



B2B TRENDS: HOW B2B MARKETERS CAN GO GLOBAL

TOP TIPS FOR EFFECTIVELY EXPANDING YOUR MARKETING TO NEW MARKETS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When a campaign performs brilliantly in one region, other regions will want to replicate it — particularly if colleagues in international offices don't have the same resources. After all, now that buying decisions are online, it's easy to think that reaching new markets is no big deal.

In reality, international marketing is far from easy. A program that drives a ton of business in one market can easily fall flat in another. Worse still, you may even damage your brand or scupper existing deals.

So, what are the steps you should follow before you simply copy and paste your marketing and promote it in another part of the world? To answer this question, ON24 and NetLine sat down with marketing expert Jay Famico, Chief Research Officer at Ironhorse. This report summarizes their thoughts and the input shared by the audience.

Here are a few highlights from the discussion:

GLOBAL MEANS GROWTH

Our experts assure marketers that international marketing — even for small organizations — is more than worth it. To support this, nearly **half (47%) of respondents to an ON24 poll reported success in global efforts.**

Not only that, but data cited by our experts suggests that international markets represent up to **seven times the marketplace opportunity** of the US — as high as **\$9.8 trillion** in Asia.

And, content consumption behaviors can indicate a level of marketplace maturity in international regions. For David at NetLine, around 60% of registration volume originates from outside of the US.

TRANSLATION AND TARGETING ARE TOP CHALLENGES

Despite knowing that international marketing is a natural choice for growing organizations, there are a number of things that can go wrong.

Among B2B marketers surveyed by ON24, some **7 in 10 (69%) shared that translation/localization was a challenge** in starting or running international marketing.

Our experts agreed that international marketing programs have their own special hurdles. Programs that are copied and pasted into new markets without considerations of **local and cultural differences**, for example, are more likely to fall flat or fail. Programs should be adapted for the sake of audiences, and marketers should reconfigure expectations to match likely strategic outcomes.

ACTIONABLE STEPS TO SUCCESS

Our experts are keen to remind marketers that international marketing is not all doom and gloom. They cite real examples of events and programs that have **translated successful formats into new markets.**

B2B marketers responding to an ON24 poll shared that **hiring local talent (57%), using different digital channels (43%) and changing messaging or value proposition (36%)** were top tactics that had worked well for them in their international marketing efforts.

Other actionable steps recommended by our experts include content creation tips, pre-campaign planning, alignment with sales teams and customizing successful content so that it can be repurposed in new markets.

HOW TO LEARN MORE

The webinar generating these insights is always-on and ready to view. [Register now to hear more.](#)

To sign up to future sessions, visit www.on24.com/resources/upcoming-webinars

Tessa Barron, VP Marketing at ON24 and David Fortino, SVP Audience and Product at NetLine would like to thank Jay Famico, Chief Research Officer at Ironhorse for joining the discussion and providing valuable recommendations for today's B2B professionals.

