

Felix B. Tan, P. Scott Corbett, Yuk Yong Wong, eds.. *Information Technology Diffusion in the Asia Pacific: Perspectives on Policy, Electronic Commerce and Education*. Hershey, Pennsylvania: Idea Group Publishing, 1999. v + 357 pp. \$64.95, cloth, ISBN 978-1-878289-48-3.

Reviewed by Sandra Katzman

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As information technology continues to shape the world, a compiled picture is provided of a much-watched region: the Asia Pacific. This timely book looks at Singapore, Hong Kong and China, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia. The multi-layered presentation of material fits the subject. Rather than one chapter for one region, *Information Technology Diffusion in the Asia Pacific* has sections of essays by different authors with different methods of inquiry about various aspects of each geography.

A brief first chapter by the editors begins with the internationally often-repeated news about the restrictions on chat room conversations in China. A contrast is made with Singapore, a society which imbues children with portable IT devices. The book covers these two extremes of place and practice and everything between. A chart at the beginning of the book shows the 21 chapters and their distribution of the issues, including privacy, distance learning, and social considerations. The voices of the authors vary in a complementary way.

The glossary at the end of the book includes entries from the global to the national, from instruction to instructive, from commerce to companies. Some examples: Multi-National Companies, Seventh Malaysia Plan, Singapore ONE. Non-native speaker of English, student-teacher work-

bench, general certificate of education; import substitution, electronic funds transfer, point of sale.

The essays are arranged in three sections: national policy and infrastructure; electronic commerce and the Internet; and education and curriculum. The editors introduce each section with a general one-page statement. Each chapter ends with summary and references, which include many web sites. Chapters include tables and figures.

The picture of information technology in the Asia Pacific that emerges from this book is of modern communication methods growing in a region.

This is a fairly readable and information-packed look at technology diffusion. The contributors support their conclusions carefully. A policy study, the reference book is up to date for anyone concerned with education and business in information technology in the Asia Pacific.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at
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