

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a small, colorful globe. The globe shows parts of North America, including the United States and Canada, with labels like 'OCEAN' and 'Beaufort Sea'. A semi-transparent dark grey diagonal overlay covers the right side of the image, serving as a background for the text.

Market Entry Guide

40 Tips to Help You Get it Right



ACCURACAST

Let the experts guide you through international expansion

Market entry has been made a whole lot more challenging for many businesses in the last two years by COVID-19. For organisations based in the UK, Brexit has also added to the complications of trying to expand across the European border.

But, fear not! In a world where the accelerated adoption of ecommerce globally has created an exciting era for businesses able to adapt at speed, we have created a 40-point checklist that will keep your export plans in check, while allowing you to identify opportunities and circumnavigate potential snags.

Our guide is not just for marketers. The list can assist any decision maker involved in the international growth of their business.

You will find the guide is divided into four topics: Advertising & Creative; Sourcing & Logistics; Localisation of Business Practices & Services; and Localisation of Web Properties & Communications.



"AccuraCast have represented our brand remarkably well to a new audience of Sports fans in key European markets, and they have produced some great results."

Conrad Edkins, E-Commerce Director



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AccuraCast is the UK's #1 multilingual digital marketing agency, and one of the longest-running independent search marketing agencies. We offer intelligent digital marketing services that deliver consistent wins.

Find out how we can help you.

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Before we start, a bit about AccuraCast ...

We help businesses grow internationally. Whether you already work at a global level or are looking to expand, we can help you find new markets, gain new customers, and expand your reach.

All our services are multilingual – we have global capability and meet the highest ethical standards of practice. This means you can count on us to:

- Increase social media effectiveness
- Deliver engaging online advertising
- Increase brand awareness through programmatic
- Optimise organic search visibility
- Reach your customers on any device in the moments that matter

Just a few of our Clients

Localisation of Business Practices & Services

1. Check customs and tax regulations

These could have a significant impact on your ability to competitively price your products or services. Therefore, you need to make it one of the first things that you or your colleagues overseeing finance and legal factors do.



2. Familiarise yourself with local trading standards

Consider what standards people will look for when buying goods or engaging in business. If you don't meet standards, at the least you may lose the confidence of potential customers, and at worst, you may be in breach of local laws.

Look at whether standards such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO), or other national standards are used.



3. Provide customer service channels

When customers and potential customers need to get in touch, how will they do this?

Will they be able to converse in their own language?

Don't assume that everyone is used to online chat and email support. Consider the customer service channels traditionally preferred in the new market and provide them if possible.



4. Identify local peak periods

Sale period and big shopping days are not the same in all countries; find out when you need to start preparing for seasonal peaks, or when to expect troughs or flat trading periods.



5. Consider using local distributors or resellers

If your business necessitates the contracting or hiring of distributors or resellers, look at whether using locally based agents would be beneficial. They will have local knowledge, speak the language and understand the nuances of local business customs.



6. Keep in mind your home market

If you are considering lowering your prices in order to gain entry into a new market, what are the brand perception risks?

How might your home market users who are made aware of this different pricing structure react?



7. Stay current

Stay abreast of national news and trends in each country; this will allow you to react as quickly as possible to a situation that presents opportunities for sales, or it may mean that you are able to avert or mitigate problems.

Sourcing & Logistics



8. Source reliable logistics and supply

Establish a reliable supply chain so that goods are available when and where you need them. Your sourcing department may find it beneficial to establish a relationship with local experts in the area.

Logistics providers can be worth the additional investment in the early days before you set up a local presence.



9. Research banking and finance options

Is it financially beneficial to use a local bank account?

How will you transfer money between the local business and your headquarters?

Find an experienced advisor who can help you administer the financial side of business in your new market in the most economical way for you.



10. Establish local payment facilities

It's important that consumers have maximum confidence in the company they are buying for when they get to the checkout stage.

Ensure you can accept payment in the local currency, using locally established payment providers. Credit card alternatives such as giropay, cash on delivery, and letters of credit are very popular in several European countries.