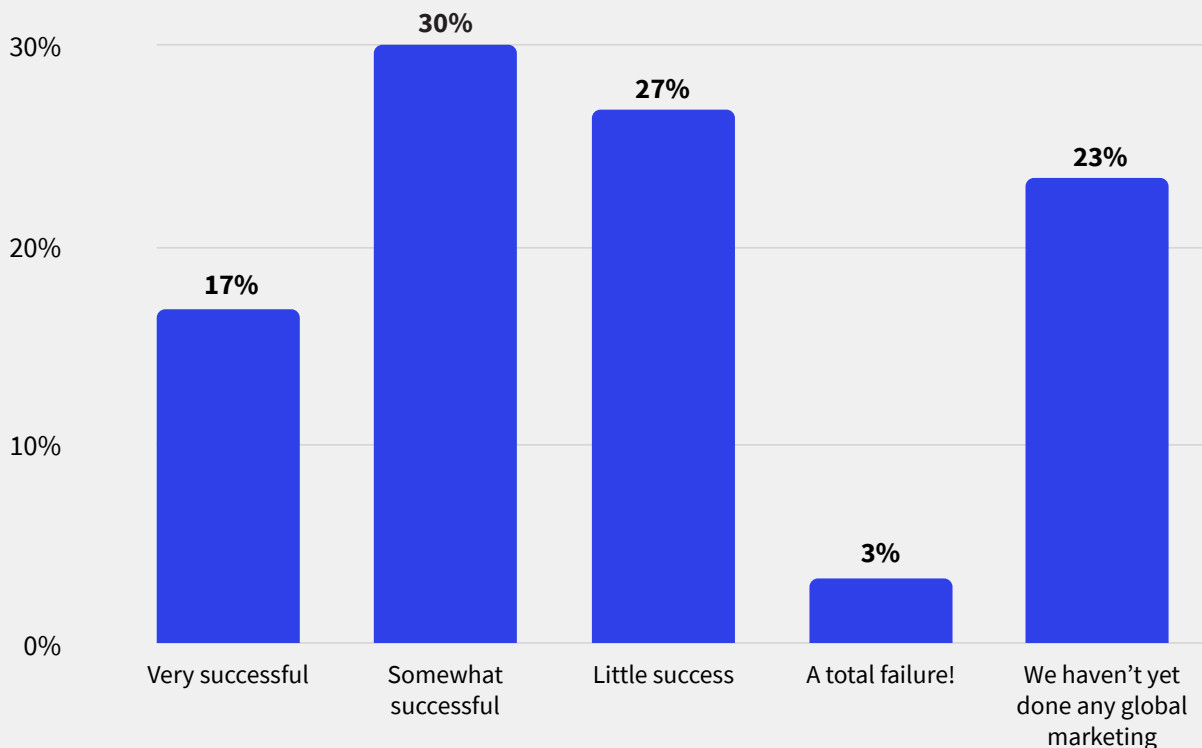
WHY SHOULD B2B MARKETERS GO GLOBAL?

Every organization is different. However, each organization ultimately shares one goal: to grow.

International marketing can help organizations realize that goal. Though it needs to be approached carefully, global marketing is a natural and worthwhile progression for programs that have been a success on a regional level.

In terms of B2B marketers' current approach to going global, respondents to an ON24 poll suggested that marketers are somewhat split down the middle. On the one hand, almost half (47%) of respondents shared that their organization has been very (17%) or somewhat (30%) successful in going global.

HOW SUCCESSFUL HAS YOUR ORGANIZATION BEEN IN GOING GLOBAL?



Respondents: 30

However, a fair share (27%) claimed their company had little to no success in going global. Similarly, about a quarter of respondents said they haven't even done any global marketing (23%).

So, for those marketers who might need convincing that going global is worthwhile, our experts thought about some of the benefits that they have experienced.

Growth over stagnation

In the success of local and regional marketing, it can be easy to get complacent with your organization and marketing team's progress. Not only is it natural that your team should look to avoid stagnation by going global, but it is also to be expected that leadership will encourage international growth.

Jay particularly emphasizes this avoidance of being stagnant that is brought about by going global:

“None of us want to be stagnant. None of us is saying, ‘I only want to grow my organization 3% in revenue this year.’ If we think about it, you have the ability to grow through acquisition, improved productivity, getting new buyers, new offers, or new markets.”

The potential in international markets is evident purely on a numbers level. Jay cites the statistic that in the B2B e-commerce space, the US represented \$1.4 trillion in marketplace opportunity in 2019. Comparatively, in that same time period Asia alone represented \$9.8 trillion in marketplace opportunity. As such, global markets represent a huge source of untapped revenue.

Digital doesn't have borders

Some teams pushing for global marketing might be presented with doubts as to the maturity and level of interest in international markets.

