



# Winning cross-border shoppers

A guide to price, trust, and speed

WHAT GLOBAL SHOPPERS **EXPECT**



AND WHAT BRANDS MUST **GET RIGHT**



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# The rise (and complexity) of cross-border ecommerce

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Ecommerce has revolutionised [consumer behaviour](#) by increasing online shopping frequency, and prioritising convenience, personalisation, and speed.

In fact, ecommerce is poised to capture [41% of global retail sales by 2027](#); a huge jump from 18% in 2017.

Cross-border sales are also expected to hit [more than \\$4 trillion by 2027](#), and according to ESW's [Global Voices 2025 report](#), more than 4 in 10 survey respondents placed up to 10 cross-border orders. Another 37% placed between 11 and 50 orders from other countries.

With the global ecommerce environment ever-changing, shoppers are constantly evolving, as are their expectations, which means brands need to work harder to deliver exceptional experiences.

Global factors also have an impact on shopper intent. Geopolitical events combined with rising costs for goods and ser-

vices, along with policy changes such as tariffs, are affecting their behaviour.

While market expansion is a non-negotiable for brands seeking growth, it is a complex undertaking that requires expert help.

## Price, trust and speed

Shopper behaviours and preferences can vary widely depending on the market, and shoppers expect a consistent and personalised experience regardless of location.

As international shoppers increasingly turn to cross-border purchases, opportunity knocks for brands that localise pricing, payments, and customer experience, while ensuring robust security and rapid logistics.

In this guide, you'll discover how to capture a share of cross-border ecommerce, and align your shopper experience to what international customers really value.



Ecommerce is poised to capture 41% of global retail sales by 2027

## THE POWER OF PRICE

# Transparent pricing isn't a nice-to-have—it's essential

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**G**lobal Voices survey respondents consistently ranked price, including taxes and shipping, along with product availability, as the top reasons they look overseas to make a purchase.

51% of shoppers in Brazil will spend more online because they perceive online shopping to be less expensive than in-store shopping, for example.

Purchasing power and market conditions differ depending on the location. When setting prices, it's important to be aware that 45% of shoppers are more

price-conscious this year due to ongoing concerns about the economic climate, with another 54% indicating a desire to save money.

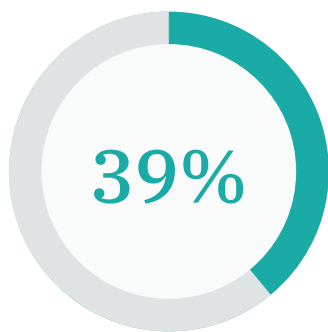
While shoppers in the growing markets of India, China, South Africa, the UAE, and Brazil all say they'll spend more than last year, by contrast, about 4 in 10 shoppers in France, Mexico, and Argentina plan to spend less than usual.

For those shoppers who will spend more this year, 49% will do so because there are more options available online.

## Price specifics

Getting the price right matters, because research shows that 39% of customers will abandon their carts due to unexpected costs at checkout.

ESW helps brands set localised prices that account for all relevant costs, including duties, taxes, and shipping, ensuring transparent pricing and including support for multiple currencies and payment methods.



Abandoned carts due  
to unexpected costs at  
checkout

Considering local payment preferences is important as it helps to increase conversion rates. According to the Global Voices report, 20% of shoppers in Asia-Pacific countries used BNPL compared to 4% in Latin American countries, for example.

Additionally, 4 in 10 shoppers in the Asia-Pacific and European regions used digital wallets last year, compared to 3 in 10 shoppers in North America and Latin America.

## Pricing checklist



Offer pricing in local currencies



Be upfront about all duties and taxes, ensuring you display a pre-calculated, fully-landed price before shoppers reach the checkout.



