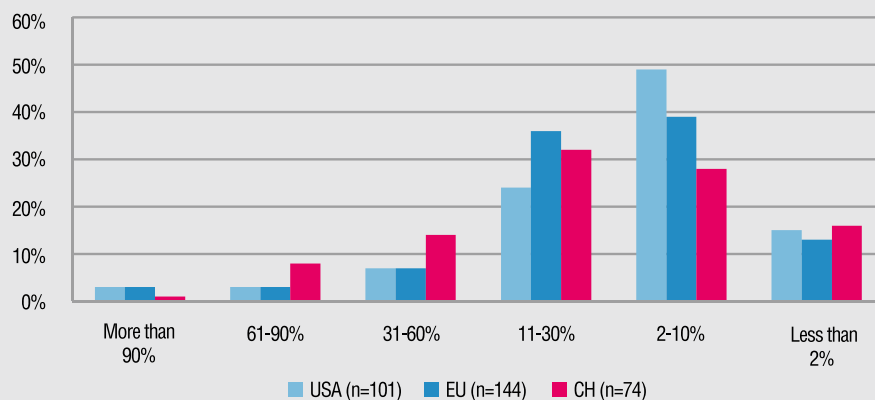


## POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN CHINA REMAINS ENORMOUS

**Swiss companies derive proportionally more of their global revenue from China than their western counterparts.** Indeed, in 2012, 23% of the Swiss companies in China already estimated that 30% or more of their global expected revenue would be generated in China, compared to 13% for both European and American companies.

Since the China part of global revenues of large enterprises are usually proportionally small, the difference comes most probably from the higher proportion of Swiss SMEs answering the survey. That, by consequence, indicates that **Swiss SMEs established in China are drawing relatively important parts of their sales from their China operations.**

FIGURE 26: WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR COMPANY'S EXPECTED GLOBAL REVENUE IN 2012 WILL BE GENERATED IN CHINA?



Looking at Swiss statistics, 100'000 SMEs and only 3'300 large companies are internationally active in Switzerland<sup>3</sup>. Proportionally, SMEs are still very much underrepresented in China so that **Swiss potential for further developments of SMEs in China remains enormous**

<sup>3</sup> See [http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/business/Swiss\\_SMEs\\_are\\_small\\_but\\_international.html?cid=30078510](http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/business/Swiss_SMEs_are_small_but_international.html?cid=30078510)

# RESULTS ARE CONVINCINGLY REPRESENTATIVE

With 87 Swiss respondents out of the 446 foreign-owned company respondents, the Swiss sample is well represented in the overall CEIBS survey.

Compared to the 254 different companies registered with SwissCham China (without counting separate subsidiaries of the same company), this represents a strong sample of the affiliated Swiss firms in China.

In terms of geographical location, when comparing the Swiss respondents sample with companies registered with SwissCham China, the proportions from different areas - excluding Hong Kong - are reasonably similar, even though Southern China subsidiaries are underrepresented and Shanghai is slightly overrepresented compared to Beijing.

**The headquarters of your company in mainland China are located in:**

FIGURE 27: LOCAL REPARTITION FOR SWISSCHAM COMPANIES

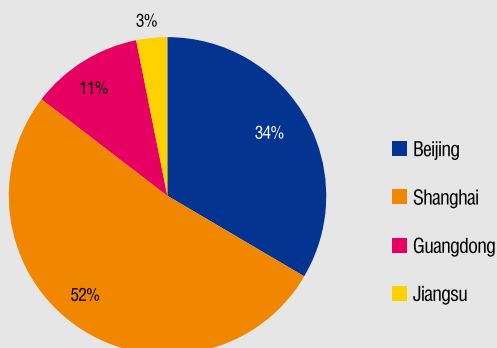
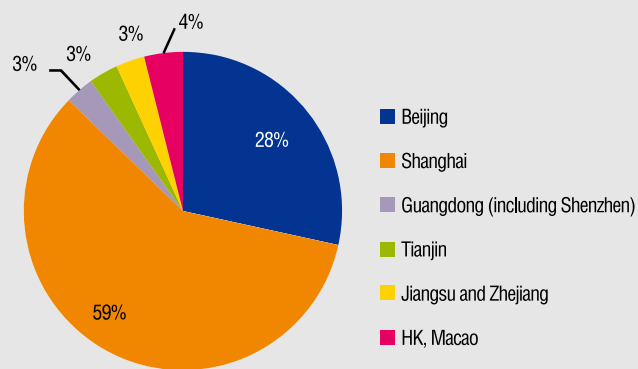
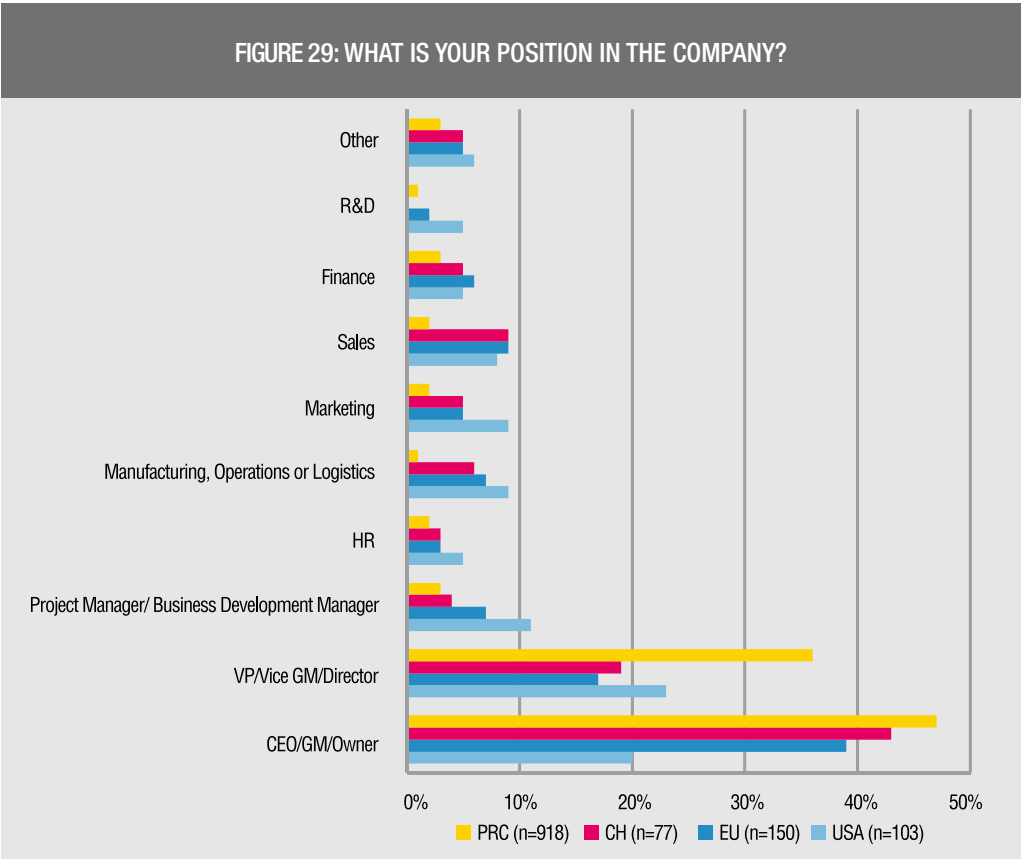


FIGURE 28: LOCAL REPARTITION OF SWISS COMPANIES IN THE CEIBS SURVEY



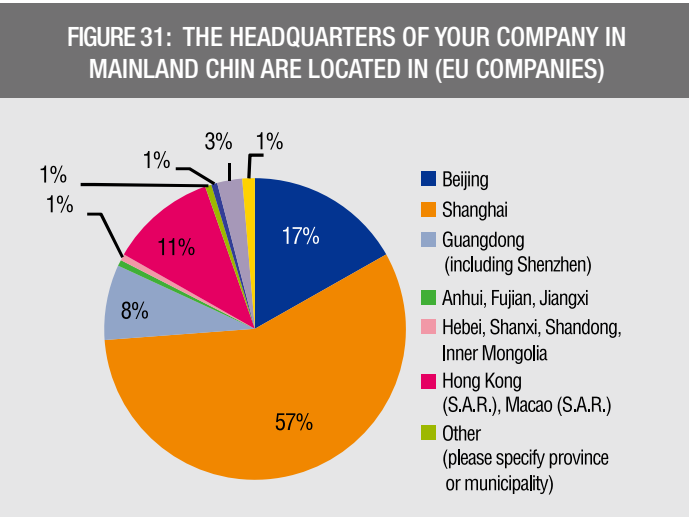
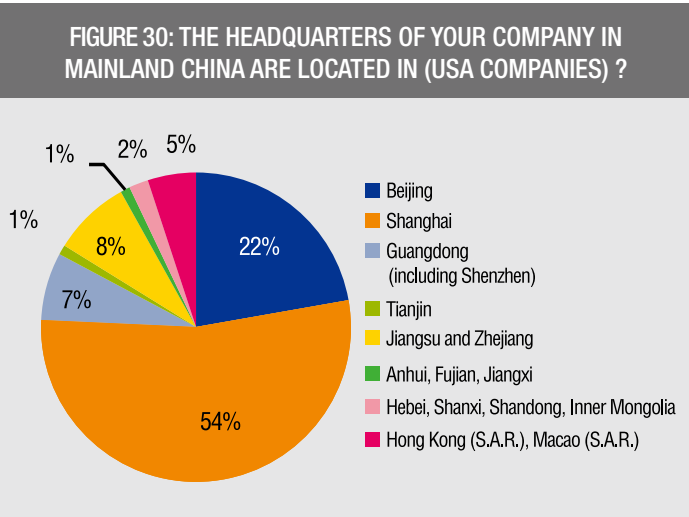
Additionally, with 62% of top managers (Owner/CEO/GM & VP/Vice-GM/Director) answering the survey, the data from Swiss companies is reasonably credible.

Respondents are noticeably more senior than those from the American (43%) and European companies (56%). Only Chinese companies' respondents have a higher percentage of top managers answering (83%).



Though Swiss respondents are noticeably younger and represent smaller companies by their European and American counterparts, western companies who answered the survey are surprisingly similar.

Interestingly enough, American and European respondents' geographical representation is also quite similar.



When looking at the establishment year, we see again pretty similar distributions among Swiss, European and American companies, though there are proportionally slightly more answers from Swiss companies that have been more recently established in China.

#### When was your company established in China?

FIGURE 32: SWISS COMPANIES (N=77)

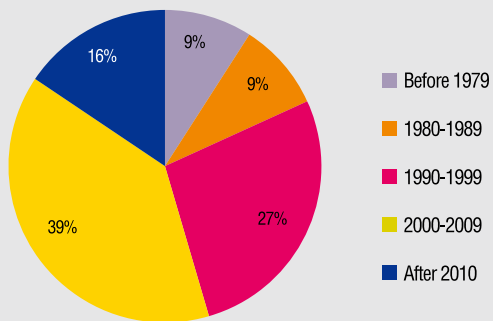


FIGURE 33: US COMPANIES (N=102)

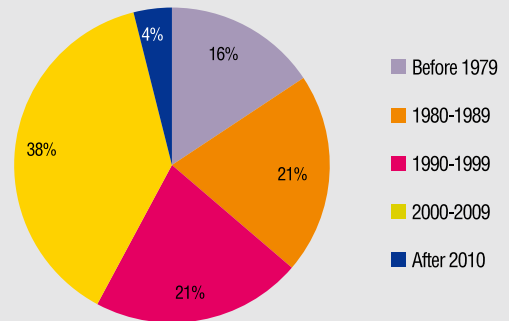
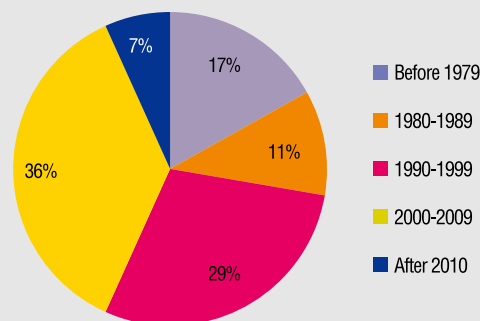


FIGURE 34: EU COMPANIES (N=148)



Close to two third of Swiss firms represented in the survey are manufacturing companies. This is again quite similar to American and European companies, while the Chinese companies answering are predominantly in the service sector (almost 60%).

A similar situation occurs when looking at the customer base: Chinese are selling significantly more to the consumers segment than the western respondents, who are more strongly focused on B2B clients, with Swiss companies predominantly in B2B (89% of the Swiss companies in our sample).

FIGURE 35: WHAT IS YOUR COMPANY MAIN ACTIVITY IN CHINA?

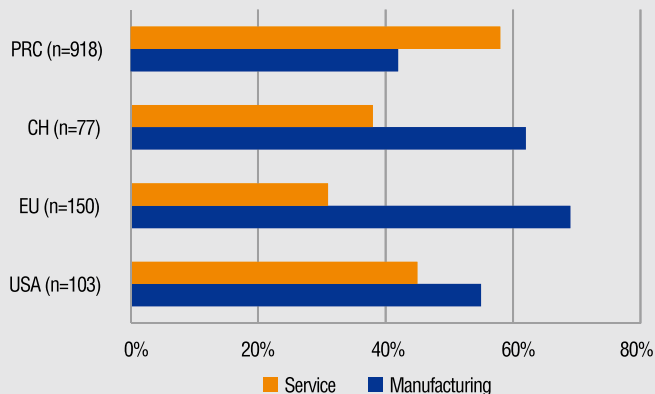
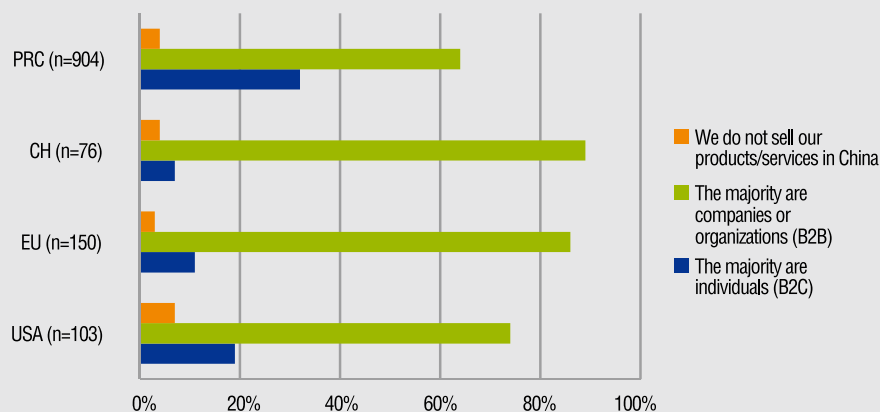


FIGURE 36: WHO ARE YOUR CLIENTS IN CHINA?



While the above already provides good reasons to think that the sample of Swiss respondents to this survey is representative, we believe that the general similarity between the Swiss, European and American data gives additional credibility to the results obtained for Swiss companies.

Indeed, since a reasonably large number of western companies – about 300 companies – report patterns and trends in a constant, similar way, we think that the results for the Swiss companies are generally correct. In addition, the significant differences between Swiss results and European and American ones do make sense when analyzed along with well-known particularities of Swiss companies.

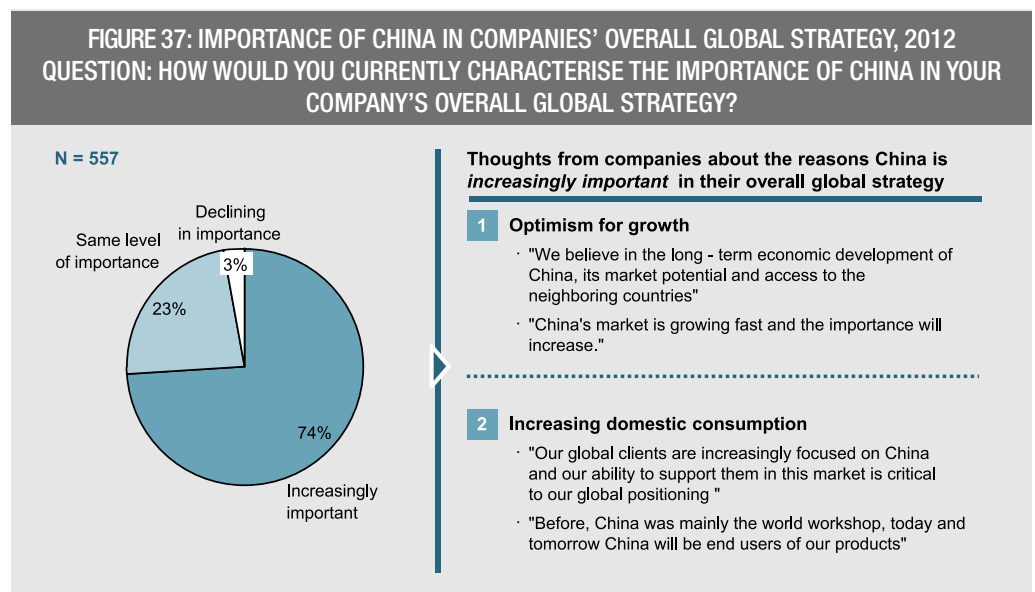
As a consequence, we are convinced by the general representativeness and value of the results and hope that they will be seen as such.

# ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS: WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE LONG TERM?

## EU FIRMS PROFITABILITY GROWTH TO BE HIGHER IN CHINA THAN IN THE REST OF THE WORLD

Based on the largely similar results of the CEIBS survey when comparing the Swiss and European companies in terms of revenue, profitability and investments, it is particularly interesting to review the results from another recent survey on European companies *European Business in China - Business Confidence Survey*<sup>4</sup> to provide conclusions useful to Swiss companies.

The most interesting finding is that, on average and contrarily to many press statements, **EU companies are more and more successful and invest more and more in China**. The figure bellow provides a clear indication: a very large majority of EU firms consider China to be “increasingly important”.