David addresses these doubts from the perspective of NetLine, whose platform hosts more than 13,000 assets (including e-books, whitepapers and webinars) by a few thousand marketers. Despite being based in the US, around 60% of NetLine's registration volume is from outside of the States. David says:

“The web doesn't have borders. If there's great content to be found, people will find it, and the challenge is what you do with that data.”

As such, based on data of this kind, distinctions can start to emerge between, for example, marketers inside companies of 500-plus employees from the UK and Eastern Europe. Despite being the same target demographic on paper, David has found that these groups prioritize different topics, formats and methods of consuming content. Having identified international markets that are showing interest, it's important to be aware of and lean into these differences.

A commitment worth making

On the other hand, it's important to remember that the marketplace opportunity represented in going global comes alongside potentially costly decisions.

Emily notes the elements of international marketing that can have a cost impact, such as office location, different salaries in different markets, and setting up brand awareness. She says:

“It definitely has to be a decision that everyone is aware of in terms of the commitment that you have to make to go into this new market and be successful.”

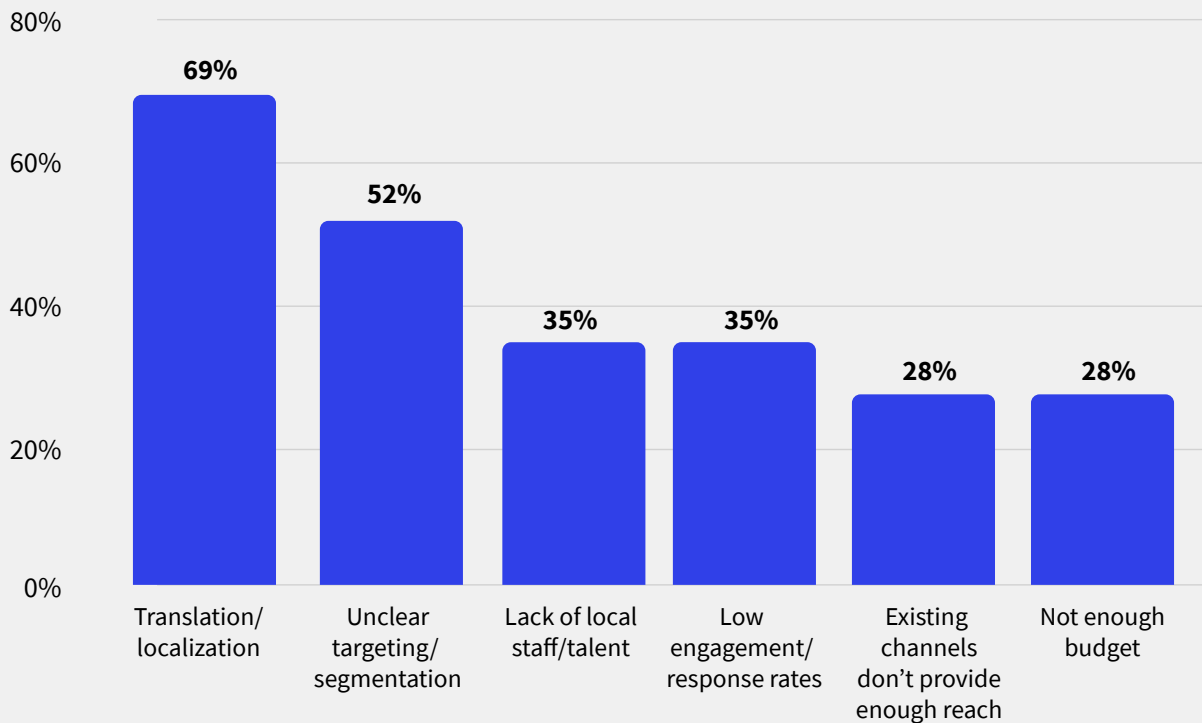
But Emily also emphasizes that in her experience this is a commitment worth making. Not only because of the wealth potential for your organization, but from the perspective of it being a highly enjoyable space to work in.

WHAT CAN GO WRONG WITH INTERNATIONAL MARKETING?