Offer local payment and security options



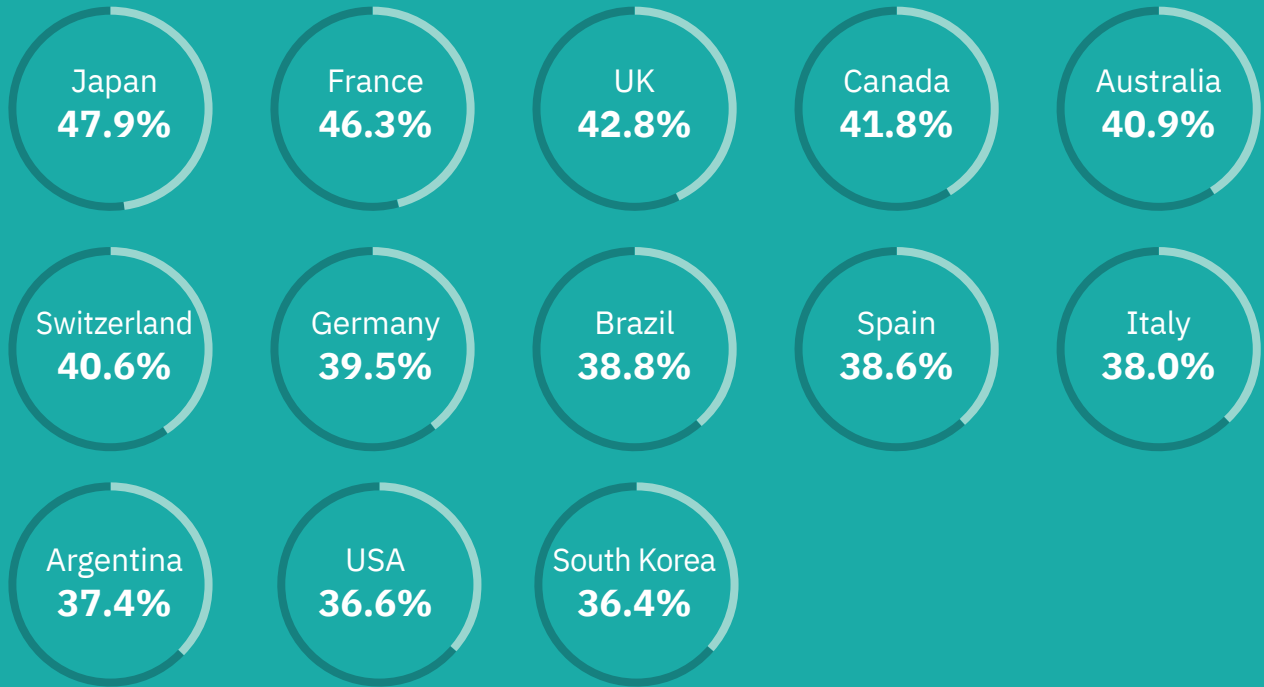
Make sure checkout pages are localised



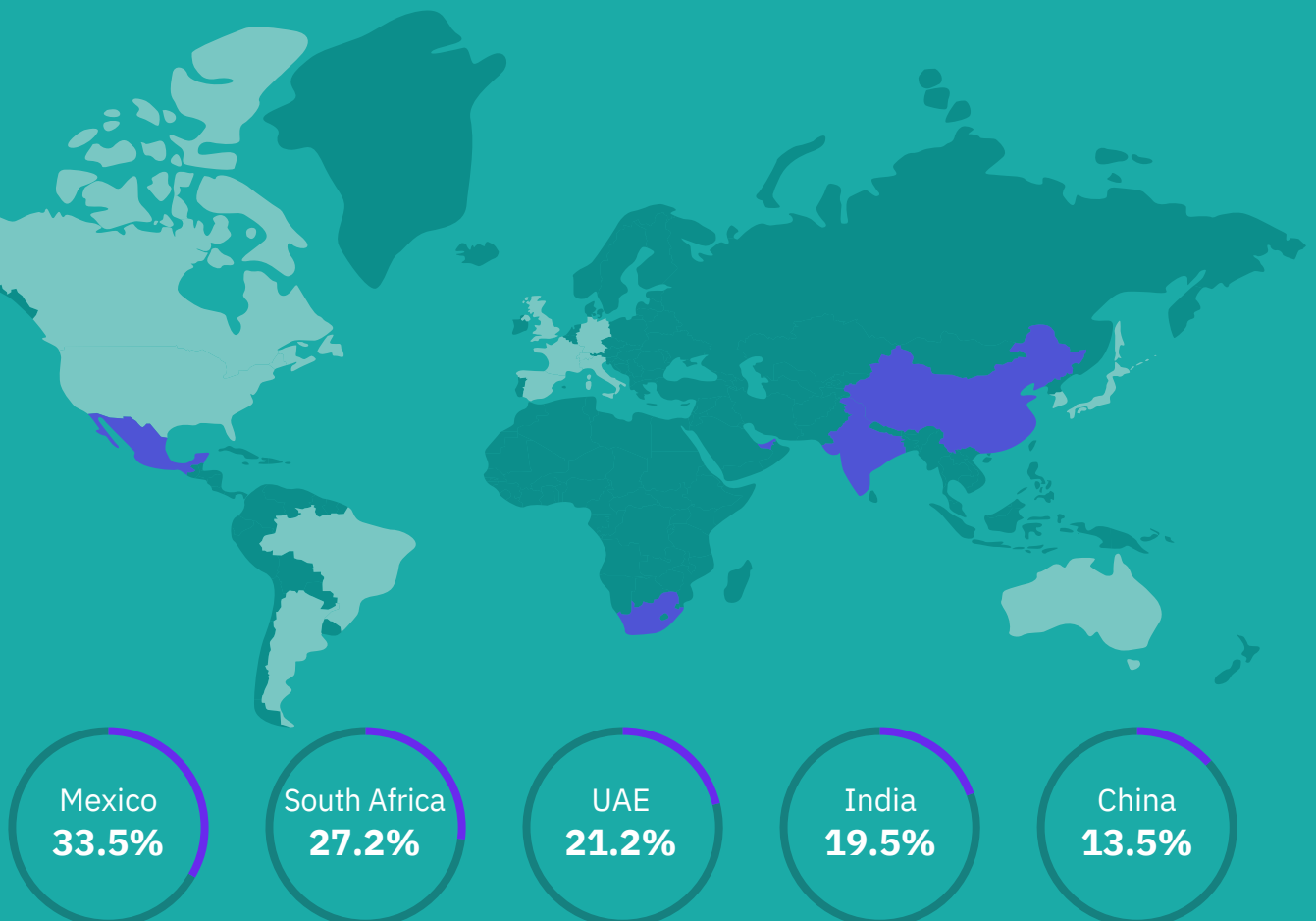
Be mindful of signs that are used for different currencies: U.S., Canadian and Australian may convert differently

