

DEVELOPING A STRONG INTERNATIONAL BRAND: Multilingual Social Media & Social Selling

SILVIA CARTER

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[The Digital Exporter Series](#) consists of seven independent books with more than 100 international case studies, each sharing the best tools, actionable solutions, and step-by-step explanations on how to sell online across channels and borders.

- Book 1 – [STARTING THE GLOBAL DIGITAL JOURNEY: How to create the best international web strategy.](#)
- Book 2 – [GETTING CLIENTS OVERSEAS, ORGANICALLY: How to set up local, international & global SEO.](#)
- Book 3 – [GETTING CLIENTS OVERSEAS, BY ADVERTISING: SEA, SMA and other acquisition channels.](#)
- Book 4 – [SELLING ONLINE INTERNATIONALLY: How to set up & manage a cross-border e-commerce.](#)
- Book 5 – [SELLING ONLINE INTERNATIONALLY: How to sell on local & international marketplaces.](#)
- Book 6 – [DEVELOPING A STRONG INTERNATIONAL BRAND: Multilingual social media & social selling.](#)
- Book 7 – [DEVELOPING A STRONG INTERNATIONAL BRAND: Multilingual inbound marketing & marketing automation.](#)

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Table of contents

Table of contents	7
Thanks	11
The Author	13
Introduction	15
Disclaimer.....	19
CHAPTER 1	
ARE SOCIAL MEDIA REALLY USEFUL FOR DIGITAL EXPORT?.....	23
YES #1 - BRAND AWARENESS	24
YES #2 - INTERNATIONAL SEO	25
YES #3 - SOCIAL SELLING.....	25
CHAPTER 2	
SOCIAL NETWORKS AROUND THE WORLD.....	27
GLOBAL PLATFORMS	28
CHINA: FROM BATS TO BATS+B.....	36
CHAPTER 3	
INSTANT MESSAGING FOR EXPORT BUSINESS	47
THE MOST POPULAR INSTANT MESSAGING APP IN THE WORLD	48
AND FOR BUSINESSES?	55
CHAPTER 4	
THE 'BORDER-FREE' APPROACH TO SOCIAL NETWORKS .	59
SOCIAL NETWORKS, THE NEW FACILITATORS FOR INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS	60
THE LOSING GAME IN B2B SOCIAL NETWORKS: VIADEO VS. LINKEDIN	60
THE EASE OF DUAL INTERACTIONS	61

THE GLOBAL EXPANSION POWER OF SOCIAL NETWORKS	62
CHAPTER 5	
SOCIAL SELLING, AI, CHATBOTS, ... SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS AROUND THE WORLD	65
KEY TRENDS TO FOLLOW	66
B2B OR B2C?	70
CHAPTER 6	
THE BASICS OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA	73
IDENTIFY RELEVANT SOCIAL NETWORKS	74
DEFINE YOUR EDITORIAL GUIDELINES	76
CHAPTER 7	
THE INTERNATIONAL EDITORIAL CALENDAR FOR YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA	79
WHAT IS AN EDITORIAL CALENDAR?	80
FIND KEY EVENTS ABROAD	81
#PLANTHEMOMENT	82
PLANNING INTERNATIONALLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR	84
CHAPTER 8	
INTERNATIONAL VIRAL MARKETING: HOW TO GET BUZZWORTHY	87
BUZZ = VIRAL CONTENT = VISIBILITY = BRAND AWARENESS = SALES	88
A FEW WAYS TO CREATE INTERNATIONAL BUZZ	89
CHAPTER 9	
FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON FACEBOOK – PAGE STRUCTURES	93
COMMON MISTAKES	94
A GLOBAL PAGE + MARKET PAGES	94
A COUNTRY PAGE + STORE PAGES	98
A GLOBAL PAGE + MARKET PAGES + STORE PAGES	100

KEY BENEFITS OF THESE TECHNIQUES.....	100
CHAPTER 10	
FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON FACEBOOK – MULTILINGUAL POSTS	103
MULTILINGUAL TECHNIQUES FOR AN INTERNATIONAL FACEBOOK PAGE	104
POSTING IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES	105
READING IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES.....	112
CHAPTER 11	
FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON INSTAGRAM	115
KEY THINGS TO KNOW FOR YOUR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ON INSTAGRAM	116
WRITE IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES OR USE AUTOMATIC TRANSLATION	118
THE RIGHT #HASHTAGS FOR INTERNATIONAL REACH	119
INCREASE INTERACTIONS WITH YOUR INTERNATIONAL INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS.....	122
CHAPTER 12	
FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON TWITTER	125
KEY THINGS TO KNOW FOR YOUR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ON TWITTER....	126
TWITTER AUTOMATIC TRANSLATION.....	126
A SINGLE INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNT OR ONE ACCOUNT PER COUNTRY?	127
THE BEST PRACTICES ON TWITTER FOR DIGITAL EXPORT	129
CHAPTER 13	
FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON LINKEDIN	131
KEY THINGS TO KNOW FOR YOUR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ON LINKEDIN...132	
A SINGLE MULTILINGUAL PAGE OR ONE PAGE PER COUNTRY?.....	135
INTERNATIONAL HASHTAGS ON LINKEDIN.....	135
CHAPTER 14	
SOCIAL SELLING: WHEN E-COMMERCE MEETS SOCIAL MEDIA	139
SOCIAL SELLING, WHAT IS IT?	140

SOCIAL SELLING ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM	141
CROSS-BORDER SOCIAL SELLING ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM	144
SOCIAL SELLING ON OTHER PLATFORMS?	146
CHAPTER 15	
USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNATIONAL MONITORING	149
HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR INTERNATIONAL MONITORING	150
WHERE TO MONITOR	150
CHAPTER 16	
HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY IS WORKING?	153
HOW TO MEASURE THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY	154
INTERNATIONAL KPIs	154
CHAPTER 17	
A FEW FINAL TIPS: COSTS, ORGANIZATION, AND ... TIME!	161
HOW MUCH DOES DIGITAL COST INTERNATIONALLY?	162
INTERNATIONAL WEB-MARKETING COSTS	163
THE IMPACT OF CTR IN AN INTERNATIONAL WEB-MARKETING BUDGET	166
HOW TO GET ORGANIZED FOR INTERNATIONAL WEB MARKETING	168
HOW LONG TO WAIT FOR RESULTS	171
HOW DIGITAL DARWINISM CAN STRENGTHEN EXPORT	175
FINAL THOUGHTS	175
SOME PRACTICAL DATA	176
FREE AND PAID TOOLS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA	177
BIBLIOGRAPHY	179

Thanks

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Also, to all those people who have dedicated some of their time to me, I want to express my gratitude for their moral and professional support throughout my project. Big thanks to Alban, Alex, Andrea, Aurélie, Caroline, Cédric, Christian, Christine, Constance, Daniela, Didier, Dominique, Emanuel, Éric, George, Inga, Isabelle, Joël, Julie, Laura, Lise, Luca, Luis, Marie-Cécile, Marielle, Maarja, Massimiliano, Maxime, Mimma, Nicolas, Pascal, Philippe, Pierre, Stefano, Thomas, Xavier, Yann,

...

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The Author

Silvia Carter has been active in international multichannel sales for more than 20 years. She has developed her career in cross-border trade and global digital marketing for both consumer products and B2B sectors.

As an entrepreneur with a dual expertise in export development and online sales, she founded and manages ToWebOrNotToWeb, a service provider specialized in multichannel export growth to help businesses increase sales and brand awareness in several countries, online and beyond.

In her work as an author, Silvia contributed to *Le marketing des start-ups* by Véronique Hermann-Flory (Eyrolles, 2017) and is a co-author with Jean-Éric Pelet of *User Experience in Web 2.0 Technologies and Its Impact on Universities and Businesses* (IGI Global, 2020). She is also the author of *Développer son business à l'international grâce au webmarketing* (Eyrolles, 2019), which inspired The Digital Exporter Series.

Silvia holds an Executive MBA from HEC Paris, where she is the pro-bono chair of the Alumni Advanced Technologies Club, and a degree in web development and digital strategy from the Digital Campus Paris. She also teaches courses in the field of global web marketing at the EMLV Business School and at ISCOM in Paris. Silvia decided to start teaching, in addition to her other professional activities, to share her expertise and develop new professions in digital export management.

Introduction

Marco Polo, Amerigo Vespucci and Christopher Columbus are just a few examples, among so many others, of international Italian spirits It is a fact that Italians are particularly 'international'. But I have had to learn how to become so: when I was young, I was marked by a total phobia of German and a deep allergy to other languages, all combined with a real aversion for any foreign cultural universe. Too complicated! Why bother when I had everything I needed near my home in Italy and in Italian?

Until the day when my home filled up with travelers: almost everyone around me spent time traveling, for work, study, holidays. So much so that remaining Italo-Italian became a handicap. So, there I was, launched for an Erasmus year at Trinity College in Dublin with an English vocabulary of ten words! Since then, my international journey has also become part of my work. First as an international marketing manager, then as an export and international sales director. As an expatriate in France, I started dealing with all the internet-related issues on the international scale. That was in the late 2000s when the internet was not as 'easy' as it is now. The level of confusion was the normal thing almost everywhere. Fed up with that confusion, I wanted to understand how the internet worked technically and to learn the best practices. That is why I decided to take a master's degree in web marketing in 2012 and, after that, to create ToWebOrNotToWeb. Today, I help companies sell internationally online on the several digital channels that the internet offers.

Nowadays more and more affordable and simple digital tools are available for entering foreign markets in a way that would have been unthinkable ten years ago. The recent 'Future of Business Survey' carried out by Facebook, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank about companies active on the internet, shows that two out of three exporting companies achieve more than half of their international turnover through the web and that 45% of them achieve even more than 75% of their

international turnover. The OECD also argues that, since these online tools are available to any type of business around the world, even microenterprises can now achieve significant business overseas¹.

That was the situation before the Covid-19 crisis. The coronavirus brought lockdowns, social distancing and an unprecedented drop in traditional business. That forced people to enter a new digital age where the web, the social networks and all the other digital applications are the key tools they can use to have an almost normal life. Digital technologies are therefore essential, now more than ever, to preserve a business as well as to develop it in new markets. Companies that are behind with these digital technologies will risk losing their business at home and abroad. And many of them are still struggling to understand how to use these digital technologies on the international scale. Consider the case of a French business that wants to develop its online sales in Germany. It can choose among different options for the website domain to use, such as www.example.de, or www.example.com/de, or de.example.com, or www.example.fr/de, or fr.example.com/de. However, each one of these options will reach a different number of people depending on the different digital technologies applied to the website, as you can see in the following table.

Domain type & SEO techniques	The target that search engines understand	Segment	Number of people that the website can reach
www.example.de	Country = Germany	German people in Germany	79,127,551
www.example.com/de + geolocalisation & hreflang	Country = Germany Language = German	German people in Germany	79,127,551
www.example.com/de + hreflang	Language = German	German-speaking people around the world	92,304,792
de.example.com + geolocalisation & hreflang	Country = Germany Language = German	German people in Germany	79,127,551
www.example.fr/de	Country = France Language = German	German people in France	130,000*
fr.example.com/de	Country = France Language = German	German people in France	130,000*

Why digital technologies are important².

¹ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Entrepreneurship at a Glance 2017* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2017), https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/industry-and-services/entrepreneurship-at-a-glance_22266941.

² The sources of the numbers followed by * are
<https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats18.htm#german> &
https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communaut%C3%A9_allemande_en_France.

Helping those companies is critical and it is the purpose of these books. The Digital Exporter Series brings immediate actionable solutions on how to grow a B2B, B2C and C2C online business and on how to do that internationally. It consists of seven books, each on a different topic, with more than 100 case studies that describe step-by-step all the web tools and techniques for cross-border digital business.

The idea for The Digital Exporter Series came from my French book, *Développer son business à l'international grâce au webmarketing*, which was published by Eyrolles in France at the end of 2019. I wrote that book mainly for French-speaking digital exporters. Although inspired by it, this new series is very different from the French book. It is not just a simple translation from French into English: it is a full adaptation to the digital environments around the world. And, for that reason, The Digital Exporter Series, instead of being one book, is seven independent books, each on a different topic.

[The Digital Exporter Series](#) is for all entrepreneurs that want to start or accelerate their cross-border online business in the most effective way at the lowest risk during the Covid-19 crisis and beyond.

That's also what motivates me in my professional life: contributing to value creation around the world by increasing the number of companies selling online beyond their national borders with the innovative digital tools that are available today. Because, for everyone and everywhere, growing export sales is much easier nowadays, thanks to digital tools used the right way. So, for all entrepreneurs around the world, I have a piece of advice: don't miss the train!

P.S.: I am always fascinated by the experiences of international business expansion and would love to read yours if you want to share them with me here: silvia.carter@towebornottoweb.com.

Disclaimer

It took me several months to research and write The Digital Exporter Series, even a bit longer than originally planned.

During the same time, the internet and the web ecosystems did not stop. That might have produced some discrepancies between what I wrote and what you can find on the web.

While I will do my best to update the content of The Digital Exporter Series as regularly as possible, I am not able to keep it perfectly updated all the time.

If you find something that should be changed or added or if you cannot find something specific in The Digital Exporter Series, contact me at silvia.carter@towebornottoweb.com, and I'll be happy to help you out.

All the companies that I have mentioned as examples or as tools or for other reasons relevant to the purpose of The Digital Exporter Series are totally independent from my work. They do not have any direct or indirect interest in The Digital Exporter Series, nor do I in their business.

The Digital Exporter Series is intended for educational and informational purposes. All photos, images and screenshots, if not created by me, have either been purchased, used with permission, credited and linked back to their original sources or believed to be in the public domain. All are used to comment on, give example of, and explain the subject matter of The Digital Exporter Series. I consider that this constitutes a 'fair use' of any such copyrighted material within the meaning of 17 U.S.C. §107. All rights and credit go directly to its rightful owners; no copyright infringement is intended.

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SILVIA CARTER

DEVELOPING A STRONG INTERNATIONAL BRAND: Multilingual Social Media & Social Selling

Exporting companies frequently overlook social media, but, when people don't know much about a newcomer, the first thing they do is to search for it on the internet. So, what matters most is a good online presence to build trust and convince people to become clients. That requires lots of web marketing content, and social media are a great channel to do that! This book explains some of the tools you can use to optimize social media for your digital export project.

Book 6



CHAPTER 1

ARE SOCIAL MEDIA REALLY USEFUL FOR DIGITAL EXPORT?

“

Yes, yes, and yes! This question will sound rhetorical to those that are already convinced by social media.

But in my work, I have met so many entrepreneurs that do not take social media into consideration for their international business, because they are skeptical about the results, that I need to start this chapter by asking that question and explaining why my answer is yes, yes, and yes!

YES #1 - BRAND AWARENESS

Although the social media ecosystem has recently been invaded by 'selfieholics' and other people posting about their cats and their food, it doesn't mean that social media are just about that.

The different platforms that can be used around the world to promote this type of self-generated communication are extremely useful for developing a brand and a business in new countries, and I really mean 'extremely useful'! After all, didn't you use social media to develop the brand awareness in your home country? So, why shouldn't you do the same in the foreign countries you target?

The most important thing you need to realize is that social media are powerful not only within their own platform but probably even more so outside their own network. That is the major positive effect that you can achieve for your brand. By simply having international or multilingual pages on Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn that are optimized for the foreign country you target for your digital export project (as to which you will find all the explanations in the following pages), when people in that country Google your brand, they will find relevant results redirecting to your own pages.

That has two effects on your brand:

- 1) Simply by seeing your brand among the first results and on the first page of a Google search, people will feel more reassured about it even if they are seeing it for the first time.
- 2) Your brand will be seen more often by your foreign potential customers on search engines, social networks, and more. By multiplying this visibility, your brand awareness will be multiplied consequently as well, and it will help attract relevant customers in the foreign country you target.

YES #2 - INTERNATIONAL SEO

Another consequence of social media's power to increase the visibility of your brand inside and outside their own platforms is the positive effect on the reputation of your business and the SEO of your website.

As before, by simply publishing consistent qualitative content on your international or multilingual pages on Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn that is optimized for the foreign country you target for your digital export project, when people in that country Google keywords related to your business, they will find relevant results redirecting to your own content.

That has two effects on your business:

- 1) The higher number of links on the first pages of Google's results not only appeals to the search engines' crawling robots but also has a direct impact on your business reputation, which will motivate people to find out more about you instead of checking the fewer links of your competitors.
- 2) The chances that people will click on one of your links in these Google results are multiplied by the number of links. So, if there is one link per item of content and per social network in these Google results, your chances are multiplied by the number of items of your international content and by the number of your social networks.

YES #3 - SOCIAL SELLING

This point is particularly important if you have an e-commerce business. In this case, social media allow you not only to direct your fans toward your products but also to sell directly on their platform and use specific back-end tools to manage your sales.

This dual functionality, which on the one hand helps you develop your brand awareness, your SEO, and your international community, and on the other hand brings you an additional sales channel on which

your customers can share and comment about the products they purchase, is a great opportunity for a digital export project.

From the big global platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, TikTok, etc. to the other more local ones, the opportunities for social selling are enormous. But, although this list is almost endless, the most important thing for you is not to be in as many social selling platforms as possible. It is to choose the right ones.

And, since certain social networks provide such complete transaction features and a smooth purchasing experience, by focusing on them you can create significant synergies between your cross-border e-commerce and the international social selling networks.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Social media are a fundamental channel for developing your digital export project.

The key reasons for that are:

- *They help build your brand awareness in the foreign countries you target.*
- *They help the international SEO of your website.*
- *They offer additional sales channels to sell internationally.*

CHAPTER 2

SOCIAL NETWORKS AROUND THE WORLD

“

Social networks are well established all over the world and in general the top five rarely vary globally.

But, at the local level, even the most popular social networks can differ a lot from one country to another depending on specific socio-cultural and demographic factors.

Understanding these differences is important to reach your potential clients abroad effectively.

GLOBAL PLATFORMS

The world's population is increasingly online and connected on social networks. In January 2022, out of a population of 7.9 billion people:

- 5.3 billion, or 67% of the world's population, are unique mobile phone users.
- 4.9 billion, or 62% of the world's population, are internet users.
- 4.6 billion, or 58% of the world's population, are active on social networks³.



TIP

Social media vs. social networks, is there a difference?

Although in common parlance they are almost always used as synonyms, they are technically different. Social networks are platforms that allow people or businesses to connect and communicate directly with other people or businesses in specific ways, for example Instagram with posts, stories, or reels. Social media, on the other hand, refer to all internet-based technologies that enable all kinds of distant interactions between people and businesses. Social media, therefore, include social networks, instant messaging, blogs, forums, etc.

So, if your digital export project involves the use of Facebook and Instagram but also a blog, it is better to have a social media strategy rather than a social network strategy.

The figures above are quite impressive. So, it can be easy to ask ourselves questions like: what are the most used networks in the world? What are the countries that are using the social networks most?

And it wouldn't be too hard to answer these types of questions.

The following pictures bearing the We Are Social and Hootsuite logos show the most popular social networks around the world as of January 2022, ranked by number of active accounts and by country⁴.

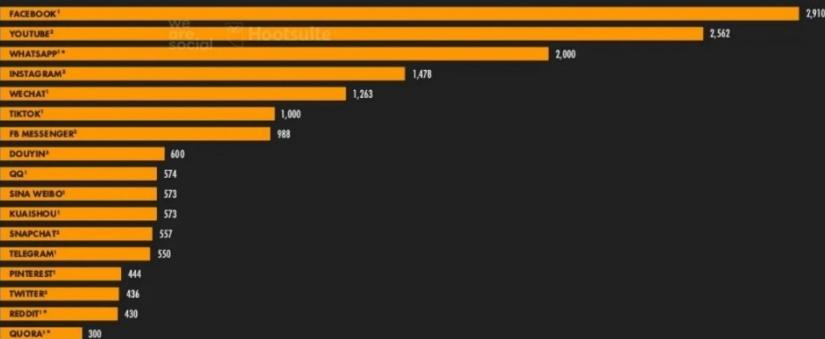
³ Simon Kemp, 'Digital 2022: Global Overview Report', Datareportal, 26 January 2022, <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-global-overview-report>

⁴ Kemp; *see also* <https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/>.

JAN
2022

THE WORLD'S MOST-USED SOCIAL PLATFORMS

RANKING OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS BY GLOBAL ACTIVE USER FIGURES (IN MILLIONS)



99

SOURCES: KEROS ANALYSIS OF (1) COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENTS OF MONTHLY ACTIVE USERS; (2) PLATFORM SELF-SERVICE ADVERTISING RESOURCES; (3) COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENTS OFAILY ACTIVE USERS; (4) CHATONLINE.COM; (5) TIKTOK; (6) FACEBOOK; (7) DOUYIN; (8) QQ; (9) SINA WEIBO; (10) KUAISHOU; (11) SNAPCHAT; (12) TELEGRAM; (13) PINTEREST; (14) TWITTER; (15) REDDIT; (16) QUORA. ADVISORY: USERS NOTE THAT MONTHLY ACTIVE USER FIGURES MAY BE HIGHER. ADVISORY: USERS MAY NOT REPRESENT UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS. COMPARABILITY: PLATFORMS IDENTIFIED BY * HAVE NOT PUBLISHED UPDATED USER FIGURES IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, SO FIGURES ARE LESS REPRESENTATIVE. BASE CHANGES AND METHODOLOGY CHANNEL DATA MAY NOT BE DIRECTLY COMPARABLE WITH PREVIOUS REPORTS.

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are.
social

Hootsuite

Figure 1: most popular social networks worldwide as of January 2022, ranked by number of monthly active users.

JAN
2022

SOCIAL MEDIA USERS vs. POPULATION

ACTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA USERS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION [NOTE: USERS MAY NOT REPRESENT UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS]



92

SOURCES: KEROS ANALYSIS OF (1) COMPANY ADVERTISED RESOURCES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS; CCMIC, TECHBASE, OCBC. NOTE: BASED ON ACTIVE USERS OF THE MOST USED SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM IN EACH COUNTRY. ADVISORY: SOCIAL MEDIA USERS MAY NOT REPRESENT UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS. PERCENTAGE MAY EXCEED 100% IN SOME COUNTRIES DUE TO ISSUES SUCH AS DOUBLE COUNTING AND "FAKE" ACCOUNTS, AND DIFFERENCES IN WHETHER SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY IS POPULARITY OR ACTIVITY. NOTES: THIS REPORT USES THE TERM "COMPARABILITY" TO REFER TO THE SIMILARITY OF SOURCE METRICS AND METHODOLOGY CHANNELS. IN SOME CASES, SOURCE METRICS AND CHANNELS IN THIS REPORT ARE NOT 100% COMPATIBLE WITH THOSE PUBLISHED IN PREVIOUS REPORTS.

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Hootsuite

Figure 2: social media penetration in the world in January 2022 by country.

