

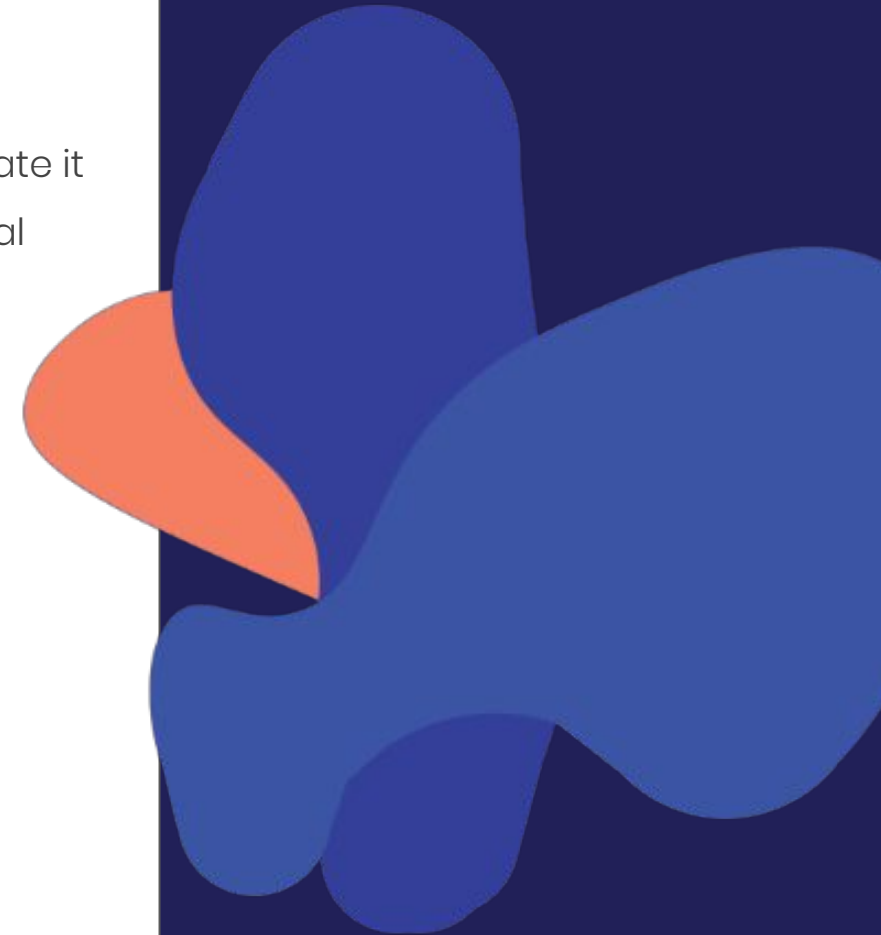
shippit

Your International Shipping Launch Checklist



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Intro

Ready to take your online store global? Shippit users that ship internationally experience five times the growth of retailers that ship solely in Australia.

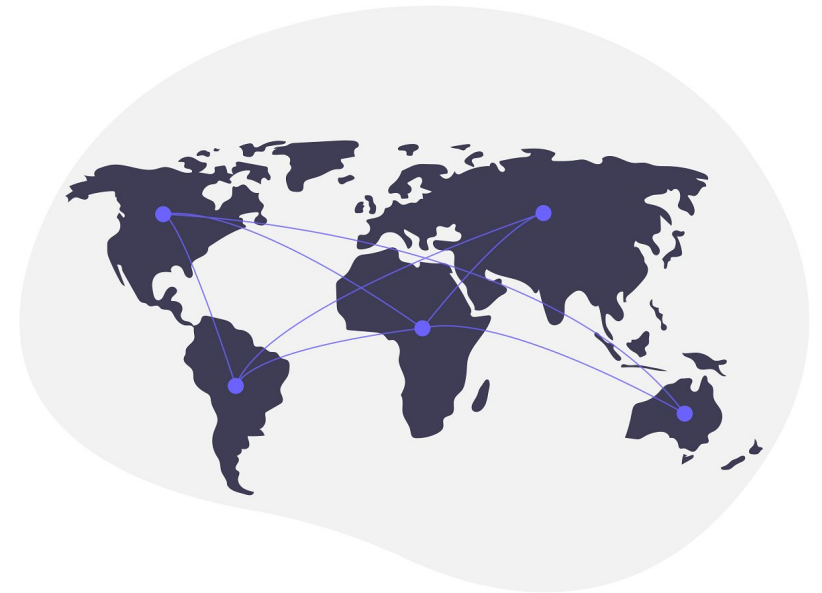
Sounds amazing, right? But there's a catch.