11. Accommodate local payment terms

Find out what payment terms are commonly accepted and expected and try to accommodate them.

For example, many Eastern European and Asian countries rely heavily on cash, cheques or credit terms.



12. Prioritise customer deliveries and returns

This is an area where customer confidence can easily evaporate, if not done correctly.

Research shipping providers, freight forwarders, warehousing solutions and their costs beforehand.

Ensure your published shipping policies reflect the services you can offer in the new market.



13. Be upfront about expected delays

When shipping across borders, you need to be crystal clear in your communication with customers about customs related fees and delivery times. Post-Brexit trade between the UK and Europe is challenging for product vendors.

Ensure that all relevant departments are consulted, and that your web content team are always up to date with policy changes.



14. Use local phone numbers

Make it easy and intuitive for customers to contact you by using phone numbers with local codes and rates.

Localisation of Web Properties & Communications

A red pushpin is stuck into a map, with its silver pin pointing to a specific location on a street grid. The map shows various streets, green spaces, and a blue river or canal in the upper left corner.

15. Create a Google My Business listing

Available in nearly 250 countries for free, you should create and optimise a GMB listing for your business in every market where it has a physical presence.

Ensure your business profile is as full as possible, with plenty of good quality images, and encourage customers to leave reviews.



16. Localise your website

This is a huge one! If your website or app looks ‘foreign’ to customers, you risk alienating them or making them uneasy about making a purchase.

High quality translation is the obvious requirement here, but you need to also cover many other factors such as currency, messaging, layout, design and tone of the site.

It’s good to stand out, but if your website differs from the cultural assumptions of users in the new market, you may stand out for the wrong reasons.

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of several interlocking metal gears. The gears are made of a polished, reflective material, likely steel, and are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and mechanical complexity. The lighting highlights the sharp teeth and the circular patterns of the gear faces.

17. Localise your order process

This could also be crucial to success. Make sure you can implement order, checkout, payment on site, and email and telephone order processes in a way that locals are familiar and comfortable with.



18. Localise automated communications

Make sure that you can segment audiences within your CRM, and consider creating a newsletter in the local language.

Ecommerce businesses also need to consider localising order confirmation emails in addition to your promotional emails.



19. Establish your brand on local social networks

Almost every business' customers expect them to have a presence on social media. You need to choose whether it is practical for you to manage a local page for each country and platform, or whether you would be better off with one global page.

Remember Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube are not necessarily popular (or even legal) in all countries, so consider which social networks will reach the most people in your target market.



20. Build a community organically

Set up social groups on platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn, with current customers who may already be in your new target market(s).

Start building a community with these early adopters as your brand evangelists.



21. Strategise for local SEO

Being entirely reliant on paid media to drive most of your web traffic has downsides – cost being the obvious one.

Create a robust SEO strategy for each market, which should include a local keyword strategy, optimised content and building links from authoritative, relevant websites in the new market.



22. Invest in technical international SEO

Simply optimising content for local keywords and acquiring local links may not be enough. This is especially true for international campaigns where the same language & content may be used in multiple webpages.

Establish a top-level domain presence with the correct language declarations to ensure you serve organic results in the correct language / locale.



23. Find PR opportunities with local media

Learn which titles and outlets are best aligned with your business and find out which journalists and bloggers would be best to create relationships with.

Use your learnings to research the correct media opportunities, whether it's news, opinion, comment, an interview, a case study etc. Start building press relationships from there.



24. Run hyper-local PR campaigns

It's worth running local campaigns alongside mainstream and popular national media outlets, to build relationships within the local community.

Make people aware of your brand entry through creative news, research, press releases, etc. (all in the local language of the new market).

25. Research competitor media exposure

Discovering how, by whom, and how often your competitors are covered in local media can help you target media organisations interested in your specialism.

This also allows you to learn which companies are getting exposure, and how they are perceived. There are plenty of free and paid-for tools available, from [Mention](#) and [Meltwater](#) to [Google Alerts](#).

You should also use social media to monitor how consumers are talking about your brand and your competitors' brands.