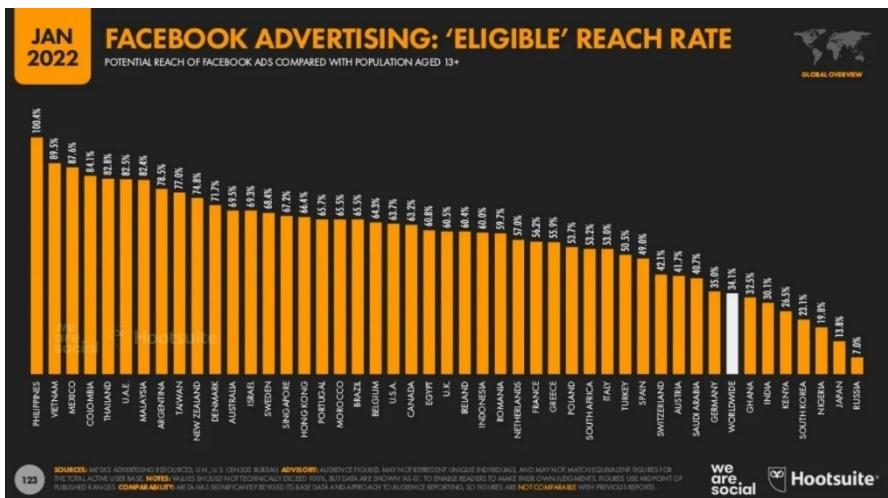


Figure 3: countries with the most Facebook users in the world.

Facebook

The global market leader, Facebook, was the first social network to exceed one billion registered accounts. It had more than 2.9 billion monthly active users in Q3 2021.

Instagram

With almost one and a half billion active users worldwide in January 2022 and an increase of 21% versus the previous year, Instagram might seem a bit behind Facebook in the global ranking. But, in fact, it is the second most used B2C social network in the world if we exclude the instant messaging applications of WhatsApp, Messenger and WeChat, as well as the YouTube video sharing application from the previous global ranking, since the value propositions are too different.

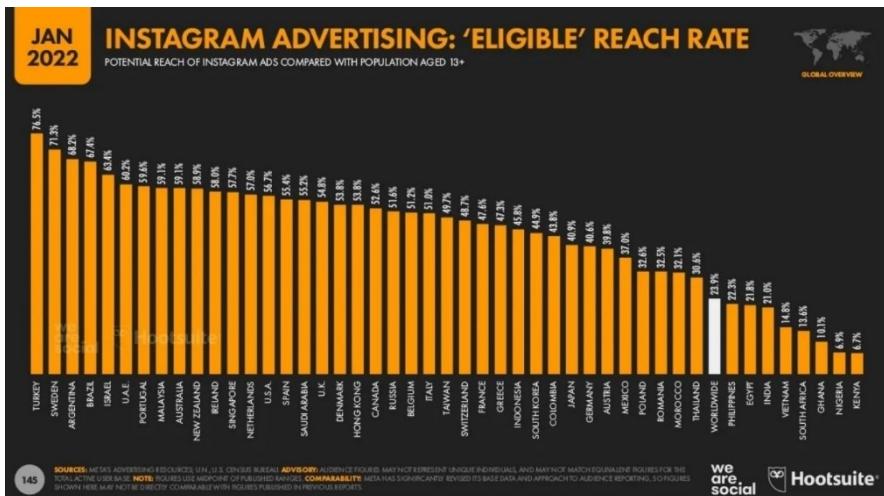


Figure 4: penetration rate of Instagram in the world by country.



Figure 5: most popular Instagram accounts in the world.

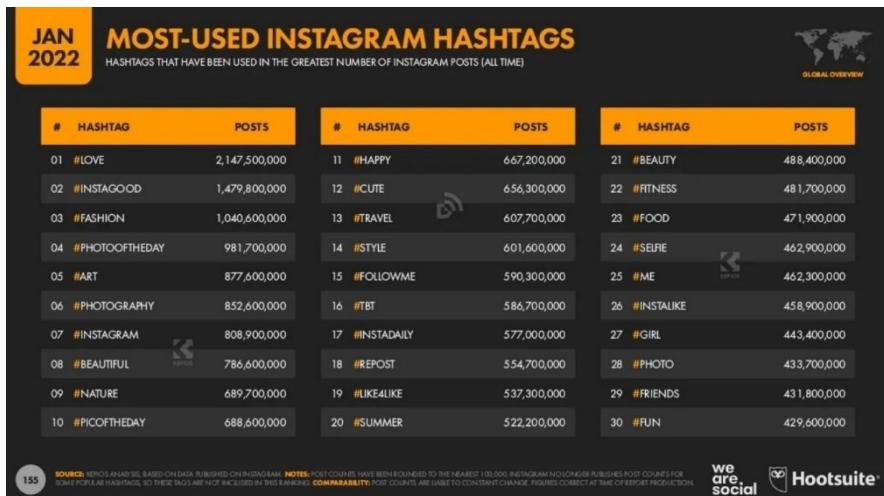


Figure 6: most used hashtags on Instagram worldwide.

LinkedIn

With more than 808 million subscribers in January 2022 and an increase of 11% from the previous year, LinkedIn is among the most used social networks in the world. However, it remains difficult to compare it to other platforms because the value propositions are very different, LinkedIn being mainly B2B.

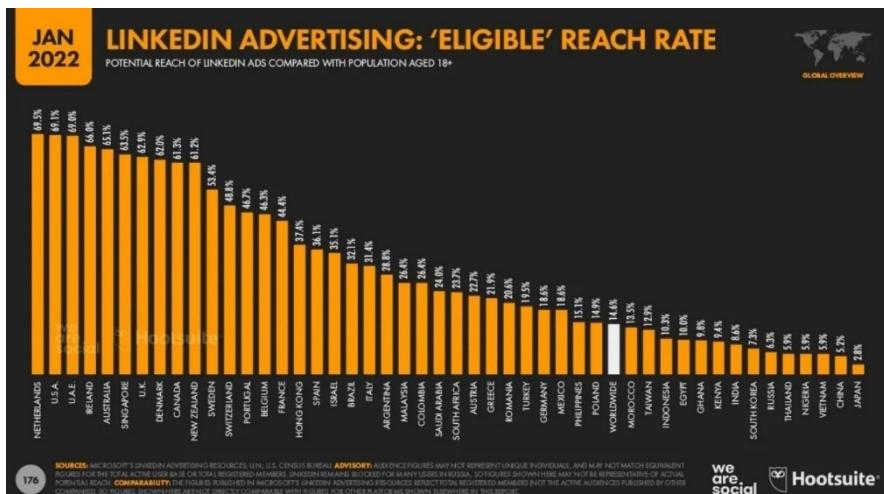


Figure 7: worldwide penetration rate of LinkedIn by country.

Twitter

Twitter had an average of 436 million active users worldwide in January 2022, but the penetration rate is so high in some countries, such as 52% in Japan or almost 32% in the UK, that it is unavoidable if your digital export project concerns one of them.

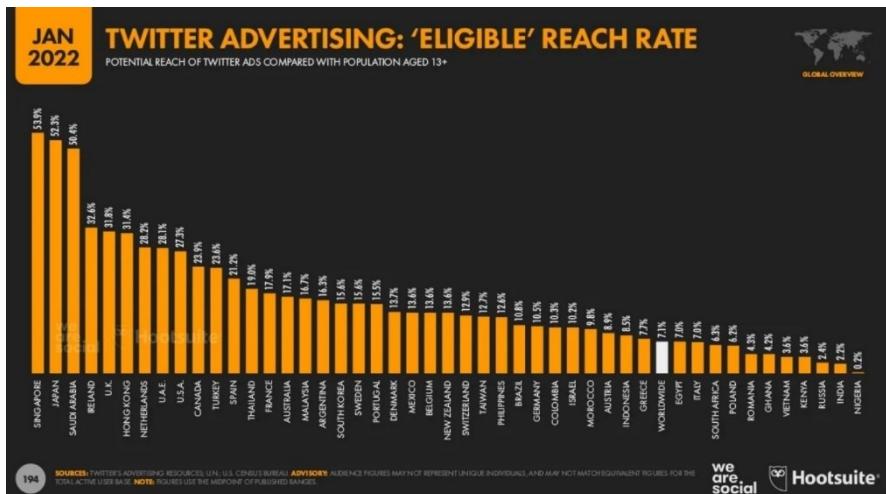


Figure 8: worldwide penetration rate of Twitter by country.

After the saga of Elon Musk's \$44billion bid to buy Twitter and his withdrawal, it is difficult to picture the future of this social network in a straightforward way.

 **Andrea Stroppa** 
@Andst7 · Aug 5
 @elonmusk's counterclaim suit against Twitter.

Clearly, from Twitter SEC filings, mDAU is the key metric. It is the key metric for its business rev. And its market value;

mDAU is an ad hoc metric, created to protect Twitter's interests. No competitor uses something similar.

110 466 3,184 

 **Andrea Stroppa** 
@Andst7 · Aug 5
2/ When @elonmusk requested more information about spam and fake accounts; Twitter provided a vague response.

Then provided outdated data;
Then offered a fake data set (not real "firehose");
Then provided a cleaned data set where they already suspended the malicious accounts;

52 191 1,658 

 **Elon Musk** 
@elonmusk

Replying to @Andst7

Good summary of the problem.

If Twitter simply provides their method of sampling 100 accounts and how they're confirmed to be real, the deal should proceed on original terms.

However, if it turns out that their SEC filings are materially false, then it should not.

9:50 AM · Aug 6, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

882 Retweets 155 Quote Tweets 7,367 Likes

Figure 9: some tweets about the key reason for Elon Musk's bid withdrawal.

Snapchat

Snapchat has 557 million estimated users⁵ in the world as of January 2022, of which more than 40% are in North America. With more than 40% of its users under 35, Snapchat is a major challenger for other social networks.

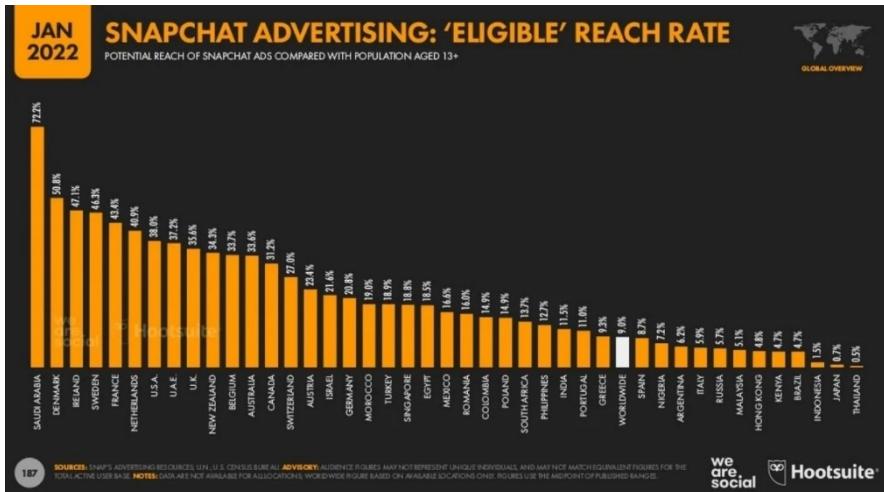


Figure 10: worldwide penetration rate of Snapchat by country.

You will find all the statistics detailed by country in the Digital 2022: Global Overview Report⁶.

So, now let's go back to the questions: what are the most used networks in the world? What are the countries that are using the social networks most?

The only rational way to answer them is by asking another question: do you think that the answer to these two questions will help your digital export sales? And the answer to this last question is ... no!

Knowing the most used networks in the world or the countries that are using the social networks most will not help you grow your exports sales. Each country has different social networks, different

⁵ Snapchat does not communicate the official number of its users. This estimate is provided by Kepios.

⁶ Kemp.

social network users and different social network habits. So, you get the point: everything is different!

You need to study these three variables to get the useful insights to establish the right social networks strategy for your digital export project.

CHINA: FROM BATS TO BATS+B

In China, the saying ‘Google is my best friend’ does not exist! And for social networks it is the same. The acronym GAFA, for Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon, here is replaced by the BATS, Baidu, Alibaba, Tencent and Sina, recently changed to BATSB following the meteoric success of ByteDance with its networks Douyin TikTok (micro-videos) and Toutiao⁷(for information and news).

With more than a billion users, social networks in China have three characteristics:

- 1) They are local: most of the global social networks mentioned above are almost completely absent or, even worse, prohibited.
- 2) They are much more numerous than in the rest of the world.
- 3) They are used much more than in other countries, 983 million out of a population of 1.45 billion, and almost always on mobile.

If your digital export project concerns China, it is therefore essential to invest in the most relevant local social networks and to adapt your content to the habits of Chinese users.

In China, it is very common to see many social networks with a non-Chinese concept that has been adapted to the local users with a

⁷ Toutiao exploded thanks to mobile internet and pre-installation in Android smartphones. Today, its success comes mainly from its functionality of content distribution based on the interests of users, which avoids the use of search engines. It is a disruptive model that has proven to have higher ad tolerance among users.

dedicated Chinese version, which is perhaps the result of the ‘Great Firewall’⁸.

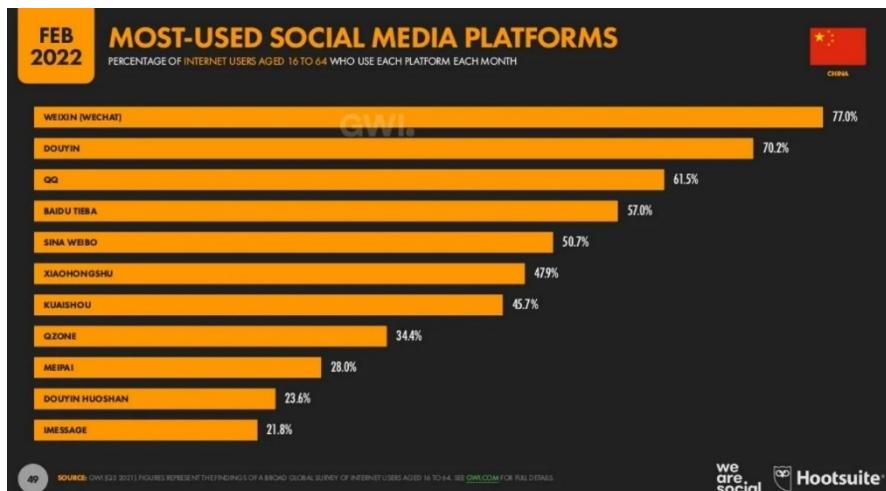


Figure 11: the most used social networks in China.

The following list, far from being exhaustive, gives you some details and the main characteristics of the most used Chinese social networks.

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Firewall.

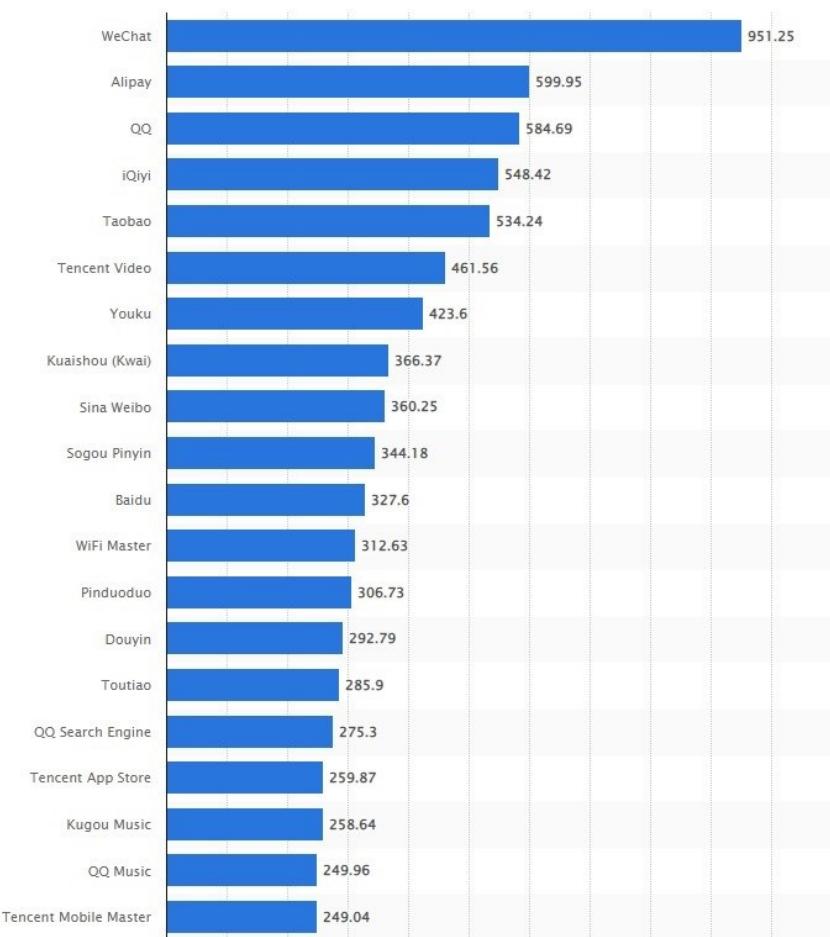


Figure 12: Monthly active users of the leading apps in China in January 2022(in millions)⁹.

WeChat

WeChat is often thought of as the Chinese version of WhatsApp. Belonging to Tencent, this B2C application has many more features than its western competitor, such as wallpapers, personalized

⁹ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1032630/china-leading-apps-by-monthly-active-users/>.

notifications, adding nearby contacts, and the most important, WeChat Pay, which revolutionized shopping in China by making WeChat an unavoidable tool for e-commerce.

Saying that WeChat is the Chinese version of WhatsApp is misleading and minimizes the real potential of WeChat. Why? Because WeChat allows people to do everything they do on WhatsApp, as well as on Facebook, Instagram, blogs, Skype, Uber, Amazon, etc. On top of that, it is also widely used for B2B objectives since businesses can create company accounts, e-shops with store cards, loyalty programs (CRM binding, e-coupon discounts, etc.) and even artificial intelligence (AI) chat systems for customer service, etc.

In the past couple of years, all these features became much easier and more affordable because WeChat decided to deploy the mini-programs, a sort of sub-applications that work within the WeChat ecosystem. These mini-programs are based on the Progressive Web Applications (PWA), a hybrid programming language that allows users to benefit from web development techniques to create mobile-like applications that can integrate an almost unlimited number of services and advanced features such as online shopping, booking a driver, paying bills, making an appointment with the hairdresser or a doctor, booking and paying a table at a restaurant or a hotel room, buying cinema or plane tickets, and much more ... everything with the same application!



迪奥小姐

花漾淡香氛



30mL

50mL

100mL

150mL

100mL

¥1080



首页



购物袋



客服

立即购买



Figure 13: Dior's store on WeChat.

Baidu Tieba

Considered the Chinese version of Reddit¹⁰, Baidu Tieba is the largest platform provided by Baidu, the most used search engine in China. Basically, Baidu Tieba is a keyword-based discussion board directly integrated on the search engine Baidu. Tieba, which literally translates into ‘Let’s Post’, or in its English acronym as ‘bar’, works as a hashtag and can be created by any user that associates it to the theme and topic of a forum, a discussion group or to a blog he or she manages.

The name of this app rarely appears in social media rankings because it is considered an extension of Baidu and, therefore, a search engine feature. But in China Baidu Tieba is so widely used that the word *tieba* has become synonymous with forum in Chinese.

Two things make Baidu Tieba much better than standard forums:

- As part of Baidu’s ecosystem, the tiebas rank incredibly well on the search results pages, capturing huge amounts of web traffic.
- Its tieba system to organize search keywords is much more effective than other regular forums and helps users segment their interests accurately.

Sina Weibo

Sina Weibo is the Chinese version of Twitter. Created in 2009, it was one of the first social media platforms in China, and it quickly gained a large number of users because it was new and very innovative.

Currently used by half a billion Chinese for micro-blogging, unlike Twitter, Sina Weibo doesn’t limit the number of characters of posts, and since in Chinese a character is a word, a length limit is not the same as in languages using an alphabetic writing system.

Another advantage of Sina Weibo compared to Twitter is that it allows you to have a mini-site on which you can post many different types of content, including pictures and videos, making it more engaging for users. This represents a great, although simpler, alternative to a real website hosted in China.

¹⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reddit>.

Although many businesses, both local and international, use Sina Weibo to obtain real-time consumer reviews and to communicate with their customers, Sina Weibo has been losing traction lately because several new social media platforms, such as Douyin, have become very popular in China.

YouKu

Considered the Chinese version of YouTube, YouKu was among the first video-sharing applications in China. However, in the last year or so, it has started to get ahead of its rivals, in particular Tencent Video.

Bought in 2015 by Alibaba for \$3.65 billion after its merger with Tudou, YouKu claimed 580 million users, in 2019 but that number declined to 381 million in June 2020 as the Chinese video-on-demand market has been getting more crowded with various service providers offering better offers.

QQ

QQ is also considered the Chinese version of WhatsApp but, in fact, is much more, since it integrates the features of Skype, Google Meet, Teams or any other video call applications, as well as features for blogging, gaming and emailing.

The emailing service is pretty straightforward because each user automatically gets a built-in email address that can be used to send large files through QQ itself. So, in that respect QQ is like WeTransfer. This service is also offered by QQ in a B2B version for companies. Owned by Tencent, the QQ application is used by some 584 million Chinese every month and is very popular among teenagers.

Qzone

Considered the Chinese version of Facebook, Qzone is an extension of QQ and is also owned by Tencent.

Created in 2005, Qzone is a kind of blog/diary where you can publish multimedia content (text messages, photos, videos, etc.). It is one of Tencent's main platforms where members create their personal profile.

Like Facebook, Qzone has very advanced functions for advertising, but the targets are more sensitive to 'low-cost' products.

Tencent Weibo

Tencent Weibo was another microblogging application very similar to Twitter, on which users could broadcast messages limited to 140 Chinese characters through the web, SMS or a mobile app.

With a more high-end platform than Sina Weibo that allowed brands to create official accounts to communicate with their prospects and customers, Tencent Weibo was integrated into QQ.

Launched by Tencent in 2010, it was shut down in September 2020.

Douyin TikTok

TikTok, the international name for Douyin, was launched in 2016 and has grown rapidly. According to the company's own data, it has 1.4 billion users, of which one billion are active monthly.

It is the sixth most popular social network worldwide, and only Facebook (2.9 billion), Youtube (2.5 billion), Whatsapp (2 billion), Instagram (1.4 billion), and Wechat (1.2 billion) have more users than TikTok.

The most used and addictive feature is creating and streaming weird and creative videos with irrelevant and audacious connotations.

This is what made its success and allowed it to acquire 75 million new users in the month of December 2018 alone.

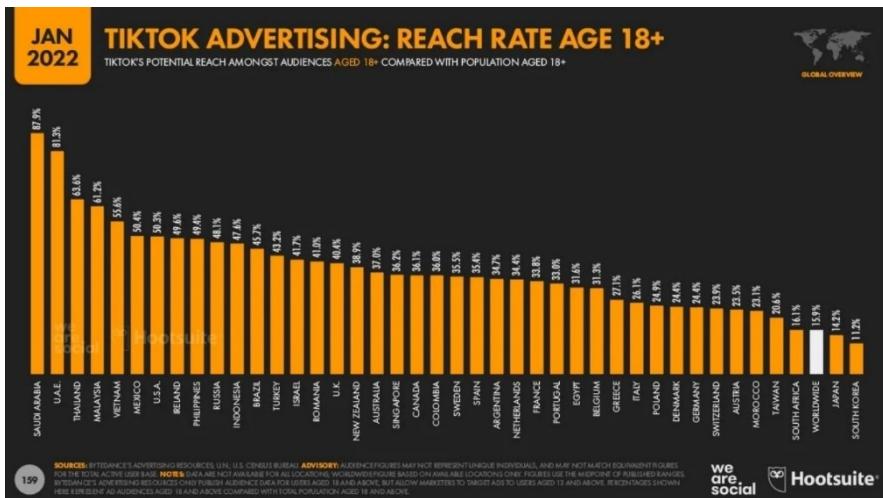


Figure 14: worldwide penetration rate of TikTok by country.

