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INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION ADVISORY & EXECUTION

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FOR 2027 EXPANSION PLANS

Where, When, How:
The 2027 Market Entry Playbook

The core questions to answer before committing time, capital and attention to a new market

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Contents

01 Introduction

Why market entry is a sequence of connected decisions

02 Market entry strategy

Where decisions break down, five core choices, three stages

03 Where to enter

Four tests for choosing the market

04 When to enter

Readiness, and first mover against fast follower

05 How to enter

Matching the entry mode to the strategic constraint

06 Localisation and market fit

What to adapt across six areas

07 Go-to-market

How demand is created, converted and retained

08 Controlling the downside

When to continue, adjust, pause or exit

The playbook on one page: five choices, one decision system

01 · WHERE

Where to enter

KEY QUESTION

Which market offers the strongest demand, access and fit?

DECISION RULE

Choose the market that passes all four tests: customer fit, demand evidence, accessibility and commercial feasibility.

02 · WHEN

When to enter

KEY QUESTION

Are product, team and capital ready at the same time?

DECISION RULE

Move when all three are ready, and weigh first-mover upside against the cost of waiting.

03 · HOW

How to enter

KEY QUESTION

Which constraint matters most for this market?

DECISION RULE

Let the constraint choose the mode: speed, customer ownership, local capability or scale.

04 · ADAPT

What to adapt

KEY QUESTION

What must change for the offer to fit locally?

DECISION RULE

Adapt only what relevance, compliance and adoption require, across six areas.

05 · REACH

How to reach customers

KEY QUESTION

How will demand be created, converted and kept?

DECISION RULE

Fit channels to local buying habits, platforms and rules, and manage every hand-off.

Then control the downside: set review points early, and continue, adjust, pause or exit on evidence, not momentum.

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Market entry is rarely a single choice. It is a sequence of connected decisions about where to enter, when to move, how to enter, what to adapt and how much risk to carry.

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↑ CONTENTS

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Entry decisions break down across five connected areas, not one error



Market-entry decisions rarely break down because of one isolated error. More often, gaps emerge across five connected areas: demand, timing, localisation, resources and entry mode. When these areas are assessed separately, decision-makers may form an incomplete view of the opportunity and the commitments required to pursue it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Weakness in one area affects the others, so each decision should be reviewed as part of the same system.

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A market entry strategy connects five core choices

01 · MARKET | 02 · TIMING | 03 · ENTRY MODE | 04 · ADAPTATION | 05 · CUSTOMER ACCESS

Where to enter

Choose the market and customer segments with the strongest demand, accessibility and fit.

When to enter

Confirm that market conditions and internal readiness support the move.

How to enter

Select the entry mode that best balances speed, cost, control and risk.

What to adapt

Decide what must change across the offer, pricing, messaging and customer experience.

How to reach customers

Define how marketing, sales, partners and distribution will generate demand and conversion.

Market entry becomes actionable when selection, timing, adaptation and customer access are considered together.

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Market entry is planned in three stages: evaluate, shape, then launch

01 · EVALUATE | 02 · SHAPE | 03 · LAUNCH

Evaluate the opportunity

Identify markets with credible demand, accessible customers and a realistic path to commercial evidence. Confirm the opportunity fits the company's capabilities before committing resources.

IN SHORT

Select + assess

Shape the entry strategy

Choose the entry mode that provides the right balance of speed, control, cost and risk. Define the adaptations required to make the offer commercially relevant and operationally viable.

IN SHORT

Choose + adapt

Launch, learn and refine

Enter the market with clear performance indicators and review points. Use early evidence to scale what works, adjust weak assumptions or reconsider the direction.

IN SHORT

Launch + review

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Four tests decide where to enter: fit, demand, access and economics

01 Customer fit

Assess whether the priority segment has a relevant problem and recognises the value of the offer. Product-market fit at home may not transfer across borders unchanged.

KEY QUESTION

Does the target customer have a clear reason to choose this offer?

02 Demand evidence

Look for signals that demand is active, measurable and able to become repeatable. Market size alone does not show whether customers are ready to buy.

KEY QUESTION

What evidence shows demand beyond general market potential?