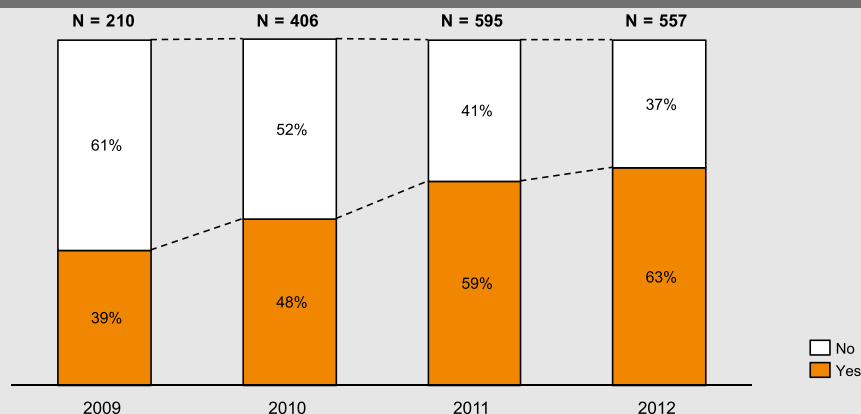


## Investments

This translates in obviously growing intentions for major investment in China and is also confirmed by the CEIBS survey.

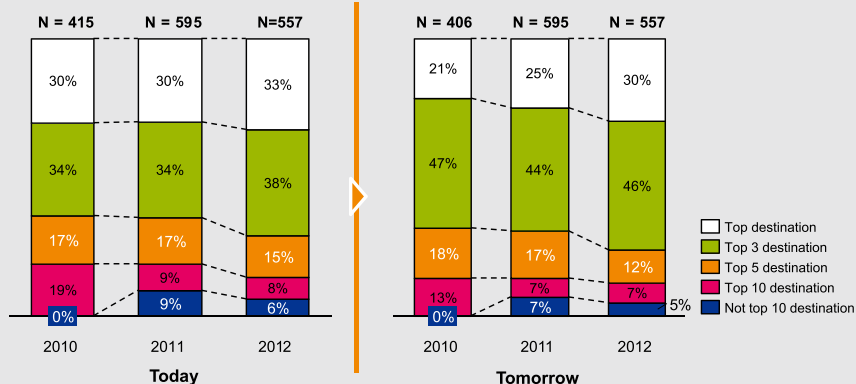
<sup>4</sup> Available at [www.euccc.com.cn](http://www.euccc.com.cn), carried out by Roland Berger & Partners

**FIGURE 38: COMPANIES CONTEMPLATING NEW INVESTMENTS IN CHINA, 2009 - 2012**  
**QUESTION: IS YOUR COMPANY CONSIDERING ANY MAJOR NEW INVESTMENTS IN MAINLAND CHINA IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS?**



When asking the importance of China as a destination for new investment, European companies reconfirm their growing interest. Indeed, 87-88% of European companies consider China as a top 5 investment destination now and in the future.

**FIGURE 39: CHINA'S RANK (AS A DESTINATION FOR NEW INVESTMENTS), 2010-2012**  
**QUESTION: ON A GLOBAL BASIS, (WHERE DOES CHINA RANK AS A DESTINATION) FOR NEW INVESTMENTS FOR YOUR COMPANY?**



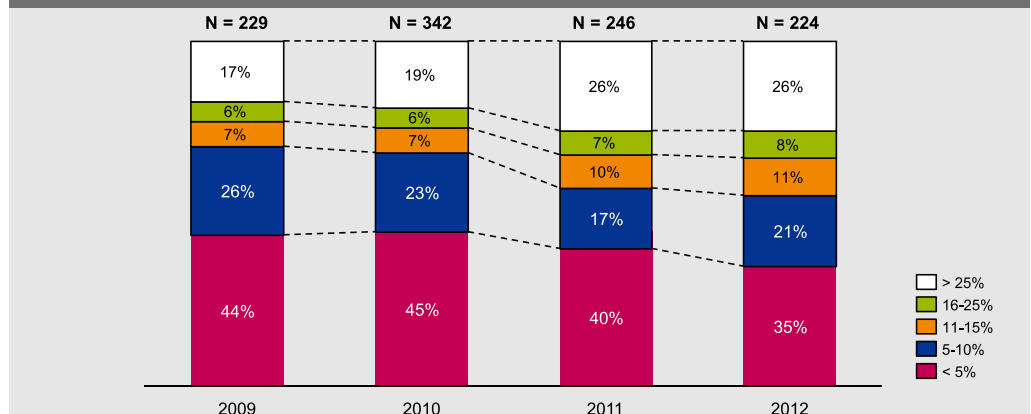
### Revenue & Profitability by Comparison to the Rest of the World

The revenue and profitability picture, however, is the most striking.

The graph below shows how fast the proportion of companies' global revenue generated in China increases for European companies. In 2009, 30% of the European companies generated in China more than 10% of their global revenues. Three years later, 45% of them generate more than 10% of their global revenues in China.



FIGURE 40: PROPORTION OF COMPANIES' GLOBAL REVENUE GENERATED IN CHINA, 2009 - 2012  
QUESTION: WHAT PROPORTION OF YOUR GLOBAL REVENUE WAS GENERATED IN CHINA THIS PAST YEAR?



That is in correlation with the growing importance of China: growing revenues naturally generate increasing importance.

In terms of profitability, the chart below is helpful.

FIGURE 41: EBIT MARGINS OF CHINA OPERATIONS COMPARED TO WORLDWIDE MARGINS, 2010-2012  
QUESTION: HOW DID THE EBIT MARGIN OF YOUR MAINLAND CHINA OPERATIONS COMPARE TO YOUR COMPANY'S WORLDWIDE MARGINS THIS PAST YEAR?

Answers	Respondents		
	N = 389	N = 262	N = 224
	2010	2011	2012
Better than company average worldwide	37%	33%	42%
Same as company average worldwide	29%	37%	29%
Lower than company average worldwide	34%	30%	29%

Over the past 3 years, more European companies in China have a profitability that is **higher than in the rest of the world** than companies whose profitability is lower. For example in 2010, 37% reported better than company average worldwide against 34% reporting lower than company average worldwide.

While the situation in 2011 is similar to 2010, in 2012 the trend is intensifying strongly: 42% achieve a *higher profitability than in the rest of the world*, against 29% with lower profitability.

This means that, on average, **European companies have proportionally higher profits in China than in the rest of the world.**

## CHINA PRODUCTION COSTS WILL REMAIN COMPETITIVE FOR MANY YEARS IF NOT DECADES

The explosion of the middle class (expected to grow 10-15 fold from 2010 to 2020) and its high income expectations, the 3 to 4 fold increase in minimum wages planned for this decade and the peaking of the young work force due to the one child policy have lead many to the conclusion that China will soon no longer be a competitive, low-cost production base. This is illustrated in the many headlines that announced the “end of China’s low costs”, “the drying up of China’s endless pool of labor” and articles about international manufacturers moving their productions out to Vietnam, Indonesia or Bangladesh, or about the difficulties of factories in coastal regions to recruit enough workers.

This appears to be reassuring, particularly for manufacturers in developed countries, finally seeing in China more market opportunities from consumers with increasing spending powers, than competition from rising producers. But while the market opportunities are clearly materializing, **China’s peak in production competitiveness may not be reached for many years, if not decades.**

While the cost of exported Chinese products is no longer going down (in US dollars terms), the cases of foreign companies relocating their production out of China are still very anecdotic. Only a limited number of industries where automation cannot replace unskilled labor are seeing a transfer of production out of China, typically the apparel and plush toys industry, for which no machines can replace the sewing work. Other cases arise for very low quality products or potentially polluting industries, for which China starts enforcing international standards while other emerging countries do not yet enforce a sustainable manufacturing regulatory frame.

Though the increasing labor costs in China and the underlying trends are all true facts, those interpreting them do not take into consideration a number of China specific factors and the situation of the other low cost competitors when forecasting that China is becoming uncompetitive.

### ***Fueled by imposed minimum wages increases, the migration to urban centers is in full swing***

The most important “China factor” having an impact on the evolution of production costs is also the most often mentioned: the size of its population. Upon becoming the country with the world’s second largest GDP, the general perception is that it has become a developed economy. While it is true that parts of China are truly developed and that the country can finance its own development, we tend to forget that, **in 2010, 38% of its workforce was still engaged in agriculture** and over 50% of China’s population was rural.

In order to bring this proportion down to 24% by 2020<sup>5</sup>, 142 Mio people will migrate from the countryside to cities by then<sup>6</sup>. That is a pool of job seeking, low-skilled labor moving into cities 1.6 times the size of Vietnam’s total population. By 2030, an estimate 235 Mio. people will have migrated to urban centers in search of better opportunities, a number close to Indonesia’s current population!

Another important China specific factor not to be neglected is the top-down managed nature of the Chinese economy. Indeed, workers salary increases are not driven by labor force shortages, but by the government imposed increase of minimum wages (13% per year during the current

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<sup>5</sup> Projections of the World Bank and the DRC (Development Research Center of the State Council, People’s Republic of China)

<sup>6</sup> Health care in China: Entering ‘uncharted waters’, McKinsey, November 2012.

2011 - 2015 five year plan, or a total of 84% in 5 years). The traditional demand and supply factor does not apply in China's case, and what could be interpreted as a shortage of labor is, in fact, a government driven phenomenon.

Why then has there been so many reports early in the year of factories in South China failing to recruit enough workers? Most of these reports failed to note that the province of Guangdong postponed increasing its minimum wages level at the beginning of the year<sup>7</sup>. As a result, the salary differential between inland provinces and Guangdong was reduced and many migrant workers decided to stay in their home provinces where they had better opportunities, when considering proximity to their homes and the general cost of living.

**Actually, increasing minimum wages throughout the country is a powerful tool that the government uses to "kill four birds with one stone":** keep the migration to cities going, increase domestic consumption through higher disposable income of the lowest income citizen, reduce social inequalities by developing the inland, and move the economy up the technology value chain.

***Robotics are booming and productivity is increasing faster than production costs***

As a result, entrepreneurs currently relying on low-cost unskilled assembly workers for manufacturing have a choice of moving inland (where minimum wages can still be as low as half those on the coast), expatriating themselves to other low cost countries and/or introducing automation.

A good example of this is the Taiwanese manufacturing giant Foxconn, who currently employs 1.2 Mio unskilled Chinese workers on assembly lines typical of the production chains we pioneered in the West 100 years ago. Unsurprisingly, Foxconn's Chairman publicly announced the installation of 1 Mio robots in its factories. While he must expect healthy growth in the business, automation on such scale is certainly also intended to reduce the workforce, and in turn fight increasing production costs associated with imposed rising wages.

While Foxconn is one of the most prominent examples, most producers whose industries allow are embracing automation as fast as they can. Indeed, due to the overall cheap and flexible labor force in China, there previously was no need to increase productivity by reducing costs and improving their supply chain processes. As a result, China's manufacturing is very far from being optimized and the potential for improvement and increased productivity through management and technology is huge.

Consequently, the automation industry is booming. Kuka, the European leader in robotics, will increase its assembly capacity in China to 5'000 units this year, from fewer than 1'000 two years ago. ABB has moved its global robotics division headquarters to Shanghai in 2006 and became the No 2 maker and seller of robots in China last year<sup>8</sup>. Today one out of three ABB robots is sold in Asia. Overall, **China is expected to pass South Korea and Japan to become the world's largest robot market in 2013.**

<sup>7</sup> Guangzhou workers increase pressure on government over wages, 19 June 2012.  
<http://www.clb.org.hk/en/node/110081>.

<sup>8</sup> Yaskawa is No 1 in China, while Fanuc and Kuka are No 3 & 4 according to the New York Times "German Maker of Robots Gains as Chinese Wages Rise", 13 April 2012. Other information about foreign robot makers in China is largely drawn from this same article.

Therefore, even though the Consumer Price Index (CPI, used as a benchmark to measure inflation) keeps rising, automation and productivity improvements of all kinds are large enough to bring down the Producer Price Index (PPI, the price at which producers are selling). **In October producers in China sold their goods on average 2.8% cheaper than they did a year before.** Despite all the recent talks of rising production costs in China, the PPI shows that, overall, these costs are now only 0.8% higher than in November 2010 (and 22.3% higher than in 1996, while manufacturing salaries increased over 400% over the same period of time!).<sup>9</sup>

***The China pool of underemployed will remain considerable, together with the skills shortages***

The transformation of production methods from early 20<sup>th</sup> century labor intensive to 21<sup>st</sup> century intelligent automation has actually just begun. The combination of China's massive urbanization and robotics solutions economically produced locally points to a lasting and large pool of low-skilled workers and competitive production costs to remain available for many years to come.

As a result, large numbers of Chinese seek to educate themselves, eventually also creating large pools of job seekers with higher skill sets. The university graduates situation illustrates well the effect of this pressure from the base of the job market: **out of the 6.8 million students who graduated in 2011 an estimated 570'000 did not find a job a year later**<sup>10</sup>.

As a result, the average starting pay of students in 2011 just reached RMB 2'520, but only when considering the three best paying industries (real estate, financial and IT). The average salaries of those graduating from vocational colleges (still in the three highest paying industries) barely reached RMB 1'900<sup>11</sup>. When compared with workers minimum wages of RMB 1'500, RMB 1'450 and RMB 1'260 for Shenzhen, Shanghai and Beijing (first tier cities), one realizes that this pressure from the bottom translates in little income differential for education, despite the fact that skilled and educated employees are very much in demand.

**In fact, China does not have a labor shortage but a large skills gap:** an important part of the available work force, be they workers, technicians or university graduates, do not have the skills needed by the economy. In the development rush, while everyone is trying to acquire better skills, the education system has also rushed to train more educated citizen, but quantity has taken precedence over quality. This is the main reason why foreign companies' biggest headache still is hiring enough qualified employees, despite the glut of formally educated Chinese. That is why top tier companies pay much higher starting salaries to compete for the comparatively few very good graduates. This skills gap is obviously also a cause for low productivity at the work place. Lack of management skills, for example, is a source of important waste in the supply chain that many foreign managers still struggle with.

While this is a very serious problem, potentially important enough to derail China's fast development, it can be fixed by the reform of the education system. Yet, no matter how fast and far-ranging reform is carried out, its effect will also take a decade to bear fruits and significantly adjust skills and attitudes. The productivity gains that closing the skills gap will bring may however come at the right time to maintain low production costs, after the main effects of the automation starts have born fruits, therefore allowing China a competitive production base well into the 2020s.

<sup>9</sup> Figures from International Labor Organization: average manufacturing salary in 1996 was RMB 470 and 2008.

<sup>10</sup> Jobless college graduates trigger concern, China Daily, 7 November 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Average starting pay of Chinese college grads hits 2500 yuan, People's Daily, 24 May 2011.

***Chinese exports increasing mostly towards underdeveloped nations***

Despite the slow American recovery and renewed crisis in Europe, Chinese exports continue to increase. They did so by over 7% in the first 10 months of the year, while year on year export growth was 11.6% in October (and 9.9% in September). Taking a closer look at the figures shows that direct export growth to the EU, US and Japan have practically stagnated (about 1% growth overall), so that China is gaining market share exporting to underdeveloped, lower cost countries. **Chinese exports to the ASEAN (which includes Vietnam and Indonesia) grew over 25% last month, compared to October 2011.** This displays China's continuous competitiveness compared to countries seen as low-cost.

Many claim that the exports are artificially supported by an undervalued Chinese currency. However, this may no longer be the case. China's current account surplus has dropped below 3% of its GDP in 2011 and is expected to stay below this rate in the coming years. This is the measure of an acceptable surplus articulated by the G-20, so that China falls now in internationally accepted norms with regard to its surplus. Besides, UBS in Beijing recently commented that they "believe that fundamentally, the Renminbi is no longer much undervalued".

Additionally, inflation in China is much lower than in its main contenders for low-cost production. Since 2010, Vietnam's consumer prices increase has routinely been 2-3 times faster than China's, while Indonesia's has been 1.5 to 2 times higher. These competitors' currencies would have to depreciate a lot against the Yuan in order to compensate this difference in inflation.

In the next one or two decades, only India, with its billion people, could become a match for China in terms of production cost. This however assumes that production costs mostly depends on labor costs, which, history has shown, is unreasonable due to the enormous advances in material science, information technology and robotics and their increasing impact on the workshop floors.

China's long term production competitiveness will not depend on its labor cost, but on its ability to catch up with modern production techniques and to automate its factories faster than its people's living standards increase. That is why it is currently so important for China's leader to push the development of science and technology along with the education. The success of these programs will be, most probably, the most important factors for China to continue its fast development and to have a chance to achieve living standards close to those of the developed world for its people.

## THE CONSUMER MARKET EXPLOSION OF THE COMING YEARS

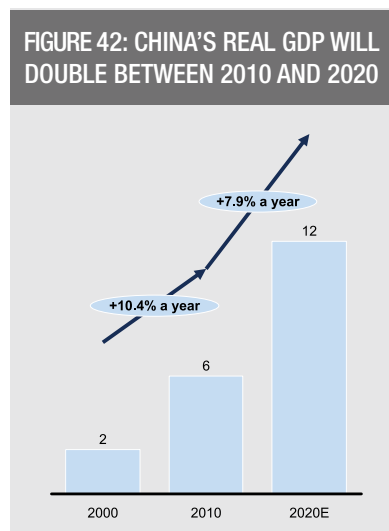
When discussing China as a business prospect, the words “threat” and “opportunity” are often thrown into the discussion. Common misperceptions about China fuel furthermore this debate, and add an element of uncertainty for decision makers. One of these widespread misconceptions is that a slowing growth makes China a less attractive opportunity than previously. It is thus worthwhile to take a look at the Chinese market and its potential for the coming decade.<sup>12</sup>

While in percentage China’s GDP growth went down from an average of 10.4% a year from 2000 to 2010, the average growth rate of 7.9% for the 2010-2020 decade<sup>13</sup> still means that China will add USD 6 trillion to its GDP this decade. That is 50% more than the USD 4 trillion in GDP added during the previous decade!

