

1. Product and market fit

Before expanding globally, many founders focus on ensuring their product has strong foundations in the home market.

- Our product demonstrates clear product-market fit in our current market
- Customers consistently see value in our product or service
- We have repeatable customer acquisition or sales processes
- Our value proposition would likely resonate with customers in other markets
- We are already receiving interest or enquiries from overseas customers

Notes:

2. Market selection

Choosing the right first international market can significantly influence the success of expansion.

- We have identified potential international markets to explore
- We understand the size and growth potential of those markets
- We have assessed the competitive landscape in each market
- We have considered regulatory or compliance barriers
- We have evaluated cultural and commercial differences that may affect adoption

Notes:

3. Commercial strategy

International expansion often requires adapting your commercial model to local market conditions.

- We understand how customers in the target market typically purchase products like ours
- We have considered how we will enter the market (direct sales, partnerships, distributors, digital channels)
- We have evaluated how pricing may need to adapt for the new market
- We have considered how marketing messages may need to be localised
- We understand how our customer acquisition strategy may differ internationally

Notes:

4. Leadership and team capacity

Expanding internationally requires leadership attention and often new expertise.

- Our leadership team has the capacity to support international expansion
- We have considered whether local expertise will be needed in the target market
- We understand when hiring a local market lead may become necessary
- Our internal processes and systems can support growth across multiple markets

Notes:

5. Operational and legal readiness

Entering a new market introduces operational complexity that founders should plan for in advance.

- We understand the legal requirements for operating in the target market
- We have considered cross-border tax implications
- We understand employment regulations in the market we plan to enter
- We have assessed data protection and regulatory requirements
- We have considered how international payments and currency exposure will be managed

Notes:

6. Financial planning

International expansion typically requires investment and patience while new markets develop.

- We have budgeted for the costs of international expansion
- We understand the potential costs of entering a new market
- We have sufficient financial runway to support early market entry
- We have realistic expectations for how long it may take to gain traction

Notes:

Reflecting on your readiness:

If you were able to confidently check most of the items above, your business may be well positioned to begin exploring international markets.

If several areas require further development, it may be worth strengthening these foundations before committing significant resources to expansion.

International growth is rarely a single event. Many successful companies expand gradually, testing markets, refining their strategy and building confidence as they scale.