03 Market accessibility

Consider how easily customers, partners and channels can be reached. Regulation, competition, procurement practice and local infrastructure shape the practical route in.

KEY QUESTION

Can the market be entered and served without disproportionate friction?

04 Commercial feasibility

Test whether the opportunity supports sustainable economics once entry costs, adaptation and ongoing operations are counted.

KEY QUESTION

Can the market earn an acceptable return without indefinite support from elsewhere?

SOURCE: Metheus Market Entry Guidebook, market selection framework

Regulation and payment habits change what market entry requires

WHAT IT MEANS *Treat local payment methods and certification deadlines as launch requirements, not later fixes.*

LOCAL PAYMENT PRACTICE

Netherlands



71%

of Dutch online purchases were paid with iDEAL in 2025, far ahead of credit cards at 8%.

MARKET-ACCESS REGULATION

Indonesia



17 Oct 2028

Halal certification becomes mandatory for cosmetics and supplements, two years later than planned.

CUSTOMER PAYMENT BEHAVIOUR

Germany



45%

of payments in Germany were made in cash in 2025, still the most used method but down from 51% in 2023.

SOURCE: Betaalvereniging Nederland, online payments 2025; Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs, Indonesia (16 Oct 2026); PP 40/2026; Deutsche Bundesbank, Payment behaviour in Germany in 2025

Timing is right when product, team and capital are all ready

01

Product readiness

Confirm that the offer is proven and adaptable for the new market.

- ☑ Demand has been validated in the current market
- ☑ The product can accommodate essential local changes
- ☑ Delivery and support standards can be maintained

KEY QUESTION

Is the offer ready to generate reliable evidence in a new market?

02

Team readiness

Assess whether the organisation has the ownership and capacity to execute.

- ☑ Clear responsibility for the market has been assigned
- ☑ Key teams have enough capacity to support entry
- ☑ Decisions can be made without prolonged internal friction

KEY QUESTION

Can the team manage expansion without distracting from the core business?

03

Capital readiness

Determine whether the business can fund entry and early-stage learning.

- ☑ Entry and adaptation costs are fully understood
- ☑ Sufficient capital is available for early uncertainty
- ☑ The existing business will not be placed under pressure

KEY QUESTION

Can the business absorb a slower or more expensive entry than expected?

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Timing reflects opportunity strength, readiness and the cost of waiting

OPTION A

First mover

Potential advantage

Earlier access to customers, partners and category position.

Strategic value

Greater opportunity to shape the market.

EXPOSURE

Higher uncertainty and execution exposure.

OPTION B

Fast follower

Potential advantage

More evidence, lower education costs and fewer unknowns.

Strategic value

Opportunity to learn from earlier entrants.

EXPOSURE

Risk of weaker positioning or reduced access.

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Entry mode should follow the strategic constraint, not the default model

QUESTION 01

Rapid access

Is rapid market access the priority, with limited upfront commitment?

ENTRY MODES

Digital entry or reseller

QUESTION 02

Customer ownership

Is direct ownership of the customer relationship strategically essential?

ENTRY MODES

Direct sales or local office

QUESTION 03

Local capability

Does execution depend on local capabilities or relationships that cannot be built quickly?

ENTRY MODES

Strategic partner or joint venture

QUESTION 04

Immediate scale

Does the value of immediate scale justify the capital and integration exposure?

ENTRY MODES

Acquisition

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Disclosure and point-of-sale rules reshape how products are presented

WHAT IT MEANS *Check labels, claims and point-of-sale information market by market before stock is produced.*

MISLEADING PRODUCT PRESENTATION

Japan



Japan prohibits packaging and advertising representations that could mislead consumers about a product's quality, content or price.

COSMETICS INGREDIENT DISCLOSURE

South Korea



Specified fragrance allergens must be individually disclosed on cosmetic packaging rather than listed only as “fragrance”.

PRODUCT PRESENTATION REQUIREMENT

France



Selected electrical and electronic products must display a repairability or durability score close to the price, in stores and online.

SOURCE: Consumer Affairs Agency, Japan; Ministry of Food and Drug Safety, South Korea; Ministry for Ecological Transition, France. Links in the source list

Six localisation decisions determine what market fit requires



Product

Determine which product changes are required to meet local demand, regulation and delivery conditions.