Not all businesses, all products, and all brands are suitable for international markets.

So how do you know if international shipping is right for you? This is your ultimate checklist to see if you should make the plunge into international waters.

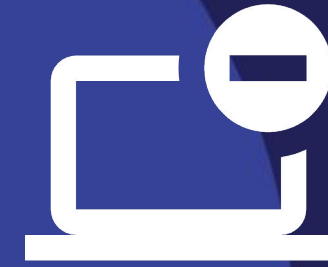
Ready for growth?

In this checklist, you'll find a lot of questions, that only you know the answers to.





70% of shoppers want clear information about delivery charges before purchase



57% of customers will cancel orders if shipping costs are too high



Small retailers will often use marketplace fulfilment services such as Amazon Fulfilment services because they're unsure how to ship internationally, but this can be very costly



International shipping is a competition between the *cheapest* or the *fastest*



The cost of cross-border shipping can be the tipping point for eCommerce businesses

Understand demand and how your target countries regulate it

Demand is one thing, but if we're talking about international shipping, demand and regulations go hand in hand.

Did you know that in 2007, Canada banned the sale, importation and advertising of baby walkers?

Chewing gum is also banned in Singapore, so before you jump the gun with your fast selling products in Australia, the first checkpoint for international shipping is to meet demand with what's allowed in the countries you want to expand to.



Key considerations

- Is there international demand for your product?
- Is your product taxable in the country and by what quantity and amount?
- Are there any customs regulations for your product?
- What is the minimum amount for duties for that country?
- Are your products too expensive for the country's market? For example, selling leather goods, some countries may have a \$100 threshold meaning the seller will be subject to a per-item tax
- Are you prepared to communicate potential customs issues to your customers?

What to look out for here

Sometimes it's better to be safe than sorry. If you're looking to expand internationally, the first thing you need to do is ensure you've got the right product-market fit, both for customers and regulators.

Look to:

Reduce as many importing and customs issues as possible. Expanding overseas is an exciting opportunity for business owners, but it can quickly become a drag if you're spending most of your time chasing seized packages.

Will your marketing strategy easily translate to international markets?

Once you've confirmed there's a strong product-market fit to sell internationally, and you've got the green light from the nation's regulatory institutions, it's time to see if you can effectively promote your products to your desired target audience:

Key considerations

- Is your pricing right for international markets?
Is it culturally appropriate?
- Does your marketing resonate with international markets?
- Do you need to translate your product descriptions?
- Are you familiar with your target country's marketing do's and don'ts?
- How does your product compare to local competitors?
- Does your international target audience have different buyer behaviour to local shoppers?



What to look out for here

Ensure you can demonstrate a strong value proposition to new international markets, and that you can easily meet the needs of new target markets. For example Over 33% of Chinese shoppers now solely use WeChat to purchase goods on the mobile.

Look to:

Establish a broad brand value proposition that is suitable for diverse target audiences and sell your products where your market likes to shop.



Payments and Processing

Now that you know your brand and value proposition is in hot demand in international countries, you'll need to ensure you can capture payments for foreign currencies without a hitch:

Key considerations

- Are you using the preferred payment processing system for each country?
- Does your shopping cart process multiple currencies?
- Are your target countries currencies stable?
- Are there high foreign transaction fees?
- Does the foreign currency convert well for your products?

What to look out for here

Here you want to reduce the cost of foreign transaction fees while also ensuring your products aren't too expensive when prices are converted into new currencies.

Look to:

Create a seamless international payment process without any hidden fees and sell in countries with a stable dollar that matches well with your products.

Controlling Shipping Costs

Yep, you're on a roll. If you've gotten this far with confidence it's looking like international expansion is on your growth horizon.

Key considerations

- What's the landed cost for items by country?
- What are the re-delivery charges?
Are there any address correction fees?
- Are there any return fees?
- [Do you have a centralised dashboard to track shipping costs?](#)
- [Do you have access to discounted postage rates?](#)
- Do you rate shop to control shipping costs?
- Is local fulfilment a cheaper alternative? For example, shipping pallets of products by ship and storing them in a warehouse locally?
- Can you give the customer an accurate estimate of the full cost of shipping, including taxes, duties and fees, at the checkout?

What to look out for here

Even if you've negotiated great international shipping rates, there are still additional costs that you need to ensure you can cover. Handling fees, re-delivery charges, international returns and last mile delivery costs can add up easily. You'll also want to ensure that your full landing cost doesn't spur a mass checkout exodus.