Xiaohongshu

Xiaohongshu, considered the Chinese version of Pinterest, is geared primarily towards women between the ages of 18 and 35.

Created in 2014, Xiaohongshu, which is translated as The Little Red Book, or simply RED, allows people to share photos, opinions, comments, about any type of content, but also to buy products directly since Xiaohongshu also operates RED Mall, which sells international products to Chinese users.

RED Mall can be an interesting opportunity for a digital export project targeting China.

This combination of social network and e-commerce made the success of the application, which is in hyper-growth.

According to Wikipedia: '[a]s of 2019, Xiaohongshu had over 300 million registered users and the number of monthly active users is over 85 million. ... Nearly 90% of [its users] are females'¹¹.

¹¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xiaohongshu>.

Weitao

Weitao is similar to Xiaohongshu, but it is not an independent social network application: it is Taobao and Tmall's native social network.

Weitao allows users and brands to post content related to products that are listed and selling on Taobao and Tmall. The aims are, therefore, to grow the sellers' communities, drive traffic and generate sales.

This social-selling business model is very similar to the one of Xiaohongshu. The main difference is that Weitao redirects users to Taobao or Tmall ecosystem, while Xiaohongshu keeps them in its own e-commerce platform.

Zhihu

Zhihu is considered the Chinese version of Quora and translates from Chinese into 'do you know?' In 2020, it was reported to have more than 420 million Chinese registered users and about 101 million active users asking or answering questions monthly, a growth of 40.1% from the previous year.

The popularity of this app helped Zhihu raise several rounds of financing, the last, for \$106.25 million, in April 2022¹². Like Quora, Zhihu represents a major advertising platform offering brands highly qualified potential customers in niche segments and in upper social classes located in the most important cities.

Meituan

Formerly Meituan-Dianping, this social network can be considered the Chinese version of Yelp, a platform for reviews and recommendations for restaurants, gyms, hotels, bars, and more.

It also includes a Groupon-type function and Uber Eats for ordering food directly with the application, taking advantage of both promotional offers and speedy home delivery.

¹² Scott Murdoch, 'China's Quora-like Zhihu raises \$106 million in Hong Kong listing'. Reuters, 14 April 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/technology/chinas-quora-like-zhihu-raises-106-mln-hong-kong-listing-sources-2022-04-14/>.

With over 667 million users as in 2021, Meituan, which would translate to ‘everyone comments’, has become a major source for local food news and deliveries.



TIP

In China there are numerous social networks that are very different from those that are used in western countries. Before you start with the social networks in China, be sure to choose those that are relevant to your business to optimize the investment and avoid wasting time/money on social networks that are not used by your potential customers.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Knowing the social networks that are the most widely used in the world is not relevant for developing a digital export project, because there are so many of them and so many differences from one country to another. In China, for example, they are much more numerous and widely used than in the rest of the world. But, if you don't specifically target China for your digital export project, you don't need them.

So, the important thing is to validate the social networks that are relevant for your project before you start. That's the way to optimize your investment and avoid costs on the platforms that are not used by your foreign potential customers.

CHAPTER 3

INSTANT MESSAGING FOR EXPORT BUSINESS

“

Maybe you have heard of or even used the chat system for instant messaging called Internet Relay Chat (IRC). Although its usage has been declining over the past several years, IRC is one of the two leading technologies for instant messaging.

The second one, Extensible Messaging and Presence Protocol (XMPP), is more extensively used because it allows better multi-party and multi-featured instant messaging. Skype, WhatsApp, Zoom, PlayStation chat and many others are based on XMPP.

Nowadays, these applications are very popular and extremely useful for a digital export project.

THE MOST POPULAR INSTANT MESSAGING APP IN THE WORLD

The SMS communication system is still widely used by subscribers of mobile operators all over the world. However, it faces more and more competition from the instant messaging applications, which, by passing through either mobile data or Wi-Fi, can offer more advanced functionalities for free or at a lower cost.

The instant messaging applications allow users to make significant savings, especially when they need to chat with people located abroad, whether via text messages, audio or video calls. Since Wi-Fi networks are deployed across the whole world, particularly in public spaces, cafes and hotels, it is no longer necessary to use the mobile network, which implies the consumption of a monthly subscription, to communicate.

Apart from WeChat and QQ, which were described in the previous chapter, here are the other main instant messaging applications at the international level.

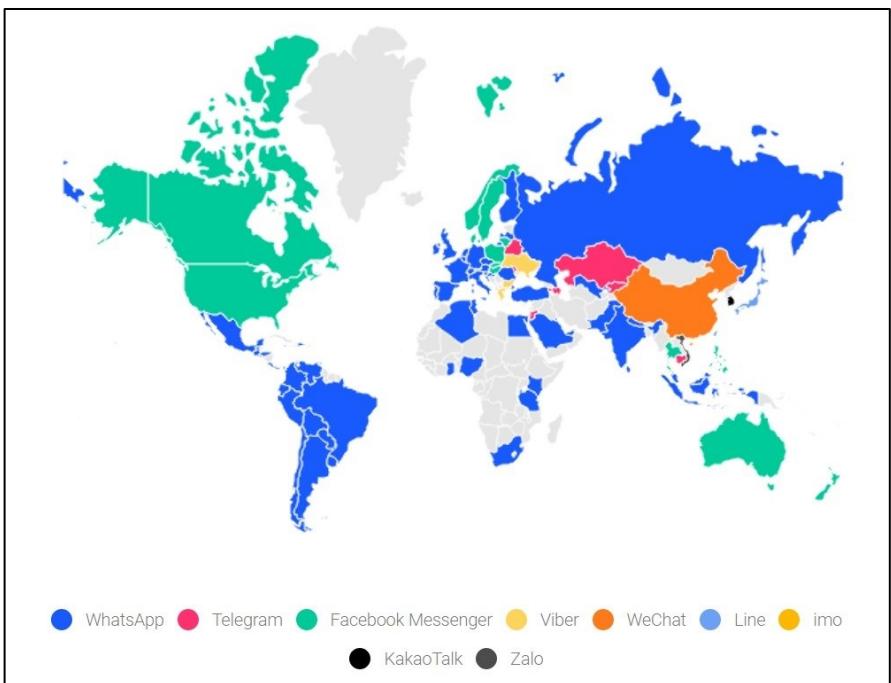


Figure 15: most popular instant messaging apps worldwide, android app data, April 2022, Similarweb¹³.

WhatsApp

With two billion global active users per month, WhatsApp is probably the most widely used communication application for export business. WhatsApp is an essential instant messaging solution bought by Meta in 2014 and the most widely used application in 60 countries according to Similarweb¹⁴.

It offers most of the services commonly used by such type of systems. It allows you to encrypt your discussions so that no one outside of the conversation can access them.

¹³ Aline Dallal, 'Most Popular Messaging Apps Around the Globe', Similarweb, 28 June 2022, <https://www.similarweb.com/corp/blog/research/market-research/worldwide-messaging-apps/>.

¹⁴ Dallal.

Your WhatsApp account is linked to your mobile number and informs you whenever one of your contacts is also using the application.

Since 2017 WhatsApp has also made a special offer for businesses that provides additional B2B features, such as automated messages and chatbot-like capabilities, a business page on which you can add more information about your company, etc.

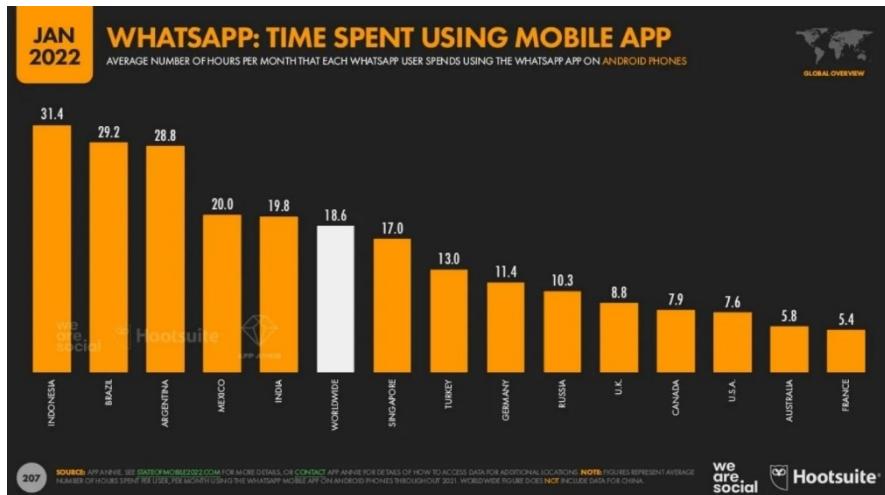


Figure 16: time spent using WhatsApp by country.

Facebook Messenger

The world's leading social network, of course, has its own instant messaging application. Its greatest advantage is that it can bring Facebook's billions of users together, who can communicate with each other instantly. You can send text and audio messages, stickers and emojis, and make calls via Wi-Fi or through your mobile data.

AI is also in the game, and on top of it the application offers companies the creation of a form, Quick Reply, to retrieve user information as well as a 'Customer Chat' plugin allowing businesses to integrate a Messenger button on their site.

You will not be able to keep your messages for more than 24 hours. The point of that restriction is to leave no trace on the web.

The application also owes its success to its filters using augmented reality such as rabbit ears, facial deformations and many other effects that are renewed continuously. Your recipients can still take screenshots of your messages, photos and videos, in which case the application will notify you.

iMessage

This instant messaging application is exclusive and embedded on Apple devices like iPhone, iPad, and Mac. Released in 2011 with iOS 5, iMessage lets people and businesses instantly communicate by sending messages, photos, video and more between any Apple devices over the internet via data or Wi-Fi.

You can send audio and text messages, which can be enhanced with dynamic effects such as animations, emojis, drawings, etc.

Apple has also launched the 'Business Chat' service in certain countries. After few years in beta version, this service is now operational in almost all countries where Apple operates and allows businesses to communicate directly with their customers, who can make direct purchases via Apple Pay.

Viber

This instant messaging application belongs to the Rakuten group and provides the main features of most other instant messaging solutions. Viber can encrypt all the conversations and it offers also the possibility to create 'hidden chats' that are secured by password.

The advantage for an international business is that Viber instant messaging has an automatic translation system that can be added into a conversation to automatically translate all communications in several foreign languages.

Snapchat

Snapchat is much more than a social network. It can also be used as an instant messaging application.

Since Snapchat is ephemeral par excellence, you will not be able to keep your messages for more than 24 hours. Again, the point of this restriction is to leave no trace on the Web.

That might sound like a paradox for SEO and for an inbound web strategy. But it is not, because the content on these instant messaging applications is mainly related to specific individual topics that are usually not worth sharing with a larger number of people as they would be on the social networks.

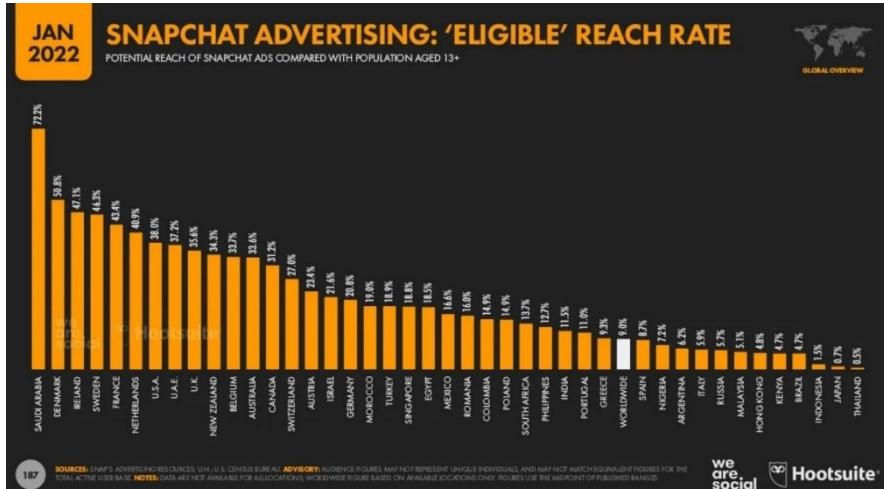


Figure 17: worldwide penetration rate of Snapchat by country¹⁵.

Snapchat application also owes its success to its filters, which use augmented reality like rabbit ears, facial deformations and many other effects that are renewed daily. Your recipients can still take screenshots of your messages, photos and videos. The app will send you a notification in this case.

A feature called 'Snap Map' allows you to locate your friends on a map if they have allowed this option. For businesses, Snapchat offers several advertising options in different formats: animations, photos, videos, geo-located filters, etc.

Google Allo, Duo, Meet ...

Available for both Android and iOS devices and with a Chrome extension, the Google Allo application was launched in 2016 to offer all the expected features for this type of service: texts, emojis, stickers,

¹⁵ Kemp.

photos, GIFs, maps, documents, audio messages, video calls, group messages, etc. The application was integrating with the Google Assistant AI, which allowed you to answer certain questions and do research on the search engine.

Why am I using the past tense here? Because Google decided to shut down the Allo service completely in 2019. That decision did not come as a big surprise to the experts, since Google launched Allo at the same time as Duo, another instant video messaging application, to recover from the failed acquisition of WhatsApp, made instead by Facebook two years earlier. It became clear that Duo could integrate Allo features and become the real competitor of WhatsApp, which didn't have video features at that time.

The unification of the two applications accelerated even further in 2020, when Google decided to put all its communication products under Google Workspace, including Google Hangouts, Google Meet, Google Messages, etc.

And here we go with another natural question: what's the difference between Duo and Meet? Well, technically Duo was Google's solution to competition from WhatsApp, while Meet was Google's solution to competition from Zoom.

Launched in 2017, Google Meet was originally a business video meeting web and mobile application. But, with Covid-19, Zoom simply boosted, and Google Meet needed to extend to consumer usage to keep up with the pace of its direct competitor, since all other video products were either no longer available, such as Hangouts, or not suitable, such as Duo.

With the current work-from-home evolution resulting from the pandemic, Google recently decided to get more aggressive against Zoom by merging Duo and Meet. Since *duo* means two in Latin, keeping this name after the merge doesn't make a lot of sense, especially because the original one-to-one feature has been upgraded to 32-person video meetings.

But TrigintaDuo wouldn't convey the same catchy and straightforward message as Meet.

Line

Line was founded in South Korea in 2011 but became extremely popular in Japan during the aftermath of Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami that ravaged Japan the same year by providing a reliable and free system for communication during such a disaster. When the worst was over, Line stayed in the heart of the Japanese, who soon started using it for their everyday instant messaging.

In Japan, Line is today like what WeChat is in China: a Swiss-army-knife-style app that went from a simple chat app into a multi-featured app for shopping, entertainment, travel, blogging features, eating, watching videos, listening to music, riding in cars, food delivery and many other everyday activities.

And, of course, it also provides instant messaging features!

Telegram

Telegram, which claims to be the most secure of all instant messaging apps, was founded by Russian Pavel Durov, who also founded VK. According to Wikipedia, in June 2022 Telegram had more than 700 million active users per month and a total of more than one billion global downloads¹⁶.

This application is very similar to the others listed above, but, since the start of the war in Ukraine, it became a central source of information and, unfortunately, disinformation.

In March 2022, Telegram's market share increased to 63%, becoming Russia's most used instant messaging application, surpassing WhatsApp, whose market share dropped to 32%.

Durov, who became a French citizen in 2021, moved to Dubai in 2017 along with Telegram's headquarters.

For businesses, the application offers Telegram Premium, a paid subscription with additional features that was introduced in 2022 in addition to its business widget, which allows a company to install an instant messaging system on its website.

¹⁶ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telegram_\(software\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telegram_(software)).

Kakaotalk

It is the largest South Korean instant messaging application published by Kakao Corp. Almost everyone in South Korea uses this application, leaving SMS texting, calls or other communication applications almost abandoned.

Operated by Kakao Corporation, KakaoTalk was launched in 2010 and is fully free for mobile and desktop instant messaging. Up to 93% of South Korea's smartphone owners actively use this application. Given the high number of users, Kakao Corporation decided to make it available in 15 languages and to add several new services, including games and e-commerce.

AND FOR BUSINESSES?

Although the applications listed above are mainly for B2C or C2C use, they can easily be used for B2B communication, and some of them have launched B2B specific versions.

Businesses are indeed using this kind of instant messaging tool more and more often either internally or with customers, especially in an international environment.

Here is a short list of the instant messaging applications whose key scope is B2B.

Skype

Created in 2003, this application has been around for many years and was acquired by Microsoft in 2011.

Skype allows people to send text, videos and files, create groups, and run voice and video calls. You can use VoIP to make calls to landlines or mobiles via dedicated subscriptions, and the service is available on most platforms, including Web, MacOS, Windows, iOS, Android, Linux, etc.

Skype was one of the most widely used instant messaging applications for business all over the world, locally and internationally. But, in the

context of the new remote-work needs dictated by Covid-19, Skype was the biggest loser.

	2020	2021	Difference
Google Meet	1.60%	21.80%	+20.2%
Microsoft Teams	9.70%	14.50%	+4.8%
Skype	32.40%	6.60%	-25.80%
Slack	17.70%	3.60%	-14.10%
Zoom	26.40%	48.70%	+22.3%

Figure 18: video call platforms market share 2020 vs. 2021¹⁷.

Hangouts

As mentioned before, Hangouts is also part of the reorganization of Google Workspace, and since 2021 its users have migrated to Google Chat and Meet, which became the default chat and video applications, whether B2B or B2C.

Hangouts allowed conversations between two or more users with an access through a Gmail or Google+ account, or through the dedicated Android and iOS mobile apps. But the system was not based on the XMPP technology, and, therefore, third-party applications didn't work with Hangouts. That was probably one of the reasons for the transition to Google Chat and Meet.

Signal

Launched in 2014, with free and open-source software, this instant messaging application gained popularity in the United States during the George Floyd protests when the application was downloaded five time more than in the week before the murder.

¹⁷ Robert Brandl, 'Video Call Victories: map reveals the most popular video conferencing platforms worldwide', EmailToolTester, 24 March 2021, <https://www.emailtooltester.com/en/blog/video-conferencing-market-share/>.

In January 2021, Signal saw another huge surge in user registrations, probably due to a change in WhatsApp's privacy policy¹⁸.

Signal can encrypt all end-to-end chats and does not require the creation of an account to use the service, since the phone number automatically becomes the account identifier.

Slack

Slack is not an instant messaging application but rather a business teamwork tool with integrated instant messaging features that allow its user to share documents, send messages, make audio and video calls, etc. from the same platform.

The key feature that made Slack popular around the world was the ability to organize users into 'channels' depending on the team, topic or project they were working on, with the option of one-to-one or group, i.e., channel, interactions.

Workplace

Not to be confused with Google Workspace, Workplace is much more than an instant messaging application. It is a business social network published by Meta that also integrates the most important instant messaging features allowing users to create inter-company groups or sub-groups for discussing and collaborating with topic- or project-related colleagues.



TIP

For a digital export project, you need to choose an application that is consistent with the countries you are targeting. That means choosing the application or applications that are most frequently used in those countries by your current and potential customers.

Another point to consider when choosing is data encryption to secure all messages.

¹⁸ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Signal_\(software\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Signal_(software)).



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Instant messaging applications, whether B2C or B2B, all offer key audio and video communication features: notifications to your contacts if you use the same app as they do, micro-blogging, website chatbot plugin, payment functions, etc.

A good integration into your company's tools will help improve your teams' productivity and efficiency around the world.

CHAPTER 4

THE ‘BORDER-FREE’ APPROACH TO SOCIAL NETWORKS

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With newer and newer digital technologies, there are hardly any obstacles to meeting people all around the world, especially on social networks!

Nowadays, the difficult thing is no longer the ability to establish a connection, it is rather the ability to find the right content to keep that connection for as long as possible. So, on social networks, since borders no longer exist, it's all about content consistency. Explanations...

SOCIAL NETWORKS, THE NEW FACILITATORS FOR INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Back in 1929, in his short story ‘Chains’ the Hungarian author Frigyes Karinthy developed the concept of the six handshakes separating two people on the planet. With the development of social networks, and in particular Facebook, this figure is reduced to around three!

With the development of such new digital technologies, it became simpler and simpler to reach the people we want, or need, to reach! Today, therefore, the problem is no longer how to reach and connect with someone, but how to find the appropriate content that will allow this person to stay connected as long as possible.

Today, on the social networks borders no longer exist. There are now thousands of opportunities to establish and develop increasingly international networks to help export sales.

THE LOSING GAME IN B2B SOCIAL NETWORKS: VIADEO VS. LINKEDIN

In the French professional world, two social networks have been competing for a long time. Until 2016, the French B2B social network Viadeo had been trying to resist the escalating internationalization of digital connections.

Since Viadeo was focused primarily on France and on the French-speaking countries, one of the main reasons for its failure was that it limited the development of its features mainly to French users. With such a limited approach, Viadeo was facing its direct competitor, LinkedIn, which, on the contrary, clearly and early on, understood the globalization power of the digital economy.

On top of its language and cultural limits, Viadeo's business model was based on users' subscriptions, while LinkedIn was applying a free and open model to all users around the world. At that time, people were very inclined to stop as many paid services as possible and, in return, to become products themselves through the data they provided. In these circumstances, the strategic error of the French social network was obvious.

Since its acquisition by the Le Figaro Group, Viadeo has tried to find new development opportunities, different from its now giant American competitor. However, regaining its past luster is proving to be more challenging than expected.

For its part, the ease of connection on LinkedIn all over the world has allowed millions of users to internationalize their networks.

THE EASE OF DUAL INTERACTIONS

The main social networking platforms that are used for professional reasons internationally, such as LinkedIn or Twitter, advocate the easy follow-ups that are possible between users across countries. Thanks to these features, developing an international network has become extremely easy on such platforms!

Whatever the business and whatever the professional topic, Twitter provides access to an absolutely amazing news base at the global level. The latest and most up-to-date content is easily accessible through simple keywords and hashtags. All the key media from all over the world are on Twitter, and users can follow their news or exchange information.

In this way, the confrontation of ideas is no longer limited to one specific country but can easily have an international reach on almost any subject.

To facilitate this international communication even more, LinkedIn allows users to identify their target contacts better on both networks.

Everyone's LinkedIn profile, for example, is accessible on Twitter and can provide the information to fill out the Twitter account in a more consistent way. Interactions on Twitter can also lead to the creation of relationships on LinkedIn by adding specific persons directly in both digital directories.

Gradually, using paper business cards will disappear with the rise of these digital technologies, which will replace the same functions but in an easier way.



TIP

B2B social networks can facilitate building relationships and organizing meetings all over the world. But they must be used consistently. People must decide how to expand them, which means choosing the types of profile to accept or invite to join and those to avoid because they are too far from their business scope, particularly on LinkedIn. In digital life, networking can be much more active than it sometimes is in real life.

The only way to benefit fully from such digital networks is to be active by accepting new contacts, building relationships, inviting new people that share similar interests, and so forth, in your home country and internationally.

THE GLOBAL EXPANSION POWER OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks, which can appear at first extremely virtual and dehumanized, are nevertheless amazing channels to meet new people and prospective customers all over the world. They are perfect to break the ice and facilitate mutual knowledge before or after a first meeting in real life.

But to be effective, these networks must be used to the full extent of their power. The interactions they create are sources of learning and discovery as numerous ideas are constantly exchanged and new insights are accessible in a few clicks.

Through this new type of digital open-mindedness, it is possible to adopt innovative solutions for the permanent evolution of any business. By sweeping away the physical limits of real encounters, social networks make it possible to go much further.