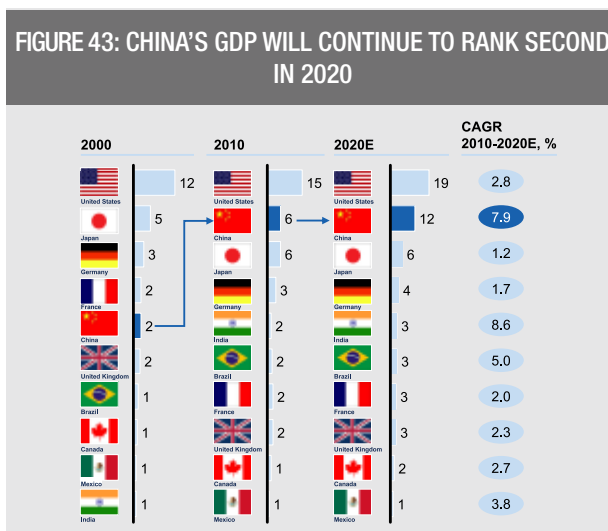
China’s growth is only slowing down in percentage. In amount of dollars, China is in fact adding more GDP to its economy every year than it ever did in the past. This is simply due to the size that the economy has reached in the past year, making a slower percentage growth still a bigger amount in absolute numbers. For business, absolute numbers, not the percentage, are those that really count. Mongolia, for example, may grow 15% in 2012, but with a USD 6 Bio. GDP, the business opportunities remain limited. This level of growth means that, by 2020, the Chinese GDP will account for 19% of the world’s economic output, compared with 9% in 2010, potentially closing the gap with the United States.

### China's continuing GDP growth

\$trillions, 2010 real term



Note: Exclude the impact of foreign exchange rate



Source: McKinsey Insights China –Macroeconomic model update (March 2011); GlobalInsight

<sup>12</sup> Like all predictions, external shocks might confound any forecast, but our understanding and analysis, based on McKinsey projections, serves as a useful lens through which to assess opportunities of the Chinese market for the coming decade.

<sup>13</sup> *Meet the 2020 Chinese Consumer*, March 2012 by McKinsey and *China 2030: Building a Modern, Harmonious, and Creative High-Income Society*, February 2012 by the World Bank and the Development Research Center of the State Council (DRC). See table in Appendix for details and projections up to 2030.

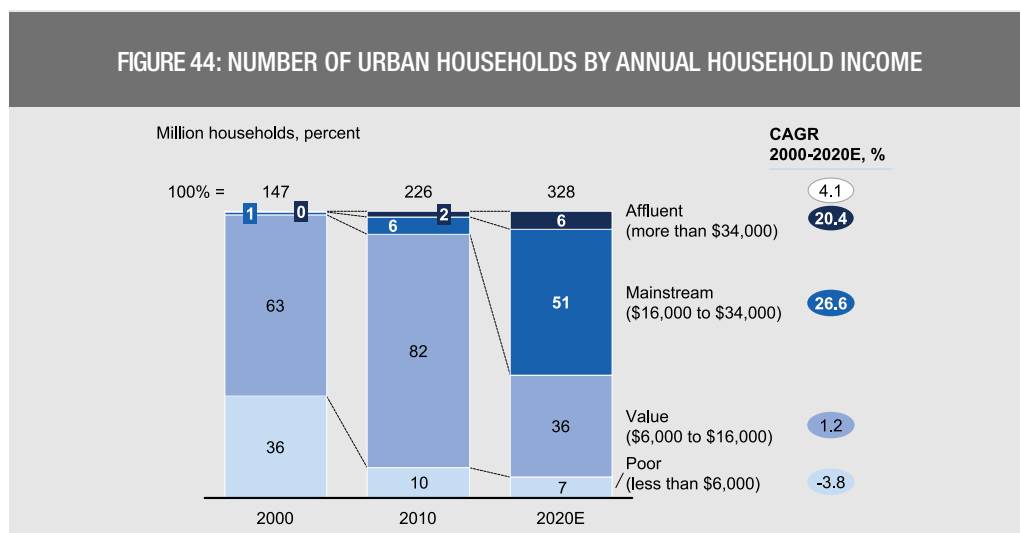
However, GDP per capita will remain low for some time to come, with wealth concentrated in the major cities. Indeed China's average GDP per capita in 2020 will come to USD 9'000 whereas the US average will be USD 57'000, leaving China still far behind and highlighting the enormous potential for growth also past 2020<sup>14</sup>.

**At a turning point:**

**from export low cost labor intensive towards a consumer driven domestic economy**

The difference between now and in 2020 is that consumption, in addition to investment, will be one more driving engine of China's GDP, aggressively pushed by the latest five-year plan. Indeed, with rapid urbanization the middle class is literally exploding. While in 2010 only 6% of urban households (about 13.5 Mio.) are "mainstream" in the McKinsey categories (see chart below), this proportion will not only grow to more than 50% of all households in 2020, but at the same time the number of urban household will increase to 165 Mio main stream households!

All in all, the Chinese middle class will be multiplied by 12 from 2010 to 2020 and the long awaited Chinese consumer market will finally be a reality.



SOURCE: McKinsey Insights China – Macroeconomic model update (March 2011)

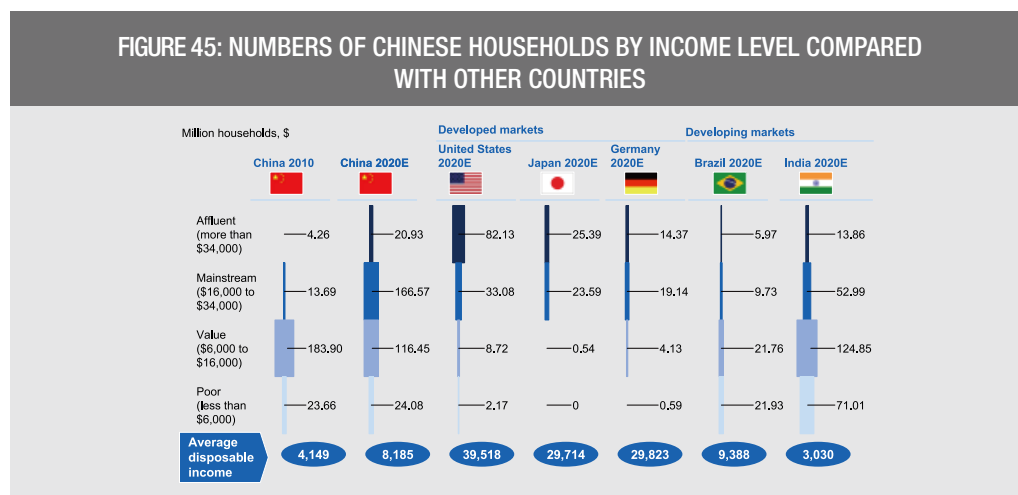
Those who will benefit are those already in the market, ready to receive the business. In terms of sectors, consumer goods are of course the obvious one, though probably also the toughest one with growing competition of local and international producers. New opportunities, however, will arise: maturing consumers will want to differentiate them and should welcome more different and special products. This will provide new opportunities for smaller, more specialized, niche companies.

<sup>14</sup> Actually, under the assumptions of the World Bank and the DRC (5.9% in 2021-2025 and 5.0% 2026-2030), computing the growth of China shows further increases in absolute GDP (USD 8 trillion added from 2020 to 2030).

Naturally, the increase in domestic consumption, will allow enabling and production industries such as machinery, manufacturing and IT, to ride the wave, also compensating for the relative decrease in exports. In general, with the increase in wages and demand for more sophisticated and quality products, technology and automation will be big winners of this development.

Not to be forgotten, the service industry will gain enormously from this new pool of middle class consumers, creating strong demand for healthcare, education, recreation and financial services, just to name a few.

### Number of urban households by income bracket



SOURCE: McKinsey Insights China –Macroeconomic model update (March 2011); Canback Dangel for United States, Japan, Germany and Brazil data

This ongoing literal explosion of mainstream consumers will change China fundamentally, one more time, bringing our economies a new set of opportunities. For international businesses, China at this turning point might just be the business opportunity of the decade.

## Appendix

**FIGURE 46: CHINA: PROJECTED GROWTH PATTERN ASSUMING STEADY REFORMS AND NO MAJOR SHOCK**

Indicator	1995-2010	2011-2015	2015-20	2021-25	2026-30
GDP growth (percent per year)	9.9	8.6	7.0	5.9	5.0
Labor growth	0.9	0.3	-0.2	-0.2	-0.4
Labor productivity growth	8.9	8.3	7.1	6.2	5.5
Structure of economy (end of period, %)					
Investment/GDP ratio	46.4	42	38	36	34
Consumption/GDP ratio	48.6	56	60	63	66
Industry/GDP ratio	46.9	43.8	41.0	38.0	34.6
Services/GDP ratio	43.0	47.6	51.6	56.1	61.1
Share of employment in agriculture	38.1	30.0	23.7	18.2	12.5
Share of employment in services	34.1	42.0	47.6	52.9	59.0

Source: DRC.



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# 2013 Business in China Survey

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China Europe International Business School

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# LETTER FROM THE RESEARCH TEAM

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We are pleased to present the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual CEIBS Business in China Survey.

This year, we have had unprecedented high participation from executives working in China both from Chinese-owned and foreign-owned firms. We want to sincerely thank all of them for their time and valuable contribution. In particular we thank the CEIBS alumni community and current MBA, EMBA and Exec Ed students who have given their support to this research. Our sincere gratitude is also extended to the institutions and organizations that have participated. They are:

- China Integrated Co. Ltd. / Swiss Center Shanghai
- China-Italy Chamber of Commerce
- Confederation of Indian Industry
- MexCham, Cámara de Comercio de México en China.

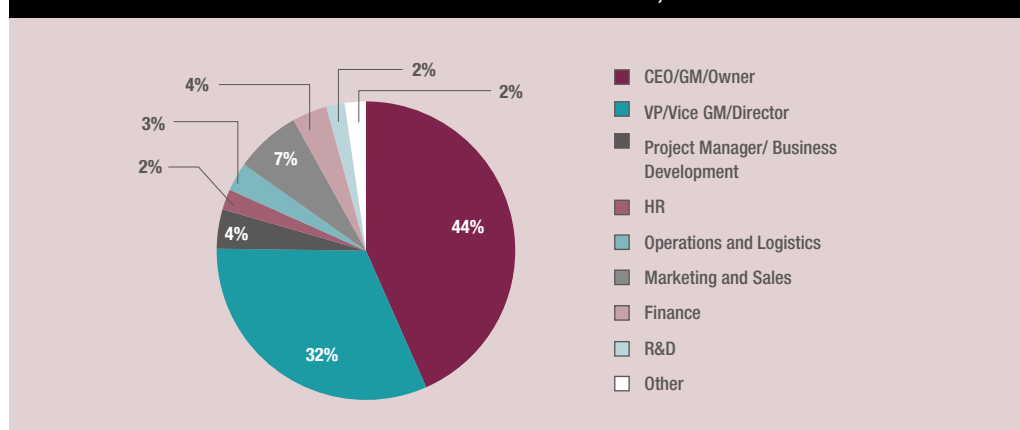
Finally, we acknowledge the financial support of CEIBS Research Fund, the support of the Alumni, MBA, EMBA and Exec Ed offices at CEIBS, and the many friends that helped us with their network. We are grateful to all of them.

Top management executives and also functional experts have given us a very valuable and rich perspective of the situation of their businesses in China in 2012 and their expectations for 2013 and the future.

The survey has been answered by 1,214 executives, 76% of which at the top levels of management: 539 of them are CEOs, General Managers or owners, and 388 are Vice-Presidents, Vice-General Managers or Directors. The other 24% is composed of executives working in different functional areas: Business Development and Project Management, HR, Finance, R&D, Operations and Logistics, Marketing and Sales.

Of the respondents, 81% are from the Chinese mainland, 3% from Taiwan, Hong Kong or Macao, and 16% from 28 different countries all over the world. The great majority of them (92%) have more than 10 years work experience, with an impressive 40% of them being seasoned executives with more than 20 years work experience. Only 17% of respondents were female.

**FIGURE 1 - WHAT IS YOUR POSITION IN THE COMPANY? N= 1,214**



# THE RESEARCH TEAM

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**Dr. Juan Antonio Fernandez** is a Professor of Management at China Europe International Business School (CEIBS) in Shanghai, China.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The 2013 Business in China Survey offers interesting insights from a broad cross-section of companies in China.

With 2012, the year of slowest economic growth for China since 1999, companies in China are adapting to the new business environment, while recognizing existing challenges.

Although at lower levels than previous years, business confidence remains positive, with a majority of firms still reporting profits and growth. Companies keep a positive outlook for 2013 and even more so for the next 5 years. This year's edition introduces two new performance indices Current Performance Index and Expected Performance Index, which help us better analyze trends. Foreign companies have tempered their initially higher optimism to a level more in-line with the new reality in China. As in earlier editions of this survey, a gap between foreign and Chinese firms is still observed in their stated level of optimism, but so is the trend to see this gap becoming narrower. Companies are looking at innovation, both in products and in management methods to increase their competitiveness. A majority of Chinese firms are focusing on improvement of quality and management systems, while in contrast foreign firms emphasize the reduction of their costs. Moreover, Chinese companies are increasing their presence abroad, while foreign firms continue to invest more in China. Overall, all companies are increasing investments in R&D and marketing in order to compete in the market.

In 2013, success in China will come from the ability of firms to address the challenges they face. In many regards, Chinese and foreign firms perceive the same difficulties: finding and retaining talent, addressing raising labor costs, growing competition and the slowdown of the Chinese economy.

Companies in our survey declare that their key to success in this environment is increasing quality of their products and services, through R&D and product innovation, and branding. A strong company culture with high quality management team is also considered a success factor. Firms are also working on HR management practices: developing a feeling of belonging to the company, offering a good career path to employees, paying above market, and establishing a system of rewards and recognition.

Nonetheless, the playing field is not leveled for domestic and foreign firms. Foreign firms continue to have specific issues related to understanding the Chinese the legal and regulatory environment, and to communicating the challenges of the Chinese market to their head office. Additionally, IP infringements are considered a key challenge by more foreign firms than domestic firms.

Domestic firms also have specific issues, like corporate governance and financing difficulties. Even though access to bank loans is relatively easy for larger firms, most companies in our sample still rely mainly on self- financing, with capital markets less frequently available.

Finally, our survey also provides valuable insights regarding firm's perception of their competitors, with interesting differences between Chinese and foreign firms. Domestic firms see their competitors as stronger when it comes to branding, marketing & sales capability, and product superiority. This contrasts with cost advantages, lower prices and government relationships and other guanxi, which are the strengths that foreign firms see primarily in their competitors in China. Both foreign and Chinese firms think they are facing strongest competition from Chinese private firms, with foreign firms also measuring themselves strongly against each others.





## SECTION 1

# DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPANIES PARTICIPATING

This section details the following information about the companies that have participated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the CEIBS Business in China Survey

- Type of ownership (Chinese or foreign), business sector and type of activity
- Location of Global Headquarters
- Location of China Headquarters
- Number of employees in China and globally
- Revenue level in China
- Legal form in China
- Years of operation

The purpose of the section is to give a general overview of the type of companies that took part in the survey. This not only helps clarify the scope of the survey, but also provides more background in interpreting survey results.

Our sample of businesses included 768 (63%) Chinese-owned companies (i.e. with more than 50% Chinese ownership) and 446 (37%) foreign-owned companies (i.e. with more than 50% foreign ownership).

The sample is well balanced in terms of business activity with 596 companies having their main activity in manufacturing and 618 in services. 74% of manufacturing companies operate in industrial products with the rest in consumer products. Our sample of service companies is split between professional (38%), consumer (36%) and industrial services (26%).

In terms of market position, we surveyed a sample of firms which operate mostly in the mid and high ends of the market, with almost half of them considering themselves as market leaders in their business. According to survey answers<sup>1</sup>, 452 firms (45%) in our sample operate mainly in the premium segment, another 512 (50%) in the middle segment and only 49 (5%) in the low-end of the market. Moreover, 445 companies (44%) identify themselves as market leaders for their main business line.

The location of their **Global headquarters** is shown in the following map:



The **China headquarters** of both Chinese-owned and foreign-owned companies are located on the main coastal economic centers for 85% of the total sample (Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, Jiangsu and Zhejiang). However, we do observe a higher concentration on these areas for foreign companies (93% of foreign firms vs. 81% of Chinese firms).

In 2012, participating companies have generated collective revenue of more than 500 billion RMB and were employing more than 4 million people in China alone.

Of participating companies, 42% of the Chinese-owned firms and 36% of the foreign-owned firms have more than 900 million RMB in revenue in 2012 in China. 19% and 20% of companies respectively have 300 to 900 million RMB in revenue<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> N= 1,013

<sup>2</sup> According to China official definition companies with more than 300 million RMB are considered large.

FIGURE 3 - WHAT IS YOUR COMPANY TOTAL CHINA FORECASTED REVENUES IN 2012?

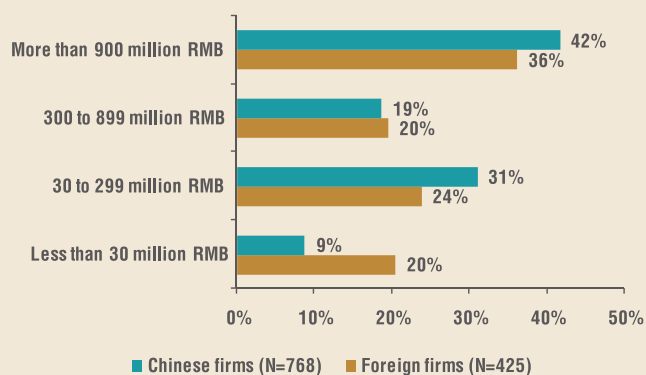


FIGURE 4 - HOW MANY EMPLOYEES DOES YOUR COMPANY HAVE IN CHINA?