26. Measure brand recognition

Carry out studies at least every six months to measure the impact of your brand exposure campaigns.

Brand recognition can be measured in various ways, including surveys, search volume data (measured by brand ad campaigns, Google Ads Keyword Planner and Google Trends), direct website visits and social listening tools.



27. Devise a (culturally sensitive) content strategy

Understand the type of content that will resonate with audiences in each market, and how to package it culturally.

Advertising & Creative



28. Carry out keyword research

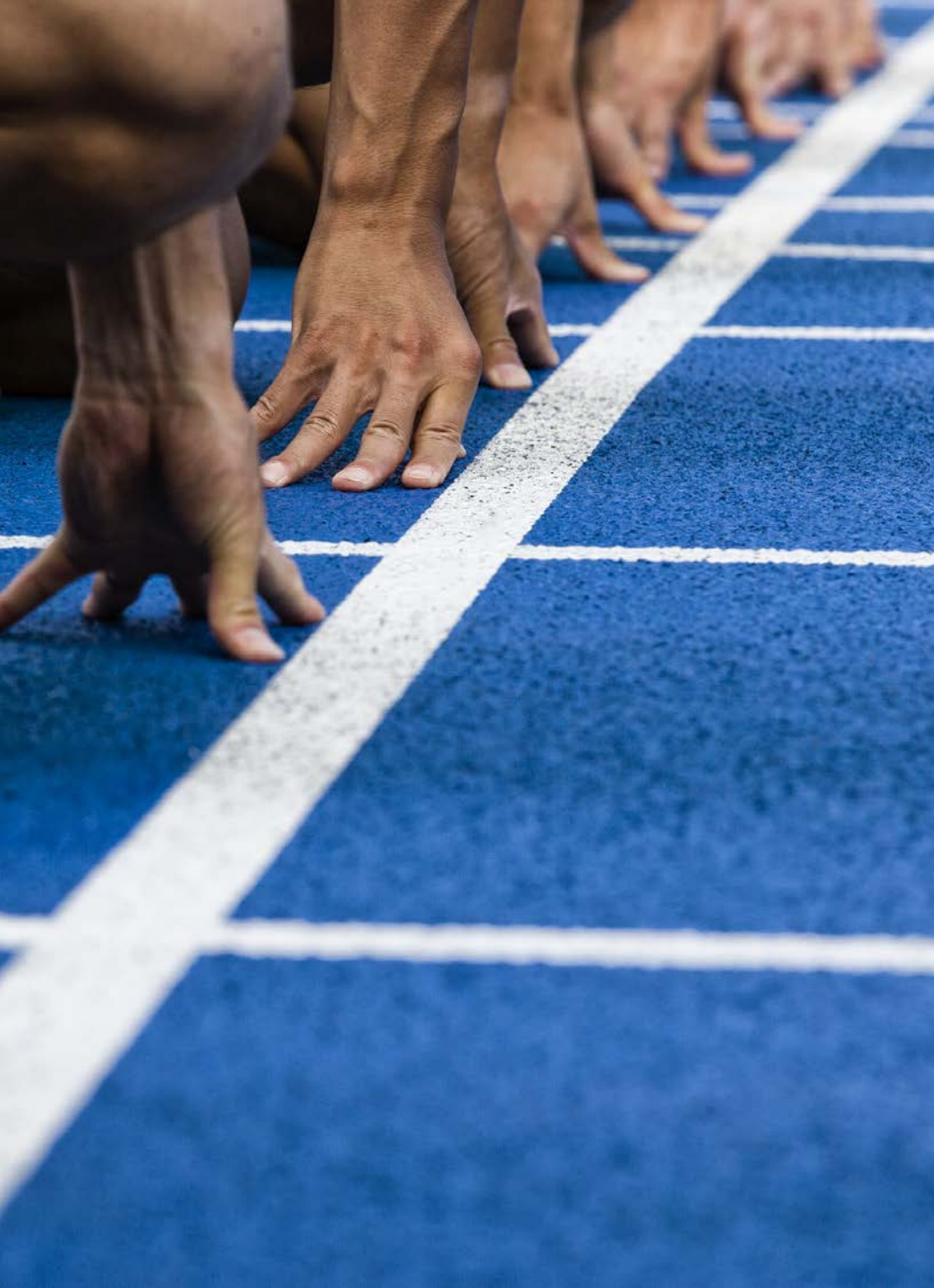
Carry out thorough research in native language(s) to find the most common and niche keywords used by natives when searching for your products or services.