CASE STUDY

To write some of the case studies for the books of The Digital Exporter Series, I wanted to broaden the concepts around digital export as much as possible by collecting testimonials from experts in different countries and on different continents. My previous French book already helped me collect testimonials from Europe and China.

This time, I interviewed several experts from all over the world with whom I connected through LinkedIn to ask them to share their experience with cross-border e-commerce, international marketplaces, and anything else related to digital export. So many people got in right away that the number of examples I was able to collect was amazing.

With the internationalization of social networks, it is possible to share knowledge and expertise much faster and more easily in any country around the globe.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

The contribution of social networks in international communication is continuous. Today, it is no longer possible to remain blocked within traditional borders because it is in the border-free digital space that people can find new opportunities internationally.

Opening up your network and connecting to new people has become essential for any professional that considers communication a key skill in the modern world.

CHAPTER 5

SOCIAL SELLING, AI, CHATBOTS, ... SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS AROUND THE WORLD

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With the appearance of new platforms, new content formats and new ways of engaging, social networks are evolving rapidly: earlier in this book, we saw the case of Viadeo, but MySpace and many others have also gone out of business or changed their value proposition, either at the domestic level or internationally.

For your digital export project, staying on top of this evolution for the countries you are targeting is essential. In this chapter you'll find some of the global trends that you need to follow.

KEY TRENDS TO FOLLOW

Social networks are constantly and rapidly evolving either at the domestic level or internationally.

Beyond Viadeo and MySpace, many others have gone out of business¹⁹ or changed their type of service and value proposition, including Google with Orkut²⁰ and Google Buzz²¹, the predecessor of Google+ and eventually Google+ itself as announced in October 2018²².



TIP

What would you do if one of your social networks disappeared? This is not an irrelevant question in view of the examples mentioned above.

After all, your fans, followers, etc. do not belong to you. They belong to the platform you use. And, if the platform shuts down, you'll lose them all, unless you act in advance!

The best practice to avoid losing fans or followers in this case is to use a lead-generation approach on all your social networks. That means publishing content that invites your audience to go to your website, for example to find out more about a post, redeem a coupon, or participate in a contest, ... anything that requires people to leave their names and email. Only when you get those contact details, will you avoid losing much if a social network goes out of business.

But still 4.62 billion people use social media globally, spending on average almost two and a half hours on them every day, with some countries going up to more than four hours per day²³.

Social networks are, therefore, an integral part of people's daily routines all around the world.

So, businesses need to use them for their digital export project but not at random in the hope of finding their target customers because the competition is very high.

¹⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_defunct_social_networking_services.

²⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orkut>.

²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Buzz.

²² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google%2B>.

²³ Kemp.

It will be challenging for your brand to stand out on the international social networks unless you have a clear digital export strategy. Therefore, you need to stay on the lookout for the latest social media trends in the foreign countries you are targeting to deploy an effective strategy.

At the global level, here are some social media trends that are particularly interesting for a digital export project.

Social selling

Just as Alipay has been integrated into WeChat or 'Shop Now' into Instagram, such shopping features on social networks are increasingly frequent and will evolve even more to the point that they might turn social networks more and more into retail platforms or marketplaces.

This trend is forecasted to grow significantly in the coming years, making social selling a very effective sales channel for digital export expansion.

But to benefit from these features, you need to create a frictionless shopping experience for your foreign potential customers by not forcing them to switch from a local social network to your e-commerce, because that can be one of too many clicks that can prevent them from converting into real customers²⁴.

²⁴ You will find more details in book 4 of The Digital Exporter Series, [SELLING ONLINE INTERNATIONALLY: How to Set Up & Manage a Cross-Border E commerce](#).

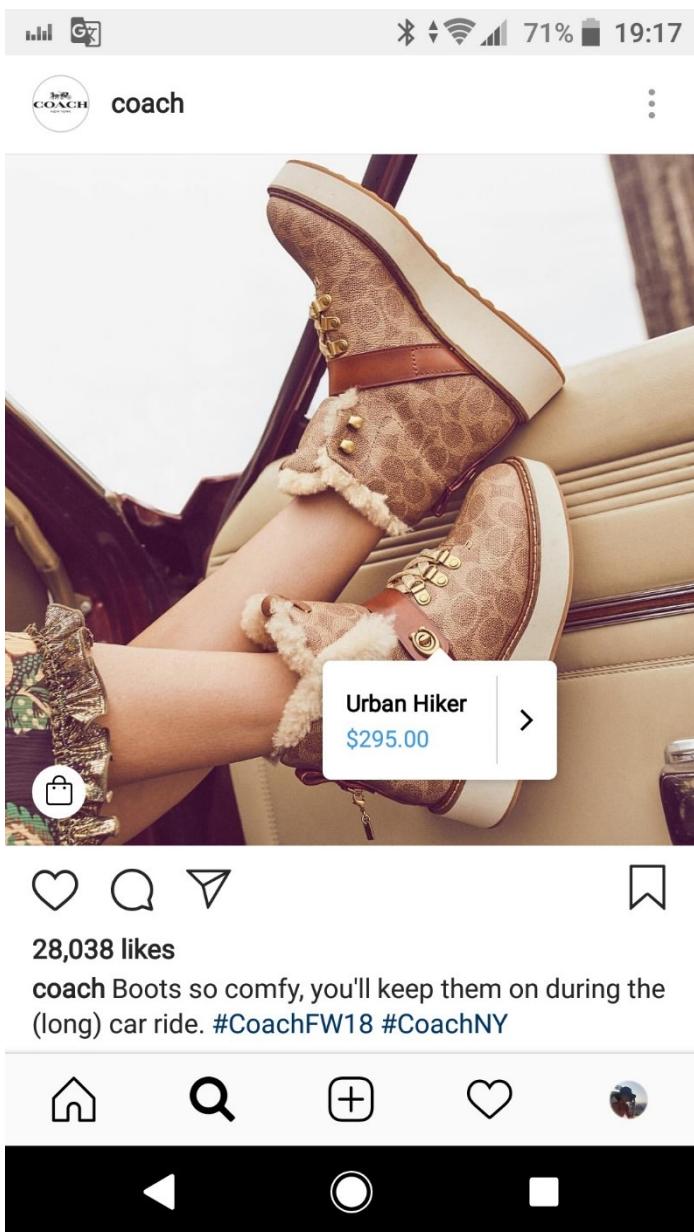


Figure 19: Coach's shop on Instagram.

Smaller local networks can be key for SMA

According to experts (Pinterest Business), social media advertising (SMA) on smaller local social networks can generate twice the return on ad spend than on the traditional global platforms. Part of this result is due to Apple's recent announcement that it will prevent Facebook from targeting almost all its users.

You, therefore, need to check not only the local social media that are mostly commonly used in your target countries but also the types of mobiles your potential customers use in those same countries.

Video content will go on dominating

Internationally, video content will remain one of the most engaging forms of content on social networks, especially the short-form like Reels, Stories, etc. What you need to keep in mind for your digital export project is that this type of content is a great facilitator of international multicultural communication as visual messages are easier to translate.

Automatic translation

With AI, the quality of these systems is getting better and better and is also facilitating international multicultural communication making it much faster than before. Automatic translations, already integrated in Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc., will become so widespread that they will cover almost all languages, social networks and services.

Instant messaging

With Messenger, WhatsApp, WeChat, etc., as we saw before, instant messaging offers new communication opportunities that are complementary to other cross-border e-commerce applications. This synergy will increase the productivity and quality of your digital export project.

Multilingual chatbots

A chatbot allows you to chat with internet users that are visiting your website and answer their questions through automated conversations even when you are not available or when you don't speak their languages. This helps you keep the visitors on your website longer, qualify their needs and improve your bounce and conversion rate.

A good multilingual configuration of the chatbot on the most frequent questions/answers will ensure this works for any foreign visitor.

Consumers and influencers

Brands are more and more interested in interactions with those consumers that are more active in sharing the values of brands because they are close to their own.

This type of consumer community can become a valuable asset for a business if it is capable of converting them into ambassadors for their brand. Influencer marketing is spreading around the world, and it is a strong channel to use for your digital export project.

B2B OR B2C?

A few years ago, the question 'what are the B2B and B2C social networks?' was very relevant.

Today, the situation has changed with business pages on Facebook, business content on Instagram, funny posts on LinkedIn, hybrid content on Twitter, and so on. There is no longer a clear separation between B2B and B2C social networks, at least on the basis of the platforms or applications used.

The only difference is in the users' objectives:

- On B2B social networks, users are mainly searching for new potential customers, publishing news about their business, unveiling new products, inviting people to an upcoming event, looking for a new job, etc. What are the social networks that are the

best suited to achieve these goals? Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Vkontakte, WhatsApp, WeChat, QQ, etc.

- On B2C social networks, people are mainly using them to stay as much as possible in touch with their friends, family and colleagues, watch videos, listen to music, read the news, etc. Which social networks are the most suitable to achieve these objectives? Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Vkontakte, WhatsApp, WeChat, QQ, etc.

It is, therefore, possible to use the same networks for very different purposes, whether B2B or B2C. However, you must avoid going to all social networks for no reason especially on the international scale: each social network requires a significant investment in terms of time and resources to deliver good results. Multiplying the social networks you use will result in a proportional multiplication of this investment and consequently a reduction of your ROI.

So, which ones should you choose? You need to focus on the relevance of social networks and their consistency with your digital export strategy. That means you need to focus on the social networks that are most commonly used by your potential customers and partners in the countries you're targeting for your B2B or B2C digital export project.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Social networks have become essential for businesses that want to develop internationally. But they are evolving rapidly and continuously.

It is, therefore, key for you to use them consistently in all the foreign countries that you target for your digital export development, whether B2B or B2C.

CHAPTER 6

THE BASICS OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA

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Social media has become fundamental in the marketing strategy of many companies because it makes it possible to interact quickly with a large number of clients and prospects around the world.

Sharing promotional content, automatizing responses to fans, organizing contests, running advertising campaigns ... there are many tactics available!

But which ones are the most effective for your digital export strategy?

IDENTIFY RELEVANT SOCIAL NETWORKS

The previous pages walked you through the main social networks used around the world. That thus raised the fundamental point: location!

Indeed, each country has its peculiarities regarding the choice and use of social networks, and you have to study them in the foreign countries you are targeting for your digital export project. Because, even if sometimes there are similarities, differences are more frequent, especially when you are targeting countries such as China, Russia or those in Latin America, for example.

Before getting started, the first thing you need to do is to identify the social networks, whether vertical (sector or topic centric) or horizontal (generalist), corresponding to your business and that are used by your foreign potential customers.

Regarding vertical social networks, they can be either a subcategory of a horizontal social network, for example groups on LinkedIn or on Facebook, or a fully standalone platform specialized on a specific topic or sector, on a local or international scale. Here are some examples:

- GrabCAD²⁵: acquired by Stratasys in 2014 and with more than 10 million users worldwide, it is the largest free cloud-based community of engineers, designers, manufacturers, and students sharing professional advice on all computer-assisted design (CAD) topics.

²⁵ <https://grabcad.com/>.

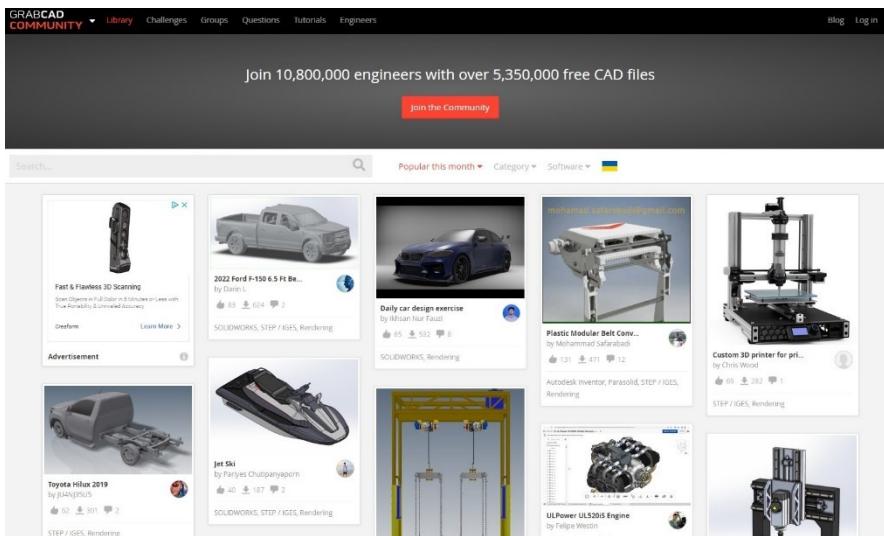


Figure 20: GrabCAD website.

- Strava²⁶: it is a social network specialized in cycling and running with one of the largest online sport communities in the world. Founded in 2009 in San Francisco, it brings together amateur and professional athletes, who share their experience to help each other.
- Spiceworks²⁷: it is the network of IT professionals of more than 3,000 tech companies around the world. Founded in Texas in 2006, it has more than six million users and has integrated major brands such as Dropbox, Dell, Intel, etc.
- Kaggle²⁸: acquired by Google in 2017, Kaggle is the social network dedicated to data science. In 2021, it had more than eight million registered users in 194 countries, from beginners to world's best researchers ready to help companies with their 'data' problems. This idea has attracted many companies and even NASA, which has been a partner for several years.

The second thing that you need to check before starting is the type of content in terms of image or video. On Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube,

²⁶ <https://www.strava.com/>.

²⁷ <https://www.spiceworks.com/>.

²⁸ <https://www.kaggle.com/>.

Vimeo, etc., depending on your value proposition and on the format of your offer, the social networks can be different.

Finally, you need to consider the age of your foreign potential customers, not only because they might use different social networks but also because they might use them in a different way depending on their age.

A precise study on this age factor in the foreign countries you target for your digital export project is, therefore, necessary.



TIP

To clearly identify the social networks that your prospects are using:

- *Avoid generalizations such as 'lawyers are not on Facebook'.*
- *Think about the moment and action: when do your foreign potential customers use the social networks? What are they doing? And are their actions on the social networks connected with your business?*

DEFINE YOUR EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

To take advantage of social networks, locally and internationally, the first thing you need to do is to publish content! To do that in an effective way, you must define two elements: your editorial guidelines and your editorial calendar, which we will see in the next chapter.

At first created for the traditional print press, editorial guidelines became fundamental for digital communication on websites, blogs, and social networks. But the new digital format for editorial guidelines has a constraint that the print format didn't have: they must optimize the synergies with SEO, SEA and any other action used in a digital marketing strategy, whether for the home country or for foreign markets.

So, what are the editorial guidelines for social networks? They are the reference document that must define the social networks strategy, the

type of content, the objectives for each type of content, the frequency, the graphic style, the visual elements, and anything else that can be used to communicate effectively with your potential customers while ensuring editorial consistency across your teams and countries.

You should define several aspects for each foreign country you target for your digital export project. The most important are the following:

- The topics and types of subjects to be covered.
- The tone and style to adopt: informative, funny, formal, friendly, dialectic, etc.
- The keywords and vocabulary to be used for SEO for the foreign countries you target as well as the words to be avoided.
- The length of your publications, i.e., the number of words or even characters.
- The type: white papers, studies, interviews, polls, news, infographics, etc.
- The objectives: grow brand awareness, increase online sales, develop the number of fans or prospects, etc.



TIP

For your digital export project, you need to pay particular attention to the objectives. Avoid being conditioned by your home market: your international objectives may differ since they must be linked to the level of development of your business in the target foreign countries and not to that in your home country!



CASE STUDY

To acquire potential customers and photographers, Ever Photo Shoot relies on:

- Two types of content: those generated by users and advertising campaigns offering promo codes.
- Two types of social networks: on the one hand, those where the profile images are very important, such as Facebook, Tinder, LinkedIn, etc., and, on the other hand, those dedicated to photographers, whether amateurs or professionals, such as Pinterest, Instagram, etc.

In terms of the type of content, beyond the choice between text, image, video, voice and music, the possible options are the same as for your home strategy:

- Organic or native publications: the content is created and published by you or your team.
- Republications: the rebroadcasting of your own content after a certain period of time, more or less long, according to your business.
- Shares: content that is published by others and is relevant to your objectives, such as press articles or contributions from recognized influencers. By sharing this content, you can comment on the position of your company in relation to the topic described in the original publication.
- Conversations: whether it is to respond to user comments on your publications or to post your own comments on third-party publications, conversational marketing is essential on social networks around the world.
- Likes: the most common and easiest interactions on any social networks anywhere around the world, Likes don't need further explanation.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

For your digital export project, social networks are essential, but, before getting started, you need to choose those relevant and useful in the foreign countries that you target, whether horizontal/generalist or vertical/specialized.

Once you have made your selection, you will need to organize your content and deploy your international strategy on these social networks.

For that, the first thing to do is to prepare the editorial guidelines for each country you target.

CHAPTER 7

THE INTERNATIONAL EDITORIAL CALENDAR FOR YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA

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Instead of publishing arbitrarily on social networks, you need to be as close as possible to your foreign potential customers.

For that, you need to publish your content on key dates, according to key local events, national holidays, evergreen topics, etc. A good way to organize that is by building an editorial calendar for all the social networks you use in each country.

There are several tools that you can use for that, including Twitter.

WHAT IS AN EDITORIAL CALENDAR?

Your editorial calendar defines the schedule and the regularity of publication to obtain a good visibility for your business on the international social networks and media: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and the like, but also blogs, newsletters, etc.

The more active the social media, the more frequently you need to publish your content so that it will have a better chance to be seen than that of your competitors.

Be careful, because, on large global networks such as Facebook, it is illusory to think that you can generate strong visibility *ex nihilo* in a short time without paying for ads. On social networks of this type, social media advertising (SMA) has become almost compulsory for any business around the world to reach a decent level of visibility for its posts.

For your digital export project, your international editorial calendar must relate to each foreign country you target.

This document aims to validate in advance the topics, formats, objectives, etc. of all the content that you will publish on the social networks that you selected for your digital export project.

The editorial calendar will help you be more effective and more relevant for your potential customers in the foreign countries you target. More precisely, the editorial calendar should allow you to:

- Keep the focus on the areas of interest of your international potential customers.
- Anticipate your content based on specific events that occur in the countries you are targeting.
- Develop content consistently based on the objectives of your digital export project.
- Save time.

All that sounds rational, but there is a tricky point...

How can you identify in advance the key events related to your business in the foreign countries you target?

FIND KEY EVENTS ABROAD

As just mentioned, an international editorial calendar for your digital export project with the key events in each foreign country you target is very useful. However, if you have to identify these key events manually, the task will be long and complicated. There are two other simpler options.

What if you already have a local PR agency in each of your foreign countries?

In this case, the easiest thing to do is to ask them to give you a generic calendar of these events in their own country, the traditional evergreens calendar, or to prepare a more specific one for your sector for the same country. In general, local evergreens calendars take the following events into consideration:

- National holidays with fixed date: Christmas, Labor Day (in some countries), Cinco de Mayo, Saint Nicholas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day, Orthodox Christmas, Australia Day, Queen's or King's Birthday, Koningsdag, ...
- National holidays with variable dates: Easter, Thanksgiving, Labor Day (U.S.), Easter, Diwali, Lunar New Year, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, Sharada Navratri, ...
- Cultural, religious or commercial celebrations with fixed date: Saint Patrick's Day, Valentine's Day, Halloween, International Women's Day, Children's Day, World Music Day, Dia de los muertos, Saint Sylvester's Day, ...
- Cultural, religious or commercial celebrations with variable dates: school holidays, retail sales, Black Friday, Mother's Day, Mardi Gras, Veterans Day, ...
- National, European, and international events: Miss World, Miss Universe, Eurovision, San Remo, Oscars, Telethons, Glasgow International Comedy Festival, Rouketopolemos, ...

- Sports competitions: FIFA World Cup, Tournoi de Roland-Garros, Olympic Games, Giro d'Italia, Tour de France, F1 Grand Prix, NBA Finals, Golf US Open, Wimbledon, ...
- Trade shows in your sector: CES, Fashion Weeks, IFE International Food & Drink Event, Spielwarenmesse, CES, Texworld, Cosmoprof Worldwide, MICAM, Maison&Object, ...

#PLANTHEMOMENT



Figure 21: Twitter #PlanTheMoment hashtag.

What if you do not yet have any PR agency abroad and are starting out on the international social networks?

In this case, you can use Twitter by following these three steps:

- 1) Connect to your Twitter account, or create one if you don't have one yet, and go to your Analytics, and then to the Events Manager tab under More. You'll get on the overview page, which lists the upcoming events according to their importance in terms of engagements on Twitter at the global level.

- 2) Now you are taken to a page that provides you with multiple choices that you can filter by type of event and location.
- 3) Here, you can get the events that are relevant for your digital export project goals and social media strategy. By clicking on an event that interests you, you will have additional statistics regarding the number of people that are interested in that event, the number of tweets talking about it, as well as view the most popular tweets.

Beyond these three steps, Twitter publishes its interactive calendar listing the key events, or moments, around the world. Just connect to the business platform and apply the filters that are the most relevant for you in terms of country and sector.

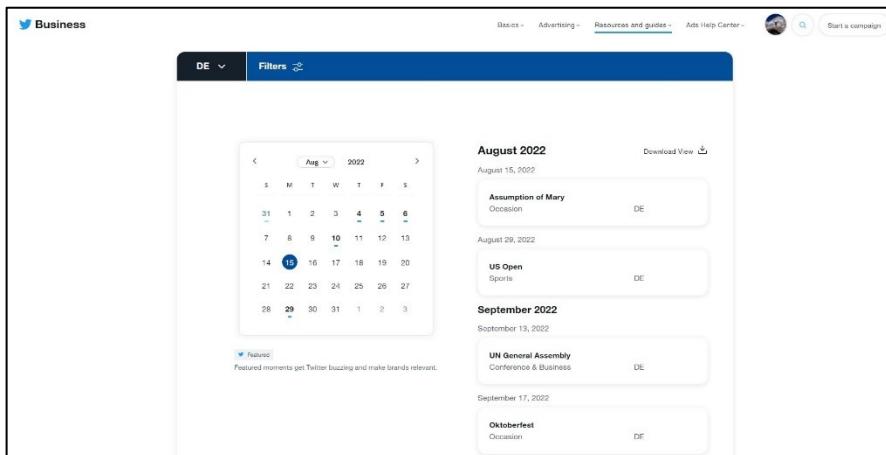


Figure 22: Twitter interactive calendar on <https://business.twitter.com/en/resources/twitter-marketing-calendar.html>.

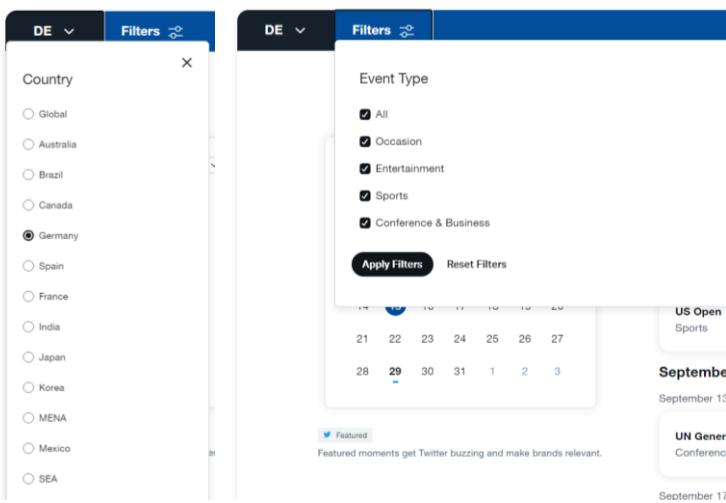


Figure 23: the filters available on Twitter interactive calendar.