## Heat map of price sensitivity by region

Markets where price is  
the most important



Markets where price is  
the less important



1

2

3

## EARNING TRUST

# Trust leads to conversion, and builds loyalty

Shoppers will buy from international brands, with 50% buying from outside their home country, but it is vital to remember that the experience of shopping, delivery and returns should be as close to their experience when buying from a domestic retailer.

The building blocks of shopper trust come from placing a focus on localising your website end-to-end, offering mobile shopping, secure payment options, excellent customer support, and building a strong reputation through transparent policies.

With 42% of global shoppers abandoning a cart due to payment security concerns, building trust by using local payment and security options matters.

### Preferred payments

Globally, credit cards come out on top of the most-preferred payment method for 52%. That's followed by debit cards (45%), digital wallets (41%), cash (25%), BNPL (13%), and crypto trailing at 4%.

Individual markets prefer specific ways to pay, with 20% of shoppers in Asia-Pacific countries using BNPL compared to 4% in Latin American countries. 40% shoppers in the Asia-Pacific and European regions used digital wallets last year, compared with a third of shoppers in North America and Latin America.

## Logistics matter

Shipping and returns are important pillars where you can build shopper trust. Making sure to offer clear and accessible returns policies is crucial for building confidence, as is understanding specific market expectations.

Shoppers in Argentina (33%), Brazil (32%), Mexico (31%) and Spain (24%) are the markets least likely to place an order if there's a charge for returns, for example. By contrast, shoppers in India (79%), China (71%), UAE (71%) and Switzerland (63%) are the most willing to pay for returns.

Returns are costly, but there are ways to mitigate this. Offering local drop-off and return-to-store options can also help to build shoppers' trust, as well as reduce shipping costs. Additionally, ESW offers

managed in-country return hubs, which can help cut return logistics charges.

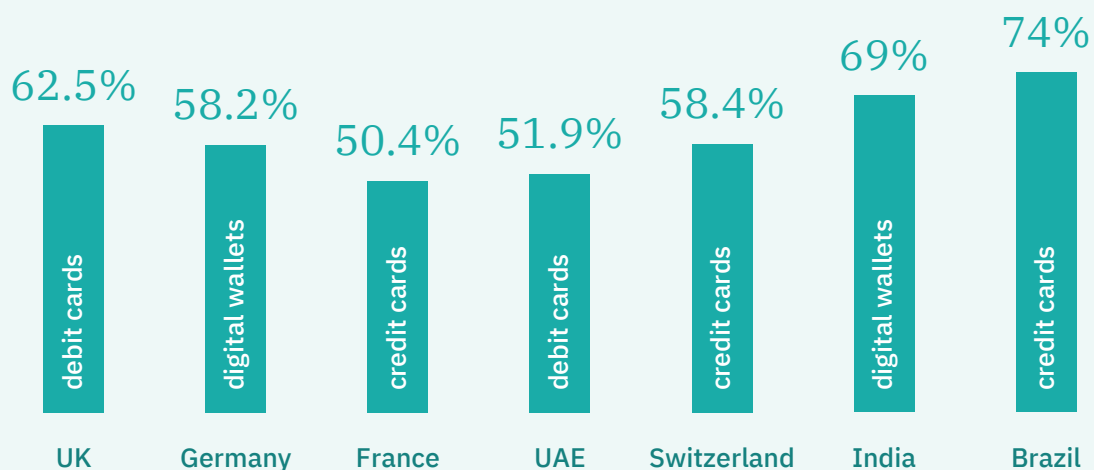
## Security concerns

Six in 10 Global Voices survey respondents in India said they had abandoned their carts due to security concerns. Secure payment gateways are essential, and using the correct payment and security logos relevant to each market helps with shopper recognition and trust.