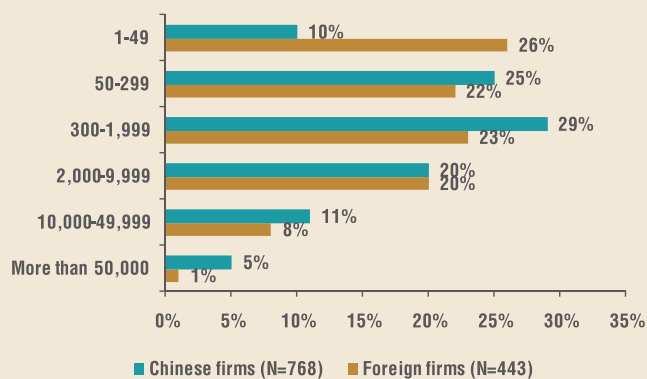
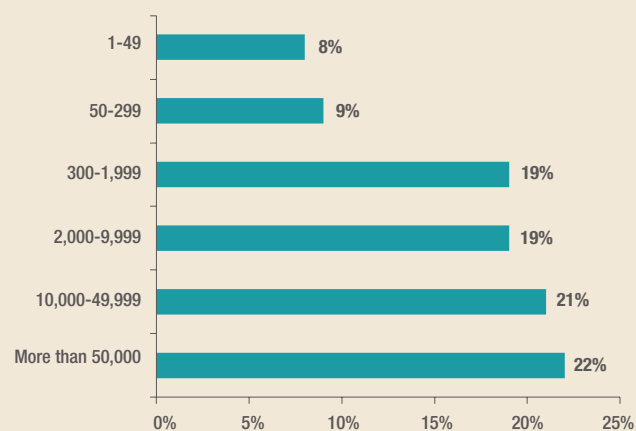


FIGURE 5 -- FOREIGN FIRMS - HOW MANY EMPLOYEES DOES YOUR COMPANY HAVE GLOBALLY? N=443

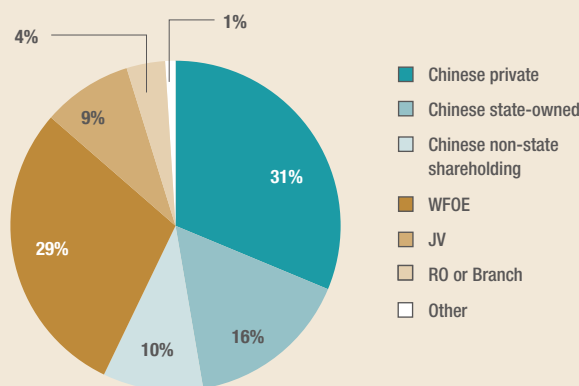


Most of the foreign companies in our sample belong to the medium and large categories (38% with 300-9,999 employees, 43% with >10,000) in their global operations. Their Chinese operations fall mostly within the small and medium categories (48% with < 300 employees, 44% with 300-9,999)<sup>3</sup>

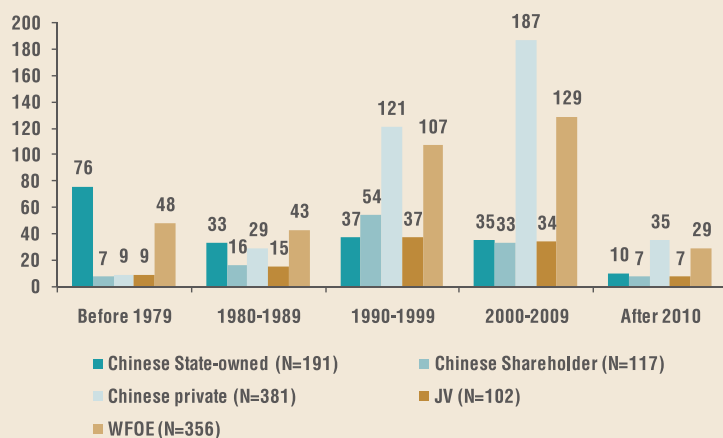
<sup>3</sup> In our survey, companies are classified in terms of number of employees as Small (<300 employees), Medium (300-10,000) and Large (>10,000)

31% of surveyed companies are Chinese privately owned, 16% are state-owned or state-holding enterprises<sup>4</sup>, and 10% are Chinese non-state shareholding companies. Joint Ventures (JV) constitute 9% of the sample, with different levels of Chinese and foreign ownership. Most of the foreign-owned companies are Wholly Foreign Owned Enterprises (WFOE), with Representative Offices (RO) and Branches of foreign companies making up the rest.

**FIGURE 6 - WHAT IS THE LEGAL STATUS IN CHINA OF THE COMPANY YOUR WORK FOR? N=1,210**



**FIGURE 7 - WHEN WAS YOUR COMPANY ESTABLISHED IN CHINA?**



The effects of the economic reforms initiated by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1980s and early 1990s are visible in our survey (Figure 7). These reforms involved the privatization of much state-owned industry, which triggered a remarkable growth of the private sector.

<sup>4</sup> "Chinese state-owned" refers to all companies having ownership granting control to the State – includes state-holdings



## SECTION 2

# BUSINESS INDICES

Business Performance Indices include:

- Current Performance Index (CPI)
- Expected Performance Index (EPI)

This year the survey introduces 2 directional indices to measure variation both in current and expected performance of the surveyed companies. Each index (ranging from 0 to 100) is constructed similarly to the well-known Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI): an index reading of 50 means that performance is unchanged, a number over 50 indicates an improvement while anything below 50 suggests a decline. The further away from 50 the index is, the stronger the change over the period.

The indices are based on multiple choice questions with 5 possible answers<sup>5</sup>.

Business Confidence Indices include:

- Business Confidence Index, for next year
- Business Confidence Index, for the next 5 years

The Business Confidence Index is a measure of the optimism stated by executives in our sample with respect to the evolution of their businesses for the next year (2013) and the next 5 years (2013 to 2018).

The reading ranges from 0 to 10 (0 = Absolutely Not Confident, 3 = Not Confident, 5 = Neutral, 7 = Confident, 10 = Extremely Confident). The executives in our survey are asked to state their confidence level in the short term (next year) and in the medium term (next 5 years)

These 2 indices have been part of the CEIBS Business in China Survey since its inception 3 years ago, which allows us to start recognizing emerging trends as well as current values.

$$^5 \text{ INDEX} = (P1 \cdot 1) + (P2 \cdot 0.75) + (P3 \cdot 0.5) + (P4 \cdot 0.25) + (P5 \cdot 0)$$

*P1 = Percentage number of answers that reported a substantial improvement.*

*P2 = Percentage number of answers that reported an improvement.*

*P3 = Percentage number of answers that reported no change.*

*P4 = Percentage number of answers that reported a deterioration.*

*P5 = Percentage number of answers that reported a substantial deterioration.*



## 2.1. CURRENT PERFORMANCE INDEX - CPI

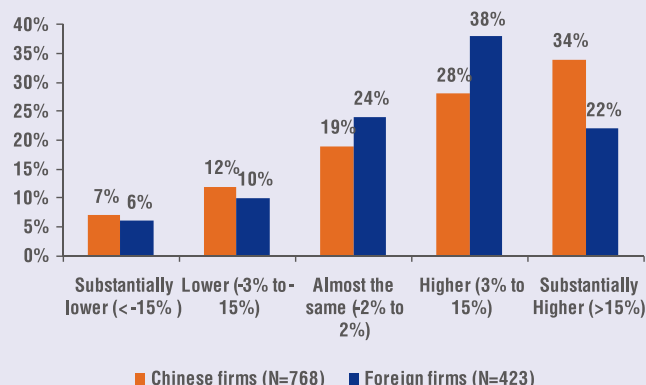
### Large majority reports revenue growth but with reduced margins

The Current Performance Index is 63 for Chinese companies and 61 for foreign companies, reflecting an improvement for both types of firms in their 2012 business results when compared to 2011, with slightly better results for the Chinese owned companies in our sample. Performance is based on both revenue and profit evolution.

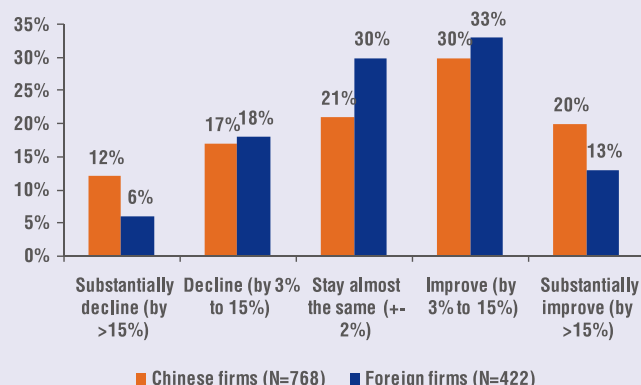
The CPI Index is calculated as a composite of 2 survey indices: Revenue and Profit Level. Each variable is attributed the same weighting.

*Revenues:* More than half the companies surveyed stated positive revenue growth for 2012 (62%

**FIGURE 8 - HOW DOES YOUR COMPANY'S EXPECTED REVENUE IN CHINA IN 2012 COMPARE TO 2011 RESULTS?**



**FIGURE 9 - HOW DO YOU EXPECT YOUR COMPANY'S PROFIT LEVEL IN CHINA TO DEVELOP IN 2012 COMPARED TO 2011?**

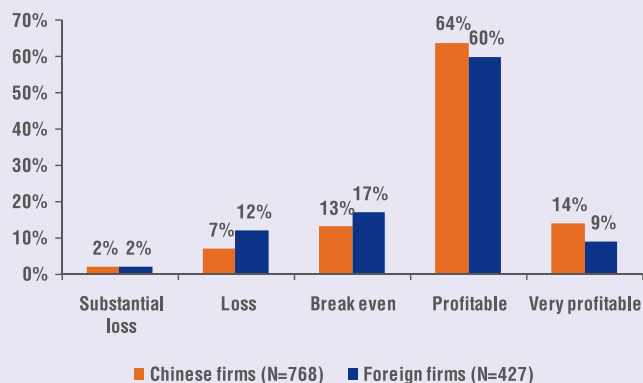


of companies, both Chinese and foreigners) and 20% stated almost the same as last year. This shows that businesses in China are still holding well despite global instability. However the data compares negatively with last year where 75% of companies reported positive growth and 15% stable level of revenues.

Amongst businesses experiencing slow down, 18% stated lower revenues compared with 10% last year (i.e. almost twice as many companies saw decreasing revenues vs. previous year)

*Profit:* companies were still profitable for the most part but profit margins were thinner overall, with a sharp increase in those losing money amongst foreign-owned businesses.

Overall, 75% of the companies in the sample stated to be profitable or very profitable in 2012, while 11% incurred in losses. The situation was worse for foreign owned companies where 14% lost money up from 10% last year. 9% of Chinese companies surveyed reported losses (similar level to 10% last year).

**FIGURE 10 - HOW PROFITABLE DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR CHINA OPERATION IN 2012?**

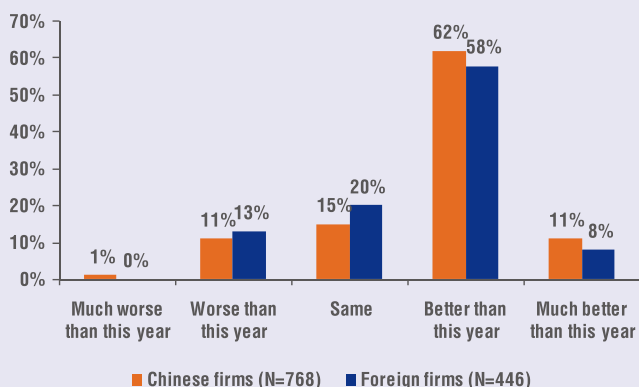
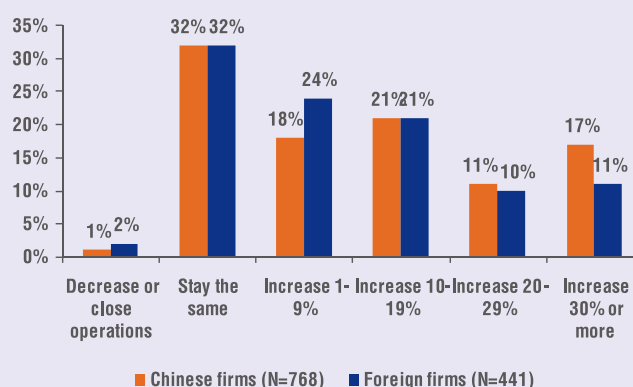
## 2.2. EXPECTED PERFORMANCE INDEX - EPI

### Optimistic outlook for 2013

A majority of the Companies surveyed are optimistic for 2013. The Expected Performance Index amounted to 68 for Chinese companies vs. 65 for foreign companies, reflecting an expected 2013 performance better than 2012 for both types of companies. 71% of executives expect results in 2013 to be better or much better than in 2012, and 17% see stability in their results. Chinese firms seem slightly more optimistic than foreign ones.

The EPI Index is calculated based on one multiple choice question describing future business evolution (Figure 11).

This optimism is reflected in planned investments in China that are up from 2012 for 76% of the

**FIGURE 11 - HOW DO YOU EXPECT YOUR COMPANY'S BUSINESS TO PERFORM NEXT YEAR (2013) COMPARED TO THIS YEAR (2012)?****FIGURE 12 - WHAT INVESTMENTS DO YOU PLAN FOR 2013 IN CHINA?**

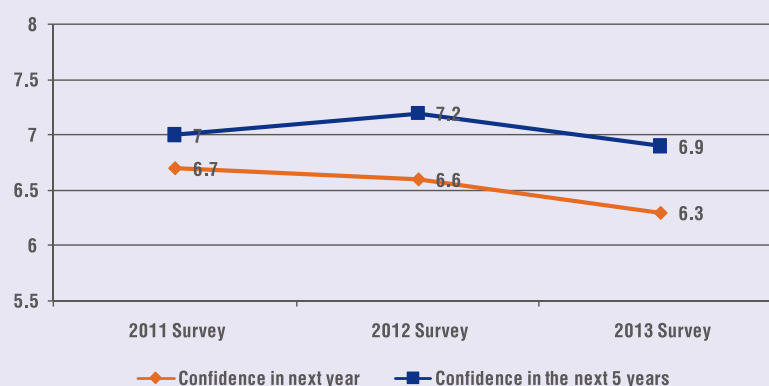
total sample surveyed and with only 2% of respondents anticipating decreases in investments. Moreover, amongst those companies having R&D in China, 98% will either increase or maintain current R&D investments.

## 2.3. BUSINESS CONFIDENCE INDICES - BCI

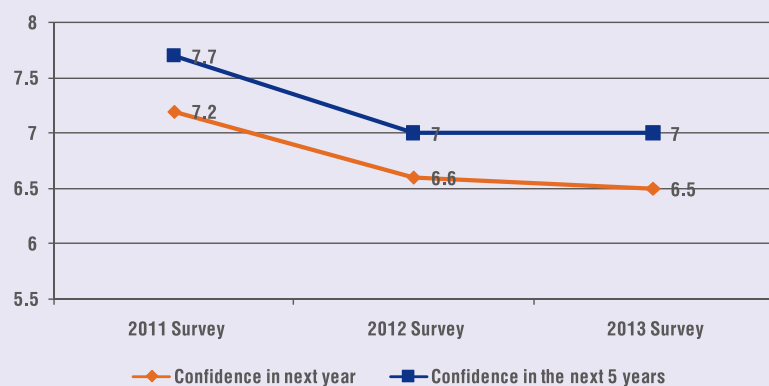
### Optimistic view for the next year and the next 5 years

In the 2013 issue of the CEIBS Business in China Survey we observe similar levels of business confidence within Chinese and foreign firms as both claim to be “close to confident” that their operations in China will be successful in the next year and in the next 5 years.

**FIGURE 13 – CHINESE FIRMS - HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU THAT YOUR OPERATIONS IN CHINA WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE NEXT YEAR AND IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS? N=767**



**FIGURE 14 –FOREIGN FIRMS - HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU THAT YOUR OPERATIONS IN CHINA WILL BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE NEXT YEAR AND IN THE NEXT 5 YEARS? N=438**



There are 3 important trends emerging:

1. Executives working for Chinese firms seem to be slightly more cautious than their counterparts in foreign firms when stating their confidence in business success, both for short and medium term.

This trend contrasts with both Current Performance Index and Expected Performance Index where Chinese companies reflect higher values than foreign ones. These indices are based on quantitative responses regarding evolution of sales and profits.

Possible explanations could be more aggressive targets in Chinese companies after being used to years of double-digit growth, or cultural differences affecting confidence levels amongst different nationalities (96% of the executives working for Chinese owned firms are Chinese nationals compared to only 55% in foreign-owned companies)

2. The gap in business confidence between foreign-owned firms and Chinese-owned firms appears to have narrowed in the 3 years covered by this survey: 2010, 2011 and 2012. This trend applies both to confidence in the next year and in the next 5 years.

In 2010, for the first issue of this survey, China was still growing strong under the effect of the 2008-2009 Chinese economic stimulus plan that was scheduled to finish by end of 2010<sup>6</sup>. The Chinese market was very attractive to foreign firms when compared to their home economies and they probably remained overly optimistic by 2010. On the other hand, Chinese firms were more aware of the real situation of the Chinese economy and were already forecasting lower growth. By the 3rd edition of this survey, foreign firms have adjusted to the more difficult reality of the Chinese economy and therefore, levels of confidence are getting closer.

3. Both Chinese and foreign firms claim more confidence in their success in the medium term than in the immediate future. This trend was observed in previous editions of this survey as well.

This may mean that executives in our sample trust the soundness of the Chinese economy despite current adjustments, and believe they can solve current challenges and continue being successful in China in the coming years.

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<sup>6</sup> RMB 4 trillion stimulus package issued by the Chinese Government to minimize the impact of the global financial crisis



## SECTION 3

# CHALLENGES AND SUCCESS FACTORS

This section details the difficulties encountered in China by the firms in our sample and the keys to their success:

- External Challenges
- Managerial Challenges
- Success factors

The purpose of this section is to identify the main challenges faced in China by the companies surveyed, explore the relevant differences in the difficulties faced by Chinese companies compared to foreign companies, and learn how the companies in our survey deal with these challenges.

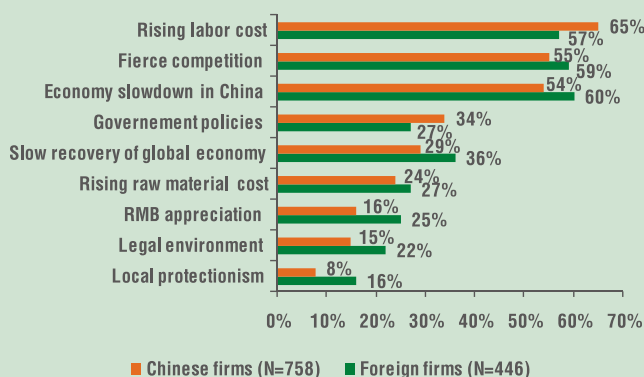
### 3.1. External challenges:

*Consolidated in 3 main areas*

The main external challenges for companies doing business in China are “Rising labor costs”, “Fierce competition”, and “Economy slowdown in China”. A very distant number four is “Government Policies” for Chinese-owned companies and “Slow recovery of global economy” for foreign-owned companies.