Despite being full of potential, international marketing has its challenges. From cultural and linguistic differences to logistical issues, there are a number of dynamics unique to going global that marketing teams should anticipate.

Indeed, B2B marketers responding to an ON24 poll shared that they had experienced a number of challenges when starting or running international marketing programs. The vast majority (69%) said that translation/localization was a challenge, and half (52%) said the same about unclear targeting/segmentation.

WHAT CHALLENGES HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED IN EITHER STARTING OR RUNNING YOUR INTERNATIONAL MARKETING?



Respondents: 29

Other challenges were in the practical realm, such as lack of local staff/talent (35%), low engagement/response rates (35%), existing channels not providing enough reach (28%) and not enough budget (28%).

To ensure that B2B marketers are not caught off guard in their international marketing efforts, our experts take a deep dive into these challenges.

Cultural sensitivity

Alongside the above respondents who identified localization as a top challenge, our experts agree that cultural sensitivity is a top priority for getting international marketing right.

Jay offers some examples of failed localization that he has experienced first-hand. First, a conference he attended in Germany that carried over the same visual messaging used during its US counterpart. What in the US was easily interpreted as an image of soccer players waving, in Germany read as saluting. This messaging fell flat.

Similarly, Jay remembers a pre-COVID virtual event targeted toward European marketers which constituted the best sessions from a previous event in the US. The concepts discussed were less familiar to European delegates, and in the end, the pipeline opportunities it drove were, in Jay's words, "negligible at best."

As an example from the Middle East region, Emily recalls an event in Dubai whose promotional images featured a Western, Caucasian person, which was not culturally relevant to the event's actual attendees. Emily says:

"Local is much more than just translation. You have to understand the environment, the buyers, and the cultural sensitivities."

Digital faux pas

Organizations are moving further into digital-first marketing after 2020. But the digital space invites specific challenges when it comes to international marketing.

David calls upon a content-centric example that highlights the potential challenges associated with market scoping and expectation setting. A client of NetLine wanted to take a US-centric campaign, targeted at mid-size organizations, and replicate it in Brazil. After the campaign went live, the flow of leads coming from the campaign was much lower than expected.

After some research, the team established that between SMBs and enterprises in Brazil, mid-size companies are relatively non-existent, with less than 1% of companies there classifying as mid-market. As such, the budget and lead-volume expectations that the client had set were not applicable to the campaign. In David's words:

"Here, it was not so much about the creative side, but about really understanding how that market's reality differs from what your perceptions might be."

Not everything translates

Another top challenge is translation. Taken literally, linguistic challenges and issues with translation are easy to come up against, even between countries that speak the same language in the use of idioms or business metaphors.

Emily reminds marketers that local translation is more than just switching a 'z' to an 's' or vice-versa. Often, translation into another language can impact the length of text, and impact design choices associated with copy. And, when those touchpoints become a human dialogue, effort must be made to ensure that both parties can effectively communicate. On this point, Emily says:

"It comes down to your CSM team, or even before that your SDR team. All these other business functions need to be in line with the campaign and ready to pick it up."

As well as this, translation can be thought about more figuratively in terms of the key concepts common to US campaigns that do not apply to international markets. Emily notes that demand gen, while highly familiar to US marketers, is not a job title often found in Europe. These differing personas, as well as buying behaviors, are important to keep in mind when establishing the target audience of international campaigns.

