

# How To Win More International Customers

Your free guide to breaking down the barriers to winning international customers.



The potential rewards from international eCommerce are massive, but there are plenty of pitfalls to watch out for. From initial research through to identifying the best payment gateway, we look at what it takes to succeed.

# Know your intended target market

Consider who might buy your products or services and where they might be located. Being global is good, but thinking in terms of multiple local markets in key countries is even better.

If you want to dive deeper in your research then perform a gap analysis – is the demand for what you offer already well met by local businesses or other exporters? You could also undertake a SWOT analysis, especially if your products or services may cost more.

Once you're happy that the opportunities are there, then use others to get to know your targets and markets. Establish relationships with relevant websites, influencers and social media exponents.



## Do your research

Which sectors can expect to sell most abroad?

A [2020 Whistl survey](#) found that when it came to products, the most popular international purchases were fashion goods, closely followed by electrical items and accessories. Also popular were household and garden items, as well as leisure and entertainment products such as books, music and games.

Equally, according to [Internet Retailing](#) and a recent REPL survey 88% of consumers are looking for brands that help them make an environmental difference when buying products.

However, you need to carefully consider logistics issues. According to a 2020 survey by [Ware2Go](#), fast shipping beat discounted prices when it came to winning customers.

Meanwhile, a [Whistl](#) study found a range of factors detracted from consumers' cross-border buying experiences. In all, 64% mentioned longer delivery times, 60% were worried by fraudulent or low-quality goods and 51% were concerned about the cost and complexity of returns.



# Take time to make a plan

Now it's time to set your goals, from short- to long-term strategy through to sales and profit expectations. Commit to a budget. Scrutinise your business model. Do you need a separate website, company, or even office?

How about people – do you require more staff in your home country? If you're expecting significant sales, you might require someone on the ground in your most important markets. Any local employees or consultants you take on should understand not just the language but the culture and market, in order to optimise customer appeal.

Once up and running, review everything regularly, from business plan to budget, as well as actual performance of course.



## Get everything ready to sell

Do you need to tweak your products or services to meet local expectations? How does the name translate locally? There are many stories of even the biggest companies making embarrassing mistakes when it comes to marketing their products in unfamiliar territories.

Check if there's anything you need to do to comply with local regulations or any testing to undertake. Some governments require strict legal certification to be in place before you export to their country. You should also adhere to local tax and banking requirements.

Consider some safeguards of your own as well. Copying is an issue in certain markets, so be prepared to safeguard your patents, trademarks and other intellectual property.

As the [Ware2Go](#) survey cited above shows, fast, reliable shipping is a crucial factor for many. So choose wisely, and give your customers options if possible – for many, a longer delivery time is acceptable if the shipping cost is lower.



# Localisation, localisation, localisation

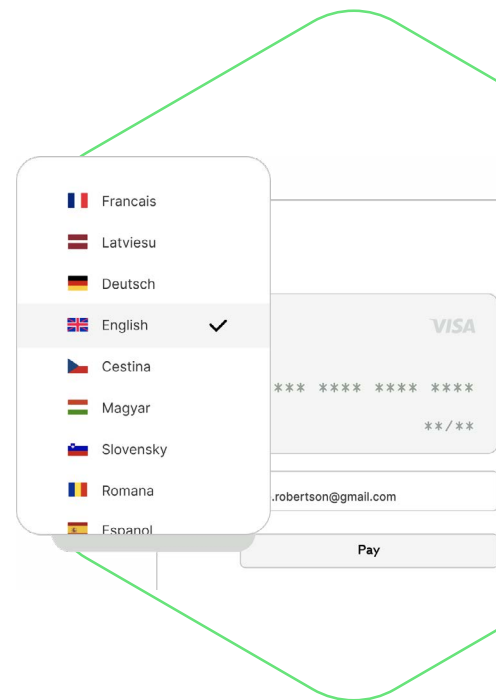
While some potential customers have reasonable English, a lot don't. And even those who speak it are going to feel reassured when they are sold to in their own language – especially when it comes to actually handing over their money.

So localise wherever you can. Translate your website, or at least the relevant parts of it. All currency conversions and local or other taxes should be clearly stated to avoid unpleasant surprises at the checkout – or, even worse, later.

[View our global payments platform here.](#)

Those relationships we mentioned above could also be useful with on-the-ground practicalities such as local postal services.

You can also take advantage of global marketplace platforms to complement your website's shop, or to test the waters. Some, such as Amazon and eBay, are well-known almost everywhere. But if Latin America is your target, then try Mercado Libre, while Tmall is popular in China and Rakuten in Japan.



## Understanding international payments

Any transaction across borders counts as a cross-border payment and being able to accept payments from all the countries you target is a prerequisite.

Your payment service provider (PSP) must provide [a secure global payment gateway](#) between seller and buyer, plus their banks or other providers. Your chosen gateway should also accept many ways of paying. Many buyers prefer to deal in local payment methods, so if you just offer major debit cards or other well-known options you're likely to miss out on sales.

The same goes for currencies – shoppers want to see what it will cost them in their own currency. To many, it's a worry if they only see exactly what a purchase has cost them once the transaction has gone through.

There are concerns for sellers as well. International payments generally take two to five days to clear – the more financial institutions involved the longer it takes. Current initiatives to speed up the process include SWIFT gpi (Global Payments Innovation).





