



# Global commerce expansion

Your UK brand's guide to internationalisation,  
tariffs, and localisation in 2025

# Introduction



With US tariffs reshaping the global trade landscape and UK brands looking beyond domestic markets for growth, understanding the complexities of cross-border expansion has never been more critical.

This guide explores three areas: exploring global opportunities, navigating new US tariffs, and developing effective localisation strategies.

It captures insights from three leading e-commerce partners who specialise in different aspects of international retail expansion.

Each brings unique expertise that collectively addresses the full spectrum of global commerce challenges.

Ingrid focuses on delivery optimisation strategy, as they help brands navigate cross-border shipping challenges, carrier integrations, high delivery costs, and customer expectations across markets.

Their expertise is particularly valuable in understanding how delivery preferences vary dramatically between regions and how to build trust through localised logistics solutions.

Global-e provides comprehensive cross-border e-commerce solutions, specialising in tax and duty management, compliance, and market-specific localisation.

Their end-to-end platform enables brands to present localised shopping experiences while navigating the complex regulatory landscape of international trade, including the evolving US tariff environment.

Swanky brings expertise in technical implementation and platform optimisation, particularly around Shopify-based global expansion, localisation strategies, and maintaining brand consistency across multiple markets.

Together, these three partners form a complementary ecosystem.

Global-e handles the regulatory and payment complexities, Ingrid optimises shipping revenue and delivery experience, and Swanky ensures technical implementation and customer experience excellence.

This collaborative approach allows brands to tackle international expansion holistically rather than addressing each challenge in isolation.

The following insights address the key challenges and opportunities facing retail brands currently navigating international expansion.

From established players reconsidering their strategies to emerging brands evaluating their first international markets.

# Internationalisation





Q: According to Global-e, which global markets present growth opportunities for brands?

Retailers who can effectively tailor their offerings to local markets are best positioned to sell online and scale their e-commerce business in regions with positive economic growth and emerging opportunities.

Europe showed strong growth in 2024, making it an important opportunity for brands. Italy and Spain have shown impressive year-over-year (YoY) growth rates of 14% and 11% respectively.

Beyond established markets, Europe's emerging economies have opened up particularly interesting opportunities, with Poland showing notable 22% YoY growth.

The Gulf region is an additional promising area for expansion, with the UAE and Saudi Arabia presenting impressive YoY growth of 16% and 6% respectively.

These examples highlight the diverse potential available for brands seeking to expand their global footprint.

Q: What are Swanky's recommendations on using SEO to validate international markets?

By using SEO as a research method — not just a marketing tactic — you can make data-driven decisions about which international markets are viable for expansion and where to prioritise your localisation efforts.

For example, keyword data, like search volume and competition scores, can reveal how and where potential customers are searching for your products or services.

It can help you understand search demand, local terminology, and consumer intent.

Ultimately, you have insight into which global markets show strong interest and may be worth pursuing.

Otherwise, analysing regional search trends, competitor visibility and the performance of any existing localised content can further validate market potential.

Look for signs of consistent interest over time, gaps in the competitive landscape, or areas where your current site is already attracting international traffic.

## Q: How does Swanky leverage Shopify for efficient international growth?

Leveraging Shopify for efficient international growth involves a strategic, phased approach that balances agility with scalability.

For many brands, one of the most effective ways to begin this process is by using Shopify Markets, a native Shopify feature designed to simplify international selling.

A self-managed solution, it allows brands to localise the customer experience for international shoppers from a single store. It is a low-risk, low-cost tool for testing and validating new geographic regions before committing significant resources.

Once you've identified strong performance and clear market fit in a specific region, the next step is to invest in an expansion store. This is a separate Shopify store that functions independently of other expansion stores in a multi-store architecture.

Expansion stores offer greater flexibility for managing region-specific content, merchandising strategies, localised marketing campaigns, and fulfilment logistics. They give teams the autonomy to act on insights unique to each market, ultimately enhancing customer relevance and conversion.