These concerns were also present in previous year surveys. One notable difference with the 2012 survey is that Chinese companies had cited Government Policies as one of their top 3 worries while this time it has significantly dropped to a much lower 4th position.

**FIGURE 15 - WHAT ARE THE GREATEST EXTERNAL CHALLENGES FACING YOUR COMPANY IN CHINA?**



The survey catches the transition of the Chinese economy well. The three areas that consolidate executive concerns – rising labor cost, stronger competition and slowing China economy – reflect the change that China is undertaking, going from a low-income country with an economy driven by cheap labor to a middle-income country.

There are a few interesting differences in the weight of some factors by Chinese and foreign firms:

- “Rising labor cost”, although it is the number 1 concern for both groups, it is stated as a concern by Chinese firms more than it is by foreign firms (65% of respondents vs. 57% respectively). This is consistent with the fact that the Chinese companies in our sample are in general larger in number of employees in China than the foreign ones (Chinese-owned firm in our sample average >4,000 employees vs. >2,000 for foreign firms).

- “Local protectionism” worries 16% of the foreign firms in our sample while only 8% of the Chinese firms. This may be due to the relative difficulty for foreign firms to navigate the differences existing in China at provincial levels, and the fact that they are currently more concentrated around the coastal areas and still need to learn how to penetrate the country.

- Chinese firms in our survey worry about “Government policies” more often than foreign ones (34% of the Chinese firms vs. only 27% of foreign).

### 3.2. MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES:

*Finding and retaining talent a top concern for both Chinese-owned and foreign-owned firms; Organization derived issues are a distant 2<sup>nd</sup>*

Most cited internal management challenge faced by companies operating in China is “Finding and retaining talent” (70% of respondents both in Chinese and in foreign companies). This is consistent with previous surveys.

Organization derived problems hold the second position, however, these issues translate very differently for Chinese and foreign owned companies:

49% of the executives working for Chinese firms worry about “Corporate governance”, which is only an issue for 24% of those working in foreign firms. Foreign companies tend to have these systems already in place, while many Chinese firms have only been putting them in place recently.

On the other hand, for executives working for foreign-owned companies, “Support from Head Office” is the 2nd more frequently mentioned managerial challenge (27% of the sample), proving that distance matters.

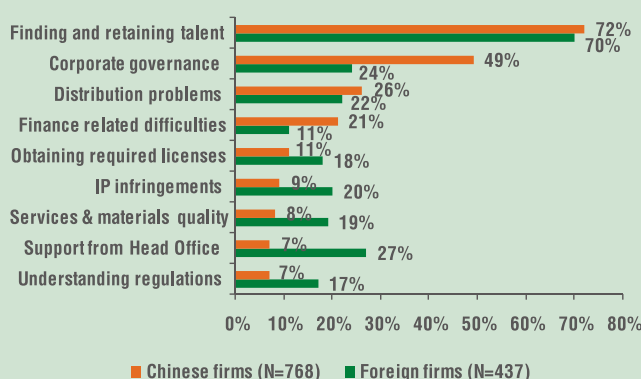
“Distribution problems” is the next difficulty in the list as reaching target clients and consumers in different areas of China proves to be a challenge for 26% of Chinese firms and 22% of foreign firms in our sample.

“IP infringements” concern more foreign companies (20% vs. 9%). This is consistent with the fact that foreign companies in our sample encounter IP infringements more frequently than their Chinese counterparts (see Section 4.2.2). Foreign companies in China tend to invest more in design and innovation and therefore could be more vulnerable to IP infringements.

“Services and materials quality” worries 19% of foreign companies in our sample vs. only 8% of Chinese firms. This is consistent with the fact that foreign companies in China are often positioned in the higher end of the market and the quality of the end product depends on quality of the input. Specifically for our survey sample, 65% of the foreign-owned companies operate in the premium segment of the market versus 34% for the Chinese-owned ones.

“Finance related difficulties” is a worry for 21% of the Chinese firms vs. 11% of the foreign ones (see Section 5.2 for more details on these issues).

**FIGURE 16 - WHAT ARE THE GREATEST MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES FACING YOUR COMPANY IN CHINA?**



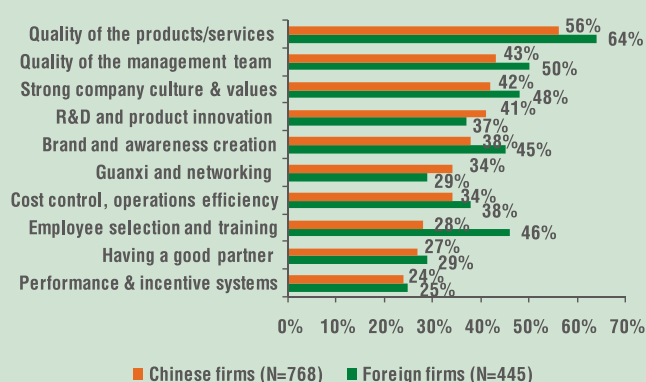
### 3.3. SUCCESS FACTORS:

*Product and service quality should come first*

Both executives from Chinese and foreign-owned companies in our sample believe that success in China is linked to product and service superiority, and to soft factors such as quality of the management team and company culture & values.

Chinese companies also emphasize other product related attributes: “R&D and product innovation” and “Brand and awareness creation”, while foreign companies emphasize “Brand and awareness creation” as well as proper “Employee selection and training”.

**FIGURE 17 - WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS FOR YOUR COMPANY'S SUCCESS IN CHINA?**



It is interesting to note that while “Finding and retaining talent” has been selected as the number one managerial challenge for both Chinese-owned and foreign-owned firms (by 72% of Chinese firms and 70% of foreign firms), 46% of foreign-owned firms consider “Employee selection and training” to be a success factor versus only 28% of the Chinese firms.

“Brand and awareness creation” also stands out as an strategy considered more often considered key to success by foreign-owned companies than by Chinese-owned companies (45% of foreign firms vs. 38% of Chinese-owned firms)





## SECTION 4

# FOCUS BY TOPIC

This section gives an overview of the following topics:

- **Market Environment**  
This chapter covers competition and regulatory environment and Government related issues affecting companies operating in China.
- **Innovation, R&D and Intellectual property**  
This chapter covers how companies in our survey address innovation in China. It provides an overview of the types of innovations more frequently introduced, and gives the perspective from our sample of executives on IPR protection in China.
- **China/Global Focus**  
This chapter gives an in-depth commentary on the weight that China has in the global operations of the foreign-owned firms in our sample, and how this weight is evolving versus previous years. Likewise, we analyze the importance of international expansion to the Chinese-owned companies in our sample.
- **Joint Ventures**  
This chapter provides details about the Joint Ventures in our sample.

## 4.1. MARKET ENVIRONMENT

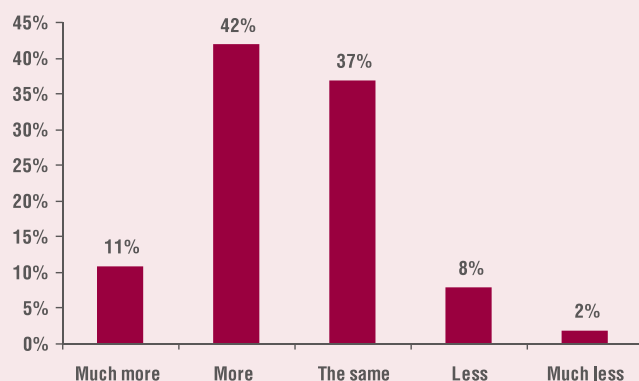
### 4.1.1. Regulatory Environment and China Government

*Policies and regulations rated “moderate” to “no effect” for most industries, yet, government relations are important. According to our survey, corruption is recognized as an existing and unsolved issue. However, respondents rate it as a lesser problem when asked about the level of corruption in their own industry.*

For most of the companies in our sample, government policies and regulations have a moderate to no effect on their industry (40% moderate, 32% inexistent). However, 19% of surveyed companies operate in industries that are heavily regulated and where government regulations pose severe constraints to their activities in China. We observe similar results for Chinese owned and foreign owned firms.

On the other hand, 90% of the interviewed executives view the relationship with the Chinese authorities as important or very important to their businesses, regardless of whether they work for a Chinese or foreign firm. Moreover, 53% of the foreign-owned firms declare to allocate more or much more resources to building these relationships than in their home markets.

**FIGURE 18- FOREIGN FIRMS - HOW MUCH RESOURCES DO YOU ALLOCATE TO BUILD OR KEEP GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHINESE AUTHORITIES WHEN COMPARING TO YOUR HOME COUNTRY? N=436**



The level of satisfaction with the services provided by the Chinese government and its related agencies is low. They are judged insufficient by almost half of the Chinese companies in our sample, who declare to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, with only 10% of respondents satisfied.

#### **Main concerns regarding the Chinese government and the legal environment:**

*Unclear and changing regulations, policy adjustment and corruption*

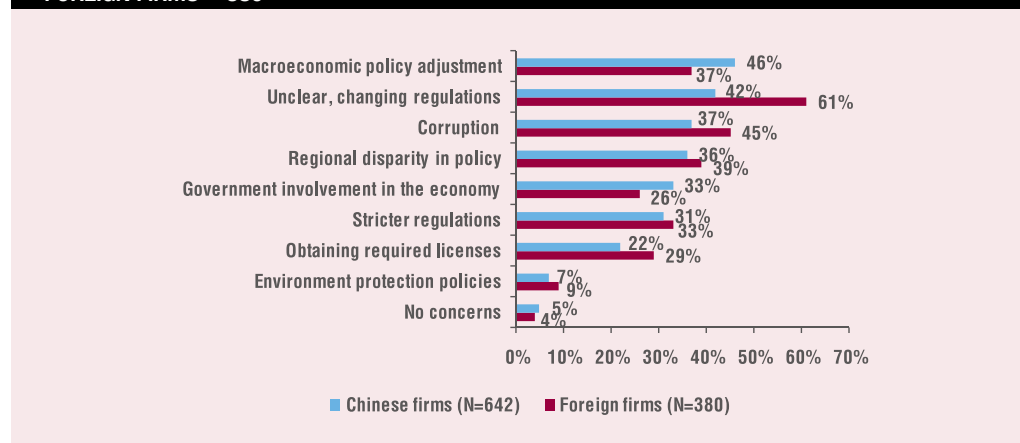
Perception between Chinese and foreign firms vary slightly.

Foreign firms are usually less familiar with the China regulatory and legal system triggering “Unclear, changing regulation” to be the main source of worry for them (61% of foreign respondents) “Corruption” comes second (45% of respondents).

For Chinese firms, the number one concern comes from “Macroeconomic policy adjustment”: 46% of them declare it to be a main concern vs. 37% of foreign firms (which are probably looking at it from a global context, within which China policy adjustment may be seen as comparatively softer than in Europe or the US). “Unclear and changing regulations” is the second most mentioned concern for Chinese firms (42%) proving how this is a troublesome matter in China even for domestic firms.

Regional disparity of central government policy implementation is also an important concern as it hinders business roll-out into greater China for both Chinese and foreign-owned firms (36% and 39% of them respectively).

**FIGURE 19 - WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN CONCERNS REGARDING THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND THE LEGAL ENVIRONMENT? MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE. N FOR CHINESE FIRMS = 640, N FOR FOREIGN FIRMS = 380**

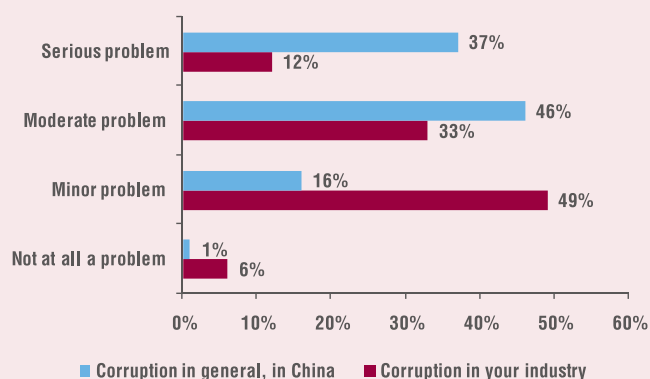


#### **Corruption in China:**

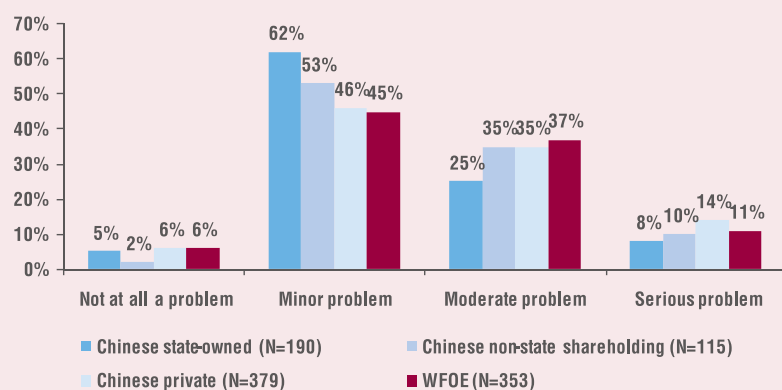
*Own industry versus others. State-owned companies versus the private sector.*

Regarding corruption, when asked specifically about the issue, a large majority (83% of respondents) view corruption in China to be a problem (moderate to serious). However, when asked about corruption in their industry, the number respondents seeing it as a problem drops by almost half. This phenomenon of corruption in China being perceived as less acute when asked about own industry is observed with respondents from both Chinese-owned and foreign-owned firms, and in previous editions of this survey as well. Most executives believe corruption in their industry has remained unchanged in 2012 versus previous years.

**FIGURE 20 - IN YOUR VIEW, HOW SERIOUS IS CORRUPTION IN CHINA, IN GENERAL, AND IN YOUR INDUSTRY? N=1,202**



**FIGURE 21 - IN YOUR VIEW, HOW SERIOUS IS CORRUPTION IN YOUR INDUSTRY?**



With respect to corruption, an interesting aspect is that State-owned companies appear to perceive corruption as less problematic than those in the private sector. This same trend is observed both when asked about corruption in China in general and corruption in own industry.

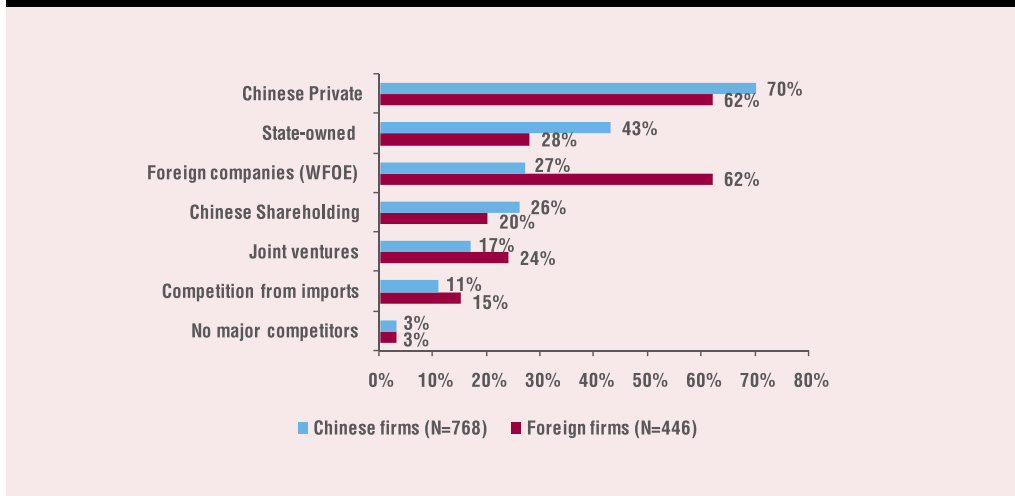
#### 4.1.2. Competitive Environment and Market Advantages

*Intensely competitive environment with Chinese private enterprises seen as the major competitive threat. Chinese firms' see advantages of their competitors in branding and marketing capabilities while foreign firms consider those advantages to reside in lower costs and guanxi.*

Chinese-owned and foreign-owned companies had no significant differences in their views regarding competitive intensity. 86% of companies (up from 80% last year) consider they are facing intense or very intense competition in China, with only 2% considering competition as not intense.

A majority of respondents cited their main competitors to be Chinese private enterprises. This is particularly marked amongst Chinese-owned respondents (70%), who cite State-owned enterprises as a distant second (43%). In contrast, foreign companies measure themselves also amongst each other, citing WFOE at par (62%) with Chinese private enterprises as their major type of competitors.

**FIGURE 22 - WHO ARE YOUR MAIN COMPETITORS IN CHINA? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**

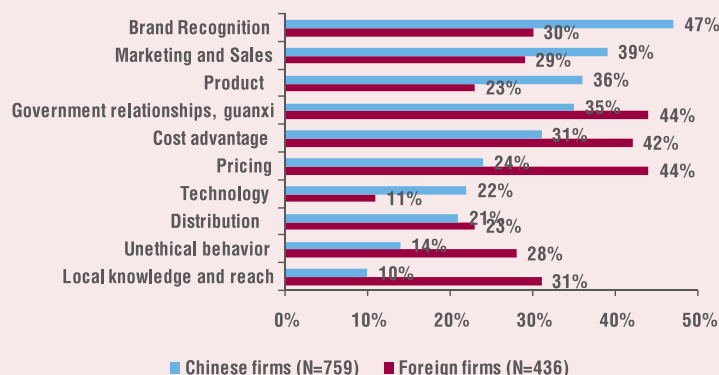


There are very interesting differences in the perceptions of the competitive advantages of other players between Chinese-owned firms and foreign-owned firms:

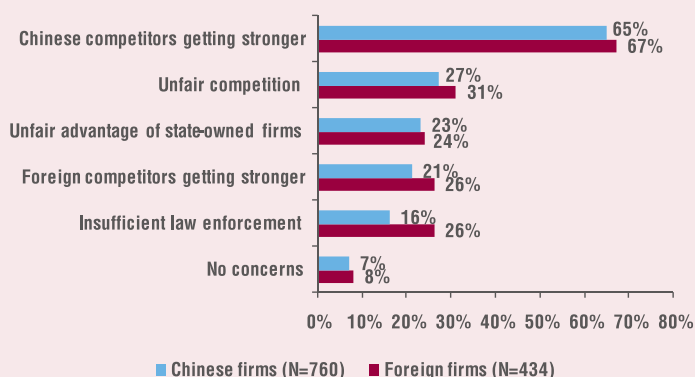
The top 3 strengths of competitors cited by Chinese firms relate to their product or service and the way they are marketed: “Brand recognition” (47%), “Marketing and Sales” (39%) and “Product” (36%).