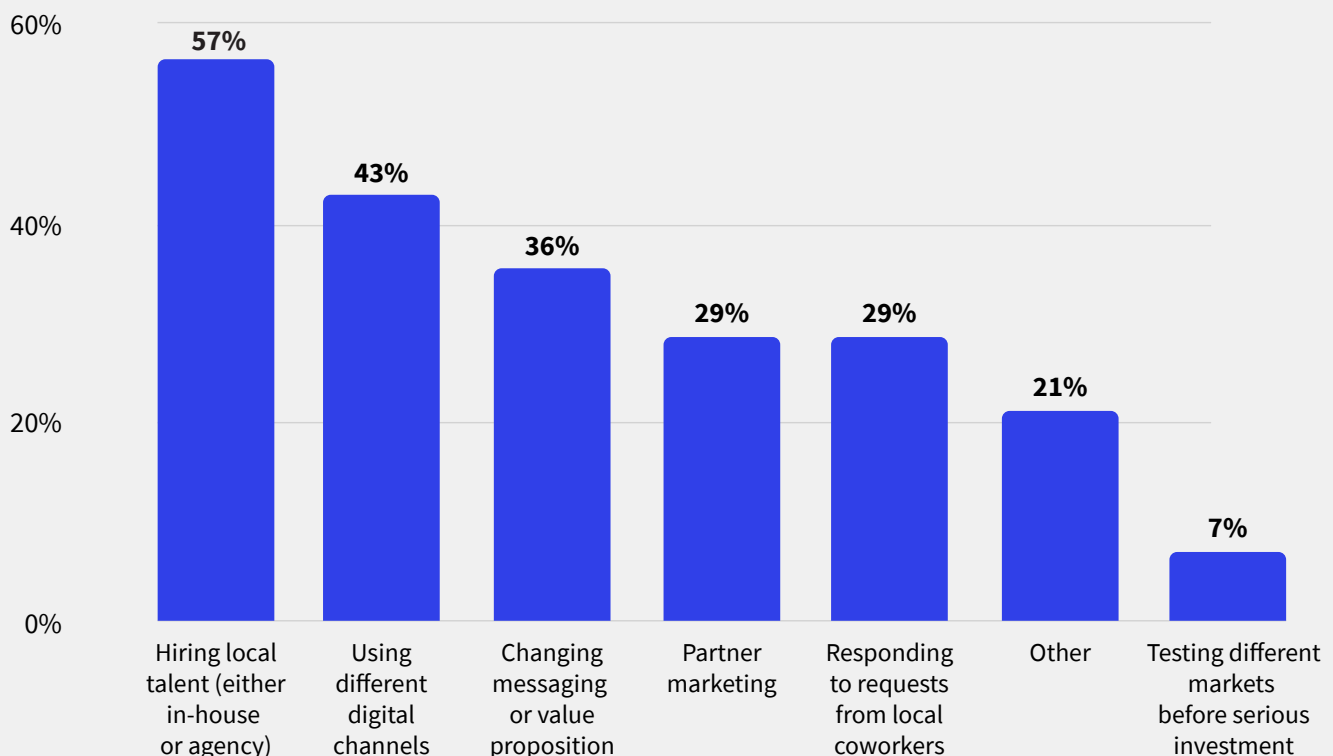
WHAT STEPS SHOULD MARKETERS TAKE WHEN GOING GLOBAL?

Having established the scenarios to avoid when running existing campaigns in new markets, there are a number of practical steps that marketers can take to make sure they get the most out of going global.

As well as some leading examples from our experts, respondents to an ON24 poll shared the approaches that have worked well in their experiences of international marketing. The top tip (57%) among respondents was hiring local talent (either in-house or agency), an approach that would certainly minimize the likelihood of the cultural faux-pas described above.

Other successful tactics have included using different digital channels (43%), changing messaging or value proposition (36%), partner marketing (29%) and responding to requests from local coworkers (29%).

WHAT HAS WORKED WELL FOR YOUR INTERNATIONAL MARKETING?



Respondents: 14

On top of this, our experts discuss successful international marketing programs they have seen, as well as actionable tips for marketers working towards their next international marketing campaign.

Successful events

It's important that international marketing efforts take into account the nuances within different regions. For Jay, an example of this is SiriusDecisions' "forums," half-day sessions that presented a current concept or area of research to 25-50 marketers. The team behind these forums planned ahead based on the knowledge that audience participation in the event was two or three times higher in California than in the UK, and so prepared more presentation content.