However, this increased flexibility brings challenges with multi-store management, particularly the increased resources required to maintain additional storefronts.

To mitigate complexity and greatly reduce development and maintenance overheads, Swanky has developed an innovative multi-store codebase solution.

It allows for localised content and functionality, giving local e-commerce teams the ability to deploy region-specific content and campaigns, while protecting the integrity of the core store codebase. This has transformed how international retailers approach global selling on Shopify.

## Q: What carrier strategy Ingrid recommends when entering new markets?

Use a multi-carrier approach rather than relying on a single delivery option. For each new market, Ingrid provides a curated list of multiple carriers and delivery options to choose from.

Delivery preferences vary widely between markets where mainland Europe is a lot more accustomed to out-of-home deliveries (OOH), such as parcel lockers and pickup points, than the UK, for example. Using local last mile carriers is a lot more effective in boosting trust and conversion.

If you don't have a local warehouse, providing a strong tracking experience becomes even more crucial. Relying solely on carrier tracking for international shipments often leads to a surge in 'where is my order?' (WISMO) inquiries.

There's typically a long gap between when the order is placed and when the last-mile carrier takes over, leaving customers without updates for days. By using solutions like Ingrid, you can initiate the tracking journey as soon as the order is placed, helping reduce WISMO requests by 80% on average.

Optimise delivery performance while maintaining flexibility to adjust your strategy based on real market feedback. Ingrid provides A/B testing tools and insights to build a data-driven delivery strategy for cross-border growth, including an app designed exclusively for Shopify. Read more [in this story](#).

#### Experiment continuously

Conduct A/B testing in new geographies to determine which carriers and delivery options perform best.

#### Integrate with multiple carriers

Never enter a new market with only one delivery option — diversification is essential for success.

#### Adapt as you go

Use agility tools to quickly adapt your delivery strategy based on performance data and fluctuating costs.

#### Offer transparency

Show real-time delivery promises based on carrier availability for higher conversion and improved customer experience.



# Tariffs



## Q: According to Swanky, how do tariffs change customer service and communications?

With the ongoing uncertainty around tariffs, it's now more important than ever to be transparent when communicating with your customers.

Be upfront and honest about the impact that tariffs are having on costs and fulfilment timelines. Keeping shoppers in the dark can lead to frustration and quickly erode trust.

Use dynamic, location-based messaging on your website, as well as email and social media, to keep consumers informed of any changes to pricing and delivery. We recommend A/B testing your messaging to determine which approach resonates best with your audience.

Transparency shouldn't stop at checkout. Keep customers updated throughout the post-purchase journey, including order dispatch and estimated delivery date. Communicate details of any delays clearly and promptly to manage expectations.

Prioritising customer service is essential in a time of ongoing volatility. Shoppers are understandably confused about tariffs, and how you handle their enquiries can significantly influence both conversion and retention.

Fast, empathetic and honest communication from your customer service team can help boost consumer confidence and nurture long-term loyalty.

Automation and AI can streamline customer service operations, minimising manual admin and driving customer satisfaction at scale. Solutions that offer pre-built responses to FAQs help reduce repetitive tasks, speed up response times, and ensure consistent, high-quality service.

E-commerce brands selling in the US can learn more on this topic in Swanky's article about [navigating tariffs](#).

## Q: How can Ingrid help with tariffs and their implications for international businesses?

Ingrid helps businesses navigate tariff challenges through built-in agility.

When costs increase due to tariffs, we enable agile pricing and cost management. As soon as tariffs impact your operations, we help you adjust shipping prices accordingly.

It's important to understand that although changing tariffs represent potential temporary losses, we expect these fluctuations regularly, so today's unfavourable conditions may benefit you tomorrow.

Working with a well-established online book retailer, we found order fulfilment inefficiencies and helped the brand implement streamlined workflows for shorter delivery times.

