



How To Build Your International Go-To-Market Strategy

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What's Your International Go-to-Market Strategy?

Is your tech company looking to launch new products or services? Are you ready to launch your established product or service to new international markets or verticals? Have you struggled with international sales?

Selling to new markets is challenging.

You work in tech. You develop your products and services in an agile environment. But beyond that, rapid feedback cycles seem to slow.

Where many B2B companies need rapid market feedback is where it's least found — in their sales and marketing. There's a lot of experimentation that goes into finding your product-market fit. And if you are targeting different countries, cultures, or continents, that fit can vary. A lot.

Each new geography, each new vertical, each new tech product or service needs its own consideration and planning.

Successful tech companies must approach everything with an agile mindset. Your international go-to-market strategy needs to follow the same pattern of observation, hypothesis, test, and iterate. Then you can identify best practices, which in turn become repeatable, scalable sales processes.

You need to make a plan that allows you to launch in the right place at the right time and quickly to beat the competition to market.

This ebook is designed to give you the ingredients in the recipe for a successful International Go-to-Market Strategy. Fast to market, proven models, low risk.



Step 1

Understand where you are. To get where you want to be.

We begin with a Sales Assessment which allows you to quantifiably examine your current sales and marketing processes. Clarify who's doing what. What's currently working and what still needs work. Truly understand current customer motivation. Use these answers to plan the first three months of your expansion.



Step 2

Look abroad. Get to know your target countries, verticals and profiles.

While the Sales Assessment is highly quantitative, a Market Analysis is fairly qualitative. It lets you predict which markets to branch out to first and which to give a pass. A Market Analysis brings together a mix of in-country market research and interviews with local experts, and then takes your unique value proposition and re-positions it in your new market.



Step 3

People over processes. Build a custom sales team for rapid success.

When you're taking your tech product or service to new markets, you need domain experts who know how to hunt for and close new deals. You need locals already selling in the market. And you need to onboard and arm them with the unique benefits of your tech and with the specific problems you solve for your customers.

Are you ready to turn your tech startup into a scale-up?

And that scale-up into a thriving international enterprise?

Read on to learn how!



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Part I

Sales Assessment

A Sales Assessment assists you in developing and accelerating your existing sales. A Sales Assessment gives you a better understanding of what your customers need and how your current sales process is attending those needs. Then, it helps you develop a repeatable sales model that allows for business development at scale.

A Sales Assessment is about Asking the Right Questions

Your global expansion journey should begin by evaluating what you already have in place and asking a lot of open-ended questions.

Unique Selling Proposition

If you are looking to expand to new global markets or verticals, that means you should already have customers in your home market. Interviewing them is the best way to begin to clarify your unique value — and to help steer your roadmap.

1. Who are your current customers? Can you build branding personas?
2. List the features of your service. Ask them to mark the ones they are using, explain how they're using them, and any benefits they're getting from them.
3. Compare that with your competitors. What are you offering that they're not?
4. What is the argument against your product or service?
5. Create clear, concise statements about your product. Focus on 'you' language and answering 'What's in it for me?' (Make sure to have tech-savvy locals help you develop this in local languages.)
6. Make sure to capture customer success stories that can be used on website and social media as proof of your USP.



Your Current Lead Generation Process

This is the way you are building brand awareness, offering added value, and converting your prospective buyers, with multichannel marketing.

What are you doing right now to generate leads?

What are your current marketing and branding processes?

How are you conveying your USP messaging in different media?

What is your content strategy? How are you measuring channel success?

What can you learn by analysing your lead generation funnel?

What is your pricing strategy? How are you conveying value alongside pricing messaging?



Your Current Sales Process

Working with sales staff and customer support — anyone who interacts with prospects and customers really — this is outlining your current sales process from lead prospecting through onboarding and retention.

What is your current sales pipeline? (Ask your customers to describe their experience here too. See if there are any gaps.)

What tools are supporting your sales process?

What are you measuring? KPIs or OKRs? What aren't you measuring?

Who is managing that process? pricing messaging?

Globalising Your Sales Assessment

When you are looking to reach new verticals or local markets, you have to take what you've learned in your initial sales assessment and apply it to those new audiences. This means you need people already working in those new customer industries or locations to respond to your questions from that new perspective.

Every USP and marketing message must be tailored to these new prospects — and translated for industry and local language and culture.



Your New Opportunity

Before even doing the translation, you need to do your research for these new markets, verticals and locations.

- What is the existing demand in this new market?
- How is our product positioned?
- How can we measure success in this new market?
- Who do we have to sell to this new market? How will we train to sell to this new audience?



Your New Competitive Landscape

- Who are your new competitors?
- How does your product measure against them in the new vertical or market?
- What are the benefits and drawbacks of your product or service within your new target markets?

Following our workshop, we deliver the assessment including a 30-60-90 days plan to cover the gaps and ensure a success market expansion engagement.

Part II

Market Analysis

A Market Analysis helps you determine which new countries, verticals, and profiles to prioritise when you are looking to sell your technology to new markets. Before you invest any resources. A Market Analysis helps make sure you set the right budget for each new market and you justify your predicted return on investment.



