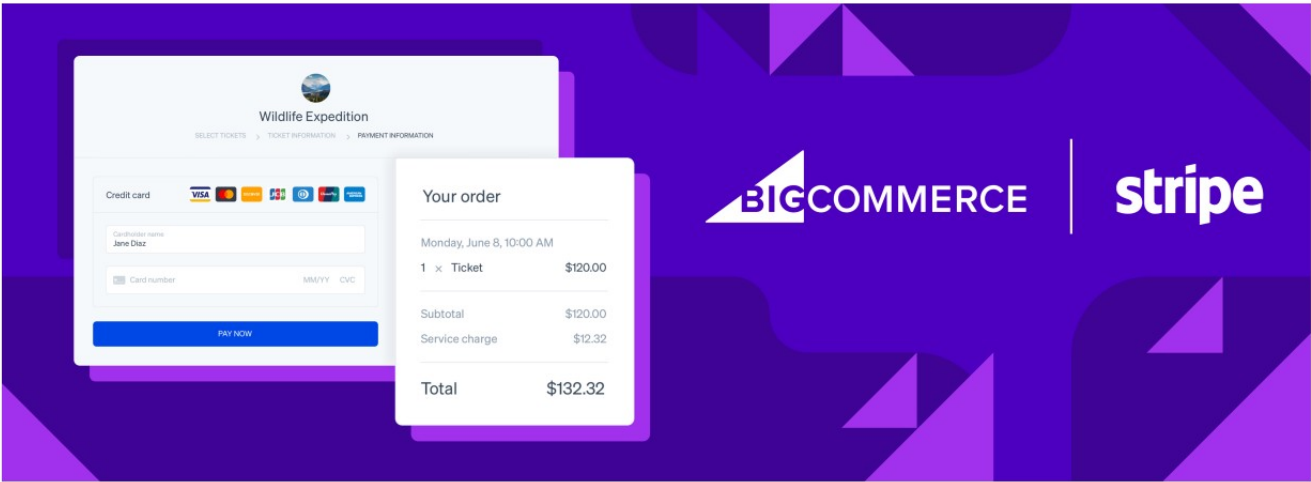


BIGCOMMERCE 3 Step Guide Going Global User Guide

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Rapid growth in ecommerce sales and digital adoption across the globe opens up a world of opportunity for businesses looking to expand.

The numbers alone make a compelling case: in 2021, ecommerce sales are expected to make up nearly 20% of total retail volume. By 2023, global ecommerce is projected to hit \$6.5 trillion with the majority of retail ecommerce growth occurring in Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, and the Middle East and Africa.

And it's easy to see how this shift is occurring in real time — new ecommerce customers are logging on every day.

Take Europe, for example. In 2020, the digital adoption rate [jumped from 81% to 94%](#). As people confronted new challenges brought on by the coronavirus [pandemic](#), similar acceleration occurred worldwide.

The projected growth of ecommerce markets makes expansion more attractive than ever, with opportunities for businesses to tap into a new customer base, establish new partnerships, increase revenue and become a global brand.

So, considering the tremendous opportunities for growth, why don't more businesses go global?

Companies frequently cite the following barriers to branching out:

- **Localization:** Website translation, adapting to local payment options and lack of market expertise are just a few of the obstacles to fitting into a new market.
- **Compliance:** Navigating the tax considerations and regulatory environment in different jurisdictions can be highly complex.
- **Shipping and customs:** The burden of managing duties, tariffs and return costs can deter businesses from selling across borders.
- **Accepting payments:** Launching local payment methods can require months of work by teams across your organization, including legal, business development, engineering, product and finance.
- **Managing customer support:** Meeting customer expectations, generating word of mouth and protecting your brand from a distance requires careful preparation.

For many businesses, the task of addressing all of these issues is daunting and cost-prohibitive.

And the reality is that going global is a major undertaking.

Fortunately, you don't have to go it alone. With the right partner and smart planning, you can successfully navigate these challenges.

3 Steps to Going Global

There's a lot to consider before you venture across borders. Following a basic strategy can help you take a careful, thorough approach. BigCommerce has partnered with [Stripe](#), a global leader in payments infrastructure, because they enable businesses to accept payments in 195 currencies and dozens of local payment methods when using Stripe on BigCommerce.

Stripe recommends a three-step framework for going global that helps businesses think through their options and take smart steps toward international growth.

Step 1: Evaluate.

As with any big adventure, you'll want to start with a map. It might seem simplest to choose your closest neighboring countries or the most developed regions where ecommerce is already strong.

But taking a broader sweep and evaluating markets around the world can help you identify your path to expansion. Consider not only where the market stands today but where it's headed. An estimated [1.8 billion people](#) are expected to enter "the consuming class" by 2025, spending an additional \$30 trillion.

And five out of six new internet users are outside Western Europe and North America — so taking a careful look far and wide may lead you to greater growth potential.

Let's look at some regions you might want to consider and the key numbers that will factor into your decision.

Top market opportunities in North America in 2020:

Canada

- \$1.7 trillion GDP.
- 37 million people.
- \$52 billion annual B2C ecommerce as of 2020, growing at 37%.
- 83% credit card adoption.
- 86% mobile adoption, with 30% of ecommerce flowing through mobile.

United States

- \$20.49 trillion GDP.
- 327 million people.
- \$830 billion annual B2C ecommerce, growing 12% annually.
- 66% credit card penetration.
- 84% smartphone adoption, with 39% of ecommerce flowing through mobile.