Look to:

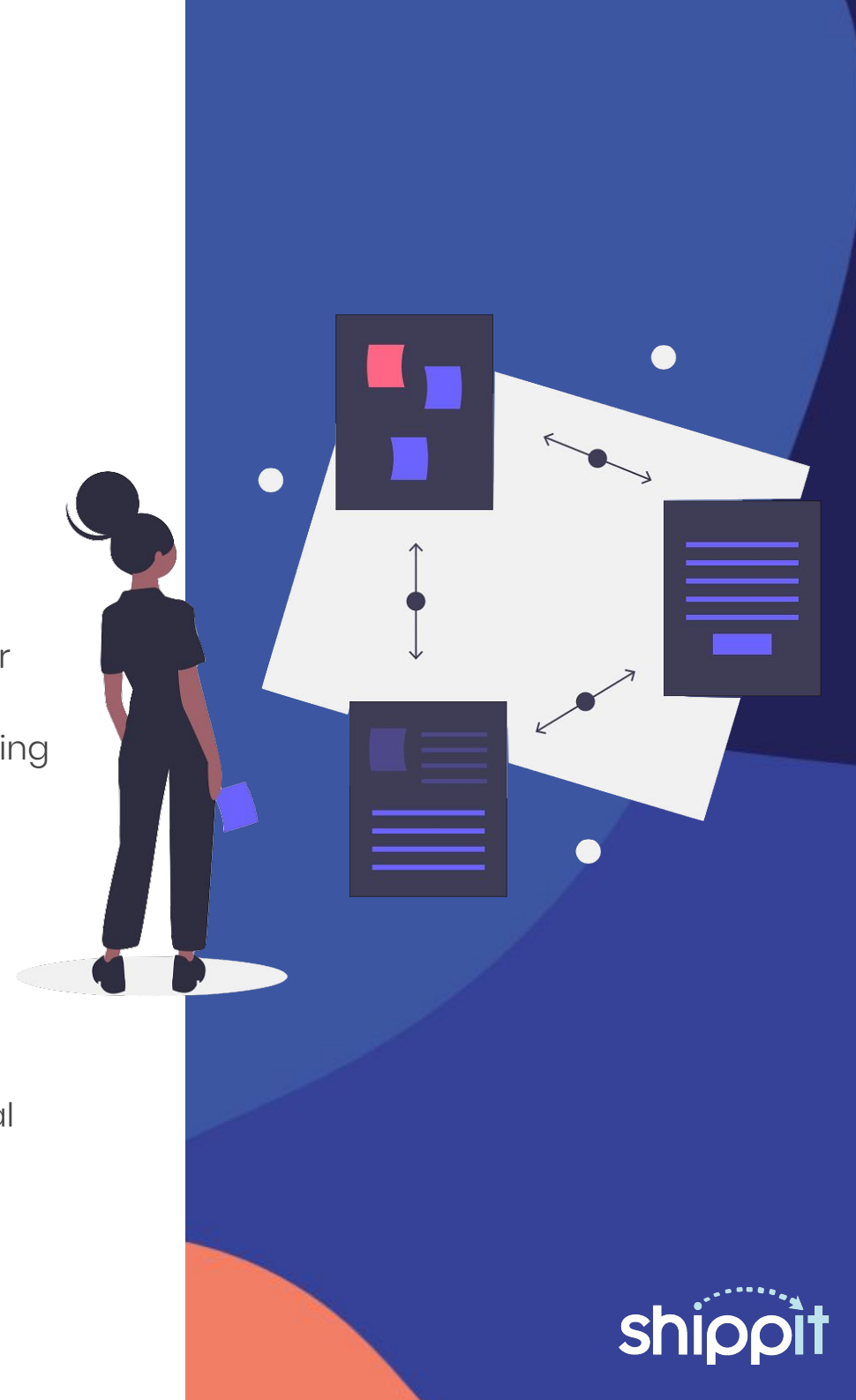
International shipping fees are unavoidable so you'll want to ensure that additional fees and charges still make sense to your business, and they don't turn your profit from net positive to net negative.

Automating Shipping and Fulfilment

The next critical step after figuring out if you can offer cost-effective shipping is establishing a seamless local and international fulfilment process.

Key considerations

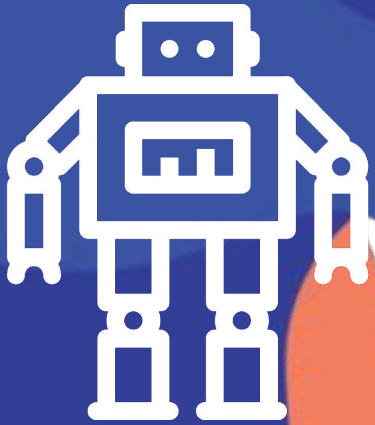
- Where are you importing orders from? For example, eBay, Amazon, Etsy, Shopify?
- Are you printing the correct labels for international courier services?
- Are you doing a lot of things manually - for example booking couriers and updating tracking information to orders?
- Do you have an easy way to validate international addresses with couriers?
- Do you need a different fulfilment process for local and international deliveries?
- Do you need to make any adjustments to your inventory management system, your warehouse management system or your warehouse set up to cater for international deliveries?
- Are you able to reduce your fulfilment errors to a bare minimum?



