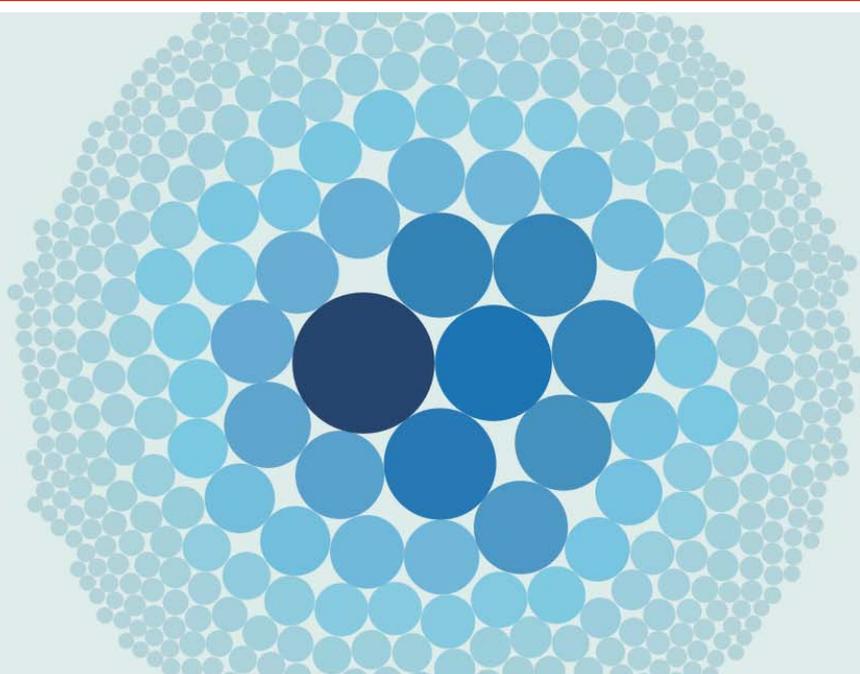


## Visualising Asia's future

Predictive analytics and visualisation are changing strategy making in Asia

SRA PERSPECTIVES

Ben Simpfendorfer



## Asia suffers from a shortage of high-quality data. Leading firms will be able to source data and visualise their business landscape.

Asia's commercial world is a complex place, and it's about to increase in complexity. From Hefei to Surabaya, Blue Moon to Ghari, Alibaba to Flipkart, the sheer number of emerging cities, local brands, and online players is expanding daily and it's hard for busy executives to keep up.

It's a change that challenges how we use data to understand trends. Take China's GDP growth rate. It still captures headlines. But what does the latest GDP report tell you, for example, about the success of Blue Moon's strategy to target consumers in Hefei using Alibaba's online platform?

The next generation of business intelligence will find ways to combine private and public sources of data in ways that help explain what's happening at ground-level in Asia, not just from 30,000 feet, from sub-regional markets to splits between online and offline sales.

That's not a new idea. Data analytics and visualisation techniques are popular globally. But Asia offers some unique challenges and therefore competitive opportunities for leading companies.

### Don't wait for governments to fill the data gap

In the U.S. or Europe, there is a reliable supply of good quality public data waiting to be tapped. That's not often the case in Asia. It's still hard to estimate a breakdown of industrial activity in China's Foshan, for instance, or the income of households in a suburb of Kuala Lumpur.

That puts responsibility on Asia-based firms to create proprietary measures of commercial activity, combining their own, third-party, and public sources. It's a tricky challenge as it means searching for insightful relationships across data sets that might be incomplete or conflicting.

## THE POWER OF ANALYTICS & DATA VISUALISATION



### Strategy Planning

Data analytics & visualisation puts critical data in the hands of busy executives, allowing them to swiftly visualise changes in their business environment and make rapid decisions.



### Business Development

In today's turbulent markets, clients are looking for leadership. Providing insightful views validated by data can strengthen a business relationship and identify new sales opportunities.