PLANNING INTERNATIONALLY THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Twitter's marketing calendar is just a free and easy tool to identify the events that are most likely to become 'Top Trending' in your sector.

However, this tool has a few limitations you need to be aware of:

- First the events are listed by level of engagement on Twitter, so you will only see events close in time that have likes, RTs, or comments. To see the other events more distant in time, you need to log into the Twitter calendar regularly, every month or more frequently.
- Another drawback is the number of countries available, still limited but probably destined to evolve.

If the countries you are targeting are not on Twitter's list or if you want a more complete view of the key dates in those countries, you can try these other techniques:

- Check out global Twitter events.
- Sign up for local news sites.
- Set up thematic alerts on Google Alerts²⁹.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

An editorial calendar for social media is critical to organize your communication and content, whether at the domestic or international level.

However, in foreign countries it can be difficult for you to identify key events without the help of a local PR agency in these countries.

Twitter and other free online tools are quite effective in helping you with this task.

²⁹ <https://www.google.com/alerts>.

CHAPTER 8

INTERNATIONAL VIRAL MARKETING: HOW TO GET BUZZ-WORTHY

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The holy grail of online marketing, the buzz, cannot be decreed in advance and has no recipe.

However, many good practices can help you generate viral content on the international social networks and, therefore, visibility for your business and for your digital export project.

Read on to find out what buzz marketing is and how to use it.

BUZZ = VIRAL CONTENT = VISIBILITY = BRAND AWARENESS = SALES

Virality, or buzz, increases when specific content is seen, liked, commented on and shared by a very large number of internet users as soon as it is published on a social network. This works the same way on any social network around the world. But the level of buzz can differ depending on the format used: for example, for a video, it is measured by the number of times it is viewed, while, for a tweet, it is measured by the number of times it is retweeted, commented on, etc.

Every day, millions of items of content are uploaded on the web and on social networks: thousands of videos, millions of photos, etc. And there is not just one global buzz per day or per week: there are tons! It is, therefore, difficult to achieve this digital Holy Grail, but this quest can still have an interest for your business.

In fact, the buzz and virality are only important in relation to the specific target of your international social media strategy. The general consumers around the world or the global ultra-specialized B2B buyers never react in the same way to social media content.

Generally speaking, the buzz is more effective for building brand awareness in a positive or negative way – ‘bad buzz’ unfortunately also exists. It is, therefore, unwise to invest a lot of time and money to achieve an international buzz if the primary objective of your strategy is not brand awareness.

However, to make a buzz that helps you sell, you need to create visibility with viral content that is monetizable, for example a video on YouTube promoting a product or service that also promotes a product or service in your home country or internationally.

A FEW WAYS TO CREATE INTERNATIONAL BUZZ

Rarely does digital content go viral internationally. However, a few major types of content can go viral more easily than others in almost any country:

- Artistic content: paintings, sculptures, music, etc., but it can be difficult to associate it to any business sector except for those related to the fields of art.
- Funny content: jokes, cute cats, humorous videos, 'I show you my life', etc. It is generally the easiest content to produce, especially in short-video formats. Of course, it must be related to your business, your entrepreneurial life, your team, and the like.
- Divisive or 'clashing' content: critical content, attacking or defending other people's content. For this kind of content to work, you need to use a social network account or profile that already has a notoriety that is consistent with such an approach, which is not very common for businesses interested in developing their export sales.
- Original content that is true, innovative, intriguing, etc. For example, an Ask Me Anything (AMA) event, where you swap your account with an influencer for a few days, give your customers full spotlight, etc.



CASE STUDY

An innovative technology or product, whether your own or the one of a partner of yours, can be a good opportunity for a viral marketing operation. The launch of the Tesla Model 3, for example, generated 276,000 pre-orders of \$1,000 in two days after the simple launch conference that featured a scale 1 mockup of the car.

- Easy-to-share and easy-to-comment content: to maximize the visibility of your content internationally, it must be easy to be shared and commented on in the foreign countries you target. Here are some good practices:

- Do not host your videos on your company's server but on third-party international video broadcasting platforms that allow your content to be shared much faster from any country around the world.
- Install the automatic 'like' or 'share' buttons on your website or blog to allow your visitors to like and share your content with one click on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc.
- Part of the virality comes from the conversation around the content you publish. Since this feature is not always on by default, you need to make sure it is activated for your company page on the social networks that are key for your digital export project. But be careful though because once this function has been activated at the international level, you must be able to manage multilingual comments right away.
- Crowdfunding: this system of raising capital involves getting small amounts of money from a large number of people. It can be an excellent opportunity to create buzz because it reaches individuals that are so much interested in the product in the crowdfunding campaign that they are likely to pre-buy and finance it. The drawback is that, to be successful, the crowdfunding campaign needs to achieve the financial target that was set at the beginning. And that requires serious preparation, a lot of communication, and a substantial marketing investment. If that financial target is not achieved, the crowdfunding will fail, and the buzz will not work.



CASE STUDY

Operating in the mass market, the consumer brand Percko, which offers dynamic underwear that improves posture to help relieve back pain, carried out a crowdfunding campaign on Kickstarter to finance its prototype. This campaign presented Percko's technical and scientific innovations. Liked and shared widely internationally, this crowdfunding campaign convinced more than 100,000 customers to pre-order the product and helped Percko to Percko buzz around the world.



TIP

Although buzz is synonym of viral content, it shouldn't be the primary goal of your international social media strategy. You have to focus above all on attracting and convincing your foreign prospective customers. And for that, buzz or other viral content are not always necessary. The buzz can just be the cherry on the cake, but for good ROI you need other types of content, and this applies both in your home country and internationally.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Viral marketing consists in the rebroadcasting by internet users of content on a very large scale, national or international, on social networks.

Creating buzz doesn't have to be the primary goal of a social media strategy.

Artistic, moving, funny, divisive, extraordinary or even (real) scoops are the types of content that work best to get viral. You will just need to ensure that they can be rebroadcast and commented on.

Crowdfunding campaigns can also be good tests of whether the offer is virally attractive.

CHAPTER 9

FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON FACEBOOK – PAGE STRUCTURES

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With almost half of its users speaking languages other than English, Facebook is increasingly looking for solutions to make multilingual communication accessible to everyone.

Since 2016, new tools and functions developed by Facebook have made it possible to publish and communicate in several languages and in several countries. This chapter explains some of the main techniques.

COMMON MISTAKES

Among the first things that companies do on social networks when they start selling abroad, three are particularly common:

- Write the same posts several times, each one in a different language, on the same page.
- Write each post in multiple languages, one after the other in the same post, also on the same page.
- Create specific pages for each foreign country and language.

These are easy-to-deploy techniques that make it possible to use different languages and types of content more or less suited to foreign potential customers. But they are not optimized in terms of performance and management cost.

Instead, there are other techniques, made available by Facebook, that are more effective in optimizing an international and multicultural presence on that network.

A GLOBAL PAGE + MARKET PAGES

'Global Pages is a framework which enables brands and businesses to provide localized versions of their content for their customers all over the world. With Global Pages, you can maintain one universal brand name, total fan count, vanity URL, and global insights across your entire fan base'³⁰.

Thanks to this technique, if one searches, for example, for 'Ikea' in the research field of Facebook, filtering by page, and then clicks on the first result, the landing page on Facebook will not be a global page but the Ikea page that is the most relevant or the closest to that person, in my case, @IKEAFrance, which has more than 31 million fans.

³⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/905034079579176>.



Figure 24: IKEA France page on Facebook showing more than 31 million fans.

But, if you check the pages of other countries, by switching region through the three-dots button in the next picture, for example @IKEA.Austria, you can see that they all have the same number of fans: more than 31 million!

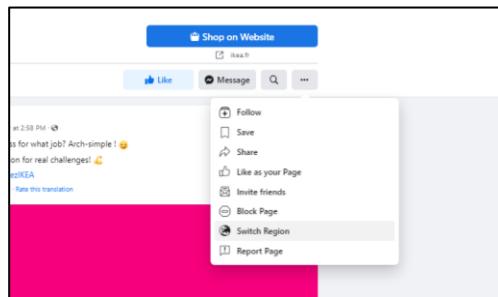


Figure 25: the button to switch region on Facebook.



Figure 26: IKEA Austria page on Facebook also showing more than 31 million fans although there are a bit less than nine million people living in this country.

Indeed, this figure corresponds to the number of fans worldwide and is displayed on each country page.

Ikea, like other international brands, has set up the 'Global Page + Market Pages', structure which allows it to capitalize on the global number of fans: for customers, when they land on their national page, they can see 31 million fans, which is more impressive than landing on a page with only a few hundred fans.

Beyond the advantage in terms of image, this structure also makes it possible to manage multilingual content and communications that are adapted to each foreign country while optimizing the visibility of the global page.

Technically, this structure is organized with three different types of pages.

- A ‘root’ page: invisible to Facebook users, this page is used to manage the entire structure (for example, the creation or deletion of pages and languages) and to analyze the statistics of all the pages of the structure.
- A ‘default’ page: this is the page to which all fans not associated with any country or ‘market’ pages are directed. It will also be the official name of the structure whose URL address will redirect to the existing market pages. In the Ikea example, the URL for the default page is <https://www.facebook.com/IKEA/>. Fans that access this address will be redirected to their local market page or the default page depending on whether the first one exists.
- The ‘market’ pages: these are the pages created specifically for a country or a language. You can have as many market pages as you want, and you can customize them by indicating which people can be redirected there, whether it’s based on their country, language, or both.

At the time of this writing, the Global Pages + Market Pages structure is being rolled out by Facebook and is only available in certain regions.

To create this structure, you must have at least two local market pages so that you can add them to a global page. These market pages must be published and completed with all the information (logo, cover, descriptions, etc.). Once these market pages are ready, contact the Facebook team at <https://www.facebook.com/business/resources/> to create your global page.

Then:

- Access your page and go to Settings.
- Click on the Global Pages tab.
- Add the local market pages you have created.
- Set up the countries and languages to be associated with each market page.
- Select your default page.
- Save the changes.

A COUNTRY PAGE + STORE PAGES

Facebook offers another type of structure based on geographic locations related to the type of business. This structure is particularly interesting when the activity is intrinsically linked to a city, a district, a country, a region, etc., such as a chain of restaurants, hotels, hairdressing salons, etc.

Thanks to Facebook's Stores, you can list and manage all the Store pages of your business from a single country page. These places will be found more easily on Facebook and Instagram, in particular via the geolocation functionality of a smartphone.

Store pages are created or integrated into the main country page, and, by default, they have the same name of the country page followed by the city name, or the address and city name, if there are several places in the same city.

The great advantage of this structure is that, as an administrator of a country page, every time you publish a post on this page it will automatically be displayed on all the other Store pages on both Facebook and Instagram.

In addition, if you give editing rights to a local manager, he can also post his own content on his own Store page.

You can then measure the performance of all posts and pages with details on the number of likes, shares, comments, etc., in the centralized analytics of the Meta Business Manager platform.

From the main country page, you can also edit the location description as well as its username (meaning the city or the address and city) to help fans remember the Store pages more easily.

To add Stores to your main page:

- Go to your Business Manager platform³¹ and open Store Locations. If you do not see this option, you must access the Settings of your page to activate it.
- Select your country page to which you want to add Store pages. This page cannot have an address, and, if it does, you'll have to remove it.
- By clicking Get Started you have created your structure, and you can start adding Store pages.

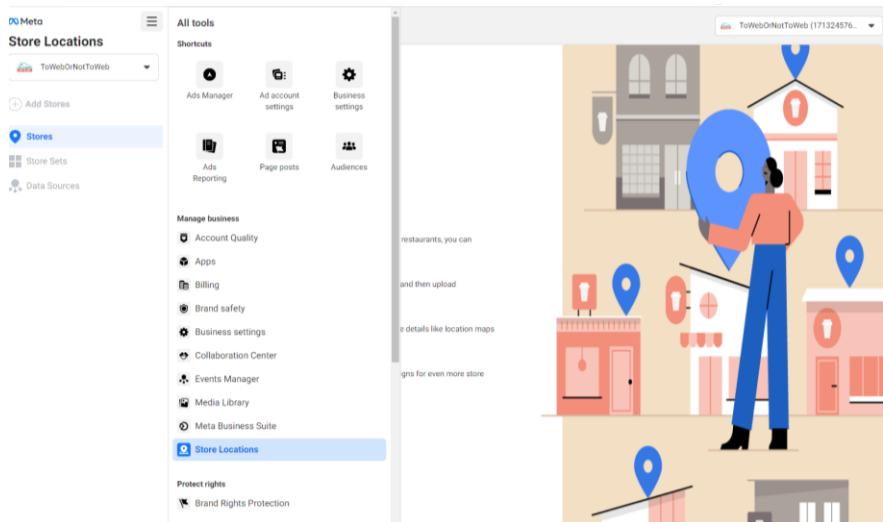


Figure 27: the *Store Locations* button on Facebook business platform.

- Now you can go to Manage Your Store Details and click on Add Stores, which allows you to create a new Store page for each business site of your company. You have four options to add all your business sites:
 - Manually: only viable if you have fewer than ten sites.
 - Spreadsheet template: recommended if you have more than ten sites.
 - Connect other pages: if you previously created different pages for your business sites, you can add them to your main country page now.

³¹ This is Meta's platform for managing a business account on both Facebook and Instagram for advertising, page settings, teams, etc.: <https://business.facebook.com/>.

- API: this feature allows you to add and update all your business sites at once automatically and is recommended for developers and very large businesses.

You can add or edit your Stores at any time by going to your Business Manager and Business Locations. That also allows you to download all the details of your Stores on an Excel spreadsheet that you can share with your team.

A GLOBAL PAGE + MARKET PAGES + STORE PAGES

This third structure is simply the combination of the two previous ones: the Store pages attached to a main page, one for each country, and all the country pages attached to a single Global page.

KEY BENEFITS OF THESE TECHNIQUES

- They make it possible to capitalize on the total number of fans that is centralized under the main page and displayed on each sub-page.
- From the same URL, these techniques can redirect fans to the corresponding Market or Store page simply according to the settings of their Facebook account³². For example, a brand that targets Canada will be able to redirect French-speaking people to its French-Canadian page and English-speaking people to its English-Canadian page.
- Thanks to a single URL address, the company simplifies the search for prospects and customers, who will immediately see the global page URL as the first result in search engines and will be

³² Facebook would locate fans at the base instead of the language set in Facebook.

automatically redirected to the Market or default page with the most suitable content related to their country and their language.

- A single URL also simplifies the international communication of your company, which has only one Global page URL to use in any online or offline marketing material in whatever country. In the Ikea example, even though the local pages each have their own URL such as <https://www.facebook.com/IKEAdeutschland/> for Germany or <https://www.facebook.com/IKEAbelgium/> for Belgium, to promote its Facebook pages on packaging, catalogs, websites, etc., Ikea only needs to use <https://www.facebook.com/IKEA/> and all its fans from all over the world will be automatically redirected to their Market page without doing anything else.
- For companies with subsidiaries or franchises, whose performance lies in brand awareness, these techniques save them a lot of time thanks to the consistency of the centralized management of their graphic guidelines across countries. If these graphic guidelines were managed by each subsidiary or franchisee, the result wouldn't be as effective: each subsidiary or franchisee would have to employ a person to manage its page, thus increasing costs and risk of graphic inconsistencies.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

There are three main techniques that can be used to optimize a business page for international reach on Facebook and Instagram.

The key benefits of them are:

- *Better targeting of fans by location and language.*
- *A larger number of fans, who will be concentrated on a single Global page and visible on each Market page.*
- *Easier communication on the Facebook page internationally.*
- *Optimized management cost of international content with lower risk of graphic discrepancies.*

CHAPTER 10

FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON FACEBOOK – MULTILINGUAL POSTS

“

The techniques presented in the previous pages concerning Global page, Market pages, and Store pages on Facebook remain quite complex and only available to companies that already have several thousand fans.

If these types of structures are not suitable for your situation, an alternative exists: a single page deploying international management techniques for multilingual content.

Here is how it works.

MULTILINGUAL TECHNIQUES FOR AN INTERNATIONAL FACEBOOK PAGE

Without these multilingual techniques, there are three other ways that are very frequently used, although not optimized, to post multilingual content on Facebook:

- 1) Post the same content several time, each one in a different language to target a specific audience in a specific country. Result: the same content, whether a picture or a video or an event, is repeated multiple times in different languages on the same page, making it look confusing and, therefore, harder to like or follow.
- 2) Post content once with the caption or description written in different languages, one after the other. Result: many fans are forced to scroll far down before finding their language, but the majority don't bother scrolling down at all if the first language is not one they understand.
- 3) Create separate pages for each language and country. Result: the number of fans is divided by the number of pages. In this case, each page only has a small number of fans and does not benefit from the positive image impact that larger communities bring. In addition, the management cost is multiplied by the number of pages.

None of these ways has ever been effective, except the third but, even then, only on the condition of having several thousand fans and integrating these pages into a global structure, as we have seen in the previous chapter.

Today, another solution is available on Facebook, although it was 'more' available a few months ago: manage a single page with multilingual tools for international content. This is the best technique to develop fans in several countries and in several languages, especially for a SME, because it also allows you to consolidate the number of fans on a single page as with the Global page structure presented in the previous pages, which you can always deploy later on when your fan base is large enough.

POSTING IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES

Available since 2016 for business pages, this tool allows community managers to write a single post and translate it into several languages automatically by using Facebook's AI automatic translator or native translations. Once published, this post is only displayed in a single language in the users' feed, the language defined by each user in his Facebook settings.

After the recent update of Facebook management platform, this multilingual tool disappeared, which looked like a tremendous inconsistent step backwards for all the professionals working in multicultural digital marketing.

The official explanation was that it was replaced by the feature that would allow all users to see the automatically translated version of the post in their feed. However, this only works when the user has activated this feature, and, on top of that, it doesn't allow the publishers to review or edit the automatic translations before publication.

The result was, therefore, upsetting for both users and publishers.

Since I personally found that hard to believe, I ran several tests and did research until I eventually found a solution, which works for the time being, in the hope that Facebook will re-establish the same tool in its original format.

What you need to do is to go to your Meta Business Suite, the same platform you use for creating and managing your posts. Then, click on the question-mark help button underneath the little gear icon at the bottom left on the platform and choose the option to switch to Business Manager, as in the next picture.

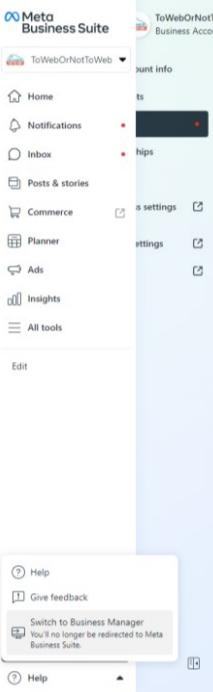


Figure 28: the help button to switch to Business Manager.

This will redirect you to Facebook Business Manager instead of Meta Business Suite where you will be able to use the multilingual editor tool in all your posts.

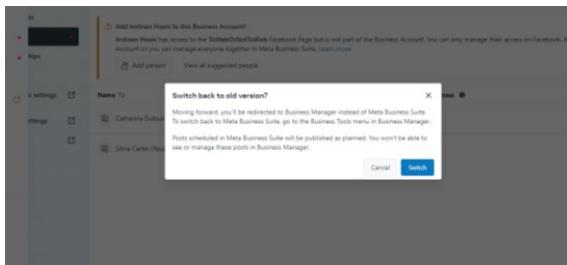


Figure 29: the switch from Meta Business Suite to Facebook Business Manager.

Here's how to use it:

- 1) First of all, make sure you have the correct settings on your page.
Go to Settings and to the General tab, then:

- If you want your page to be visible only in certain countries, select them in Country Restrictions, otherwise make sure there are no restrictions at all.
- In Publish in Multiple Languages, authorize the people that manage your page to write publications in several languages.
- In Translate Automatically, allow it to show machine translations of your posts to people that speak other languages than those you're using.

Page Visibility	Page published	Edit
Visitor Posts	Choose who can publish to your Page timeline.	Edit
Auto-Generated Video Captions and Subtitles	Auto-generated captions are on	Edit
Post and Story Sharing	Post sharing to Stories is On	Edit
Audience Optimization for Posts	The ability to select Feed targeting and restrict the audience for your posts is turned off	Edit
Messages	People can contact my Page privately.	Edit
Tagging Ability	Only people who help manage my Page can tag photos posted on it.	Edit
Others Tagging this Page	People and other Pages can tag my Page.	Edit
Country Restrictions	<input type="text" value="Enter country or countries"/> [?] <input type="radio"/> Only show this Page to viewers in these countries <input checked="" type="radio"/> Hide this Page from viewers in these countries	Save changes Cancel
Age Restrictions	Page is shown to everyone.	Edit
Content Moderation	No words are being blocked from the Page.	Edit
Profanity filter	Turned on	Edit
Similar Page Suggestions	Choose whether your Page is recommended to others	Edit
Page Updates	Page posts are automatically published when you update Page info, reach milestones, receive reviews and more.	Edit
Post in Multiple Languages	Ability to write posts in multiple languages is turned on	Edit
Translate Automatically	Your posts may show translations automatically for people who read other languages.	Edit
Comment Ranking	Most relevant comments are shown for my Page by default.	Edit
Content Distribution	Downloading to Facebook is allowed.	Edit
Download Page	Download Page	Edit
Merge Pages	Merge duplicate Pages	Edit
Remove Page	Delete your Page	Edit

Figure 30: the Country Restrictions option on Facebook general settings.

Page Visibility	Page published	Edit
Visitor Posts	Choose who can publish to your Page timeline.	Edit
Auto-Generated Video Captions and Subtitles	Auto-generated captions are on	Edit
Post and Story Sharing	Post sharing to Stories is On	Edit
Audience Optimization for Posts	The ability to select Feed targeting and restrict the audience for your posts is turned off	Edit
Messages	People can contact my Page privately.	Edit
Tagging Ability	Only people who help manage my Page can tag photos posted on it.	Edit
Others Tagging this Page	People and other Pages can tag my Page.	Edit
Country Restrictions	Page is visible to everyone.	Edit
Age Restrictions	Page is shown to everyone.	Edit
Content Moderation	No words are being blocked from the Page.	Edit
Profanity filter	Turned on	Edit
Similar Page Suggestions	Choose whether your Page is recommended to others	Edit
Page Updates	Page posts are automatically published when you update Page info, reach milestones, receive reviews and more.	Edit
Post in Multiple Languages	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Allow people who manage this Page to write posts in multiple languages??	
	Save changes	Cancel
Translate Automatically	Your posts may show translations automatically for people who read other languages.	Edit
Comment Ranking	Most relevant comments are shown for my Page by default.	Edit
Content Distribution	Downloading to Facebook is allowed.	Edit
Download Page	Download Page	Edit
Merge Pages	Merge duplicate Pages	Edit
Remove Page	Delete your Page	Edit

out Create Ad Create Page Developers Careers Privacy Cookies Ad choices ▾ Terms Help

Figure 31: the Post in Multiple Languages option on Facebook general settings.

