Digital transformation projects are inherently complex — even more so when combined with cross-border eCommerce goals. This checklist provides the main steps in a global eCommerce expansion as a starting point for this journey.

### Cross-border eCommerce: A checklist for international growth

Getting your goals right from the beginning is the cornerstone of a successful international expansion. Shortlist countries/regions as potential expansion targets. Research market growth, digital maturity, localization needs, logistics, regulatory requirements, international payments and currency conversion. Select the countries/regions to expand into. Collect expectations and ideas on how the company will handle cross-border operations, people and technology.

### Strategy and Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Define the cross-border strategy</th>
<th>2. Assess your current capabilities</th>
<th>3. Assess your technology ecosystem</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting your goals right from the beginning is the cornerstone of a successful international expansion.</td>
<td>Assess what capabilities are required to bring your cross-border strategy to life.</td>
<td>Audit your current capabilities to determine what’s working and what’s not — and if you need a complete tech overhaul.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Define the vision and goals of a global expansion.</td>
<td>Identify local payment methods, including payment reconciliation and currency conversions.</td>
<td>Map the existing tech ecosystem to common capabilities required in cross-border eCommerce, e.g., local payment methods and localized marketing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shortlist countries/regions as potential expansion targets.</td>
<td>Evaluate partnerships with third-party logistics or local carriers for distribution.</td>
<td>Evaluate if the platform can scale and support multi-site/multi-language eCommerce.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research market growth, digital maturity, localization needs, logistics, regulatory requirements, international payments and currency conversion.</td>
<td>Establish a product assortment and sourcing strategy.</td>
<td>Evaluate if the commerce platform is flexible enough to add and customize new features and touchpoints specific to locales.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Select the countries/regions to expand into.</td>
<td>Define a customer support strategy and outsourcing options.</td>
<td>Identify customizations, integrations and extensions not covered by the current platform.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collect expectations and ideas on how the company will handle cross-border operations, people and technology.</td>
<td>Identify regulatory requirements relevant to your business.</td>
<td>Assess tech options and solutions to fill out potential gaps.</td>
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<td>Evaluate partnerships with best-of-breed experts to plug into the ecosystem and deliver the missing capabilities.</td>
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## Localization and Operations

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<th>4. Delve deeper into your selected markets</th>
<th>5. Define an operational model to build and run technology across countries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Now that you have a comprehensive strategy and tech assessment, become an expert in your chosen expansion targets. Also, evaluate how much to localize your brand, products, distribution channels and operations.</td>
<td>Set up your cross-border eCommerce operations and core responsibilities between local and centralized teams.</td>
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</table>

- [ ] Assess market maturity and demand for each country/region.
- [ ] Research the digital ecosystem and presence.
- [ ] Research international product restrictions and compliance guidelines.
- [ ] Dive deep into local customer purchasing behavior and expectations.
- [ ] Research local competitors and presence.
- [ ] Select the entry strategy for each country/region between marketplaces, B2B2C and D2C, or a mix of those.
- [ ] Define a pricing strategy, including tax regulations, distribution cost within the country and commission strategy with third-party partnerships.
- [ ] Identify locally relevant digital touchpoints and channels.
- [ ] Define clear ownership and responsibilities between local and centralized teams. For example, local teams can implement payment methods while centralized teams focus on building and scaling capabilities.
- [ ] Define a product-based software delivery model to build customer-centric digital capabilities.
- [ ] Iterate and build incremental value-added features for local customers, if required.
## Rollout and Improvements

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<th>6. Define the rollout strategy</th>
<th>7. Measure, improve, adapt</th>
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<tr>
<td>Plan your rollout step-by-step, selecting one locale as the starting point with an MVP (minimum viable product) approach.</td>
<td>The key to long-term success in cross-border eCommerce is to improve and adapt continuously.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Establish a repeatable framework-based process to launch and scale to new markets.
- Select the first market as the rollout pilot.
- Build the core foundational platform to scale for additional volumes.
- Map and extend capabilities to support localized offerings.
- Align business processes and set up with centralized vis-à-vis market teams.
- Compile lessons learned before moving on to the next locale.

- Define KPIs and measure metrics constantly against goals.
- Collect customer feedback and incorporate it into your key journeys.
- Iterate and experiment often, adapting fast to ever-evolving customers' expectations.
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