### Costs & Productivity

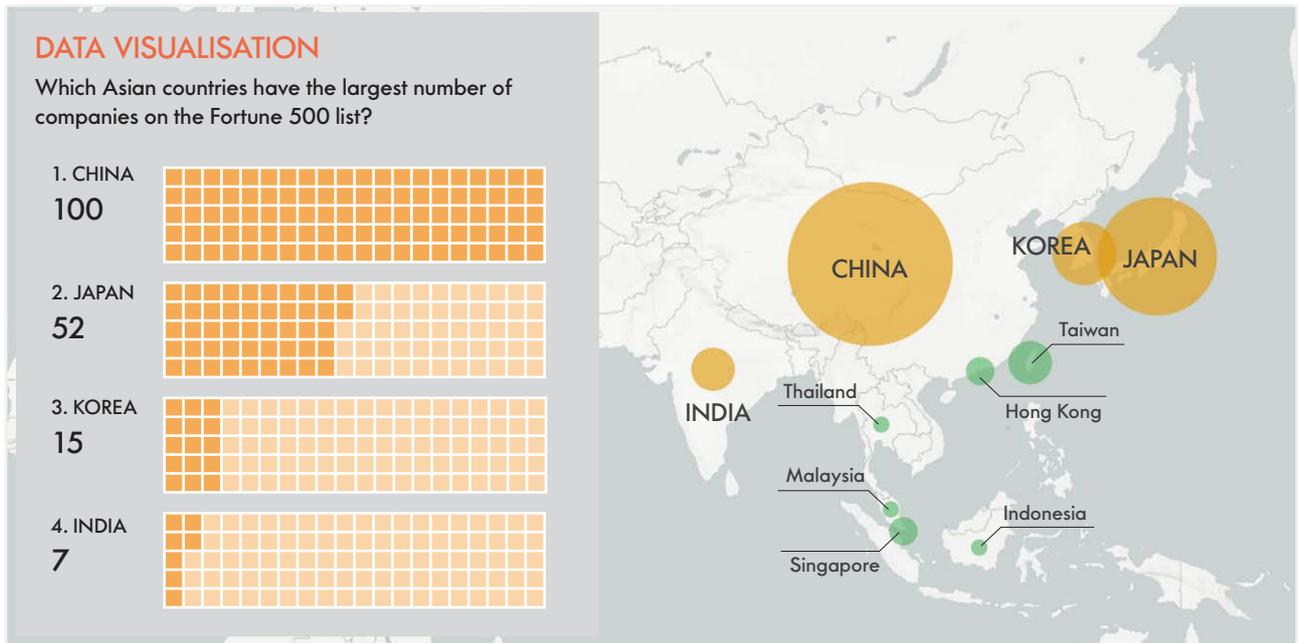
Today's challenging business environment means companies must do more with less. Data analytics reduces the need for analysts to collect and process data in excel spreadsheets.

But that market gap also creates a competitive opportunity for companies that are able to move early in response to changing markets.

### The ability to tell a story matters for busy Asian executives

Asia has no shortages of big numbers: three billion people, 40 countries, and 500 major cities. That's why data visualisation will be a powerful capability for companies in Asia, as it helps Asia-based executives to quickly grasp a complex situation across multiple countries and make effective decisions.

Visualisation will also help to explain the region to colleagues in other parts of the world who might understand Beijing or Mumbai, but struggle to digest



commercial changes in smaller cities and so help Asia-based colleagues lobby for support from HQ or changes in strategy.

The good news is that Asia is a great region to visualise and maps are especially powerful whether detailing e-commerce activity across Southeast Asia or the spread of multiplexes across India's many cities.

**Data visualisation helps to educate, not just explain**

And lastly, for all that data analytics and visualisation will advance business intelligence capabilities, there's no replacing front-line intelligence gathering. For firms with a large number of front-line employees across multiple locations, they have the ability to gather vast amounts of human intelligence.

There's nothing new there. What is a game changer is the manner in which those insights can be aggregated and visualised in ways that are vastly more helpful to senior management look to identify the more granular trends in commercial activity and moving beyond GDP figures.



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Silk Road Associates provides strategic advisory and intelligence services to Fortune 500 multinationals and leading Asia-based companies, helping our clients stay competitive in Asia's fast moving markets.

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## HEAD OFFICE

1801 Wheelock House  
20 Pedder Street  
Central, Hong Kong  
T: +852 2293 2236  
E: info@silkroadassoc.com

[www.silkroadassoc.com](http://www.silkroadassoc.com)