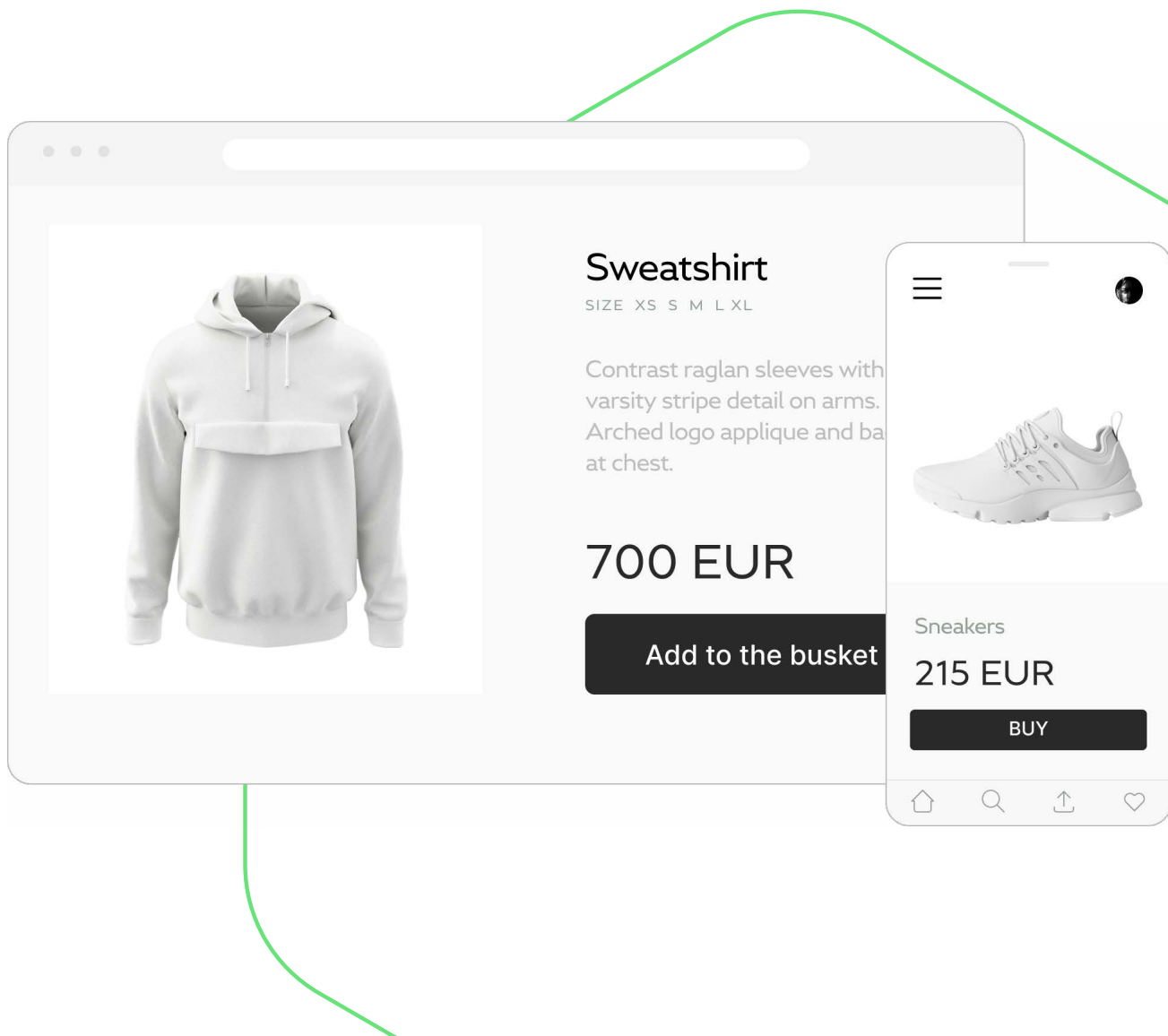
# How to choose the right PSP

Whatever progress is made, you'll want a PSP that can transfer your payments as quickly and efficiently as possible, and is equipped to take advantage of any measures to make the process smoother and quicker. They should also be 100% transparent about any transaction and foreign exchange fees.

You should similarly be aware of the main cross-border regulations for the countries you'll be dealing with most. For EU members, PSD2 and 3DS2 are the key directives. These are designed to make payments safer and your PSP should be following them in full.

Costs are also a prime consideration. There are usually several factors to consider, including the initial set-up fee and the transaction cost, with some PSPs also charging monthly fees. Many PSPs charge a small fixed monthly fee for a set maximum of transactions; any further transactions above that will be at a slightly higher rate.

Remember that your sellers will likely be using a variety of payment methods, so check what prospective PSPs charge for different ones. Try also to work out your probable volume of transactions – and look for a PSP that will be flexible and responsive to your changing business.



# Find out more now

To talk to one of our payment solutions experts, please call **+44 (0) 208 0682591** / email [help@fondy.eu](mailto:help@fondy.eu) or contact us via our [website](#).

[You can also read more about our global payments offering.](#)

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Working with start-ups to global enterprises and everyone in between, our experts can propose solutions for any type of business, whatever the sector, to ensure optimal sales and service up-time. That means our customers can focus on keeping their customers happy, and growing the business they love.



FONDY LTD, 40 Gracechurch Street,  
London, EC3V 0BT, England

Web: [www.fondy.io](http://www.fondy.io)