



ONLINE RETAILER

Avalara

# CROSS-BORDER COMMERCE WHAT NO ONE TELLS YOU ABOUT EXPANDING OVERSEAS.

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# THE CROSS-BORDER IMPERATIVE



## Domestic Growth Ceiling

Annual retail turnover rose ~2.1% in Q1 2025 after a sluggish 2024.



## Cost-of-living Pressure

Household costs up 2.4–3.5% YoY into March 2025 and retailers have seen sales drop 3–6%



## Changing Consumer Behaviour

85% are now more price-conscious than five years ago and AOV has fallen ~23%

International expansion offers a path forward.  
But what *looks* easy and what *is* easy are two very different things.

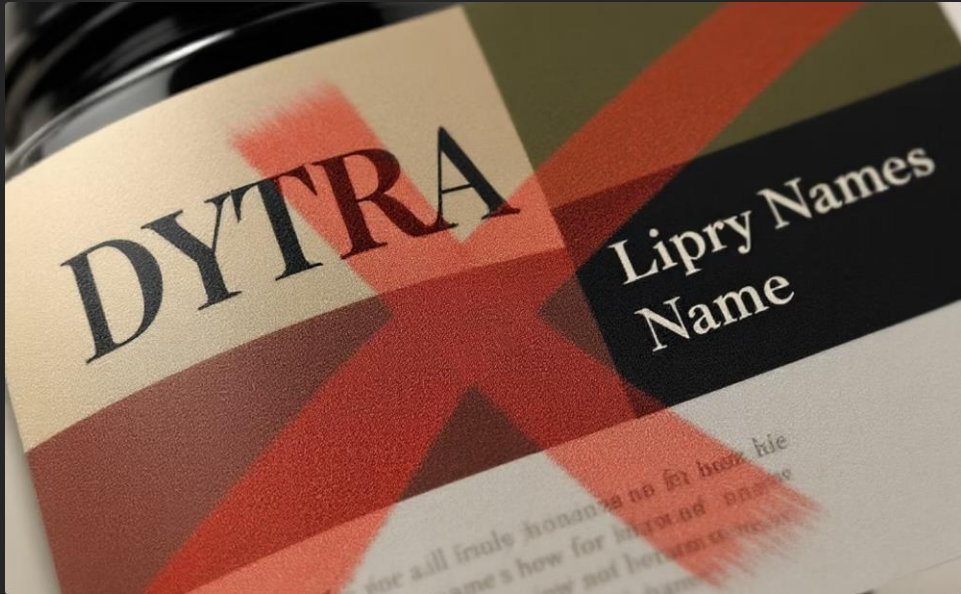


# THE ASSUMPTION VS THE REALITY

**Expansion is easy... until it's not.**

1. One size doesn't fit all
2. The true cost of entry
3. Your local playbook won't scale

# TRUE LOCALISATION GOES BEYOND TRANSLATION



## Product Naming

Playful Australian product names flagged as offensive in the US market, requiring last-minute corrections and tag blackouts.



## Representation

Marketing imagery that felt "too white, too Australian" in US and South African markets, requiring additional diverse content creation.

"You're not expanding into a region – ***you're entering a culture***"

# PAYMENT PREFERENCES MATTER

1. Localise the trust signals

2. Offer what's native to the customer

⚠ Lack of local payment options is consistently one of the **top reasons for cart abandonment** in cross-border markets.



# FULFILMENT EXPECTATIONS VARY

1

## UNITED STATES

Orders fulfilled from Australia via DHL eCommerce arrived in 2-3 days—faster than domestic Perth deliveries.

**Learning:** Cross-border express can work with strong carrier partnerships and fast-track customs processing.

2

## NEW ZEALAND

Post-COVID customs laws stretched delivery times to 10-14 days.

**Learning:** Even small markets can drive innovation like Click & Collect or Ship from Store—if designed with intention.

3

## SOUTH AFRICA

High import duties made direct-to-consumer shipping unfeasible.