Page Visibility	Page published	Edit
Visitor Posts	Choose who can publish to your Page timeline.	Edit
Auto-Generated Video Captions and Subtitles	Auto-generated captions are on	Edit
Post and Story Sharing	Post sharing to Stories is On	Edit
Audience Optimization for Posts	The ability to select Feed targeting and restrict the audience for your posts is turned off	Edit
Messages	People can contact my Page privately.	Edit
Tagging Ability	Only people who help manage my Page can tag photos posted on it.	Edit
Others Tagging this Page	People and other Pages can tag my Page.	Edit
Country Restrictions	Page is visible to everyone.	Edit
Age Restrictions	Page is shown to everyone.	Edit
Content Moderation	No words are being blocked from the Page.	Edit
Profanity filter	Turned on	Edit
Similar Page Suggestions	Choose whether your Page is recommended to others	Edit
Page Updates	Page posts are automatically published when you update Page info, reach milestones, receive reviews and more.	Edit
Post in Multiple Languages	Ability to write posts in multiple languages is turned on	Edit
Translate Automatically	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show people who understand other languages automatic translations of your posts when available	
	Save changes Cancel	
Comment Ranking	Most relevant comments are shown for my Page by default.	Edit
Content Distribution	Downloading to Facebook is allowed.	Edit
Download Page	Download Page	Edit
Merge Pages	Merge duplicate Pages	Edit
Remove Page	Delete your Page	Edit

out Create Ad Create Page Developers Careers Privacy Cookies Ad choices ► Terms Help

Figure 32: the Translate Automatically option on Facebook general settings.

- 2) You can now create multilingual publications! Here's how to do it:
 - Start writing a post as usual in English. As soon as you start, Facebook will ask you if you want to 'Write the post in another language'.
 - To proceed with that option, first define English and the text you just wrote as the default language of your post. This will be the post that will be seen by all users that do not have their language version.
 - Once you've set the default language, you must now select from the drop-down the foreign language that you want your post to be translated into and wait a few seconds for

Facebook's robots to provide their translation, which will automatically appear under your text in English.

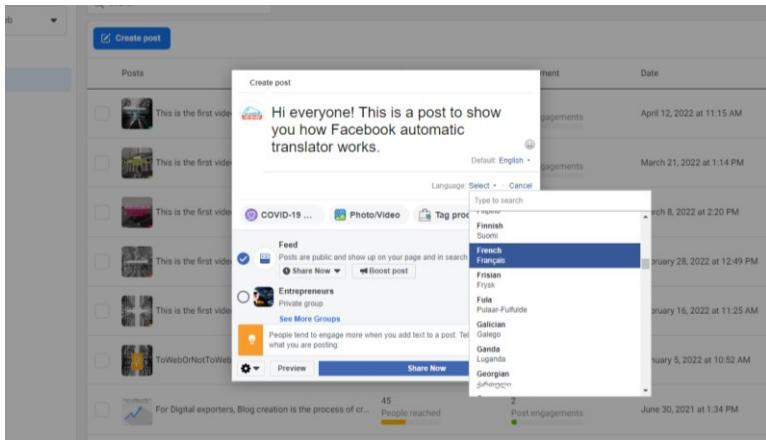


Figure 33: start your multiple language post by setting your default language and then by selecting the other languages you want your post to be translated to.

- If you want to translate the same publication in other languages, just click again on 'Write publication in another language' and again select from the drop-down menu another foreign language you're interested in for your post. Facebook automatic translation will again show under your English post and the previous foreign language.

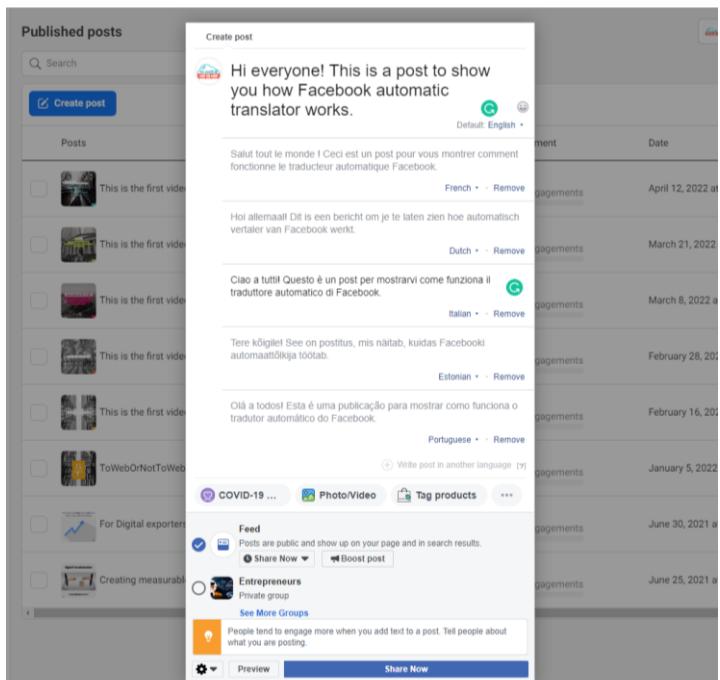


Figure 34: your multiple language post is now automatically translated by Facebook into the languages that you have selected.

- If you see that the automatic translations provided by Facebook are not good, you can edit all of them and make the changes you want. Simply click on the text to edit, add your changes and save it.
- Once you're happy with your post and all its translations, you can click on Share Now and it will be displayed in only one language, either the one that users have set up in their Facebook settings, or in English (i.e., the default language) if they didn't set up any language or if the post is not translated into their language.

READING IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES

The automatic translation is a default feature in Facebook and can be used by all users when viewing posts on their feeds.

How does it work? If a company or a person publishes in a language that does not match the one a user has set up on Facebook, a 'See translation' button will appear under that post. By clicking on it, the user will automatically see the text in his language without doing anything else.



Figure 35: an example of using the See Translation option on Facebook feeds.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Multilingual content on Facebook pages is an effective solution for your international social networks if the size of your fan base is not large enough to allow you deploy the techniques presented in the previous chapter.

This multilingual content solution allows you to:

- *Target by language efficiently.*
- *Consolidate the number of your fans on a single page.*
- *Simplify the management of your multilingual content through a single page.*

CHAPTER 11

FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON INSTAGRAM

“

If you still think Instagram is the social network for sharing pictures of meals and cats, think again. This platform has managed to capture many companies and major brands around the world.

One reason is the engagement rate that is higher on Instagram than on Facebook: on average, users engage with posts on Instagram 10 times more than on Facebook.

It is also an effective social network for developing a digital export project, thanks to its multilingual and geolocation functions.

KEY THINGS TO KNOW FOR YOUR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ON INSTAGRAM

Everyone knows that the originality of Instagram is based on its photo- and video-sharing features. If your business involves creating qualitative graphic content, this social network is definitely among the best options for you not only to develop your brand awareness internationally but also to sell overseas, because it is widely used all over the world.

In December 2021 Instagram reached two billion monthly active users³³ out of which more than 200 million are businesses.

The advantage of Instagram for international development is linked to its visual-content peculiarities, which help reduce language barriers. In fact, Instagram users, which have higher engagement rates than on other social networks around the world and for any sector, can like and comment on a post simply based on its image.

Beside this advantage, Instagram has an awkward drawback that impacts both local and international communication. Whether you're using a personal profile or a business account, nothing is clickable in the text that is written in the caption added when posting a picture, a video, a story, etc. Yes, nothing, apart from hashtags and tags. If you add a URL like <https://www.website.com> in the text of the caption, it won't become a hyperlink, and it will be not only non-clickable but also impossible to copy for pasting it on a browser!

In practical terms, that means that it is impossible to redirect users on websites that are outside Instagram with a simple post. To do that the only options are:

- 1) To invite people to check your biography, where you can have one, and only one, clickable link. Usually that link is either the main business website or e-commerce, or an aggregator of sever

³³ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/253577/number-of-monthly-active-instagram-users/>.

external links including temporary landing pages, such as Linktree.

- 2) To use the Instagram Shopping features, which allow you to post content with a clickable link on it that can redirect to external web pages. This option is only available for business accounts that are e-commerce selling physical products.
- 3) To advertise. For that, of course, you need an additional budget to pay the cost-per-click (CPC) campaigns, but you can redirect to any kind of external web page, whether for physical products or services.

Ready now? Well, there are two more things you need to do before you start developing your community internationally on Instagram:

- 1) Activate your pro account: to access all business features, it is essential for you to switch your Instagram account to a pro-account if it's still a personal one. That way, you will be able to display a call-to-action button on your business account such as call you, book a meeting, send an email, etc. Most importantly, this business account will allow you to access the statistics of your followers' engagements, which will help you analyze the overall performance of your account.
- 2) Optimize your biography for your foreign potential customers: to allow Instagrammers to identify you and better understand your business, you need to write a brief presentation in your bio thinking of them. Instagram offers the possibility to translate the text in the bio automatically by simply clicking on 'Show translation' at the bottom of it. To facilitate this function and increase the quality of the machine translation, it is essential to write clearly, with short sentences, without dialects or slang, and putting the emoticons at the end of the text. You can, for example, add the flags of the countries you're interested in for your digital export project, but at the end of the text, as for the emoticons.

WRITE IN MULTIPLE LANGUAGES OR USE AUTOMATIC TRANSLATION

What do you need to do to reach foreign Instagram users effectively when your objective is to develop sales abroad? You need to do just one simple thing: speak their language!

That sounds rational, but since Instagram doesn't work like Facebook, speaking different languages is not easy. Basically, you have three options when you use a single international account:

- 1) Multiple languages on a single post. With this option, you write your post caption in multiple languages one after the other. It can result in a very long caption if you're trying to speak a lot of different languages, which can be annoying for your Instagram users, who might have to scroll down several times before finding their own language.
- 2) Single language on multiple posts. With this option, you write your post caption in a single language, and you publish it several times, each time in a different language. The result might be effective for your foreign readers but is definitely not optimized for the timeline of your account, which will show the same post repeated over and over for all the times you republished it in each different language.
- 3) Automatic translations. With this option, you write your post caption in a single language and use Instagram's automatic translator by inviting people to click on 'See translation'. As in the biography, the quality of Instagram's automatic translation depends on how easy your original text is for Instagram's translating robots. So, here too, you need to optimize the caption by writing in the right way with short sentences, without abbreviated words, slang, symbols and by placing the emoticons at the end of the text. Users attracted by your visual content will click on 'See translation' to read the caption if it is in a different language from the one set in their Instagram settings. Another very important thing to note for this option, as detailed in the next chapter, is that hashtags are never taken into account by the automatic translations: if you want to reach foreign Instagram

users, you must add the translated hashtags manually in each different language, one by one.

THE RIGHT #HASHTAGS FOR INTERNATIONAL REACH

To grow your Instagram follower base internationally, you need to insert between five and 25 hashtags in each of your posts, without going up to 30, which is the limit imposed by Instagram.

These hashtags work as keywords in search engines and should be chosen based on the interests of the people you want to reach. And, as mentioned before, they are never translated by the 'See translation' feature.

For example, if you want to reach people in Spanish-, English- and French-speaking countries in addition to your home country, which I'll assume for this example is Canada, you need to add relevant hashtags in Spanish, English and French in the caption of your posts even if the text of the caption itself is only in English.

Indeed, as previously explained, with the automatic translations of your post, any Instagram user can read it in his own language by clicking on 'See translation'. However, nobody will be able to find it by searching for the hashtags on Instagram's search engine, unless the post contains the translated hashtags people would search for.

In the same example, assuming your Canadian business is about women's footwear to be sold in any Spanish-, English- and French-speaking countries in addition to Canada, you should add translated hashtags, both specific and generic, like for example:

- #chaussuresfemme
- #chaussures
- #mode
- #talons
- #sneakers

- #womenshoes
- #shoes
- #fashion
- #highheels
- #style
- #zapatosmujer
- #moda
- #zapatos
- #tacones
- #yoamozapatos
- etc.

They will allow your posts to be found by Spanish-, English- and French-speaking Instagram users around the world.



CASE STUDY

An approach often used on Instagram by influencers and businesses is to write in multiple languages.

Below is the example of @thecheerfulist posting in French and English. Each text is preceded by the flag of the language used and the hashtags are in both languages so that the posts can be discovered by French- and English-speaking Instagram users.

1,261 likes

thecheerfulist 🇫🇷 Ce qui est sur c'est qu'aux Philippines on aura passé beaucoup de temps sous l'eau... Que ce soit en snorkeling ou que ce soit sous les deux typhons qu'on a eu ! 🌪️
On vous laisse découvrir ça dans la vidéo qu'on vous a glissé.
Et vous, avez-vous déjà été dans une catastrophe naturelle ?

🇺🇸 What's on is that in the Philippines we will have spent a lot of time under water ... Whether snorkeling or under the two typhoons we had! 🌪️
We let you discover that in the video that we slipped you.
And you, have you ever been in a natural disaster?

[View all 74 comments](#)

May 27 · See Translation

Home Search + Heart 2 Share

Figure 36: an example of writing in two languages on Instagram.

INCREASE INTERACTIONS WITH YOUR INTERNATIONAL INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

On Instagram, the more and the quicker interactions your posts get, which determines their engagement rate, the more they (and your brand) will be visible on this social network.

This visibility is border-free, which means that it is not limited to one country.

So, to generate this kind of interaction and boost the engagement rate of your posts, you need to motivate Instagram users to leave comments in the caption of your posts, on top of simple likes.

And since your posts are targeting a larger number of languages and countries, you have better chances to get more interactions than those competitors of yours that are targeting only one language and country.

Another way to increase these interactions, and the engagement rate of your posts, is through the 'Story' features that Instagram took over from Snapchat few years ago.

These ephemeral photos and videos, which only last 24 hours, allow you to share special content, flash offers, and any other temporary event that would be too redundant if published in the regular timeline.

Also, within the Stories, Instagram offers to add other functions, such as polls, booking, rating, etc.

Since they are very visual, such features also help reduce linguistic barriers.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

To optimize an Instagram account for a digital export project, you need to take several actions:

- *Activate a business account.*
- *Improve the biography for foreign users.*
- *Write in several languages or use automatic translations.*
- *Use hashtags correctly for international purposes.*
- *Share stories to increase engagement.*

CHAPTER 12

FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON TWITTER

“

Twitter is a global micro-blogging platform that limits the publication of content to 280 characters. Despite this limit, it can be very effective to develop an international community.

Like Instagram, Twitter relies on the hashtag system to organize data and information under the same specific topics. It is so straightforward that it can be very useful to strengthen a company's international online reputation and brand awareness.

Here are some of the best practices you can use for your digital export project.

KEY THINGS TO KNOW FOR YOUR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ON TWITTER

Twitter is a social network dedicated to sharing short texts and media in real time. The main utility of this tool is to inform you instantly of the essential elements related to the development of your business. It can also allow you to broadcast special events in real time to a highly qualified and connected audience all around the world.

How can you use Twitter to help your digital export project?

You might think that the answer to that question is either by tweeting in multiple languages or by using automatic translations. But, in reality, this dual option, which can be used on other social networks, is not viable on Twitter.

In fact, Twitter forces users to post tweets that cannot be longer than 280 characters. So, writing tweets in multiple languages is impossible unless you target only two languages, and you can write very concisely through codes or symbols. Chinese and Japanese are good examples.

For all other cases, the best option is to use automatic translations.

TWITTER AUTOMATIC TRANSLATION

Like Instagram and many other social networks, Twitter can automatically translate your tweets³⁴ for users speaking a language other than that of your tweets through a partnership with Microsoft, which provides its automatic translator.

³⁴ 'A Tweet is any message posted to Twitter which may contain photos, videos, links, and text' (definition provided by Twitter on its help site <https://help.twitter.com/en/resources/new-user-faq>, where you will find more information on how to use this social network).

This is a default feature on Twitter. Just by clicking on ‘Translate Tweet’ at the bottom of the tweet, people will see the text in the language they have set up on their Twitter account.

Similarly to what we’ve seen for Instagram and Facebook, the quality of the translation can be disappointing if you do not follow good writing rules, which are always the same:

- Avoid shortening words, even if you have to respect Twitter’s limit on number of characters: the automatic translator will not understand the abbreviated words and will, therefore, translate them awkwardly.
- Use short and simple sentences, without slang, or acronyms: the aim is to simplify the work of the automatic translator so that it can provide quality texts in other languages.
- Use multilingual hashtags to reach as many foreign prospects as possible: it is through the hashtag system that Twitter users around the world find the topics they are interested in and the accounts to follow. Since Microsoft automatic translator on Twitter does not translate hashtags, your tweets have to include the translated versions in the foreign languages spoken in the countries you target.

A SINGLE INTERNATIONAL ACCOUNT OR ONE ACCOUNT PER COUNTRY?

This question is relevant for any other social network, as is the answer!

If you are starting out on international social networks, the most efficient way, in terms of performance and management costs, is to keep a single account. That allows you to consolidate the number of followers under the same account instead of dividing it over several accounts, which conveys a more professional and reassuring message to foreign people that are not familiar with your brand and business.

This approach also allows you to optimize the platform's automatic translator in synergy with your multilingual-hashtag strategy.

On the other hand, if your company already has an international activity on social networks with several thousand followers in different geographical areas, creating separate accounts per country, per language or per macro-region/continent will allow you to have more geo-qualified followers in each geography.

Before deploying this strategy, make sure you have the necessary resources and skills to manage all of your accounts in each local language, because, even if you can use the automatic translator for your tweets, interacting with people and replying to comments in multiple languages can be challenging.

The image consists of two side-by-side screenshots of a Twitter mobile application. Both screenshots show a tweet from the account @allianzfrance. The left screenshot shows the original French tweet, and the right screenshot shows the English translation generated by Microsoft's automatic translator.

Left Screenshot (French Tweet):

- User: Allianz France (@allianzfrance)
- Tweet content: "Waouuu !! Allianz France remporte le Trophée de l'Assurance en OR dans la catégorie "Innovation Relation Clients" avec son service @securkeys 🏅🏆😍 ! Avec #Securkeys vos clés reviennent toujours 🔑👉 po.st/uZyaYa #partenariat #tropheesassurance #innovation"
- Options: "Translate Tweet" with a red arrow pointing to it.
- Image: A small thumbnail image of a person giving a thumbs-up.
- Text: "Tweet your reply"
- Bottom navigation: Standard Android-style navigation icons (back, home, recent apps).

Right Screenshot (Translated Tweet):

- User: Allianz France (@allianzfrance)
- Tweet content: "Waouuu! Allianz France wins the Gold Insurance Trophy in the category "customer relationship Innovation" with its service @securkeys 🏅🏆😍! With #Securkeys your keys 🔑👉 po.st/uZyaYa #partenariat #tropheesassurance always #innovation come back"
- Options: None
- Image: A larger, clearer image of a young boy with glasses, wearing a blue shirt and overalls, standing next to a large gold trophy and raising his right arm in triumph.
- Text: "Tweet your reply"
- Bottom navigation: Standard Android-style navigation icons (back, home, recent apps).

Figure 37: an example of the automatic translation on Twitter.

THE BEST PRACTICES ON TWITTER FOR DIGITAL EXPORT

- 1) Identify key opinion leaders abroad: to set up an effective international watch on Twitter, you need to identify the opinion leaders for your business in the foreign countries you target. By using the hashtags in the right languages, you can find them and subscribe to their accounts. For example, if a tax law changes in one of the countries you target, you will get that information instantly.
- 2) Follow live events: most major events around the world have a dedicated hashtag, allowing participants to follow live photos, videos and important information in real time. This can sometimes be an easy substitute to attend several events without traveling.
- 3) Promote your brand through your Twitter username: when you create a Twitter account, you need to choose your username, the one that starts with the symbol @. You need to show it on your communication and marketing materials, such as business cards, packaging, etc., to make it easier for other people and customers to find you on Twitter and share it with other members to stay tuned. But be careful if you have decided to have a different account for each country. In this case, you will have to adapt your country Twitter username to the specific marketing materials corresponding to the right country.
- 4) Create your own #hashtags: it is free and very easy to launch a hashtag so that Twitter users can follow the events and information associated to it. Note that usually hashtags do not belong to anyone and can be freely used by everybody within the social network. As mentioned before, hashtags are not translated by Twitter's automatic translator. So, don't forget to translate the hashtags you create into the language of the countries you are targeting.
- 5) Internationalize your welcome message: compare these two welcome messages, keeping in mind that they can also be translated by Twitter's automatic translator:
 - Lacoste: 'Life is a Beautiful Sport, since 1933'.

- H & M: 'Welcome to #HM - the place for #fashion & #beauty inspiration! We ❤ your comments but please stay respectful'.

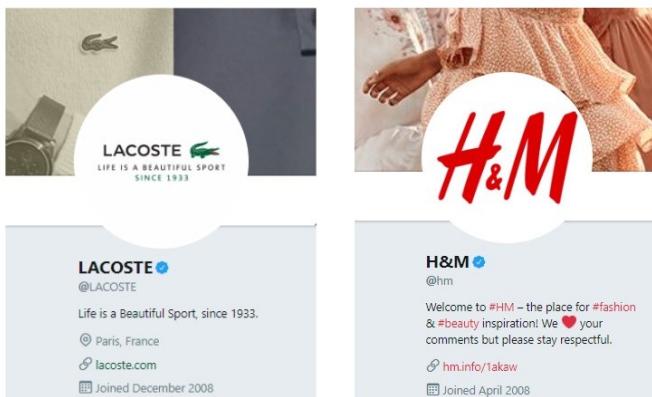


Figure 38: an example of two welcome messages on Twitter.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

To help your digital export project on Twitter, you can take several actions:

- Use Twitter in several languages, with the automatic translator.
- Keep a single international account, if you don't have many followers, or create a dedicated account per each country, if your follower base is large enough.
- Get in touch with opinion leaders abroad.
- Promote your Twitter username internationally.
- Optimize your welcome message for international users.

CHAPTER 13

FIND FOREIGN CUSTOMERS ON LINKEDIN

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LinkedIn is the world's largest B2B social network and is ideal for presenting your company and your professional profile to foreign potential customers.

Most people use it to check the skills and career of other professionals or the recent news about a company. But how can you use it for your digital export project? How can you make sure that your foreign prospects can find you on this B2B social network?

Here are some of the main techniques you can deploy.

KEY THINGS TO KNOW FOR YOUR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS ON LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is the B2B social network *par excellence*!

It allows businesses and professionals from all over the world to be brought together on the same platform. With more than 808 million registered users worldwide in January 2022, an increase of 11% from the previous year³⁵, your presence there is essential, whatever the size of your company.

You can use two different tools for your international presence on LinkedIn: your professional profile and your business page.

They don't work the same way, and they don't provide the same features:

- With your professional profile you can showcase your expertise, your jobs, your degrees, your publications, and other key milestones. With your professional profile you can also get connected to, and communicate with, other members, follow business pages as well as publish your own posts or comment on, like, and share the posts of other people or companies.
- On the other hand, a business page cannot get connected to anyone and cannot follow other business pages. A business page can publish posts that will be displayed in the feeds of the members that are following the page. Another key difference is that only business pages can run advertising campaigns or promote their posts while personal profiles cannot.

To optimize your international performance on this social network, therefore, you can use both tools. Here are the main actions you can take:

- 1) Translate your professional profile and your business page: unlike the previous social networks, LinkedIn allows you to translate your professional profile as well as your business page into

³⁵ Kemp.

several languages. In this way, your page and your profile will be displayed in the language of the members viewing them if that is one of your translations. If it is not, they will view your original versions. For your digital export project, this is a big advantage, because there is no need to create different profiles or pages for each country.