Not only will this help you optimise key website landing pages for organic search, but it will also inform you of the market's awareness of your products or services.



29. Run test ad campaigns

Before fully committing to a market, you can gauge market readiness by running test campaigns in your target location, reasonably inexpensively. These campaigns can be used to bring traffic to your website instantly, test your minimum viable product (MVP), and gauge how users react to your ad copy and product or service offering.



30. Analyse the competitive landscape

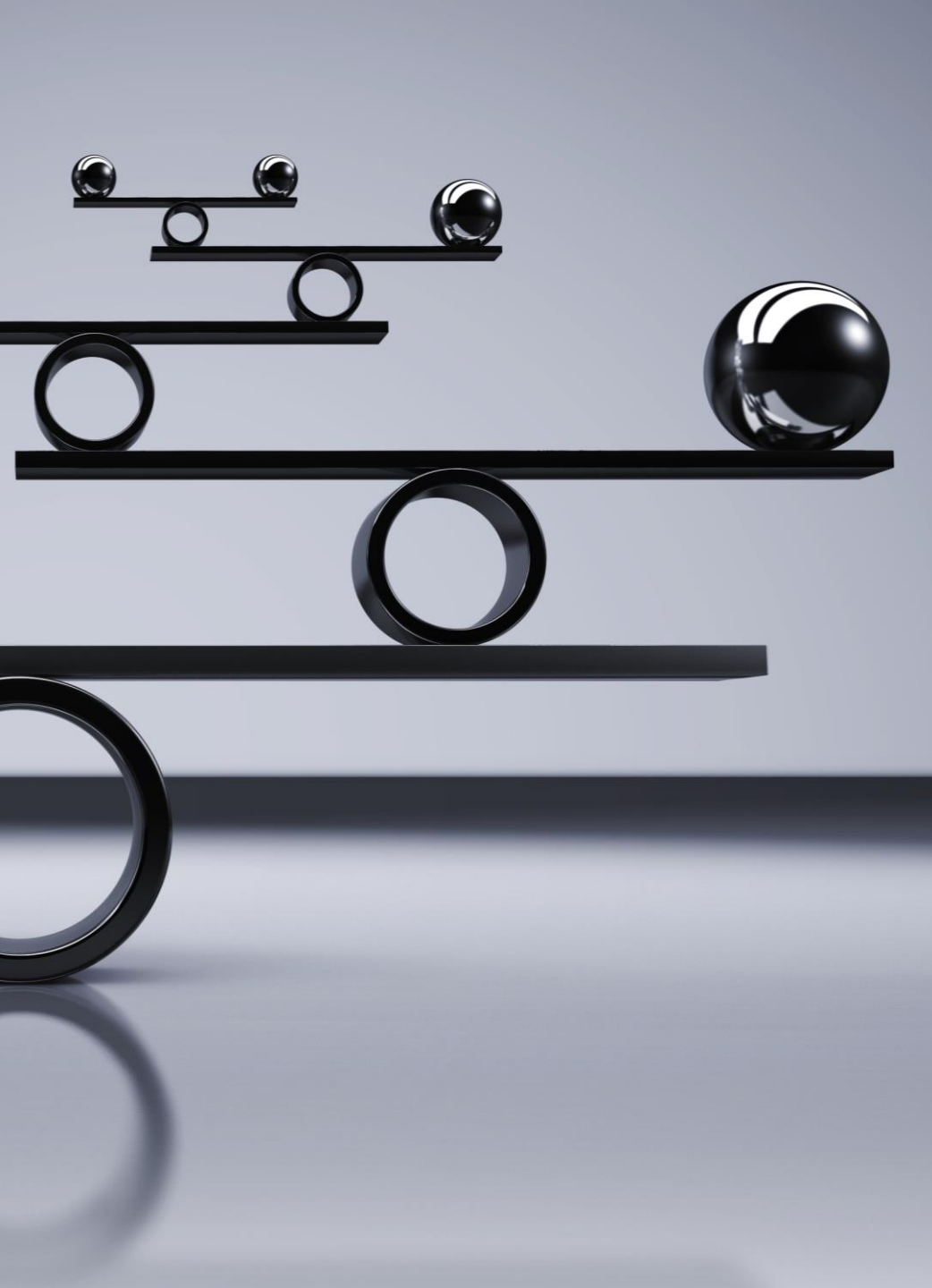
Understand the market landscape and identify how your brand can find its niche. This specifically applies to the functions of marketing but should also be understood more widely by the leadership team.