**Learning:** Fragmented markets may need multiple last-mile partners to meet customers where they are.



# OPERATIONS OUTWEIGH MARKETING

## 1 Import Duties, Tax & Compliance

Every market has unique de minimis thresholds, customs documentation, and labelling requirements.

## 2 Return Logistics

Without local return options, you erode trust, kill repurchase intent, and see costs eat into margin.

## 3 Platform Limitations

Most domestic eCommerce platforms aren't built for true multi-region execution.

⚠ The true cost of entry into international markets is almost always underestimated.



# DOMESTIC STRATEGIES DON'T **SCALE** GLOBALLY

## Media Channels & Costs

- Meta & Google is not necessarily the norm in other markets.
- Paid Media costs are double that of Australian budgets.



## Promotional Strategy

- EOFY & Click Frenzy mean nothing outside Australia
- Align with regional events: Labor Day, Amazon Prime Day, Singles Day etc.

## Marketplace Dominance

- In many regions, marketplaces are the default starting point for brand & product discovery
- Use them to validate demand before going full-scale

# ONE MARKET, TWO APPROACHES



## The Cult Street Brand

- Research showed US paid media would be extremely expensive
- Leveraged cultural relevance through talent collaboration
- Released limited edition capsule timed with upcoming tour
- Launched localised website early to establish brand presence

✓ Result: No paid media, purely organic WOM & PR strategy, sold out in under 24 hours

## The Lifestyle Fashion Brand

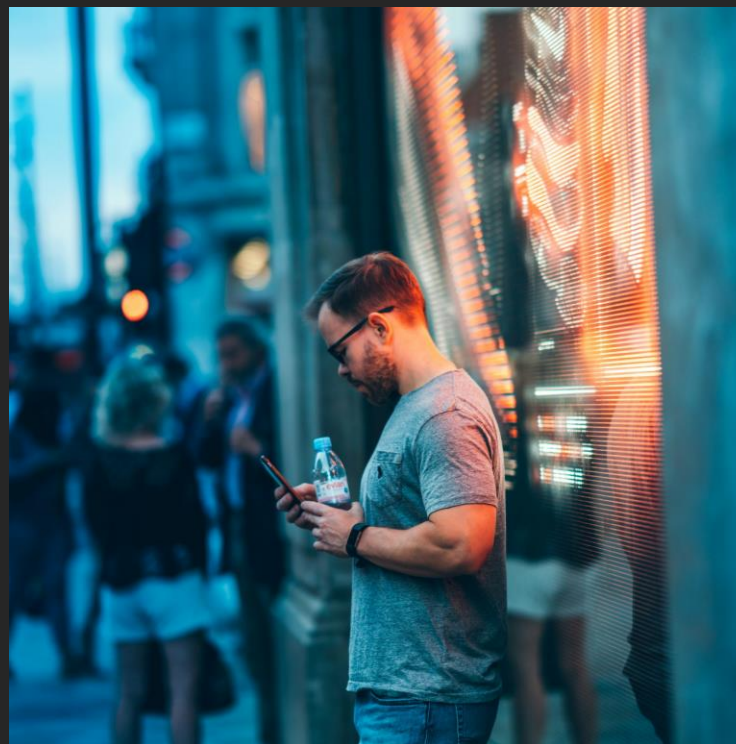
- Planned five stores and website with no paid media budget
- Relied on local area marketing and global campaign
- Used mid-tier influencers for awareness
- Offered free shipping for initial 3 months

⚠ Result: Low sales, minimal brand awareness, struggled against established competitors

# WINNING STRATEGIES



1. Cultural Relevance



2. Launch Website in Advance



3. Have an Acquisition Strategy

# ASK THE QUESTIONS



What are the dominant discovery channels?



Where do customers expect to transact?



What are the top barriers to conversion?



What do customers expect post-purchase?



Who are the local leaders?