- 2) Use the automatic translator: as before, on LinkedIn there is the same default feature of 'View translation' at the end of a post or other types of content. So, by using the same good writing rules that were explained for Facebook and Instagram, you can maximize the quality of the automatic translations of your posts: no abbreviations, no slang, short and simple sentences, translated hashtags at the end of the text³⁶, etc.
- 3) Invite your contacts via your directories: to obtain as large a network as possible quickly, you can invite all your contacts at once via the automatic access to your smartphone directory, or to your email software, or even by importing them through an Excel file. In just a few clicks, people with a LinkedIn account will receive an invitation request to join your network.
- 4) Optimize your title: you need to choose a good title for your profile to be easily found not only on LinkedIn but also on Google and other search engines. Indeed, if someone searches on Google by your first and last name, LinkedIn will be among the first results, and it will display the title that you chose next to the URL. For this reason, the LinkedIn title is strategic: it must be able to motivate people to click on your link and go visit your profile on LinkedIn. For the title, you have three options: the exact title of your job, the description of your expertise, or the description of the solution that you bring to your target prospects. As for the language of your title, if you created your profile in several languages as explained above, you will have the chance to adapt your title for each language version.
- 5) Use the filters in the advanced search: to find qualified potential customers with an active prospecting approach, LinkedIn allows

³⁶ As with all other networks, it is thanks to hashtags that members around the world identify the subjects that interest them and the profiles to follow. No automatic translator is able to take hashtags into account, including that of LinkedIn. You must, therefore, insert them in the languages of the countries you are targeting.

you to search for other people's profiles via specific filters. You can use several criteria, such as geographic location, professional position, sector or company name. LinkedIn also offers a paid solution, Sales Navigator, which can provide more sophisticated filters to refine these types of searches.

- 6) Make your page as visible as possible: your page is a good channel to communicate internal or external news about your business. To make your page as visible as possible, you need to encourage all your employees to follow it to give it a better image. You also need to publish as much content as possible on your page in the different languages of the countries you target for your digital export project. That will help your brand stand out and be easily identified as an expert in your field, which will positively support your search for potential foreign customers.
- 7) Use your profile to grow your network internationally: once your page and profile are established and optimized for international reach on LinkedIn, you can start your international acquisition strategy, also called lead generation. That consists in first growing both your expert reputation and your profile visibility by publishing insightful content, sharing other key people's posts, giving your thoughts on topics related to your business, etc. Then, with such a visible and professionally active profile, you can start sending connection invitations to qualified potential customers around the world. Having optimized the image of your multilingual business page as explained in the previous point, your international lead generation campaign will be strengthened and more effective. The aim is to encourage the foreign potential customers to whom you sent your LinkedIn connection request to accept it and identify you as the expert they need as a professional partner.

A SINGLE MULTILINGUAL PAGE OR ONE PAGE PER COUNTRY?

We have seen this same question for the previous social networks, but here we also have the possibility of translating the company page and the professional profile into several languages.

So, that means it is easier on LinkedIn to manage a multilingual page and profile because all translations will be attached to the same account, whether business or personal.

On the other hand, as soon as your company has achieved a considerable international development and has several subsidiaries around the world with hundreds of thousands of fans in different geographic areas, creating specific pages for each country or for each macro-region may be more effective than keeping a single page.

INTERNATIONAL HASHTAGS ON LINKEDIN

As for the other networks we have seen in the previous pages, LinkedIn also encourages the use of hashtags in posts and other publications to allow members to organize topics by keywords.

However, unlike in the previous cases, an overuse of hashtags is counterproductive on LinkedIn.

A maximum of four to seven, including the translated versions, with differences in quantity and quality in each post, will be good.

That will make it easier for you to start conversations with people that are interested in the same topics.

LinkedIn recently added a new feature that allows you to insert your followed hashtags just under your profile title. It is the Creator Mode: by activating it on your profile, you will be given the option to choose

the hashtags that matter the most for you on LinkedIn and they will be displayed just after your title.

That will help other members, because they'll immediately see the topics you're interested in, which will, therefore, increase the opportunities for new connections.

The screenshot shows a LinkedIn profile page. At the top, there's a section titled 'Resources' with a note that it's 'Private to you'. Below this, there's a 'Creator mode' toggle switch that is set to 'On', indicated by a red arrow pointing to the button. A descriptive text below the switch says 'Get discovered, showcase content on your profile, and get access to creator tools'. Underneath this, there's a 'My network' section with a note to 'See and manage your connections and interests.' At the bottom of this sidebar, there's a link to 'Show all 6 resources →'. The main content area is titled 'Featured' and contains three cards. The first card is an 'Article' by Silvia Carter on LinkedIn, titled 'THE WORST MISTAKES TO AVOID IN DIGITAL EXPORT...', with a preview of several small thumbnail images. The second card is an 'Image' by ToWebOrNotToWeb - Export Guide, titled 'Exporting with a Multichannel Approach', with a preview of a colorful graphic. The third card is another 'Image' by ToWebOrNotToWeb - International Social Media Guide, titled '9 steps for International Social Media Success', featuring two women's faces. There are also '+' and edit icons at the top right of the featured section.

Figure 39: the button to activate the Creator Mode on a LinkedIn profile.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

To help your digital export project with LinkedIn, you have several actions that are possible:

- Translate your professional profile and your business page.
- Use LinkedIn's automatic translator.
- Use a single international page if your follower base is small or one page per country if you have several hundreds of thousands of followers around the world.
- Make your business page as visible as possible.
- Deploy an international lead generation strategy through your profile.
- Use multilingual hashtags.

CHAPTER 14

SOCIAL SELLING: WHEN E-COMMERCE MEETS SOCIAL MEDIA

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As books 4 and 5 of The Digital Exporter Series explained, cross-border e-commerce websites and international marketplaces are great systems to sell online abroad. But they are not the only ones!

Some social networks offer advanced online shopping features that allow you to sell your products directly on their platforms to people from anywhere around the world.

It sounds great, doesn't it? Here is how it works.

SOCIAL SELLING, WHAT IS IT?

If you Google ‘definition of social selling’ or something similar, you will not find a unique definition.

On the contrary, there is a lot of confusion around this term, starting with LinkedIn, which explains: ‘Social selling is a strategic method for sellers to connect and build relationships with prospects through social networks. ... Social selling allows salespeople to build trusted relationships, boost social credibility, and ultimately reach their sales goals’³⁷.

And that is not all. LinkedIn went even further by creating its own Social Selling Index, an indicator to measure how much a profile is socially selling on LinkedIn.

There are many other people, mainly marketers, that use this definition of Social Selling as online techniques to build relationships.

But other people, mainly traders, define Social Selling as a complete shopping experience that takes place on social networks and includes finding a product, learning about it, and completing the transaction.

This is the definition I use in this chapter and personally prefer, because I consider that Social Networking is already a good term for the previous one.

³⁷ <https://business.linkedin.com/sales-solutions/social-selling>.

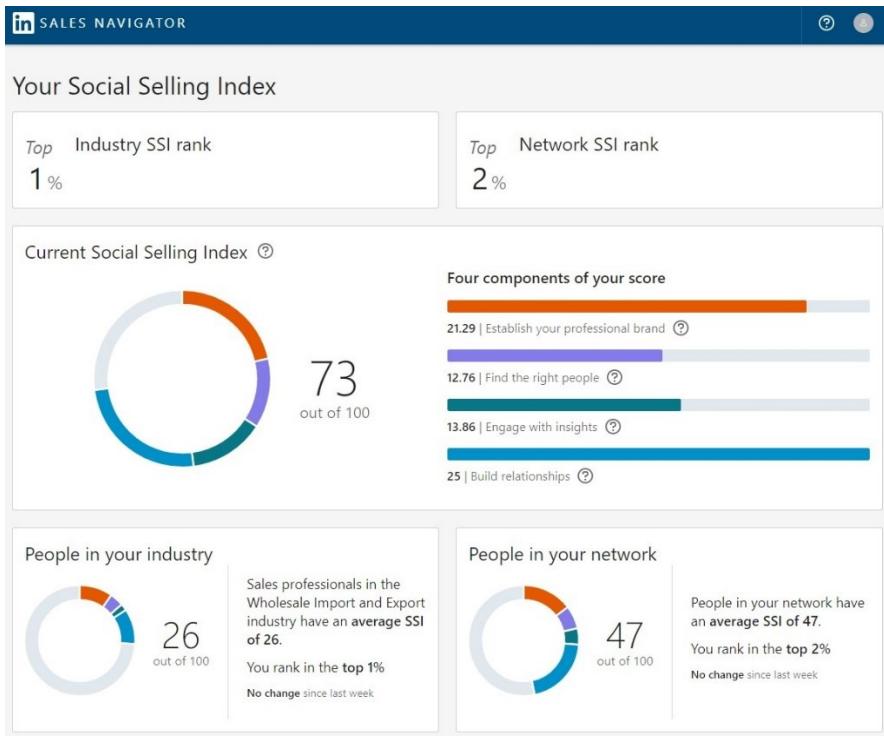


Figure 40: the Social Selling Index on LinkedIn. You can find yours by going to <https://www.linkedin.com/sales/ssi> when connected on your profile.

SOCIAL SELLING ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM

Selling on social networks, especially on Facebook and Instagram, has become one of the most important things to do for e-commerce businesses all over the world.

Or almost all over the world ...

In fact, to sell on Facebook and Instagram, there are several requirements:

- Comply with Facebook's Terms of Service, Commercial Terms and Community Standards.
- Comply with Instagram's Terms of Use and Community Guidelines.
- Approve Meta's Merchant Agreement, Commerce Policies, Ads Policies and Pages, Groups, and Events Policies.
- Use Facebook Page and Instagram professional account for products that you are already directly selling online on your website, whose domain will need to be connected with your Facebook and Instagram accounts and go through a complete verification process by Meta.
- Be located in one of your supported markets. Find the full list countries for Facebook here
<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/549256849084694>
and for Instagram here
<https://www.facebook.com/help/instagram/321000045119159>.
- Demonstrate trustworthiness by maintaining a sufficient follower base on your Facebook page and Instagram professional account.
- Provide accurate information and follow the best e-commerce practices, including pricing, availability, refund and return policies.

You can find all details here:

<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/2347002662267537>.

Once you are done with the above, you will need to decide how to get paid. There are three checkout methods on Facebook and Instagram:

- 1) Directly on Facebook and Instagram (only available in the U.S.).
- 2) On your own website, the technical integration of which will be more or less difficult depending on the content management system (CMS) or e-commerce software you're using (see book 4 of The Digital Exporter Series, [SELLING ONLINE INTERNATIONALLY: How to Set Up & Manage a Cross-Border E commerce](#), for all the details).
- 3) Via direct message on Messenger or WhatsApp (only available for Facebook).

You can find all details here:

<https://www.facebook.com/business/help/449169642911614>.

After you've completed these two steps, you can begin setting up your shop on Facebook and Instagram. For that, you will need a Facebook business page with a catalog. If you don't, you can easily create both.

Otherwise, if you already have a Facebook business page with a catalog:

- You need to have the administrator role for the account, plus the manager permissions for the Facebook business page and catalog.
- If you want your shop to be on Instagram as well, you'll need your Instagram account to be business, and it must be linked to the same Meta Business Manager account that owns your Facebook business page.
- If you only want to open a shop on Instagram, you don't need a Facebook business page, but you still need to have your Instagram business account linked to your Meta Business Manager account.
- Now, you can start to set up your shop. If your own e-commerce is done with Shopify, WordPress, BigCommerce, Prestashop, Wix or another CMS platform, you can create your shop by using specific plugins and by simply syncing your products through them. For that, you just need to follow the instructions of your CMS plugin. Otherwise, you can create your shop manually by following Facebook wizard.
- Choose the checkout method among the three that are available.
- Associate your Facebook business page or create one if you don't have one yet. And the same for your Instagram business account if you also want to sell on Instagram.
- Associate them to your Meta Business Manager account or create one if you don't have one yet.
- Choose the catalog of products you want to sell on Facebook, Instagram, or both. If you don't already have a catalog on Facebook, you won't have this option, but Facebook will create one automatically that you can fill out with your products later after completing the setup of your shop.
- Review all your shop details and accept all conditions. If everything is in order, you can click on Finish Set-up and your shop is created. But, to make it visible to the people on Facebook and Instagram, you also need to click on Publish Your Shop³⁸.

³⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/268860861184453>.

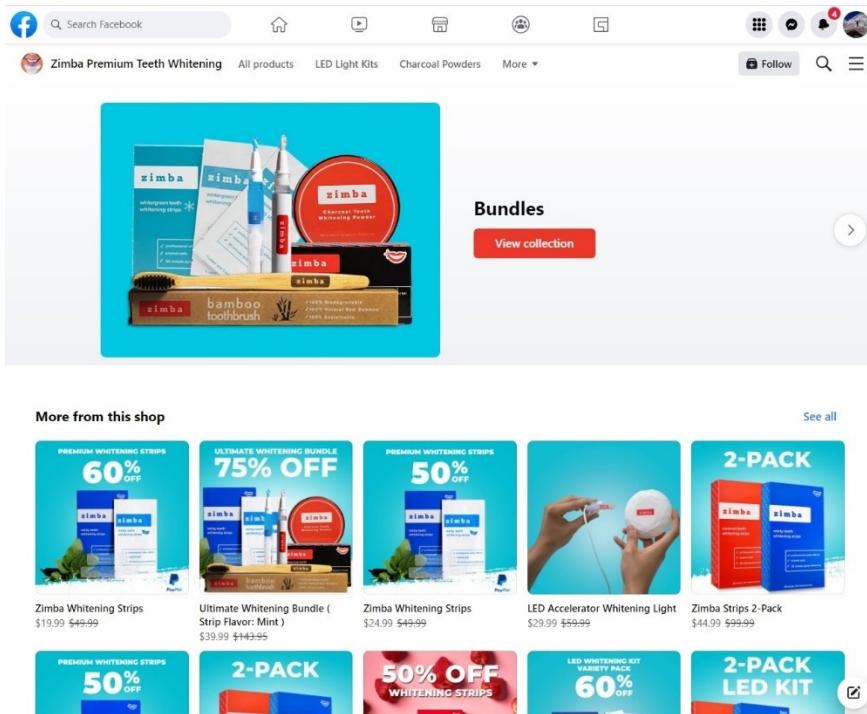


Figure 41: an example of Shop on Facebook.

CROSS-BORDER SOCIAL SELLING ON FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM

Although the multilingual techniques explained in the previous pages are fundamental to attract foreign potential customers, they are not enough to maximize the purchase conversion rate.

There is another important factor that can make a huge difference, unfortunately. The currency!

The currency of your Facebook and Instagram shops can depend on several things:

- The address of your business that is validated on your Facebook business account.
- The currencies used on your e-commerce website connected to Facebook through your CMS, such as Shopify, Wix, etc.
- The CMS plan you subscribed to build your cross-border e-commerce.

If the CMS you chose for your e-commerce allowed you to add the special plugin to sell cross-border, then you will be able to use these plugins to sync all your products in different currencies and languages with Facebook and Instagram.

In that way, your shops on Facebook and Instagram will automatically show your products in the right country, in the right language, and in the right currency. For example, if your e-commerce is selling to the U.S., Germany, and the UK:

- Facebook and Instagram users in the U.S. will see your products in English with the prices in USD, and for the checkout they will be redirected to the U.S. version of your e-commerce.
- Facebook and Instagram users in Germany will see your products in German with the prices in EUR, and for the checkout they will be redirected to the German version of your e-commerce.
- Facebook and Instagram users in the UK will see your products in English with the prices in GBP, and for the checkout they will be redirected to the UK version of your e-commerce.

To upload all this information by country, language, and currency to your catalog in Facebook Commerce Manager, you will need to create specific product feeds, which are special spreadsheets that contain all this additional data. Most of the popular e-commerce CMS provide plugins that can help you create these files and integrate them into Facebook Commerce Manager.

If instead you are not using such a CMS, it can be difficult to show your products in several foreign currencies in your Facebook and Instagram shops.

An easy compromise can be to use as international as possible a currency, such as USD or EUR, for all your products and all your potential customers. Such currencies are more used internationally than others, which can consequently result in a lower cart abandon rate.

SOCIAL SELLING ON OTHER PLATFORMS?

As mentioned in the first paragraph, social selling is not clearly defined, at least in the Western countries. But in China, social selling is a clear activity on social networks that include shopping and transactions.

Think, for example, about WeChat: launched as an instant messaging application, it then evolved into a multi-featured social network, and it is now possible to have an e-commerce on it to sell products to anyone that can immediately pay with WeChat Pay.

Many other social networks in China have integrated transactional and e-commerce features, such as RED, or Weitao to mention a few.

But, in the rest of the world, not all social networks are suited to this kind of transactional social selling.

LinkedIn, Twitter, or even YouTube are good in a different kind of social selling, the one for building business relationships.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

There is no single definition of Social Selling, but for the scope of The Digital Exporter Series, it is used as a complete-shopping experience that takes place on social networks and includes finding a product, learning about it, and completing the transaction.

Two of the best social networks for cross-border social selling are Facebook and Instagram, which can be managed through the same tools.

A few other few platforms, especially in China, have very advanced social selling features.

Otherwise, the majority of social networks provide social selling features that don't include any financial transactions and are meant mainly for building business relationships.

CHAPTER 15

USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERNATIONAL MONITORING

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Beyond the development of sales and brand awareness, social media are also effective channels for staying informed about your sector and your competitors.

This type of market monitoring, sometimes also referred to as benchmarking, is probably what you’re already doing in your home country in a more or less continuous and organized way. But social media are relevant sources of information for both local and international monitoring.

Here are some useful tips for your digital export project.

HOW TO ORGANIZE YOUR INTERNATIONAL MONITORING

Competitive, technological, legal, commercial, etc., international monitoring can integrate different areas and cover several questions:

- How are your products or services positioned in relation to the competition in foreign markets?
- What are the new technologies adopted by consumers in these countries?
- How can the legal and tax context in the relevant foreign countries affect your digital export project?
- Etc.

This international monitoring is, therefore, a dynamic process aimed at acquiring and using information not only to preserve your business but also to reduce costs and risks by improving your ability to respond, adapt and decide in the uncertain environment you face in foreign markets.

The international monitoring process is generally organized into six stages:

- 1) Define objectives, geographical scope, local and international sources of information.
- 2) Validate the schedule and frequency of research.
- 3) Research, collect and verify the data.
- 4) Process, measure and analyze the data.
- 5) Formulate and distribute recommendations by scenarios with potential outcomes.
- 6) Archive the information and manage the updates.

WHERE TO MONITOR

In the era of Big Data, there are such large amounts of data to monitor that you need to know how to manage them to find the right information as quickly as possible.

For those companies doing business in several foreign markets, the additional problem is to allocate enough resources and time to this international monitoring while doing it for the home market at the same time.

However, whether for national or for international monitoring, several digital tools are still underused.

Beyond the easy use of search engines, such as Google, Yandex, Baidu, etc., set up for local searches in the countries that you target³⁹, here are other free or freemium tools that you can use for this strategic monitoring:

- Google's N.A.T. pack: News on <https://news.google.com/>, Alerts on <https://www.google.com/alerts>, Trends on <https://trends.google.com/> for the relevant country or countries.
- Netvibes, <https://www.netvibes.com/>.
- The most important media in your industry: magazines, blogs, video channels, etc.
- Groups on LinkedIn or Facebook.
- Twitter and Instagram via the relevant hashtags.
- BuzzSumo, Emplifi, the former Socialbakers, Agorapulse, Awario, Feedly, and many other freemium online tools.

³⁹ You will find all the step-by-step explanations in book 1 of The Digital Exporter Series, [STARTING THE GLOBAL DIGITAL JOURNEY: How to create the best international web strategy](#).



CASE STUDY

1) According to the monitoring tools that you have decided to use, organize your research clearly for each foreign country using the hashtags associated with:

- Your products, services, brands.
- The international SEO keywords used on your website.
- Your competitors.
- Your key suppliers and partners.
- Your core business.

2) To make sure you don't forget any key elements, use the internet to:

- Locate the accounts of your partners and competitors in social networks as well as the hashtags they use in foreign countries.
- Search for other relevant hashtags for the countries that interest you that are similar to the ones you've identified, by using tools that provide hashtags for all over the world, such as:
 - Hashtagify.me
 - Trendsmap.com
 - ...

3) In Twitter, you can also organize the accounts of people that are interesting for your digital export project in specific lists, by country or region for example, rather than simply following every single account: this allows you to avoid having too high a number of 'following' people and to remain discreet when you want to follow the activity of your competitors.

4) Schedule daily alerts, preferably at the same time, via email with the results from the previous day. You will achieve two benefits by doing this every day:

- The amount of information will remain at a more contained level compared to what you would get with weekly alerts.
- This daily practice will allow you to be faster and faster in reading and analyzing the monitored information. It will save you time.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Social networks are also valuable allies for monitoring your foreign markets and for benchmarking your competitors while keeping you informed about your business, whether in your home market or internationally.

Using them well with adapted tools will allow you to secure and strengthen your competitive advantage in any market.

CHAPTER 16

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY IS WORKING?

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From the previous pages you must have realized the great opportunities that you have on social media and the almost endless list of platforms you can use for your digital export project. However, if your international social media strategy is not working, all your investments on these platforms will be wasted!

To avoid that, you must constantly measure the performance of all the actions that you planned in your strategy.

Here are some explanations on how to do that.

HOW TO MEASURE THE PERFORMANCE OF YOUR INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

Whether your objective is to get closer to your foreign customers, grow your brand awareness abroad, or develop your cross-border online sales, your international social media strategy must deliver positive results. If it doesn't, there is a problem with your strategy, and you need to identify it as soon as possible if you don't want to waste a lot of money.

That is why measuring the performance of your international social media strategy is essential!

So, how do you do that?

First, you need to have clear and measurable objectives. It is up to you to set the objective you want to achieve with your social media strategy in the country you target for your digital export project.

The key thing when choosing this objective is that it must be measurable. But it is not enough to choose an objective that is measurable: you also need to decide how to measure it! You will find some examples in the following pages.

INTERNATIONAL KPIs

Must the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for your digital export project be different from those you use in your home country? It depends!

Since KPIs are directly related to the objectives, if your home and international objectives are identical, then your KPIs won't need to be different. Otherwise, as is very often the case, if your foreign objectives are different from your domestic ones, you will need to set specific different objectives.



CASE STUDY

For example, since you might already be close to your customers in your home country but not in the foreign country you target, you might decide to use social media with the objective of getting closer to your foreign customers.

To measure progress towards your objective, you first need to make sure you can separate your foreign customers from your home customers.

Then, for your foreign customers, to see whether you're getting closer to them through your social media strategy, you might think of keeping track of indicators like the number of calls or messages you get through the relevant social network.

To give you some ideas on how to make sure your international social media strategy is producing good results, these are some of the most common KPIs depending on two different objectives you may set:

1) Develop international brand awareness:

- Number of new foreign fans
- Number of likes and comments from non-fans
- Number of comments in foreign languages
- Number of shares on accounts in foreign languages
- Time spent on the multilingual page
- Time spent on each multilingual post

2) Develop cross-border sales:

- Conversion rate
- Acquisition rate from social networks
- Acquisition cost from social networks
- Number of transactions from abroad
- Cart average value from abroad
- Cart abandon rate from abroad

These are simply non-exhaustive lists of suggestions. You can find many more ideas for KPIs on the web around the world.

But avoid getting overwhelmed and lost. If you see dozens and dozens of KPIs, it does not mean you have to follow them all. You need to choose those that are the most relevant for your digital export project.

So, instead of following all the KPIs listed in the last web marketing blog article, focus on the objective of your digital export project and stick with those few KPIs that are really... key!