Our team recommends staying agile with fulfilment costs by using available tools to adapt to changing markets.

While measures exist for dramatic scenarios, tariffs generally don't significantly affect this part of the delivery chain.

## Q: What about transfer pricing implications?

The tariff situation becomes more complex when transfer pricing rules between countries come into play, ensuring profits are taxed in the right jurisdiction.

For example, if a brand establishes a US legal entity that purchases wholesale and resells at manufacturer's suggested retail price (MSRP), the profit remains and gets taxed in the US.

Other costs — like design, marketing and overhead — stay in the original country, like the UK. This structure effectively shifts profit away from the home market, draining the UK company's resources.

We've seen this risk with the online bookstore retailer we work with. When they expanded into Norway, they found that companies using this model risked starting to leak money to the US, which could potentially make their home market unprofitable.

## Q: How does Global-e help retailers adjust their e-commerce setup amidst shifting US tariffs?

Our key focus is helping retailers maintain both sales and margins to the US amidst the shifting tariff landscape, enabling informed decisions about their e-commerce setup and optimal business solutions.

By analysing the potential tariff impact based on products' country of origin (COO) and average order value (AOV), we advise retailers on the most effective duty and shipping proposition.

Global-e makes tailored recommendations on pricing inclusive of duties, presenting duties as additional checkout cost with pre-payment, and so on.

We provide retail clients with simulations showing impact of changes to determine the optimal route for clearing goods to the US based on COO.

Retailers can leverage Global-e's multiple operational solutions and services to minimise tariff impact, reduce duty costs, and maintain competitive pricing.

This includes our 3B2C service, enabling retailers to import goods into the US at intra-company prices without establishing physical warehouses or moving stocks.

## Q: How does Global-e help retailers stay ahead of changing trade regulations?

Global-e's team of tax and duty specialists continuously monitors regulatory changes, de minimis shifts, and local VAT reforms.

Updates are deployed to Global-e's tax and duty calculator in real time, ensuring accurate calculation while avoiding unnecessary costs and maintaining compliance with no hassle.

We provide our retail clients with ongoing updates on all import and tax regulation changes.

Global-e analyses the impact of these changes and provides affected retailers with tailored support in swiftly adjusting their pricing and duty proposition.

This way, our clients maintain optimal customer experience and margins while remaining compliant.



# Localisation





Q: How does Global-e enable brands to localise their offering for every region?

Through Global-e's end-to-end solution, retailers can effectively localise customer experience and tailor it to market-specific preferences.

Our unique data-backed market expertise helps retailers to optimise their proposition per market, drive conversions, and boost profitability.

Localising the customer journey includes real-time multi-currency pricing and duty/tax calculation tailored to AOV and local market practices, such as tax-inclusive pricing or checkout pre-payment.

We offer over 150 local and alternative payment options. Finally, attractive delivery options and easy local returns complete the experience.

Through our AI product classification tools, we ensure compliance with local import regulations and restrictions, saving brands costly errors.

Another cost saving tool is our duty-drawback service, enabling retailers to recover taxes and duty fees on returns and provide a better experience to their customers.

Through our platforms, brands can quickly adjust their proposition to respond to changes in market dynamics, shifts in consumer trends, or changes to local regulations.

Q: How can Ingrid help with localisation of the delivery proposition?

To adapt quickly to local behaviour in new markets, use tools to develop your localised delivery strategy on the ground. This way, you can respond to local preferences in real time rather than imposing home market assumptions.

What is a delivery strategy? It's a holistic approach to fulfilling customer orders in a specific market, which includes multiple carrier integrations, delivery options, pricing, timing, and tracking, all tailored to local expectations.

Use A/B testing to gather data on customer preferences, benchmark different delivery options, and optimise based on local behaviour patterns.

This data-driven optimisation method ensures your delivery strategy matches what customers in that geography actually want, rather than what worked elsewhere.