Step 1 Market Research and Overview

Just because your tech is thriving in your home market doesn't guarantee your success abroad.

How do you know if there's an opportunity in a new market? How do you know which regions, countries or even cities to target first? What if your product has more opportunity abroad in a new vertical? Market research gives you a unique understanding of the dynamics of new markets and cultures needed to answer these questions.

You need to tap into the local news and trends to gain an understanding of how the new local market is segmented. You need an ally who already has a network of tech leads locally.

And you have to be ready to size up the competition. Online research backed by conversations with locals feed into intelligent competitor comparison grids. Your competitors' profiles can vary by region. You may have to steer your product or service in a different direction or to adapt your branding and messaging in response. That way you don't go into oversaturated markets and you do go after verticals that are ripe for the picking



Step 2 In-Country Expert Interviews

Like all good pre-sales, it starts with a conversation.

To perform a really useful Market Analysis, you should have (preferably face-to-face) interviews with local industry experts and potential customers. You'll gain qualitative insights and start to make sense of the info you gathered in Step One.

As nuances and preferred sales styles matter, this should ideally be done by someone fluent in the local language and local industry. Bonus is that locals already have a rapport with an existing professional network, which makes these conversations more open, honest and productive.



Step 3 Proposition Value

Finally, you turn what you learned in both Step One's research and Step Two's conversations into a fresh understanding of local industry best practices, optimal product positioning, and localised messaging.

This will reveal your global market sweet spot. That's the perfect combo of:

- Country/Region
- Vertical/Company Type
- Customer Profile
- Technology
- Competition

This Market Analysis will enable you to plan a better international product roadmap, target market priorities, and localised business models, as part of your International Go-To-Market Strategy.

Your Market Analysis then steers your coherent, compelling local messaging. It differentiates your product offering. Everything you've learned can then be reused and re-formatted into vertical-specific case studies and landing pages to support your in-country launches.

Part III

How to Build a International Go-To-Market Team

You've been successful in your home market and even have some brand advocates. It's time to create your go-to-market team. You know, the one that truly gets to the crux of local culture and tech sales. A team that understands how to develop a repeatable sales model.



Hiring your first sales folks

When founders — or investors — realise it's time to hand over the sales reins, most often they look to hire a recruiter to search for a VP of Sales who will then hire a team of reps for inside sales, field sales, or both. And then probably some customer support to service those first customers.

This is slow, and becomes an expensive, long-term contractual commitment...

...before you definitely know your product-market fit

...before you know all your verticals

...before you know your target geographies

Maybe even before you know what really motivates your prospects toward Sold.

Add to this, your first founder-driven sales came with your expert tech and domain knowledge. These first hires need to share your technical knowledge.

And they need to come with an existing local tech network.



The unique international sales profile

You're looking for sales reps that enthusiastically combine technical, business and sales savvy. The ability to question and to close. With some creativity and a drive to solve customer problems. This is someone who enjoys the hunt for the right problem-to-tech-solution match. Someone who can build a new brand and service, and not just rely on a known brand to open doors.

When you're looking to expand your business abroad, it's even harder to find this unique sales profile. Most companies make the mistake of transplanting a successful rep to a new country. Or they invest a great deal of time and money into remote recruitment that lacks the subtleties of the job profile defined above. That recruitment certainly doesn't come packaged with ongoing management and a long-term commitment.





Think globally. Sell locally.

What you really need is someone local who already has an understanding of regional nuances. Someone already working in your tech niche. With an existing network to test your local product-market fit. Who can build excitement just based on their reputation. Who can speak the business side of tech too. Who can help you build your full-time team based on that new proven sales strategy.

Then, once you have that right person or team in place, it's time to confirm your market fit and start getting some traction.

It's important to remember that, as a founder, you must actively work hand-in-hand with your local team to help create a replicable sales strategy. Only this will take you from a dozen to hundreds of new deals.

The Simplest Way To Grow Your Tech Business In Europe

More speed. More expertise. Less risk.

Why would we offer the ingredients to our secret recipe? Because, while we think there's a lot of valuable information in this e-book, we believe the most important part of any tech company or sales process is the people. This book comes with decades of experience launching tech companies abroad because that's just what we and our team of sales executives do.

Since 2013, Sales Force Europe has had a full-service strategy to bring your tech company to Europe. We've helped more than 300 tech organisations launch their SaaS, Telco and Consumer Electronics abroad. We have the experience working within local laws and cultures in a way that limits your risk in entering new markets.



We offer a custom mix of all the services above — Sales Assessment, Sales Team Outsourcing, and Marketing Analysis — plus we offer very successful Lead Generation and Inside Sales. We work with you to build a customised international go-to-market strategy. And then we have regional management to help see it through.

Our sales execs each have at least ten years selling tech in their local markets. They already have a network of local tech buyers. So they understand what motivates your new customer base. This allows you to quickly:

- leverage their existing networks
- test your product-market fit
- develop a reproducible local sales funnel

The average time it takes for most tech companies to hire sales employees abroad is six months.

Sales Force Europe does it in a month.



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