# RAPID FIRE **HARD** TRUTHS



You can't scale chaos



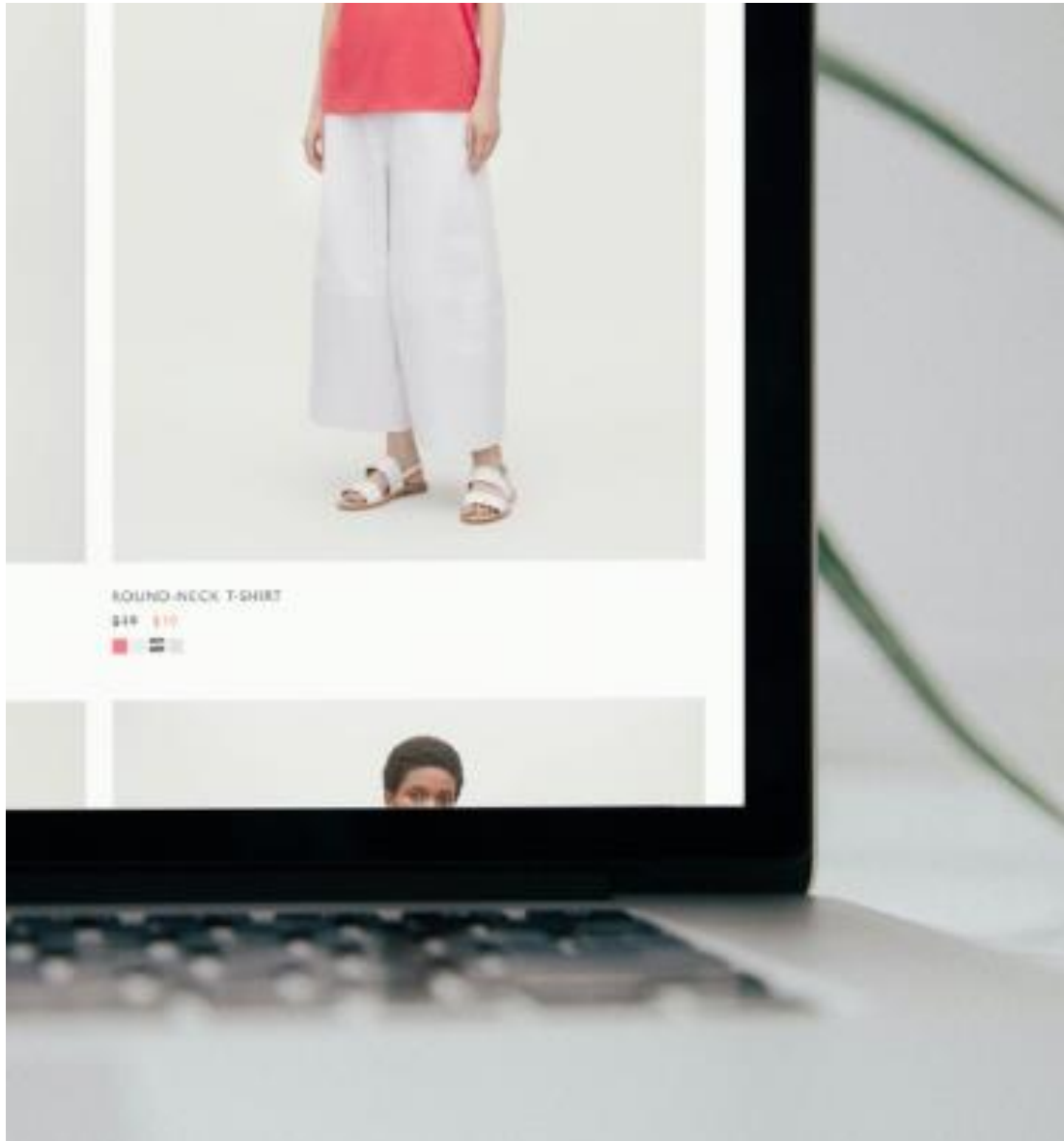
Customers don't care where you're shipping from



Marketplaces aren't shortcuts



Everyday lost post-launch is twice as hard to recover



**CROSS-BORDER  
ECOMMERCE ISN'T AN  
EXTENSION OF YOUR  
BUSINESS,  
IT'S A REINVENTION**