Research comparable suppliers that serve the same geographic market; understand what your competitors are selling, and how they are pricing and promoting their products or services. Take care not to automatically assume that their approach is working though...



31. Research your audiences

Using tools like Facebook Audience Insights and Google In-Market audiences can help you to understand the potential size, demographics, interests and behaviour of audiences you can reach online in the new market.



32. Calculate your brand vs. performance split

If you're new to international expansion and your brand is mostly unknown in the new market, the marketing split will be more heavily weighted towards branding, in comparison to that of your home or established markets.

Relevant decision makers in your business should then identify realistic KPI expectations (e.g., lower initial ROAS targets on branding campaigns).



33. Invest in video

Find out where your audiences spend their time online, and reach them with video to explain your brand, products and services.


Be sure to invest in localised language creative; a poorly pitched video could do more harm than good.



34. Use culturally sensitive creative

Make sure your visual ad creative and landing page content align with the demographic profile of the country you are expanding into.

The tone of your ad and website copy needs to be culturally aware to avoid standing out for the wrong reasons.



35. Look out for local privacy constraints

Watch out for local government restrictions surrounding privacy, and make sure you respect and abide by the laws governing personal data use in those countries.

For example, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe and the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) in the USA both impact your ability to remarket with personalised ads.

This is one for both marketing and sales departments to be on top of, in consultation with legal.



36. Use consumer surveys

Learn about your own brand's strengths and weaknesses, with surveys in the native language.

There are several ways to conduct such a study, from email surveys to signing up for Google or Facebook survey tools.

You might discover new and valuable insights about local people's needs and views.

A detailed close-up photograph of a mechanical watch movement, showing various sized brass gears, steel plates, and screws. The image is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping the teal background.

37. Optimise your ad accounts

Weigh up the pros and cons of setting up a single Facebook or Google Ads account for each country versus running ads from a single account.

In addition to convenience, you'll need to consider currency, time zone, tracking and the amount of data you'll feed the machine learning algorithm from each account versus from a single account.

38. Plan your analytics set-up

Whichever analytics platform you use, you will need the configuration to consider the reports you and all stakeholders need to see.

You should configure cross-domain tracking if users are likely to move between your different websites. This will also enable a unified view of how people interact with your websites and/or subdomains.



39. Set up your Facebook Pixel across all websites

Best practice would be to have one common Facebook Pixel across all your domains.

This will make Pixel code maintenance easier, and will be particularly useful to employ cross-border audiences if you plan on running multi-lingual ads across your various domains.

A close-up photograph of a blue and silver ballpoint pen resting diagonally on a document. The document features a bar chart with several blue bars of varying heights. The background is a solid teal color.

40. Monitor advertising budgets

Every market is different, and until you start your campaigns in new countries, it's impossible to tell exactly how budget will be spent by the platforms.

Set budgets that reflect the audience size, and monitor frequency rates and impression share data carefully until you are confident. If you're unsure, start off conservatively.

How can we help?

There's a great deal to consider when entering a new market, but the potential rewards - particularly in today's hyper-connected world - are significant! We hope this list will help to ignite your growth plans.

For help with any marketing aspects of market entry, get in touch.

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