Pricing

Align pricing architecture with local purchasing power, competitive benchmarks and the economics required for sustainable growth.



Payments

Support locally trusted payment methods without weakening conversion, cash flow or operational control.



Packaging

Adapt packaging to meet local labelling, disclosure and presentation requirements without diluting brand integrity.



Language

Define how language, terminology and support must adapt to preserve clarity, trust and commercial relevance.



Customer experience

Adapt the buying journey, onboarding and support model to meet local expectations without adding unnecessary complexity.

Localisation can reshape the product, pricing, payments, packaging, language and customer experience.

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Go-to-market must reflect buying preferences, platforms and local rules

WHAT IT MEANS *Sell where customers already buy, and check who may legally promote you before briefing creators.*

CONVERSATIONAL COMMERCE

Brazil



49%

of Brazilian enterprises made online sales through messaging apps such as WhatsApp in 2024, down from 55% in 2023.

LOCAL PLATFORM DOMINANCE

Thailand



54 million

monthly active LINE users in Thailand as of March 2026, more than 80% of the population.

INFLUENCER ELIGIBILITY

United Arab Emirates



Advertiser Permit

required for individuals advertising through social media in the UAE, paid or unpaid, subject to specified exemptions.

SOURCE: Cetic.br, ICT Enterprises 2024; LY Corporation, March 2026; UAE Media Council, Advertiser Permit. Links in the source list

The go-to-market motion connects demand, conversion and retention

01 · AWARENESS | 02 · DEMAND | 03 · SALES | 04 · CONVERSION | 05 · RETENTION

Awareness

Build visibility and relevance among priority customers, creating the conditions for qualified demand.

Demand generation

Convert market interest into identifiable, qualified opportunities with clear commercial potential.

Sales

Move qualified opportunities through a consistent commercial process towards commitment.

Conversion

Remove barriers that prevent qualified customers from progressing towards commitment.

Retention

Strengthen customer value after purchase to support renewal, expansion and advocacy.

The strength of the motion depends on each stage and on the quality of the handoffs between them.

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Local obligations add costs and scrutiny the entry case does not show

WHAT IT MEANS *Price compliance into the business case: reporting, warnings and take-back fees change the margin.*

REPUTATIONAL RISK

Norway



Enterprises covered by the Transparency Act must carry out human-rights and working-conditions due diligence and publish an account of it every year.

COMPLIANCE EXPOSURE

California, USA



Businesses with ten or more employees must warn consumers before exposing them to listed chemicals above the applicable risk thresholds.

UNEXPECTED COST

Chile



Producers and importers of products such as packaging, tyres, electronics and batteries must finance their collection and waste management.

SOURCE: Norwegian Consumer Authority, Transparency Act; OEHHA, Proposition 65; Ministry of the Environment, Chile, Ley REP. Links in the source list

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Review the evidence before deciding to continue, adjust, pause or exit

EVIDENCE TO REVIEW

- ❑ Is customer demand strengthening?
- ❑ Are returns moving towards sustainability?
- ❑ Can the business maintain delivery?
- ❑ Does exposure remain acceptable?

Evidence should inform action early enough to prevent weak signals, rising exposure and untested assumptions from becoming irreversible commitment.

01 **Continue**
Evidence is strengthening.

02 **Adjust**
The opportunity remains credible but requires correction.

03 **Pause**
Evidence or risk does not justify further commitment.

04 **Exit**
The remaining downside exceeds the opportunity.

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Practical questions to review before committing to a new market

01 How do you know demand is strong enough?

Demand is strong enough when interest becomes repeatable, commercially relevant and supported by evidence such as qualified pipeline, conversion signals and early customer commitment.

02 When is a company ready to enter?

Readiness depends on proven product value, sufficient team capacity, capital resilience and a credible route to market, rather than perfect internal certainty.

03 How much should an offer be adapted?

Adapt only what is necessary to support relevance, compliance and customer adoption. The objective is commercial fit without unnecessary complexity or a weaker core offer.

04 When should a company pause or exit?

Pause or exit when evidence weakens, exposure rises and continued investment is no longer supported by credible demand or a realistic path to improvement.