KEY TAKEAWAYS

In the previous chapters, we've seen that social networks can be very useful for your digital export project if you have a sound strategy. But having a sound strategy is not enough if you don't keep track of its performance internationally.

Constantly measuring your international social media strategy performance is essential to:

- *Know whether it is working, or in other words, is delivering the expected results.*
- *Adjust your strategy if the results are below expectations.*
- *Stop wasting time and money with actions that are not helping your digital export project.*

CONCLUSIONS

Here we are at the end of this book.

But don't close it right away, because I still have a few things to tell you about the necessary costs and organization.

Then, it will be up to you to get started on your digital export action or, if you have already started, to pick up the pace!

CHAPTER 17

A FEW FINAL TIPS: COSTS, ORGANIZATION, AND ... TIME!

“

How much does international web marketing cost? What type of organization should you have for the deployment of a digital export strategy? How long does it take to get results?

Here is my latest practical advice to help you answer these operational questions.

HOW MUCH DOES DIGITAL COST INTERNATIONALLY?

In principle, you can do almost anything on the internet for 'free'. But today, in terms of efficacy, free on the internet is not the same as it was a few years ago, and the first example is Facebook.

Today, Facebook is no longer free for companies as it was before: for a few years, its algorithm has increasingly limited the pages' organic reach. As a result, standard publications are visible only to a few fans. If you want more, you have to switch to sponsored posts or advertising. The problem is the same for other social networks as well as for SEO, blogs, etc. Content is free when produced in-house by you or your teams, but:

- The time spent on the production of this content has a cost called a 'salary'.
- Visibility, a determining factor for performance, has a price that must now be added to your budget.

Build an international web-marketing budget

The share of web marketing in companies' marketing budgets is constantly increasing compared to traditional marketing, which is constantly decreasing⁴⁰.

Often these budgets are provisioned and allocated as a percentage of the company's turnover in the concerned territory. But what should you do when you start in a new export market where you have little or no turnover? Are you going without a budget? Not at all!

In this case, you need to be inspired by the web-marketing budget of another comparable country or of another business unit similar to the activity concerned, or the head office should determine the initial funding, which will be provisioned beforehand and reimbursed with a more or less extended schedule or co-financed by public aid.

⁴⁰ Jennifer Veenstra, 'The CMO Survey: Marketing Budget Gets Big Boost', Deloitte, 26 April 2021, <https://deloitte.wsj.com/articles/the-cmo-survey-marketing-budget-gets-big-boost-01619463730>.

As in the T.O.S.CA method, there are similar elements to consider when building an international web-marketing budget, whether for a new market or for an already existing one:

- Target: foreign countries and foreign languages.
- Objectives: increase sales, brand awareness, ...
- Segments: consumers, professionals, age, level of education, etc.
- Channels and Call-to-Action: website, e-commerce, marketplaces, distributors, ...
- Paying levers: Google Ads, Display, influencers, ...
- Types of content: video, text, photo, tone style, frequency of publication, etc.
- Period to be covered: three years, five years, ...



TIP

When building your budget, do not forget to include your objectives, whether quantitative or qualitative. Without them, you will have trouble calculating the ROI of your investment.

INTERNATIONAL WEB-MARKETING COSTS

In practice, international web marketing uses several skills, each with a specific cost. For a company with ad hoc needs, such as the internationalization of its website or e-commerce, the integration of marketplaces abroad, the development of SEO for export, etc., the best solution is to call on external service providers offering linguistic and technical skills that are suited to its project.

In this context, here are some examples of the average rates of freelancers in Europe (for information purposes only).

- Web designer/graphic designer: between €150 and €300 per day.
- Web developers: between €300 and €700 per day depending on the development language and expertise.

- Artistic director: about €800 per day.
- SEO consultant: between €300 and €800 per day depending on level of experience and issues addressed.
- International SEO consultant: between €500 and €900 per day depending on level of experience, issues addressed and geographic scope.
- SEA consultant: between €400 and €800 per day depending on level of experience, budget, type and quantity of campaigns.
- International SEA consultant: between €700 and €1,000 per day depending on level of experience, geographic scope, budget, type and quantity of campaigns.
- Analytics consultant: between €300 and €500 per report depending on experience.
- International analytics consultant: between €700 and €1,000 per report depending on experience and geographic scope.
- Web-marketing strategy consultant: between €500 and €1,000 per day depending on experience.
- International web-marketing strategy consultant: between €700 and €1,500 per day depending on experience and geographic scope.

In an international approach, you can also work with local providers or freelancers based in the foreign country you are targeting, or even elsewhere. Prices can vary as much as 100% for identical services. To give you an idea: if we set the United States at 100, France would be at 80, the countries of North Africa and Eastern Europe at 70, and India almost at 50.



CASE STUDY

Since many factors condition budgets, formulas vary on a case-by-case basis, and it is impossible to generalize. To give you some guidance on how to build a budget, here are some calculations as examples.

Example 1—Banner for a hotel in the Alps in Austria, to be displayed on affiliate program websites.

Target: sporty couples with young children based in France, Germany, and Italy. Budget: €3,000 over four months.

Results:

- Impressions of the campaign on affiliate sites: more than five million times.
- Banner clicks: approximately 5,000 clicks, with a CTR of 0.1%.
- Bookings: 50, conversion rate 1%, cost per acquisition €60.
- Simplified ROI: turnover of €10,000 for the 50 reservations; $ROI = (\text{turnover} - \text{budget})/\text{budget}$ = 233%.

Example 2—Google Ads campaign to download a white paper for SaaS in the legal sector.

Target: SMEs in the UK. Budget: €1,000 over 14 days.

Results:

- 12,000 impressions.
- More than 287 clicks, with a CTR of 2.87%.
- 19 downloads of the white paper.
- Conversion rate of 6%, cost per conversion of €52.60.
- Simplified ROI: turnover of €1,500; $ROI = (\text{turnover} - \text{budget})/\text{budget}$ = 50%.

These calculations relate to simplified ROIs. To obtain the net ROI, you also need to deduct the variable costs associated with the project, such as any costs of creating the banner, translating, and producing the white paper in English, adapting the website, etc.

THE IMPACT OF CTR IN AN INTERNATIONAL WEB-MARKETING BUDGET

The budget to invest in international web marketing is also linked to the CTR⁴¹, which is a concept used around the world to express the percentage of internet users that have clicked on a link, whether organic or paid.

How does CTR impact your budget? If your CTR on organic and free web-marketing levers (for example, the SEO on your website for a foreign country) is very low compared to the industry average, paid levers will probably be more effective: as is often the case in a new market, where a brand is still little known, it can take time to reach the strategic target only through SEO. On the contrary, paid levers can achieve these goals much faster, but the costs increase to pay for SEA, SMA campaigns, etc.

Otherwise, if your CTR is already at a good level or even higher than the industry average, you can move forward with organic web-marketing actions in your target foreign country, which will be more economical than in the previous case.

To know whether your CTR is good or bad, you must, therefore, compare it with the average for your business sector in the export market that you are targeting. To give you an idea, here are some sector averages in the U.S.⁴²

⁴¹ <https://support.google.com/googleads/answer/2615875>.

⁴² Mark Irvine, Google Ads Benchmarks for YOUR Industry [Updated!], WordStream, 24 September 2021, <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2016/02/29/google-adwords-industry-benchmarks>.

Industry	Average CTR (Search)	Average CTR (GDN)
Advocacy	4.41%	0.59%
Auto	4.00%	0.60%
B2B	2.41%	0.46%
Consumer Services	2.41%	0.51%
Dating & Personals	6.05%	0.72%
E-Commerce	2.69%	0.51%
Education	3.78%	0.53%
Employment Services	2.42%	0.59%
Finance & Insurance	2.91%	0.52%
Health & Medical	3.27%	0.59%
Home Goods	2.44%	0.49%
Industrial Services	2.61%	0.50%
Legal	2.93%	0.59%
Real Estate	3.71%	1.08%
Technology	2.09%	0.39%
Travel & Hospitality	4.68%	0.47%

An example of the average CTR by sector in the U.S.

Each lever has its average sectorial CTR, which may be higher or lower than the others. In general, the CTR in Display is lower than in Search: all sectors combined, Display CTR is 0.46% while Search CTR is 3.17%.



TIP

Do not compare the CTR of one lever with that of another. This can lead you to decide, 'I just do Search because the CTR is higher'. In reality, it is the synergy between the different levers that will improve the performance of web marketing and thus the ROI of your budget, both at home and abroad.

The rise in CTR rates is proof of this: if CTR were the only factor in performance, Display budgets would have been stopped for years.

HOW TO GET ORGANIZED FOR INTERNATIONAL WEB MARKETING

Although web marketing is well anchored in corporate strategy, it is common to hear clichés about international practice, such as:

- My intern, who spent his holidays in Spain, will manage my cross-border e-commerce.
- My English girlfriend's neighbor's son is going to develop my bilingual website for free.
- We don't need to translate the website into German because everyone in Germany speaks English.
- We have created a page in English on Facebook because we were told that was the right thing to do, but frankly it is useless and in addition it is empty because no one here is comfortable writing in English.

Unfortunately, these examples are not uncommon in companies, especially in those that have not taken the time to formulate their multichannel export strategy.

In fact, digital export and international web marketing include several distinct activities and skills: SEO, SEA, newsletters, social media, e-commerce, marketplaces, influencers, marketing automation, etc., each of which must be adapted to the target export markets. Your company must not only find solutions to manage all these skills in several countries at the same time, but also ensure the integration of all these skills as well as new techniques to come.

But in addition to this complexity of technical skills and geography, digital export also imposes a shift from the offer, or the company, to the demand, or customer. With an organization focused on the offer, the company risks having the problem of 'silos' where each function works on a single axis of the customer journey by country and separately from other functions. Whether at home or abroad, you need to ensure the convergence of all actions carried out in the direction of prospective customers to provide as coherent and effective a customer journey as possible.

Organizing digital export and international web marketing is, therefore, complicated, but you can act in three areas to make it easier:

- *Bring them closer to the company's strategy.* Digital export and international web marketing must be as well-suited as possible to the short-, medium- and long-term objectives of the company and must be able to deploy the most effective levers. At the same time, the company must provide the necessary resources to align its web marketing with the objectives of its export strategy and motivate all its teams, internal and external, to work towards the same objectives.
- *Acquire an in-depth understanding of each step of the export customer journey and learn to use them correctly.* This will allow you to understand precisely not only the strengths and weaknesses of your company in this journey, but also the new skills necessary to address those weaknesses.
- *Adopt the agile organizational approach.* Since digital export requires several types of expertise in technical, graphic, commercial, managerial fields, etc., hiring several people for each area of expertise requires a substantial budget. The agile approach needs an open vision toward alternative solutions, an ability to share new ways of working, and a willingness to adopt new concepts quickly. Your organization can adopt this approach and respond more effectively to the ambitions of your digital export project.

Centralized or decentralized management

To organize the deployment of your digital export sales, you must first consider the two options for centralization or decentralization, depending on the size of your business and on your target countries:

- Decentralized deployment via subsidiaries or local partners. Some of the advantages of this model are:
 - Local management of budgets.
 - More specific positioning and content in the countries.
 - Closer organization of local events.
- Centralized deployment from your headquarters. Some of the advantages of this model are:
 - Better control of brand image.
 - Economies of scale in production and publication of content.
 - International monitoring of KPIs.

Centralized deployment is usually more suitable if your business is in an international start-up phase and does not yet have local structures.

Internalizing, externalizing or both?

Often international web marketing is under the responsibility of the company's marketing manager, who is in charge of everything: traditional marketing with trade fairs, communication, packaging, catalogs, etc., and web marketing with SEO, newsletters, blog, social networks, etc. But a single person rarely has expertise in all areas of traditional and digital marketing as well as in all export markets the company targets.

On the other hand, the profile of a generalist marketing manager can be a good solution. He will have sufficient skills to negotiate and manage the service providers specialized in the fields of international web marketing that you need for your digital export project. As a company employee, he can directly take charge of some of these levers, the most critical, which will then remain internalized. He can outsource the others to selected service providers, and then gradually internalize them: recruiting a web-marketing team is a significantly expensive investment, and you will be more in favor of it once you know what ROI you are able to achieve.

So, in a start-up phase, as for ad hoc needs on specific issues, for example the internationalization of your website in German or the implementation of an advertising campaign on Yandex, working with specialized service providers is the best choice.

Things to pay attention to when outsourcing

As we have seen, there are significant price differences depending on the skills of the service provider in question. But beyond the price, there are other things to pay attention to when negotiating with future international web-marketing providers. Here are a few:

- The specifications of the international web project: clearly define who does what between you and your service provider and when.
- Ownership of accounts: make sure that you keep ownership of Google accounts, such as Google Ads, and that they are properly linked to your name with full access to data and administrator rights to change login and password until the end of the contract.

- Ownership of product content: when providing international content creation services published on your website or social media, make sure that this content becomes your property.
- The duration of contracts: avoid commitments over several years without any possibility of emergency exit.
- The difficulty of paying for results or performance: being enormously dependent on Google's algorithms and their untimely changes, service providers cannot make 100% of their remuneration conditional on results. Success fees or bonuses for exceeding objectives are more appropriate and appreciated.
- Reporting of results and monitoring of actions: mention them in the quotes so that you can always know what has been done when and when to measure the results.

HOW LONG TO WAIT FOR RESULTS

The press and specialized media repeat it often: internationalizing a business is not just about selling a product or service abroad; it is rather a long process requiring a lot of thought and preparation. But what's the right balance so that 'a lot of thought' doesn't get in the way of action?

Premature internationalization or no internationalization?

Premature internationalization certainly carries risks, but 'no internationalization' is not a solution either.



CASE STUDY

The marketing director of a French manufacturer of bicycle accessories wanted to expand its online business to other countries. The company already had a good number of domestic customers, but it had not yet developed its own e-commerce. The marketing director then decided to integrate the e-commerce functionalities on the website, which he had translated into English, German, Spanish and Italian, and to list around 20 products on Amazon's European marketplaces in the hope that this would increase sales in Europe.

After a few weeks, the first orders arrived, mainly from the United Kingdom. The items were dispatched immediately. All UK customers tried to contact the company after receiving their package, but failed, and finally decided to return the items. The marketing director, surprised by this result, contacted them by email to find out why: the customers explained that the instructions they received were not in English, that they had tried to call the company, and no one answered, and that, unable to understand how to install and use the products, they simply returned them.

In this case study, we cannot criticize the marketing director for having started exporting without being sufficiently prepared. His initiative has enabled the company to create value⁴³ and to create the basis for new sources of growth. In addition, his approach is compatible with a gradual export development strategy, and the company can adapt its investment according to the degree of success of the actions deployed.

A multilingual website is, therefore, not enough to make your business international, but it is one of the first ingredients necessary to become profitable and sustainable. Think of the investment you have made to promote your business in your home country, on the internet and beyond: the website but also SEO, newsletters, marketplaces, social networks, trade shows, packaging, interviews, advertisements, etc. How much time and resources have you devoted to it and continue to devote to it on a daily basis? Would it not be normal to think that so much time and resources should also be dedicated to your target foreign market?

The secret to good results is time

Export and digital separately are two processes that take time to achieve positive results in the target countries. Although the

⁴³ An international website can increase the value of a business, especially an e-commerce website.

combination of the two makes it possible to accelerate international development, a multi-channel export strategy always takes time, and the ROI is long-term, generally over three to five years.

This is why intermediate stages with objectives in the short and medium term are also necessary to increase and measure the performance of the deployment over time. These stages must be described in a roadmap for five years, or even beyond. Even if reality invalidates part of this roadmap, it will serve to inspire the launch, to monitor the development, and to formulate hypotheses on what export sales could be achieved in the short, medium, and long term with their budgetary impact.

Regarding this last point, here are three concrete examples:

- For short-term goals, such as prospecting during an international trade fair abroad, investing in SEO or social media will not be effective, because they will not have the time to produce concrete results. Other levers, such as lead generation or advertising campaigns, will be capable of achieving this performance in the desired time frame.
- For medium-term goals, such as increasing sales on Zalando in Europe by 30% in one year, simply referencing the products translated into each language will be useful but not sufficient. Boosting products with promotions or advertising on Zalando and on partner sites may produce more satisfactory results within the desired time frame.
- For long-term goals, such as developing brand awareness in a new country over three years, organic levers are strategic and suitable for building this reputation on solid qualitative bases and supporting its growth over time.

Depending on the time available to achieve the objectives, the levers used will, therefore, have a higher or lower cost, which will impact your budget.

But even with a clear roadmap, many companies throw in the towel for the first year for lack of positive results. Avoid this mistake and don't give up. To extend your perseverance intelligently, here are some tips:

- Place digital export as a priority ambition in the company's strategy by not allowing it to be perceived as a simple search for commercial

opportunities. Involve as many employees as possible by making them feel that they are part of this ambition.

- Be realistic. The average time to complete an export business, all channels combined, is two years, depending on the sector. Moreover, completion does not mean profitability, because profitability generally needs one to two extra years.
- To maintain the course on your international development, subtract everything that is not in your core business and that others can do better than you. But beware of providers who promise impressive results overnight. Whether online or offline, if you want to achieve good, profitable, and lasting positive results, you have to invest in quality work, and that doesn't happen in days.
- Anticipate your funding needs to ensure that your cash flow can follow the project over the long term. Several mechanisms such as government grants or aids from chambers of commerce, etc., make it possible to finance the development of digital export.
- Regularly analyze your performance. Yes, the progress can be disappointing. But check it regularly and make sure that the best tools and practices are correctly implemented. That will allow you to intervene as quickly as possible if something goes too slowly compared to your roadmap.

So, how long will it take to get results? Neither digital nor export is a precise science; they are rather continuous projects. For the first, on average 95% of new websites can take more than a year to arrive at the first results of SERP. For the second, it can take between six months and a year, after validation of the strategy, to obtain the first customer. These times are mere estimates, and the actual time you need may vary depending on several factors, including your sector, the export market, your budget, your objectives, etc.

HOW DIGITAL DARWINISM CAN STRENGTHEN EXPORT

The internationalization of a company should be considered a journey and not a destination. Each foreign country is not just a new market; it also involves the discovery of new habits, new cultures, new opportunities. Certain countries will have specific needs for which the company will have to find specific solutions. It is the wealth of solutions that the company will be able to deploy in its new markets that will make its export journey efficient.

Until the early 2000s, export development for an SME mainly involved finding and managing distributors or importers in other countries. English was the only language used for business, often sufficient in that context.

But, in recent years, the opportunities for internationalization have evolved. Internet, e-commerce, marketplaces, and other digital tools have joined distributors and importers, multiplying the channels that help reach foreign customers, directly and indirectly. How will this evolve in the coming years? With the speed of breakthrough innovations, we can expect huge developments in several areas affecting export sales thanks to the internet.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Digital export is like conquering a summit: there is the excitement of the challenge, the pleasure of advancement, the ecstasy of the outcome. These stages are renewed at each conquered summit, but the chances of success will be greater after each successive conquest. It would be a shame to stop at the first summit, and for your digital exports it would be a shame to stop at the first country.

If you want to read more about how to sell online across channels internationally, don't forget the rest of The Digital Exporter Series,

where you can find more than 100 case studies presenting the best tools, actionable solutions, and step-by-step explanations. Here is the list of books in [The Digital Exporter Series](#):

- Book 1 – [STARTING THE GLOBAL DIGITAL JOURNEY: How to create the best international web strategy](#).
- Book 2 – [GETTING CLIENTS OVERSEAS, ORGANICALLY: How to set up local, international & global SEO](#).
- Book 3 – [GETTING CLIENTS OVERSEAS, BY ADVERTISING: SEA, SMA and other acquisition channels](#).
- Book 4 – [SELLING ONLINE INTERNATIONALLY: How to set up & manage a cross-border e-commerce](#).
- Book 5 – [SELLING ONLINE INTERNATIONALLY: How to sell on local & international marketplaces](#).
- Book 6 – [DEVELOPING A STRONG INTERNATIONAL BRAND: Multilingual social media & social selling](#).
- Book 7 – [DEVELOPING A STRONG INTERNATIONAL BRAND: Multilingual inbound marketing & marketing automation](#).

I hope that this book has given you useful advice, and I wish you success in reaching as many digital export summits as possible!

SOME PRACTICAL DATA

- Trade Map (www.trademap.org): covering 220 countries and territories and 5,300 products of the harmonized system, a system adopted in 1983 by the World Customs Organization, it provides plenty of indicators on exports.
- OECD.Stat (<https://stats.oecd.org>) is a platform that provides access to statistical databases for OECD countries.
- Ecommerce Europe (<https://ecommerce-europe.eu/>) is an association representing more than 100,000 companies selling goods and services online to consumers in Europe.
- DHL, ‘The 21st Century Spice Trade: A Guide the Cross-Border E-Commerce Opportunity’

(https://www.dhl.com/content/dam/downloads/g0/press/publication/g0_dhl_express_cross_border_ecommerce_21st_century_spiece_trade.pdf).

- European Commission, 'Buying goods online coming from a non-European Union country' (https://ec.europa.eu/taxation_customs/individuals/buying-goods-services-online-personal-use/buying-goods/buying-goods-online-coming-from-a-non-eu-union-country_en).
- United Nations (<https://unstats.un.org/home/>), statistical data globally and by country.
- Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), The World Factbook — Explore All Countries (<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/>).
- W3C Internationalization (I18n) Activity: <https://www.w3.org/blog/international/>.

FREE AND PAID TOOLS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Most of the social media tools, including the ones listed below, are directly connected to one account and to the language of that account. For that reason, they are not able to manage the multilingual features explained earlier in this book.

Agora Pulse: <https://www.agorapulse.com/>, freemium tool. It is an all-in-one platform for social media management, and it allows you to schedule, publish, analyze, monitor, report and collaborate with your teams.

Brandwatch: <https://www.brandwatch.com/>, formerly Falcon.io. It is a paid tool for social media management, and it combines all the key features (management, engagement, advertising, analytics, monitoring,) plus customer service management, landing page builder, and social insights.

Buffer: <https://buffer.com/>, freemium tool for social media management (including scheduling and publishing), analytics and landing pages.

CoSchedule: <https://coschedule.com/>, freemium tool for planning and managing a social media calendar.

Crowdfire: <https://www.crowdfireapp.com/>, freemium tool for scheduling, publishing, and listening. It also allows you to connect your blog, e-commerce, or website to share any update directly on your social media.

Hootsuite: <https://www.hootsuite.com/>, one of the biggest social media management tools. A paid all-in-one platform, it can be used to create and schedule content, analyze the performance, and run ads on social media.

HubSpot: <https://www.hubspot.com/>, it is a freemium CRM tool with a specific hub for marketing and social media management, the Marketing Hub. It can integrate all marketing actions, such as email, SEO, customer support, sales leads, and social media into the same platform.

Later: <https://later.com/>, paid tool specially designed for platforms where visual content is predominant. It is good for social media management (including scheduling and publishing) and analytics.

It also offers a useful feature to manage the links in Instagram's bio.

MeetEdgar: <https://meetedgar.com/>, paid tool for social media management. It allows you to schedule posts, use content from your website via RSS feeds, republish older content, and track your analytics.

Post Planner: <https://www.postplanner.com/>, paid tool for social media management. It can suggest content, manage the editorial calendar, publish, and analyze the social media performance.

Sprout Social: <https://sproutsocial.com/>, a paid tool for social media management. It can be used to create and schedule content, analyze the performance, and monitor trends or competitors on social media.

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