In contrast, foreign-owned firms consider that their main weaknesses vis-à-vis their competitors lay in competitors’ superiority in “Price” (44%), “Relationships with Government and other guanxi” (44%) and “Cost advantages” (42%)

“Unethical behavior” is seen as competitive strength of the competitors by 28% of foreign-firms in the sample vs. only 14% of the Chinese ones. Although it is gradually changing as environmental sustainability becomes more important in China, foreign companies sometimes claim that they apply stricter environmental control policies in their production sites, thus increasing the cost of their finished products.

**FIGURE 23 - WHAT ARE THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES OF YOUR MAIN COMPETITORS IN CHINA? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**

“Chinese competitors getting stronger” is the main source of worry mentioned by as much as two thirds of our pool. Fairness issues, like “Unfair competition” and “Unfair advantage of state-owned firms” follow, but each issue is mentioned by less than one third of companies. It is interesting to note as well that 26% of surveyed foreign companies believe that there is insufficient law enforcement in the competition arena, while only 16% of Chinese firms are worried about it.

**FIGURE 24 - WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN CONCERNS REGARDING COMPETITION? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**

Insufficient law enforcement is more worrisome for companies in the premium segment (25%) than in the other segments (13%). Additionally, foreign companies are perceived as comparatively stronger in the premium sector (48%) than in the medium and low-end segments (33% and 27% respectively).

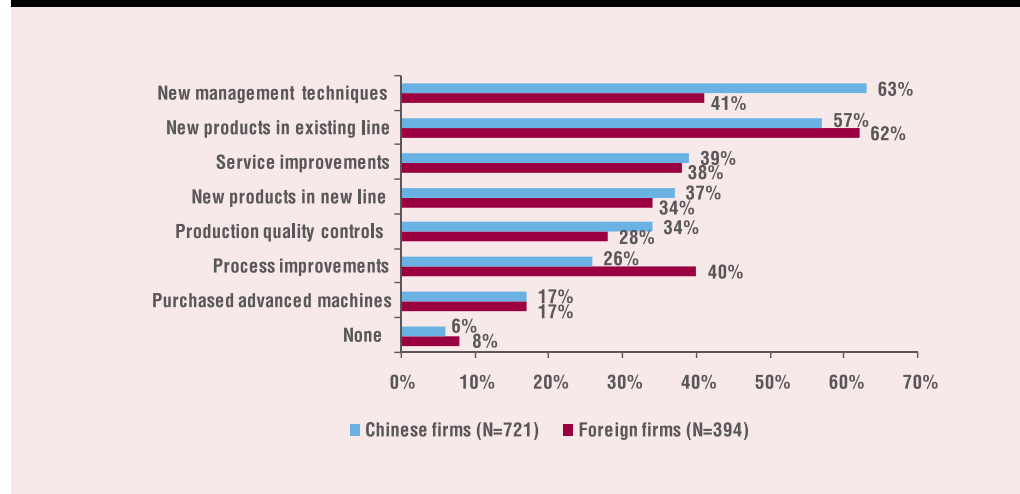
## 4.2. INNOVATION, R&D AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN CHINA

Surveyed companies introduced innovations not only at product and service level but also in new forms of management. In spite of varying levels of R&D spending, a large majority of respondents intended to increase their R&D spend in the next three years. Infringement of intellectual property rights is reported damaging to both foreign and Chinese firms, even if it is seen as infrequent.

### 4.2.1. China Innovation and R&D in 2012

Large numbers and types of innovations were introduced by both Chinese and foreign-owned companies in 2012. Most frequently mentioned are innovations in management techniques and introduction of new products or services in existing lines. Service improvements and introduction of new lines of products and services are also mentioned as an important source of innovation in 2012. Companies, especially foreign-owned ones, have also been working in process improvements.

**FIGURE 25 - WHAT TYPES OF INNOVATIONS HAVE YOU INTRODUCED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF 2012? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**



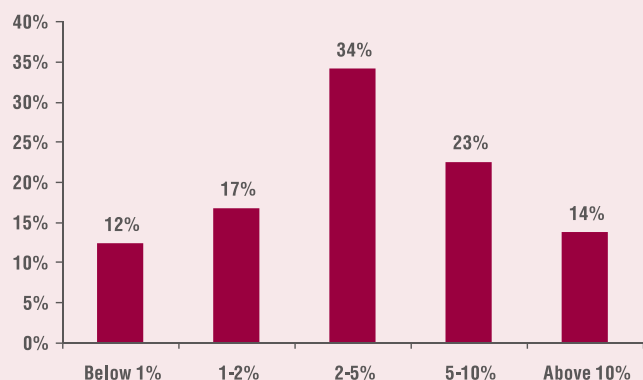
More than 60% of the total pool of companies has innovated in their products or services in 2012. This is in line with the fact that 66% of the firms surveyed (75% of Chinese-owned firms and 52% of foreign-owned firms) have R&D activities in China.

We notice that 63% of Chinese-owned firms in our sample are focusing on implementing “New management techniques” (vs. 41% of foreign firms), which is in line with the overall effort that Chinese companies all over the country are making to develop their managerial systems and catch up with their international competitors in this respect. Likewise, the work that Chinese firms are doing upgrading their product quality is reflected in this survey as 34% of Chinese firms have innovated in “Production quality controls” (vs. 28% of foreign firms).

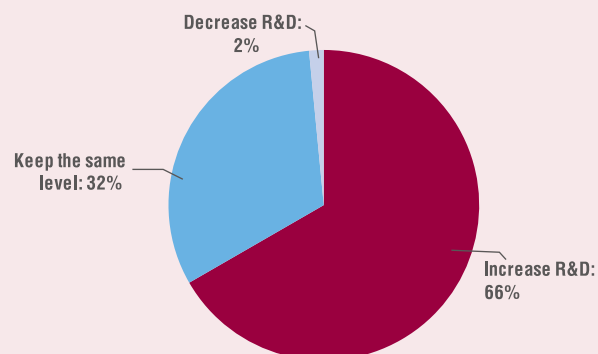
In contrast, 40% of foreign-owned companies in our sample have innovated in “Process improvements” versus 26% of the Chinese-owned ones. This reflects the importance of efficiency and cost control for foreign firms given the competitive environment and, according to survey results, the fact that they consider a strength of their competitors to have lower costs and prices.

The investment in R&D in 2012 varied largely with roughly one third of companies investing less than 2% of revenues, another third spending between 2 and 5 %. However, 66% of respondents intend to increase and expand their R&D investments in China the next 3 years.

**FIGURE 26 - WHAT IS YOUR ANNUAL EXPENDITURE ON R&D AS % OF REVENUE? N=658**



**FIGURE 27 - WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE NEXT 3 YEARS? N=658**

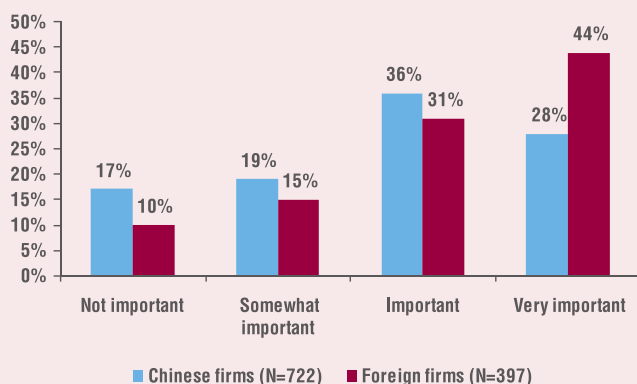


#### 4.2.2. Intellectual Property in 2012:

*IP infringements damaging to business while no perceived improvement versus last three years*

Intellectual Property is important for all businesses in China and this is true for most companies (only 14% of the total sample of firms qualify it as not important). However, a larger proportion of foreign-owned companies (44%) rate this issue as very important (vs. 28% of their Chinese counterparts).

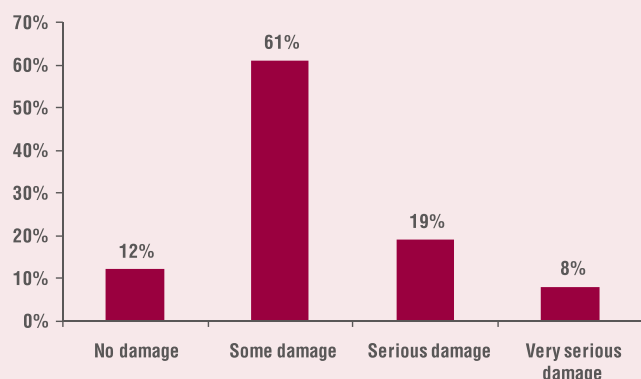
**FIGURE 28 - HOW IMPORTANT IS IP (INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY) TO YOUR BUSINESS IN CHINA?**



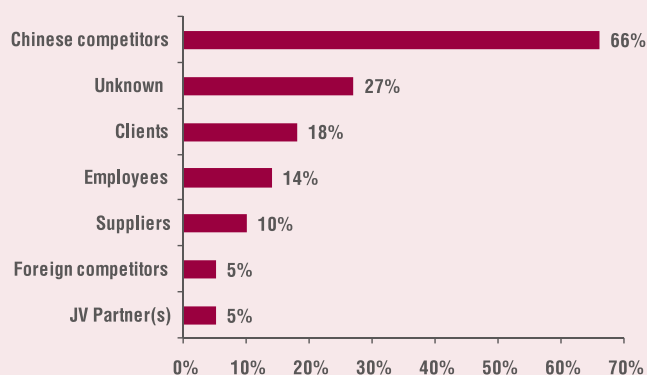


Despite the fact that two thirds of companies in our survey pool have R&D in China, only half of them have obtained a patent in China in the last 2 years. The most commonly owned types of IP in China are patents and trademarks, followed by industrial design rights and copyrights.

**FIGURE 29 - WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF THE DAMAGE CAUSED BY IP INFRINGEMENT IN CHINA IN YOUR BUSINESS? N=940**



**FIGURE 30 - WHO HAVE BEEN THE PERPETRATORS OF THE IP INFRINGEMENTS? N=167**



IPR infringement is still an issue in China. The vast majority of the firms in our sample consider IP infringement to be damaging their business: 61% claim some damage and 27% claim serious or very serious damage. On the other hand, it doesn't seem to be happening very frequently (surveyed firms cite "sometimes" and "rarely" in most cases). Both groups of firms agree on this point.

IPR infringement seems to be more frequently encountered by foreign firms (most answers are "sometimes" vs. "rarely" and "sometimes" for Chinese firms).

Moreover, the opinion of the firms in our survey is that there has been little or no improvement in the last 3 years regarding IPR infringements. For most firms (71%) there has been no variation in the amount of infringements in their business for the last 3 years while 35% believe that it has gotten worse.

IP infringement perpetrators are Chinese competitors for two thirds of the executives surveyed (functional experts working in marketing, sales or R&D). 27% answered that perpetrators are often unknown, followed by clients, employees and suppliers.

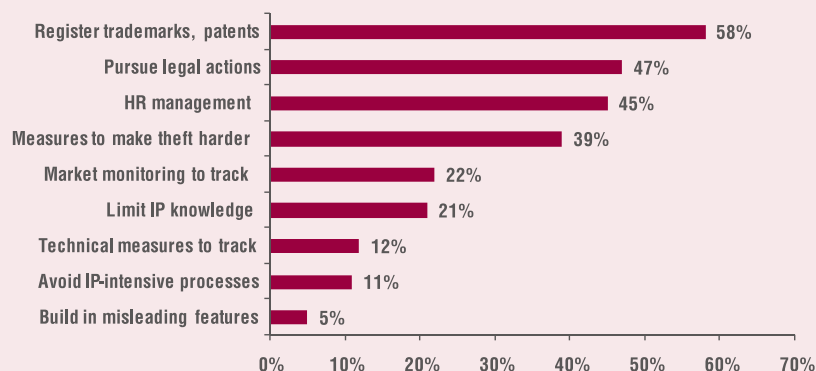
Although the above is true for both Chinese-owned and foreign-owned firms, we do observe some differences: Clients are reported to be IP infringers for 14% of the foreign-owned firms while only for 8% of the Chinese-owned firms, while JV Partners are considered infringers for 6% of the Chinese firms and only 2% of the foreign ones.

According to the Chinese firms in our sample, market release of copies or very similar products by competitors comes very quickly (4 to 6 months), this contrasts with responses from foreign firms (more than 12 months).

The measure most favored by executives to protect their IP in China is trademark registration or patent filing in China (58% of answers). Seeking legal actions against infringers comes second (47%). A third measure to fight IP infringement is HR management (45% of the surveyed executives), such as IP specific clauses in employment contracts and company regulations, screening job applicants for honesty and IPR training.

Another popular course of action (39% of answers) is to take measures to make the theft of commercial secrets harder and therefore reduce infringement.

**FIGURE 31 - WHICH ARE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEASURES YOU USE TO PROTECT YOUR IP IN CHINA? N=935**

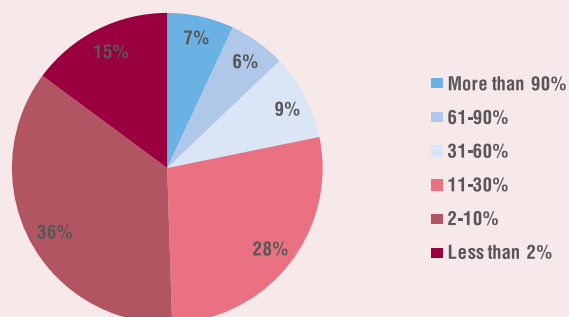


## 4.3. CHINA / GLOBAL FOCUS

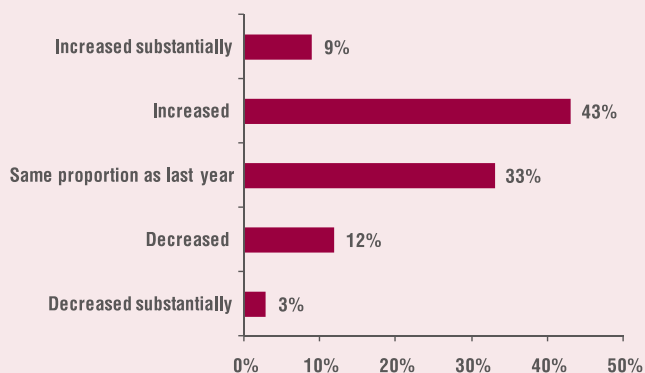
### 4.3.1. China focus for foreign owned firms

In comparison to previous years, the attitude of foreign firms towards China, as well as their commitment to doing business in the region has been reinforced, according to survey answers. Overall, relative size of China compared to global business is expected to increase. Accordingly investment is increasing. Spending levels are growing in Marketing and there has been a steep increase in R&D activities in China vs. previous years.

**FIGURE 32 – WHAT % OF YOUR COMPANY'S 2012 GLOBAL REVENUE WILL BE GENERATED IN CHINA? N=436**



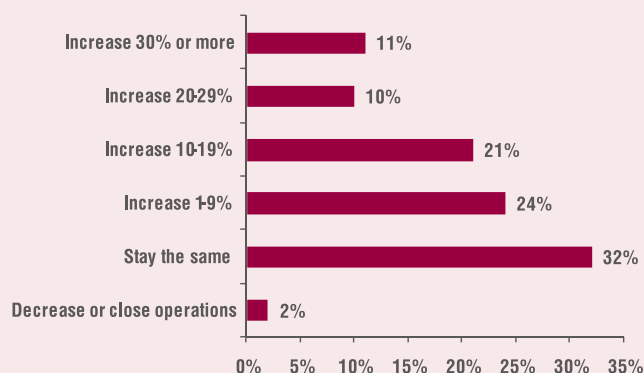
**FIGURE 33 – HOW DOES THIS % COMPARE TO LAST YEAR? N=432**



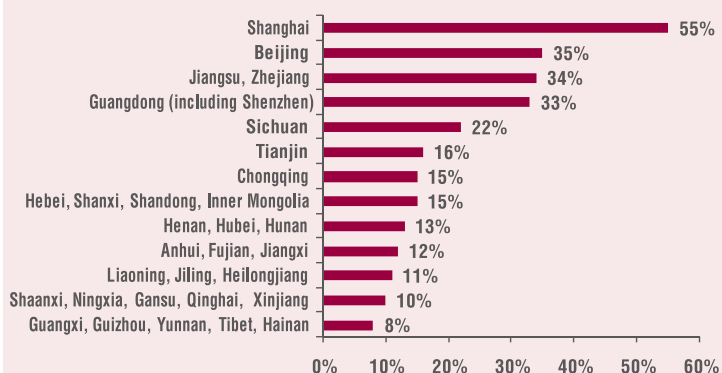
Half of foreign-owned companies in our sample generate more than 10% of their global sales in China. This level of China focus represents an increase versus last year: 52% of surveyed foreign companies cite an increase or a substantial increase of this weight (compared to 15% citing a decreasing share). Moreover, China is ranked within the Top 3 global investment priority for 60% of the foreign-owned companies in our sample.

Investments in China by foreign firms are going to increase in 2013 for 66% of our sample of foreign firms. Moreover, 21% of them claim an intention to increase investments by more than 20%. The most cited areas for investment in China in 2013 are Shanghai (mentioned by 55% of companies), Beijing (35%), Jiangsu and Zhejiang (34%), Guangdong and Shenzhen (33%), Sichuan, Tianjin and Chongqing with 22%, 16% and 15% of respondents respectively.