Emily cites ON24's Beyond the Webinar as another great example of successful international marketing. After a session by Chief Webinerd Mark Bornstein, Mark handed over to respective presenters in EMEA and APAC as well as North America for a regionally relevant Q&A session.

Practical tips

For marketers wanting to recreate the success of these examples, Jay offers some tactical and operational tips regarding the technology and process of international marketing campaigns. He suggests having a single tool to coordinate content creation that transcends the variety in content processes between regions. Content should also be guided by frequent reviews with regional sales teams and what they need in terms of enablement.

When it comes to making international marketing scalable, Emily recommends a strong campaign architecture that does a lot of planning upfront and maps out where campaigns will be global and local. She says:

“When you're trying to do this afterwards, or as the campaign is being built out, that's when international marketing can feel a little like an afterthought or cause lag between campaigns.”

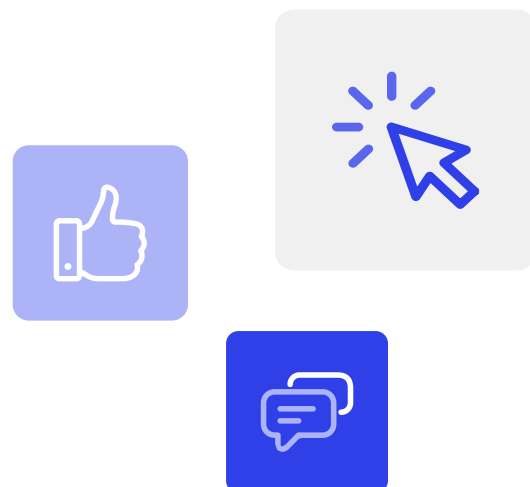
Our experts also recommend captions as a great way to repurpose previously successful video content, as well as other ways to customize simulative sessions such as offering access to the relevant local resources as needed.

Carry success to campaign outcomes

Great international marketing campaigns require valuable time, effort and planning. David says it's important to maintain focus on the outcomes of the campaign that make it all worth it. In David's words:

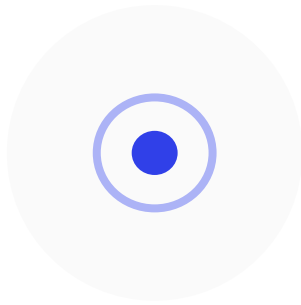
“Spending a ton of time and effort on the campaign intricacies, targeting, tactical execution, creative and so on, none of that really matters if it all fails. And failure largely comes through once things get to human dialogue with SDRs or anyone else downstream.”

David recommends making sure that the sales side is fully bought in and are well versed in the messaging, the creative itself, and, if possible, have a team immersed in that local environment be part of the process.



FINAL TAKEAWAYS

Here are our experts' top tips to take away regarding international marketing.



VALIDATE YOUR MARKET OPPORTUNITY

David's top tip is making the most of the external data points that can identify your organization could be successful in a certain region. Perhaps there are existing competitors who are already validating the need in that marketplace, but David recommends going deeper and understanding the true dynamics of the relevant market.

“It's really important to understand this because it will impact creative as well as the entire downstream process. Without that, you will be executing ill-informed campaigns, and mediocrity is probably going to be the deliverable.”



SQUARE PEG ROUND HOLE

Emily's top takeaway takes us back to the root of discussions of going global — that you and your team can always say no to taking a successful campaign to an international market:

“Sometimes you can't make content global. You can't make it fit into different markets. Have a think about which elements of corporate you do want to bring into your market, and which elements you want to layer on top.”



STAY ALIGNED

Jay's top tip is to be purposeful and aligned within your organization as to how you are approaching international marketing, and to not rush things:

“It's unrealistic that you're going to be able to do every single thing we've discussed within one or two quarters. What you should be doing is having a frank conversation with all of your stakeholders, agreeing upon what you're going forward with, and why.”