Top countries by market opportunity in Europe in 2020:

UK

- \$2.8 trillion GDP.
- \$233 billion annual B2C ecommerce, growing 11% annually.
- 55% of customers buy online via mobile.

France

- \$2.8 trillion GDP.
- \$106 billion annual B2C ecommerce, growing 13% annually.
- 39% of customers buy online via mobile.

Germany

- \$3.8 trillion GDP.
- \$108 billion annual B2C ecommerce.
- 50% of customers buy online via mobile.

Top countries by market opportunity in Asia-Pacific in 2020:

Australia

- \$1.4 trillion GDP.
- 13% ecommerce annual growth rate.
- World leader in contactless payment adoption, with 4 out of 5 in-person payments.

New Zealand

- \$205 billion GDP.

- 10% ecommerce annual growth rate.

India

- \$2.7 trillion GDP.
- 1.4 billion people.
- 26% ecommerce annual growth rate.
- 43% of customers buy online via mobile.

Indonesia

- \$1 trillion GDP.
- 269 million people.
- 31% ecommerce annual growth rate.
- Payments split: 35% cash, 42% bank transfer, 10% wallet, 5% credit card, 3% convenience store (beginning a transaction online and paying in-store), 5% other.

Japan

- \$5.2 trillion GDP.
- 126 million people.
- \$183 billion B2C ecommerce, growing 7.7% annually.
- 85% credit card adoption.
- 79% smartphone adoption, with 42% of ecommerce flowing through mobile.

Top countries by market opportunity in Latin America in 2020:

Brazil

- \$1.9 trillion GDP.
- 210 million people.
- 89% mobile adoption.

Mexico

- \$1.2 trillion GDP.
- 126 million people.
- 34% ecommerce annual growth rate.

As you're taking stock of different markets, you'll want to also compare and consider the following:

- Market size: What's the ecommerce GDP in that particular country or region? What are the growth projections for that market?
- Market attractiveness: In a given market, how many customers fall within your target demographic? Is that number likely to grow? What are the country's digital adoption and smartphone penetration rates? What is the competitive landscape?

- Ease of entry: When it comes to the logistics and costs of doing business, not all markets are created equal.

Consider how simple or complex each of the following areas is in your chosen new market:

- Localization requirements.
- Data regulations.
- Shipping partners.
- Tax considerations.
- Cross-border regulatory environment.

After a thorough evaluation, you'll be ready to make a strategic choice and start selling in a new market.

Step 2: Launch.

Once you've chosen your new cross-border market, it's time to launch.

When you start doing business in a new country, it's critical to ensure not only that you've chosen the right market, but that your company is ready for cross-border transactions.

Here's how to set yourself up for success:

Offer local payment methods that are familiar to your customers. Payments are personal. Understandably, customers want to use payment options they know and recognize. Absent these options, they may abandon their carts.

[A Stripe survey](#) of more than 6,000 businesses who sold to buyers in Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland and Austria found that, on average, businesses saw a 40% lift in sales when they turned on European payment methods like iDeal and Giropay. If you're working with BigCommerce and Stripe, you can easily turn these on with no additional work.

Optimize your checkout flow

No matter where you're doing business, friction chases away customers. And while your checkout may work without a hitch at home, it might be a trouble spot for customers in another country.

Keep your checkout flow seamless with responsive forms that adapt to address formats across countries. And make sure your site offers dynamic, real-time confirmation of network acceptance across banking systems.

Some other crucial areas to pay attention to:

- Maintaining compliance with local regulations, including Europe's General Data Protection Regulation and Strong Customer Authentication.
- Managing taxes, especially Europe's value-added tax (VAT).
- Managing customer support.
- Handling shipping and customs.

Each of these issues can be highly complex for a business to navigate in a new region, but remember, you don't have to manage it all on your own. When you partner with BigCommerce and Stripe, we manage these challenging and ever-changing matters every day, so you don't have to worry.

Step 3: Optimize.

After you've opened for business internationally, it's time to refine your operations for optimal performance. Now you can focus on maximizing your revenue and minimizing costs.

Consider opening a local entity

This option requires a big investment, but as your business expands, it's something to think about. You can do a lot virtually, but having a physical location in the market you're serving can help you further boost revenue and add local expertise to your team.

What's the advantage of opening an on-the-ground local shop? First, there's significant cost savings on

transactions. Domestic card transactions have about [10% better](#) authorization rates than cross-border transactions. And domestic transactions eliminate cross-border fees, which can save you more than 2% on a \$100 transaction.

Another advantage is that by hiring regionally, you tap into local knowledge, experience, and expertise, which can lead to better products and more effective marketing. Ultimately, this can help your business establish deeper connections with customers and drive brand loyalty.

Reduce fraud

Fraud is a growing global issue with quickly shifting patterns that vary from country to country.

But with BigCommerce and Stripe on your side, that's one less thing to worry about. Even if a card is new to your business, there's an 91% chance it's been seen before on the global Stripe network. By learning from millions of businesses processing hundreds of billions in payments in 195 countries each year, BigCommerce and Stripe help you fight fraud in a way that works for your unique business.

The Final Word


Taking your business global is exciting and introduces immense opportunities for growth. But the challenges of venturing beyond your own borders aren't insignificant. In fact, they can be highly complex and difficult to untangle.

The good news: BigCommerce and Stripe together are a great fit for ambitious businesses looking to expand. With the right partners in your corner, you can tackle those big next steps with confidence.

To learn more, [see articles](#) in the BigCommerce Knowledge Base.

Growing your high-volume or established business?
Start your [15-day free trial](#), schedule a [demo](#) or give us a call at +61 2 8188 1832.

Documents / Resources

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