What to look out for here

A lot of retailers fulfil orders manually, adding to the time and cost it takes to fulfil each order.

Here, you'll want to ensure you have the ability to **automate international shipping and fulfilment**, otherwise, you run the risk of getting bogged down with orders while also making a lot of fulfilment errors.



Look to:

Introduce a fulfilment and shipping automation solution like Shippit. You'll need a robust solution that can import orders from multiple sales channels, can book local and international courier services, while also being able to track cross-border and local deliveries.

Looking to speed up fulfilment?

Find out more about Shippit's fulfilment features [here](#).

Creating a seamless international shipping experience

The customer journey for online deliveries doesn't stop at the checkout. In fact, **the most critical part of the new customer experience is giving our buyers an amazing tracking experience.**

Key considerations

- Can you easily provide customers with cross-border tracking updates?
- [Can you easily track all cross-border and local deliveries?](#)
- Can you guarantee your items will be delivered within the required timeframe?
- Can you offer customers different international standard and express shipping?
- Can you quickly and effectively communicate with international delivery complaints?
- Will you proactively alert customers to delayed deliveries?
- Do you have the resources to investigate late international deliveries?
- Can you delight your customers with fast and cheap international shipping?

What to look out for here

See if you have the capability to offer seamless, cross-border tracking that is transparent and delights customers.

Look to:

Reduce all the friction for customers to track their parcels and ensure you have enough resources to quickly respond and investigate late deliveries.

Navigating international returns

Key considerations

- Do you need to revise your return policy and window?
- Will you or the customer bear the cost of the return?
- Under what conditions will you authorise returns?
- How will you send the customer their return label?
- How will you communicate the returns process and is it easy for the customer to understand?
- How will you communicate to customers that request a return outside of the authorised return timeframe?
- When will you do if you receive items that aren't qualified for a refund?

What to look out for here

Offering customers easy returns is essential to eCommerce, but international returns is a whole new logistical ball game. You'll need to make sure you have the capability to authorise, receive and process returns within the required timeframe.

Look to:

Create an international returns strategy that is cost effective and easy for both you and your customers.



How Ready is your Business?

So you've gotten this far. All signs are pointing to go. You've got a great product, a great product-market fit, your brand is great for international markets and you're ready to sell *and* ship your products overseas.

But this is where we need to look deep down inside ourselves and do a bit of soul searching.

Are you ready? Are you prepared for the added stress? Will additional international sales strain your local market?

Here's how to tell:

Key considerations

- Can your business absorb growing sales from new markets without letting local customers down?
- Are you able to keep on top of constantly changing exchange rates?
- Are you able to keep on top of changing regulations?
- Are you ready to support international customers?





What to look out for here

Just because we *can* do something, it doesn't always mean we *should* do it. In business, it's normal to take risks. Sometimes they pay off in dividends, and sometimes they end up in complete and utter disaster.

Look to:

Balance the added effort of selling overseas with a worthwhile reward. Maybe it won't pay off straight away, but if you can get it to work it might be the most rewarding thing you'll do for the growth of your business.

In business, we must make smart decisions and ensure we've thought strategically about our expansion efforts. But we also need to be cautious of being bogged down by fear and uncertainty.

The great Theodore Roosevelt believed that nothing is worth having unless it's achieved through hard work:

"Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty... I have never in my life envied a human being who led an easy life. I have envied a great many people who led difficult lives and led them well."

International shipping is a great, but hard step forward. Are you ready?

The Wrap

International growth is exciting but is also a lot of hard work that has the opportunity to double your business growth.

But there's a lot of things you need to get sorted first:

1. Understand your product demand and if it fits in with the laws and regulations of new countries
2. Ensure your marketing messages and brand voice resonates with international markets
3. Build out the safe capability to capture international payments and foreign currencies
4. Control your international shipping costs and reduce the impact of additional fee and taxes
5. Automate your shipping and fulfilment process for all markets
6. Ensure you can track cross-border deliveries
7. Work out your plan and policy for international return shipping



Ready to start shipping internationally?

Get fast and cheap international shipping with end-to-end cross border tracking.

Contact our team today so we can get you shipping!

GET IN TOUCH