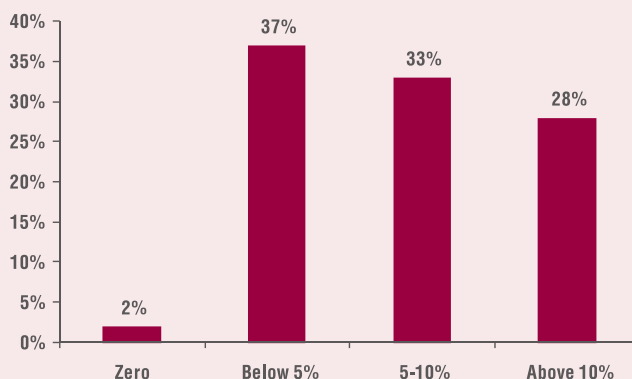
**FIGURE 34 - FOREIGN FIRMS - WHAT INVESTMENTS DO YOU PLAN FOR 2013 IN CHINA? N=435**



**FIGURE 35 - FOREIGN FIRMS - WHERE IN CHINA DO YOU PLAN TO INVEST? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS) N=288**



**FIGURE 36 - FOREIGN FIRMS - WHAT % OF YOUR YEARLY REVENUES DO YOU SPEND ON MARKETING AND SALES? N=335**



Another sign of commitment to the China market by foreign companies is the increase in the number of companies (28% of respondents, up from 20% last year) spending more than 10% of their China revenues in marketing and sales for the China market. The levels of investment in marketing and sales of foreign-owned companies in our sample are similar to those of Chinese-owned ones.

Similarly, 52% of foreign companies now have R&D activities in China, up from 39% last year. One third of them invest more than 5% of their revenues in research and development activities in China, showing the emphasis in innovation related investments in China for foreign firms.

#### 4.3.2. Global focus for Chinese-owned firms

*Chinese firms continued the globalization of their business in 2012. This is visible from an increase in their export revenues and stated intentions to invest outside of China.*

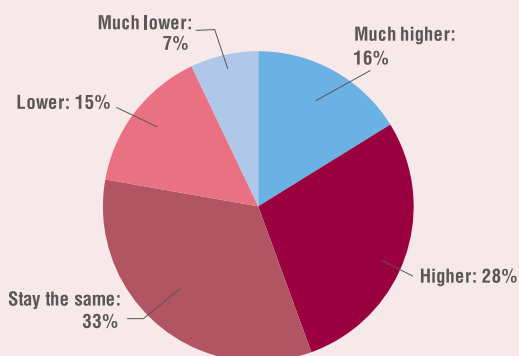
Export is the most widespread form of reaching out for Chinese firms with about half of the companies exporting their products or services abroad. Amongst respondents, export revenues have increased from last year to reach one third of their total revenues. Asia and Europe are the main export markets at a similar level, followed by North America.

33% of respondents have investments abroad, with most of them close to home in Asia, followed by the US and Europe. This data is similar to previous surveys. However, there is a trend to increase these investments, with 42% of companies stating plans to invest outside of China in the next 3 years.

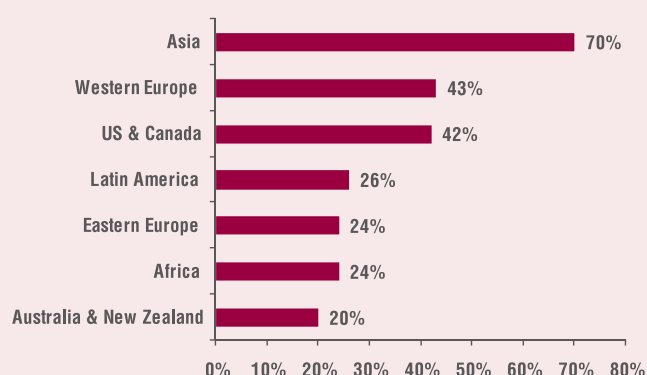
Regarding outsourcing of manufacturing operations by Chinese firms, one third of the companies have plants abroad, mostly concentrated in Asia.

#### Outbound Trade of Chinese-owned companies: Up from 2011

**FIGURE 37 – CHINESE FIRMS - HOW DO YOUR EXPORTS IN 2012 COMPARE TO 2011? N=366**



**FIGURE 38 – CHINESE FIRMS - WHICH ARE YOUR KEY EXPORT MARKETS? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS) N=376**



Almost half of the Chinese firms in our sample export their products and services and these exports represent one third of their total revenue. Moreover, export revenue is up in 2012 compared to 2011 for a majority of the firms.

Key export markets are Asia and Europe both regions with the same weight. The third preferred export market is the US & Canada.

**Outbound Investment of Chinese-owned companies:** *Similar to last 2 years but intent is growing*

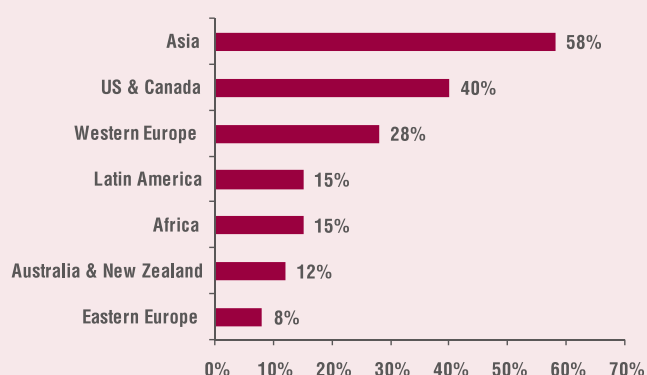
In terms of investment outside of China, we see the same proportion of companies going abroad as in the previous two years (33% of the surveyed Chinese companies). The preferred targets are Asia (Hong Kong and Taiwan, Middle East, Singapore etc.) for 56% of the surveyed companies, US and Canada for 40% of them, and in a third place, Europe for 35% of them.

Most of these companies (55%) feel neutral about their investment results abroad or satisfied (34% of them). Only a small percentage (7%) of our pool of Chinese companies declares to be dissatisfied.

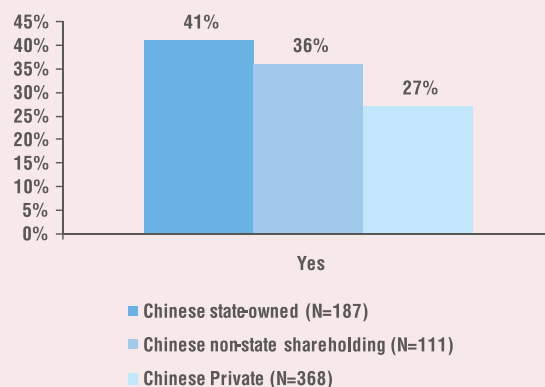
The major challenges for Chinese companies doing business abroad are cultural differences, laws and regulations, and finding the appropriate human capital.

Nevertheless, the above challenges do not seem to hinder Chinese firms from going abroad. The upward trend in out-of-China investment is shown by a higher number of companies planning to invest abroad in the next 3 years (42% versus 33% of firms currently investing abroad). The targeted geographies are similar to those where Chinese firms have currently invested.

**FIGURE 39 – CHINESE FIRMS - WHERE ARE YOUR FOREIGN INVESTMENTS LOCATED? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS) N=256**



**FIGURE 40 – CHINESE FIRMS – DOES YOUR COMPANY HAVE INVESTMENTS OUTSIDE OF CHINA?**



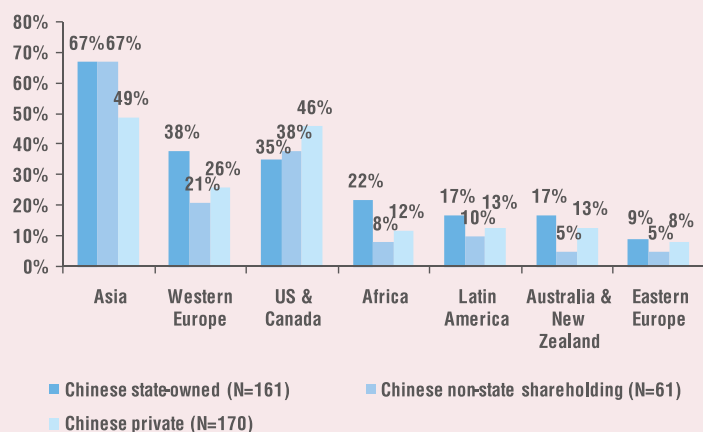
When analyzing in more detail the presence of Chinese enterprises abroad, we observe that it is the state-owned or state-holding enterprises that proportionally go abroad most often with 41% of them having investments outside of China. They are followed by private shareholding companies (non state-holding) with 36% of them having investments abroad. The lowest relative international presence is for Chinese private firms (27% of them).

We also notice that Chinese state-owned companies have a different pattern of expansion as they go more broadly to more regions than the other 2 groups. They favor Asia expansion with 67% of them citing investments in the region, followed by Europe for 41% of them (38% go to Western Europe, 7% go to Eastern Europe), US & Canada (35%), Africa (22%), Latin America (17%) and Australia (17%).

In contrast, non-state shareholding companies, by far, first choose Asia (67% of them), before the US (38% of them), and Western Europe (21%). Their investments in the other geographies are minimal with less than 10% of them citing this region.

Chinese private enterprises select Asia and the US at an almost equal weight (49% of them invest in Asia, 46% of them invest in US) with Western Europe coming 3rd (26%).

**FIGURE 41 – CHINESE FIRMS - WHERE ARE YOUR FOREIGN INVESTMENTS LOCATED? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**



**Manufacturing activity abroad of Chinese-owned companies: Mostly in Asia**

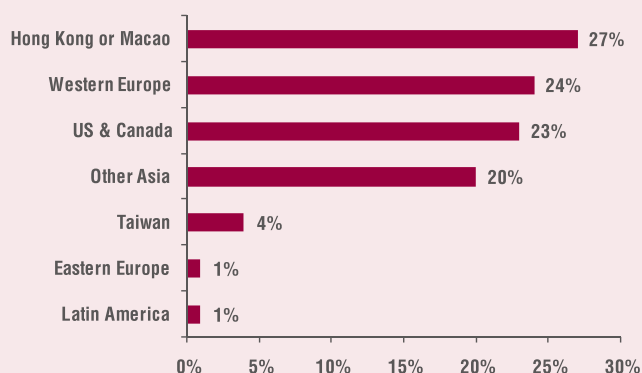
35% of the Chinese manufacturing firms having investments outside of China (14% of total sample of Chinese-owned firms) have plants abroad, and two thirds of them state satisfaction. These manufacturing sites are located in Asia for 56% of them, while the rest are spread amongst the rest of the globe.

## 4.4. JOINT VENTURES

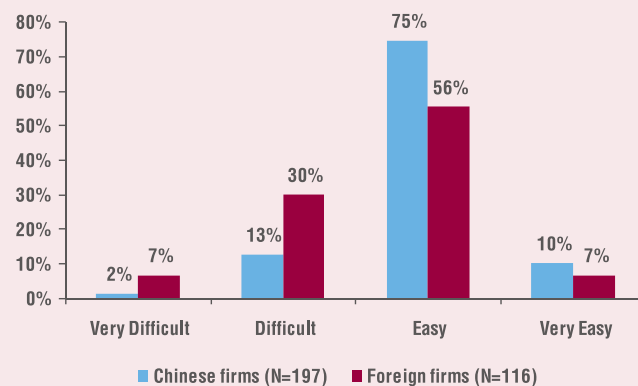
*Half of JV foreign partners come from Asia.*

311 executives state to work for a Joint Venture or for a company with Joint Ventures. This is 26% of the total sample, with 9% of the total sample working directly for a JV (105 companies). 52% of JVs in our sample are Chinese controlled (more than 50% of ownership is Chinese)

**FIGURE 42 - WHICH REGION IS YOUR MAIN FOREIGN OR NON-MAINLAND CHINESE PARTNER FROM? N= 237**



**FIGURE 43 - HOW DIFFICULT/EASY IS WORKING WITH YOUR PARTNER?**



The foreign or non-mainland partner comes from Asia for 51% of the JVs, more than half of them from Hong Kong. 24% come from Western Europe and another 23% from the US & Canada.

When asked about difficulties in working with their partner, more difficulties are reported by the foreign side (37%) than the Chinese side (15%). Difficulties most frequently mentioned are: differences in management styles or business concepts, cultural differences and communications problems, strategy differences and conflicts of priorities.







## SECTION 5

# FOCUS BY FUNCTIONS

This section provides perspectives on three functional areas:

- Human Resources

The chapter covers the top HR issues that companies in our sample face in China. It also gives an in-depth commentary on what the executives in our sample think are the most effective measures to retain employees.

- Finance

This chapter gives an overview of the most frequent sources of funding for the Chinese-owned firms in our sample by type of company.

- Marketing, Sales and Distribution

This chapter includes an overview of market segments where companies in our sample operate as well as mobility of companies within segments. It also details which are the most effective sales and marketing strategies for the companies in our sample, and particularly for those companies in our sample that are leaders in their markets.

The purpose of this section is to understand challenges and success factors of our respondents in these functional areas.

## 5.1. HUMAN RESOURCES

*Finding talent and rising labor costs are cited as the top HR issues for managing businesses in China*

### 5.1.1. Top Human Resources issues in China

HR issues remain the top challenge faced by companies in China, just as in previous editions of this survey. In spite of continuous efforts from executives, they have remained a major concern.

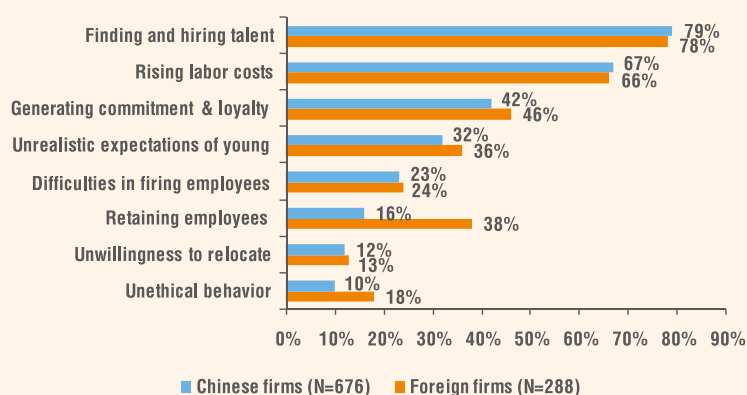
“Finding and hiring suitable talent” is the Top HR concern for foreign and Chinese owned firms (78% of surveyed executives). The issue appeared particularly acute for Engineers and Technicians as well as at Management (both top and middle levels). The origins of this difficulty in hiring talent range from lack of experienced talent to inability to afford available talent.

“Rising labor costs” follow closely as the second major HR related concern. It is also the number one external challenge for doing business in China (see Section 3).

“Generating commitment and loyalty” comes third (43%) in the HR related concerns cited by surveyed executives.

“Unrealistic expectations of the new generation” are the next most cited source of worries at 33% of our sample of companies. This item didn’t appear as strongly in previous editions of the survey (10%) and it seems to become more important as the Generation Y hits the labor market.

**FIGURE 44 - WHICH ARE THE MAJOR HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES FACING YOUR COMPANY IN CHINA? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**



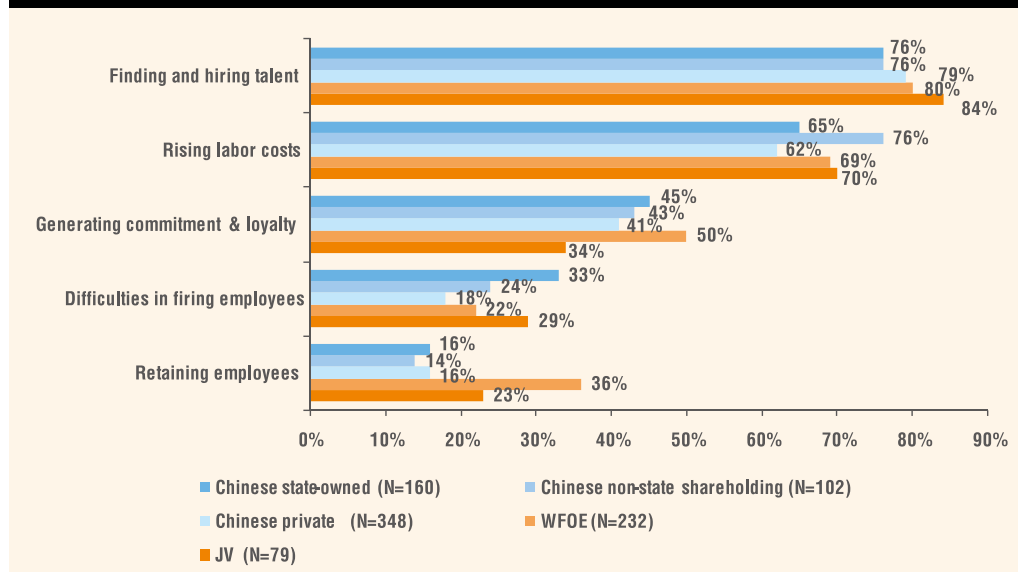
Although the above described challenges are common to the total sample of companies, we do observe differences in relative weight of some of the issues depending on the legal status of the company:

- “Finding and hiring talent” is, relatively speaking, a lesser problem for state-owned companies and non-state shareholding companies. It is possible that these two kinds of larger Chinese enterprises are better equipped than others to attract local talent.

- Both “Generating commitment and loyalty” of staff and “Retaining employees” seem to be more problematic for foreign companies than for their Chinese counterparts. In particular, “Retaining employees” worries 38% of foreign companies vs. only 16% of Chinese ones. A possible explanation is that foreign-owned firms are targeting just a section of the labor market while Chinese firms target the whole market.

- “Difficulties in firing employees” are more acute for State-owned companies and JVs (where the Chinese side is often a state-owned company). This is a problem that happens with state-owned enterprises in other countries as well.