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Readiness scorecard: twelve questions to answer before you commit

HOW TO SCORE 0 = no evidence · 1 = partly true · 2 = true and evidenced. Add up your total out of 24.

01	Target customers have a clear reason to choose our offer over local alternatives.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2	07	Our entry mode matches our main constraint: speed, ownership, capability or scale.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2
02	We have evidence of demand beyond general market potential.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2	08	We know which product, pricing, payment and packaging changes are required.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2
03	We can reach, sell to and serve the market without disproportionate friction.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2	09	We know which channels and platforms local buyers actually use.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2
04	The offer is proven at home and can take the essential local changes.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2	10	Local labelling, advertising and promotion rules have been checked.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2
05	A named owner and team have the capacity to run the entry.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2	11	Local obligations and compliance costs are in the business case.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2
06	We can fund a slower or more expensive entry than planned.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2	12	Review points and continue, adjust, pause or exit criteria are agreed.	❑ 0 ❑ 1 ❑ 2

YOUR SCORE
_____ / 24

0–12 · NOT YET
Close the gaps before committing capital.

13–19 · CLOSE
Test with a limited, reversible entry.

20–24 · READY
Commit, with review points in place.

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How Metheus can help

HOW METHEUS CAN HELP

We help businesses turn expansion ambition into global growth through an evidence-led plan.

We connect market evidence with commercial strategy and execution discipline, so businesses scale with clarity, control and confidence.

01 **Market prioritisation**
Assessing demand, customer fit, competition, accessibility, regulation and commercial feasibility to identify markets with a credible path to growth.

02 **Demand validation**
Testing whether priority customers recognise the problem, value the offer and demonstrate meaningful willingness to engage or buy.

03 **Entry strategy**
Comparing routes such as direct sales, digital entry, partnerships, resellers, local operations, joint ventures and acquisition against speed, control, cost and risk.

04 **Localisation and commercial fit**
Identifying the changes required across product, pricing, payments, messaging, packaging and customer experience without introducing unnecessary complexity.

05 **Go-to-market design**
Defining how awareness becomes qualified demand, how opportunities progress through the commercial process and how customer value continues after purchase.

06 **Execution and review**
Translating the strategy into priorities, ownership, milestones and decision points, then reviewing early evidence to decide whether to continue, adjust, pause or exit.

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Twelve sources stand behind the facts in this playbook

NO.	PUBLISHER	DATASET OR DOCUMENT	PERIOD	USED ON	GRADE	LINK
01	Betaalvereniging	iDEAL share of Dutch online purchases	2025	03	B	betaalvereniging.nl
02	Tilleke & Gibbins	Halal deadline extended to October 2028	OCT 2026	03	B	tilleke.com
03	Deutsche Bundesbank	Payment behaviour in Germany in 2025	2025	03	A	bundesbank.de
04	CAA Japan	Misleading Representations Act	IN FORCE	06	A	caa.go.jp
05	MFDS South Korea	Cosmetics labelling rules	IN FORCE	06	A	mfds.go.kr
06	MTE France	Repairability and durability indices	IN FORCE	06	A	ecologie.gouv.fr
07	Cetic.br	ICT Enterprises 2024 survey, Brazil	2024	07	A	cetic.br
08	LY Corporation	LINE monthly active users, Thailand	MAR 2026	07	B	lycorp.co.jp
09	UAE Media Council	Advertiser Permit guide	IN FORCE	07	A	uaemc.gov.ae
10	MMA Chile	Ley REP: producer responsibility	IN FORCE	08	A	economiacircular.mma.gob.cl
11	OEHHA California	Proposition 65: FAQ for businesses	IN FORCE	08	A	p65warnings.ca.gov
12	Forbrukertilsynet	The Transparency Act	IN FORCE	08	A	forbrukertilsynet.no

A OFFICIAL STATISTICS, AUDITED FILINGS

B REPUTABLE INDUSTRY SOURCE

C ESTIMATE OR SINGLE INTERVIEW: VERIFY

SOURCE: Links open the publisher's page. Grades assigned by Metheus

Forethought, quantified. Growth, evidenced.

Scored under 20 on the readiness scorecard?

Book a 30-minute review →

→ Read client success stories

→ Explore market insights

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