Find the right tech and delivery partners that can handle international operations, returns management, and maintain speedy, reliable delivery times.

Ingrid makes sure your team understands and adapts to local market nuances quickly, creating delivery experiences that feel native to every geography.

**Accurate translations** ensure global customers clearly understand product information, pricing and policies, helping you **engage broader audiences** and **remain competitive internationally**. Read more in Swanky's [guide to Shopify translation](#).

#### Poor translation breaks sales

It causes confusion, lost sales, and damaged brand credibility. Translation methods vary in accuracy, localisation, and cost.

#### Human translation

While it's typically more time-consuming and costly, it ensures higher accuracy and quality.

#### Machine translation

A quick and cost-effective method, although the raw output quality may be questionable, as it cannot communicate cultural and linguistic nuances.

#### Machine translation post-editing (MTPE)

In a mix of machine and human translation, content runs through machine translation, then gets edited by a native speaker for natural output. It produces quality translation with local nuances without the cost or time of full human translation.

# Complex challenges and unprecedented opportunities



In 2025, the landscape of global retail expansion presents both unprecedented opportunities and complex challenges.

As evidenced by industry insights, successful expansion requires a sophisticated, multi-faceted approach that addresses logistics, compliance, technology, and customer experience simultaneously.

Several emerging themes will shape how brands approach international expansion.

**Agility is essential.** Whether responding to tariff changes, adapting to local preferences, or adjusting fulfilment strategies, brands must build flexibility into international operations from the outset.

The ability to quickly pivot pricing, delivery options, and positioning based on real-time data is no longer optional — it's a competitive necessity.

**Local expertise drives success.** Every market has unique challenges, from Europe favouring OOH delivery to Australia's promotion-driven culture.

Brands that adapt to local behaviours, rather than impose domestic strategies, consistently outperform those that don't.

**Tech integration is key.** The complexity of managing multiple carriers, currencies, tax regimes, and customer service channels across different markets make sophisticated technology solutions non-negotiable.

The most successful brands leverage integrated platforms that can handle these complexities while maintaining operational efficiency.

**Diversification mitigates risk.** International diversification allows brands to capitalise on positive growth trends in some regions while offsetting challenges in others.

It builds resilience against localised disruptions from tariffs, economic conditions, or regulatory changes.

**Partnerships enable scale.** The expertise required for successful international expansion — from duty optimisation to carrier selection to customer service localisation — is too broad for most brands to develop internally.

Strategic partnerships with specialised providers enable brands to access world-class capabilities without building these competencies in-house.

Looking ahead, the brands that will thrive internationally are those who recognise that each market requires thoughtful adaptation while maintaining core brand values.

These retailers approach global expansion as a long-term strategic capability rather than a series of tactical market entries.



Ingrid fixes everything that's wrong with delivery for retailers and shoppers. The delivery experience platform that grows conversion and loyalty while increasing shipping revenue and profitability.

[ingrid.com](https://ingrid.com)



Global-e simplifies global e-commerce, removing barriers between merchants and consumers, creating a seamless local experience for online buyers and sellers anywhere in the world. The chosen partner of brands and retailers across the US, Europe and Asia, Global-e sets the standard of global e-commerce.

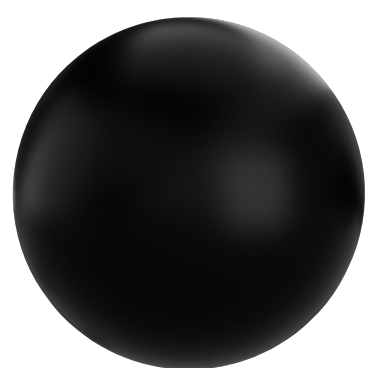
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Swanky is a leading Shopify Plus agency with offices in the UK, Australia, and France. A certified Shopify Platinum Partner, they create exceptional digital experiences using best-in-class ecommerce technology, and help brands grow with data-driven strategy.

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