**FIGURE 45 - WHICH ARE THE MAJOR HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES FACING YOUR COMPANY IN CHINA? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**



### 5.1.2. Most effective measures to retain employees

In order to retain employees, executives in our survey cited the importance of creating a feeling of belonging to the company (69% of respondents) and offering interesting career path within the company (66% of respondents). It is interesting to note this top set of measures comes before paying above market (third with 51% of respondents) and having a system of rewards and recognition (47%). Company reputation and training plans represent the next set of measures cited by executives.

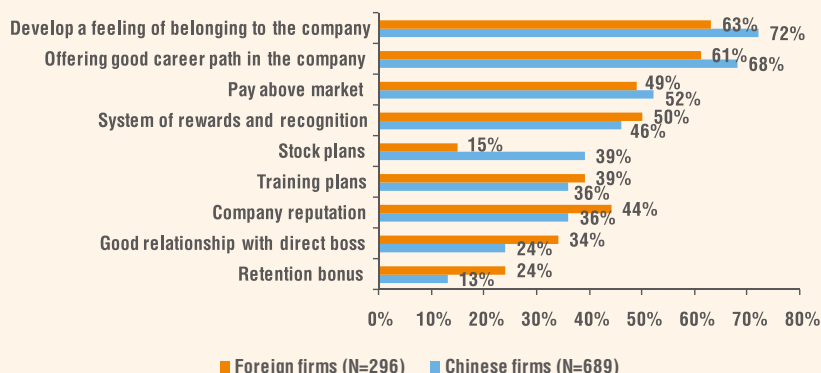
Even if the above selection of most effective HR measures is shared by for both Chinese and Foreign companies, we do observe differences in the relative weight of some of the strategies between both types of firms:

A larger amount of Chinese-owned firms favor “Develop a feeling of belonging to the company” (72%) and “Offering good career path in the company” (68%) when compared to foreign-owned firms (63% and 61% respectively).

“Stock plans”, even if less frequent, are more successful amongst Chinese firms (39% of them) than foreign ones (15%). This may be related to regulations regarding foreign stock ownership by Chinese citizens.

On the other hand, foreign firms put more emphasis (when compared to Chinese firms) to “System of rewards and recognition” (considered most efficient by 50% of foreign-owned firms vs. 46% of Chinese-owned firms), “Company reputation” (44% vs. 36%) and “Good relationship with direct boss” (34% vs. 24%).

**FIGURE 46 -WHAT MEASURES DO YOU FIND MOST EFFICIENT IN RETAINING EMPLOYEES? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**

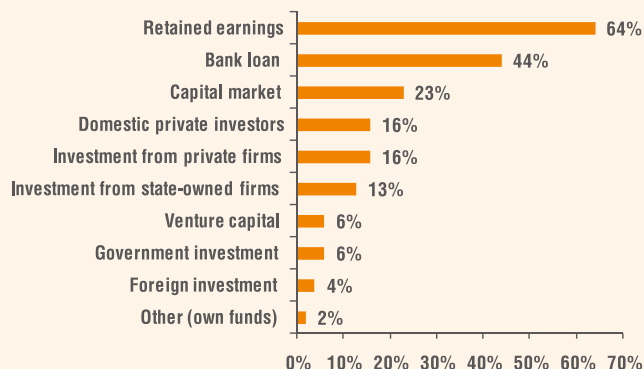


## 5.2. FINANCE

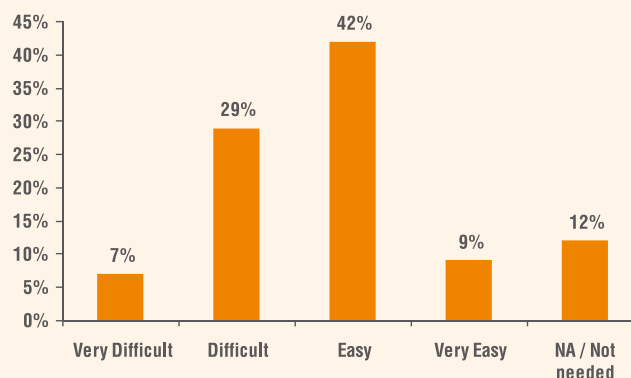
This set of questions was asked to Chinese-owned companies only.

Two thirds of the surveyed companies rely mainly on self-financing as they choose retained earnings as the primary source to finance their expansion. Bank loans are the second most commonly used means of funding favored by half of our sample. Capital markets (23%) and investments from either private investors (16%) or private firms (16%) come next. Notably, there is little presence of venture capital funding (only cited by 6% of respondents), or of government and foreign investments.

**FIGURE 47 – CHINESE FIRMS - WHICH ARE THE MAIN SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR YOUR COMPANY? N=684**

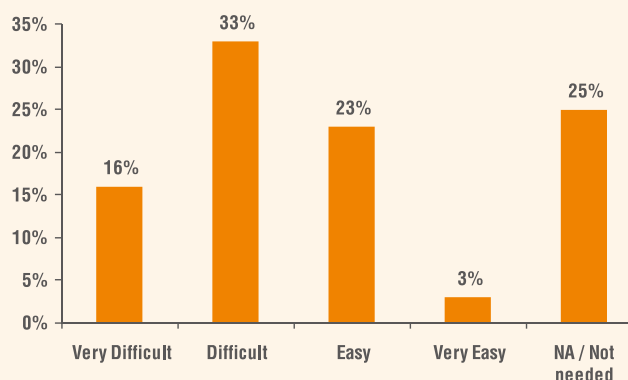


**FIGURE 48 - CHINESE FIRMS - YOUR ACCESS TO BANK LOAN IS: N=681**



A great majority of surveyed companies qualified access to bank loans as relatively easy, which could explain its popularity. In contrast, access to financial resources external to the company and not coming from bank sources is seen as relatively difficult to very difficult. Policy restrictions are the most frequently mentioned obstacles.

**FIGURE 49 – CHINESE FIRMS - YOUR ACCESS FINANCIAL RESOURCES FROM NON-BANK SOURCES IS: N=675**



### 5.2.1. By legal entity

#### Chinese state-owned companies

“Retained earnings”, “Bank loans” and “Investment from state-owned enterprises” are equally frequent (51% of responses) sources of funding for companies having State ownership in our sample. The “Capital market” follows very closely, mentioned by 42% of respondents with State ownership.

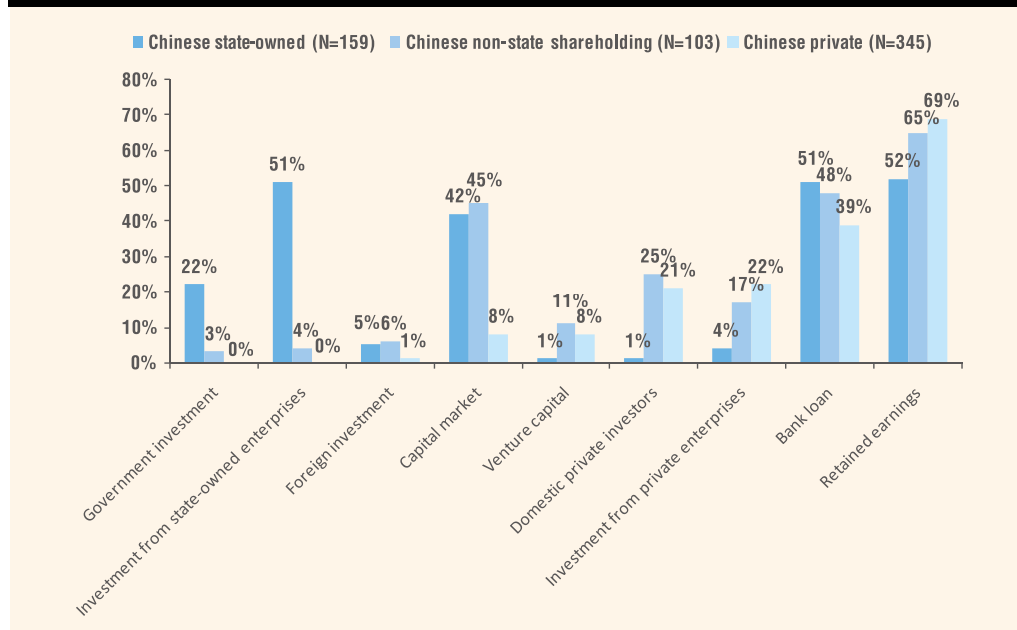
“Government investment” is the 4<sup>th</sup> most significant source of funding mentioned by 22% our respondents working for this category of companies.

#### Chinese non-state shareholding companies

“Retained earnings” are number one source of funding favored by 65% of our sample in this category of companies. It is followed by “Bank loans” (48%) and “Capital market” (45%). Less frequently, “Domestic private investors” and “Investment from private enterprises” are cited by 25% and 17% of the concerned respondents respectively. Although only 11% of companies Chinese shareholder companies use “Venture capital”, it is still the category of companies most frequently using VC funds in our sample.

#### Chinese private enterprises

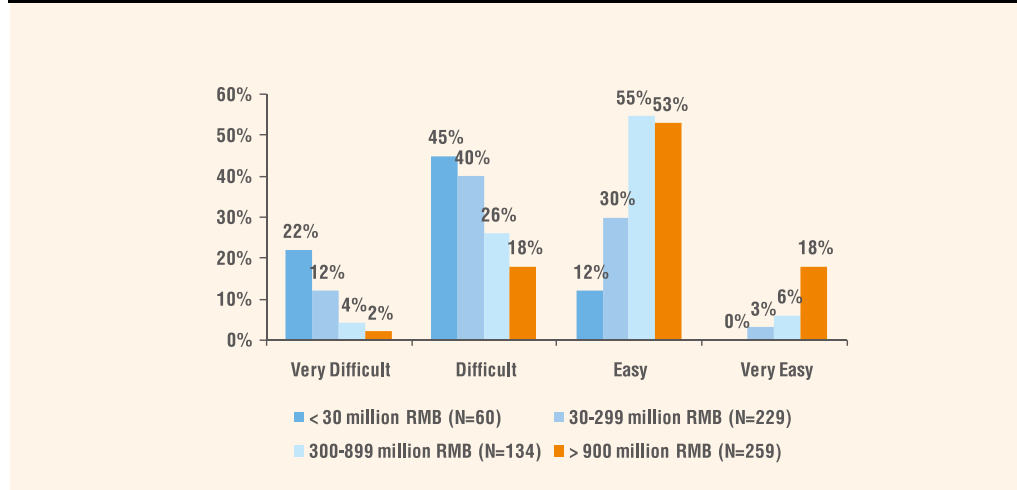
“Retained earnings” are, by far, the most favored source of funding mentioned as a main source of funding by 69% of Chinese Private enterprises. “Bank loans” come as a distant 2<sup>nd</sup>, with 39% of respondents. This is consistent with the data exposed later in this chapter where access to bank loans decreases rapidly with company size, whereas private enterprises are in average smaller businesses than state-owned or non-state shareholding companies (59% of them are small or medium enterprises, compared to 22% within the Chinese non-state shareholding firms and only 14% of the state-owned companies).

**FIGURE 50 – CHINESE FIRMS - WHICH ARE THE MAIN SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR YOUR COMPANY? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**


### 5.2.2. By company size

In terms of company size, we observe a direct relationship between size in annual revenues and funding through bank loans. Bank loans are mainly used by the 2 larger categories of companies (58% of companies with size 300-899 million RMB and 54% of companies with size > 900 million RMB use bank loans as a main source of funding, vs. 12% of companies <30 million RMB in size).

Similarly, the capital market is almost only used by the largest companies (>900 million RMB in revenues, with 44% of them using it as a main source of funding).

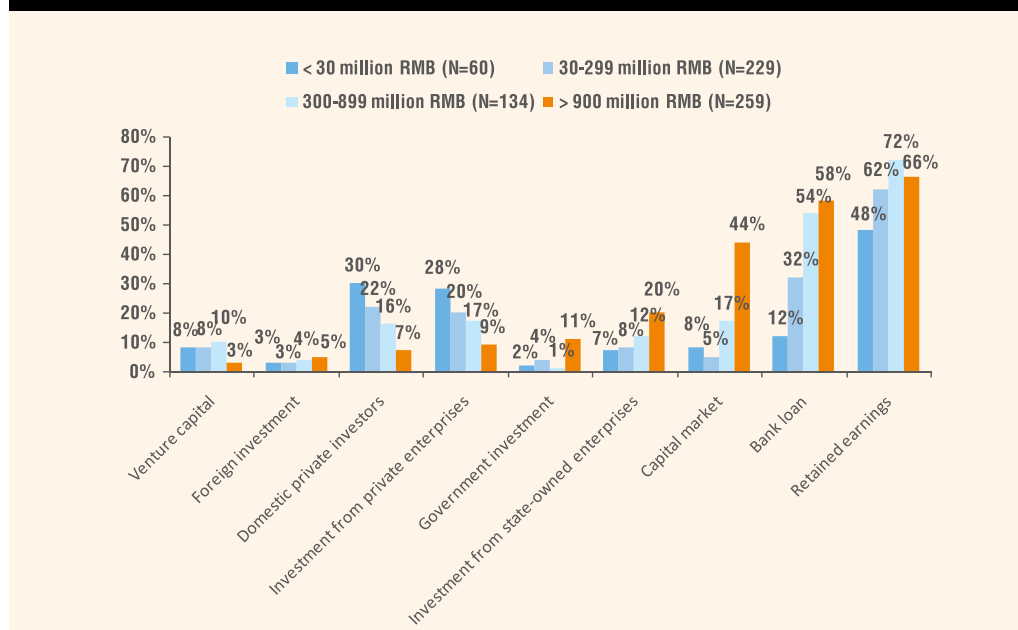
**FIGURE 51 - CHINESE FIRMS - YOUR ACCESS TO BANK LOANS IS?**


This situation is linked to access. Our sample shows a clear relationship between company size and access to bank loans: 67% of small companies in our sample claim access to bank loans to be “difficult” or “very difficult”, compared to 52% for medium size companies, 30% for large firms, and 20% for the largest companies in our sample (>900 million RMB).

Investment from private enterprises and private investors, although not the main source of funding for any of the company types, is more favored by small and medium companies.

Government investment and funds from State-owned enterprises have relatively more importance within the super-large companies of our sample (>900 million RMB in revenues), even if they are overall one of the least frequently mentioned funding means together with foreign investment and private capital.

**FIGURE 52 – CHINESE FIRMS - WHICH ARE THE MAIN SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR YOUR COMPANY? (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)**



### 5.3. Marketing, Sales and Distribution

**Market segments and mobility:** *Clear market positioning with slight trend to move upscale*

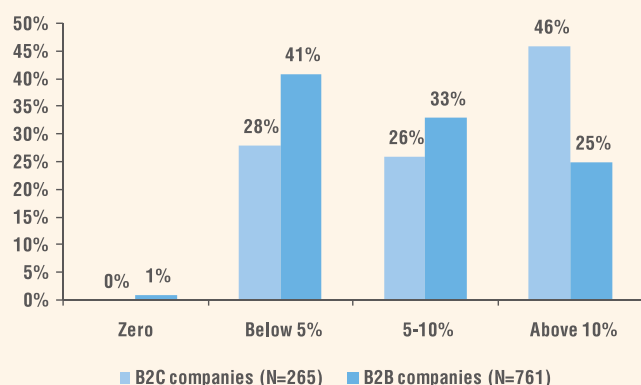
Our sample of companies operates mainly in the middle and premium segments with 50% and 45% of companies respectively, and only a small 5% in the low-end.

In terms of segment mobility we see that even if a majority of companies plan to grow future sales within their existing segment (77% for those operating in the premium segment and 62% of those operating in the middle segment), there is still a significant amount of companies that plan to grow outside of their current segment. This trend is stronger for companies in the middle segment where 36% of them want to move into the premium segment. For companies currently operating in the premium segment, a smaller proportion (22%) of them wants to expand down into the middle segment.

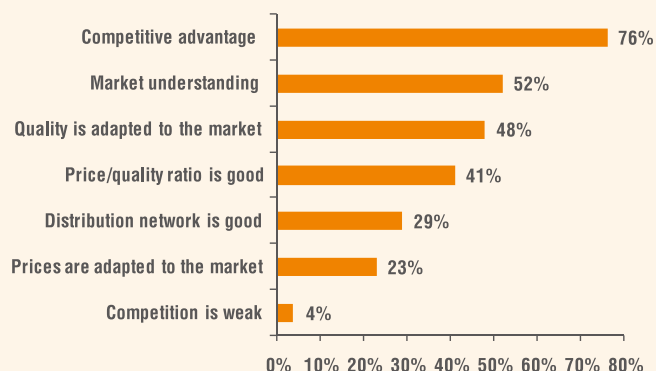
**Marketing and sales budgets and most effective strategies:** *No significant difference in behavior between Chinese and foreign firms*

In terms of marketing & sales budgets and strategies, we observe a marked difference between firms operating in the Business-to-Business (B2B) area and those in the Business-to-Consumer (B2C) area. Within those two groups, Chinese-owned and foreign-owned companies follow similar patterns without significant differences.

**FIGURE 53 - WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YEARLY REVENUES DO YOU SPEND IN MARKETING AND SALES?**



**FIGURE 54 - FOR MARKET LEADERS - WHY ARE YOU AT THAT POSITION? MULTIPLE ANSWERS N=444**



Unsurprisingly, firms selling directly to consumers have larger marketing and sales budgets (above 10% of revenues for almost half of them). Most cited marketing spend are traditional advertising (TV, print) and Internet advertising. Other marketing strategies are public relations, as well as newsletters and emails. In terms of success factors in China, access to a good distribution network, developing a strong brand, and advertising are most frequently cited.

In contrast, B2B firms favor seminars, conferences and other public relations activities, followed by attending trade fairs, mainly in China.

The most cited success factors are good service, high quality and developing a strong brand.

#### **Distribution network:**

Only 20% of the total sample evaluates their national distribution network as bad or very bad. The main issue for 50% of them is the lack of experienced professionals in the distribution field followed by fragmentation and limited geographical reach of the distribution chain (20%). Foreign-owned and Chinese-owned firms also have similar views in this respect.

#### **Market leaders keys to success:**

445 companies (44%) in our sample claim to be market leaders for their main business line.

Their keys to success are having a competitive advantage, understanding the market better than their competitors, and offering a quality adapted to the market needs (see figure 54). Both Chinese and foreign firms agree on these factors.



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