



# CROSS-BORDER TRADE:

Time to expand your horizons?



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By 2022 cross-border shopping will make up 20% of all e-commerce—with sales forecast to reach \$630 billion.<sup>1</sup>

Clearly, geographical boundaries are becoming less and less important to consumers.

So, if you've been waiting in the wings maybe now's the time to join the many brands already seeing huge success overseas. In this eBook, we'll show you that making the transition needn't be costly or risky –

***so long as you start small and stay agile.***

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.forrester.com/report/Forrester+Data+Online+CrossBorder+Retail+Forecast+2017+To+2022+Global/-/E-RES137898>



## 1

## Do your items appeal to international buyers?

When asked why they buy from foreign websites, 76% of cross-border shoppers said they were looking for the best price.<sup>2</sup> Being able to buy a specific brand or product that isn't available in their home market was another reason cited according to a recent report by UPS.<sup>3</sup>

If you can compete on price or have something unique to sell, then you are in a great position to market your goods abroad.

## 2

## Test the waters on Amazon and eBay's international sites

Overseas shoppers are far more likely to turn to Amazon than take a chance on an unfamiliar brand or site. A recent study revealed that 25% of CBT digital buyers worldwide made their most recent purchase on Amazon—followed by eBay at 18%.<sup>4</sup>

If you currently sell on Amazon and eBay, then your first move should be to list your items on their local country sites. You can also take advantage of their comprehensive overseas fulfilment programmes designed to help you get started in new locales. Fulfilment by Amazon (FBA) stores, ships and offers award-winning customer service in a local language. eBay's Global Shipping Programme (GSP) offers a similar service—and both handle returns.

Track where demand is highest to give you an indication of the countries worth targeting in future.

<sup>2</sup> <https://ecommercenews.eu/71-european-e-shoppers-buy-cross-border/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://pressroom.ups.com/pressroom/ContentDetailsViewer.page?ConceptType=FactSheets&id=1517504848201-234#en>

<sup>4</sup> <https://retail.emarketer.com/article/cross-border-buyers-favor-global-platforms/5a78c8f9ebd4000744ae4104?ecid=NL1014>





# 3 Check out what local marketplaces have to offer

Once you've determined that there's a demand for your products in a specific country (or countries) consider listing on local online marketplaces. Many will consolidate and ship your orders, take care of tax issues and provide local customer services on your behalf.

Here's a few to have on your radar:



**Zalando**, the biggest online fashion retailer in Europe recently announced a new fulfilment programme designed to help brands - Fulfilment Solutions.<sup>5</sup>



Top US marketplace **Newegg** is keen to attract international sellers too—they can take care of taxes and offer a fulfilment service akin to Amazon's.



**Tmall Global** enables overseas merchants to access 400 + million active Chinese buyers and 14,500<sup>6</sup> international brands - without the need to set up a brick and mortar store. Merchants can also take part in promotions including Singles' Day—which last year made \$25 billion in sales.<sup>7</sup>



New entrant to the European market **Fruugo** is also keen to help merchants make the move into international e-commerce. Fruugo can translate domestic listings into 17 local languages and take care of complexities—from currency conversion, to customer service.

<sup>5</sup> <https://ecommercenews.eu/zalando-launches-zalando-fulfillment-solutions/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://internetretailing.net/2017/03/irx-2017-interview-david-lloyd-alibaba-selling-china/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/helenwang/2017/11/12/alibabas-singles-day-by-the-numbers-a-record-25-billion-haul/#2aca9bd71db1>





## 4

## Always offer trusted payment options

While many international shoppers have credit cards or use PayPal, others prefer to use alternative ways to pay. In China consumers generally opt to pay via web-based payment systems such as Alipay. Many German consumers prefer to buy with SOFORT, a bank to bank system, while some Italians look for cash payment on delivery as an option. Check out the local payment preferences and ensure you can provide them.

## 5

## Don't get lost in translation – make sure you get found on Google

75% of cross-border shoppers will refuse to buy from a site that isn't in their native language.<sup>8</sup> When you're listing on marketplaces always use a professional translator – they will understand the finer points, ensuring your content is easy to read and accurate.

Besides making customers feel more inclined to buy from you, translating your web content makes sense SEO-wise. French shoppers won't be searching for 'shoes' on Google, naturally they'll search for 'chaussures'. So, if you want high rankings on Google's French site you need to ensure your products are searchable in the French language.

<sup>8</sup> <https://home.bluesnap.com/snap-center/blog/how-cross-border-payments-work-in-ecommerce/>





# 6

## Check your branding makes sense in the new market

What works well in the UK could confuse, put off, or even cause offence in another country.

For example, in Europe we tend to associate the colour 'white' with cleanliness and newness. But in some Asian countries white stands for death and mourning. Perhaps not a colour to emphasise in branding.

Similarly, apparel retailer Barbour had to re-think its branding approach to the Asian market. In the UK Barbour represents an aspirational rural lifestyle. However, this doesn't impress people in China, Japan and India—they see the countryside as synonymous with poverty.

It's also important to tailor your promotions to events which may happen at different times in different countries – for example, Mother's Day is on different days across Europe and the US.





## 7

## Establish trust on social

Advertising and marketing are great for building awareness but not necessarily trust. Many overseas consumers will check out your social media presence before buying from you, and they also prefer to buy from brands with a presence on local platforms. Especially keen social media users are buyers in Southeast Asia and Latin America where a third of e-commerce sales start.<sup>9</sup>

Instant communication via social media and messaging apps are key things to factor in when selling abroad. Make sure you can respond to customers in real time.

Create content that's local on Facebook and Instagram. Set up a review system to collect reviews in multiple languages – these reviews will then read to Google as 'fresh content' which will help your site and listings rank higher.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.future-of-ecommerce.com/the-e-commerce-2017-top-ten/>





## Next steps?

Once you're confident about the market for your products, launch a local version of your own webstore. Use low risk retention marketing such as affiliate, retargeting, email and social to build reputation and ramp up your mobile marketing (m-commerce made up almost 60% of all digital sales last year) and use paid advertising to boost site traffic.<sup>10</sup> Make sure you find a trusted logistics partner. Look out for established providers – many are expanding globally to fuel demand – and they could be opening facilities in your selected area.



<sup>10</sup> <https://retail.emarketer.com/article/mobile-driving-retail-ecommerce-sales-worldwide/5a6f89f5ebd40008bc791221?ecid=NL1014>



## Connect and optimise the world's commerce

At ChannelAdvisor we help clients make a successful transition into cross-border trade. We support Amazon and eBay, plus hundreds more overseas channels – so we're perfectly positioned to help you manage your inventories across multiple channels. If you're thinking about taking your business overseas, drop the UK ChannelAdvisor team a line at [sales@channeladvisor.co.uk](mailto:sales@channeladvisor.co.uk) – or call us on 0203 014 2700.



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