Countries with the highest cart abandonment rates due to payment security concerns include India (60%), Mexico (52%), UAE (58%), Brazil (48%), South Africa (57%) and Argentina (47%).

To help, implement a multi-layered approach that includes robust authentication, secure payments, data encryption, and regular security audits.

Most popular payment type by country





## SPEED THAT MATCHES EXPECTATIONS

# Is faster always better? What shoppers really expect varies by market

**L**ong delivery times play a major part in cart abandonment. Offering clear, fast shipping options encourages shoppers to complete purchases, and again, this can differ depending on the market. Just 1% of global shoppers will pay for faster shipping, with 47% accepting a trade-off between free shipping and a wait time of 4 to 7 days.

Understand what each market will bear and set policies accordingly. For example, 23% of shoppers in Italy expect packages in three days or less, but 13% of

shoppers in Brazil, Australia and Argentina will wait two weeks or more.

When it comes to returns, your policies should cater to individual markets. Shoppers in Spain and Mexico prefer paying for a subscription service that includes free returns, but 4 in 10 shoppers in Germany and Switzerland prefer a return shipping fee.

India, China, UAE and Switzerland are the markets most willing to pay for returns, whereas Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and Spain are the markets least likely to place an order if there's a charge for returns.

## Return to sender

Processing and shipping returns is an expensive part of the business of ecommerce, but the returns experience helps to build customer loyalty when it's fast and easy.

**Here are three ways to make reverse logistics easier.**

1



Clearly understand local market preferences. Shoppers in India are more willing to accept a return fee, for example.

2



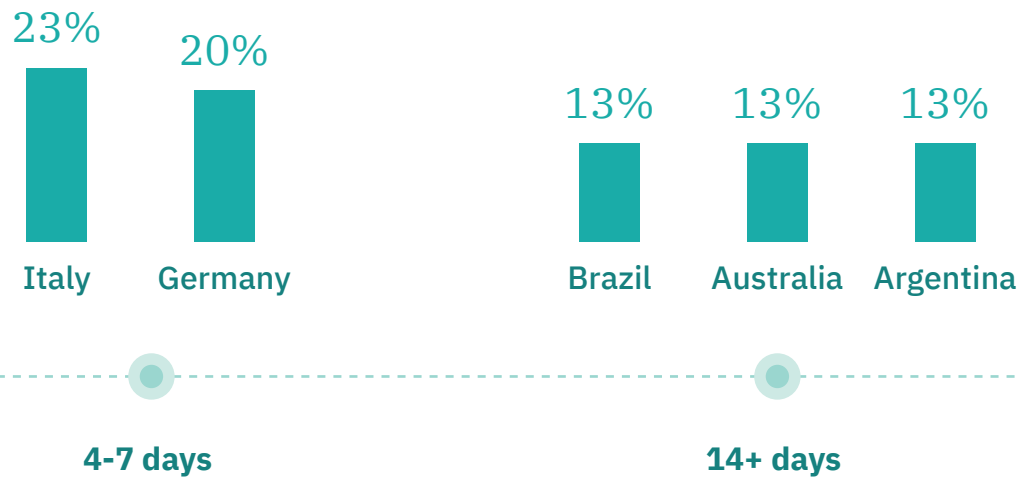
Consider deploying an omnichannel strategy offering drop-off locations, home pickup, mail-in returns with labels, or in-store returns.

3



In-country warehousing streamlines local returns and provides quicker refunds, along with a better customer experience.

## Delivery expectations in 5 key countries



% of shoppers who expect  
returns to be free

% of shoppers who expect  
returns to be fast



# Is your cross-border experience built to win?

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## Print our actionable checklist for global ecommerce success

### **Are your prices fully inclusive of all duties, taxes, and cross-border fees?**

*Ensure customers see the total cost upfront to avoid post-purchase surprises.*

### **Is your payment flow locally optimised and secure?**

*Support popular regional payment methods and currencies, and ensure security standards compliance for maximum trust.*

### **Do your shipping options align with local delivery preferences and timelines?**

*Offer regional options and provide accurate delivery estimates based on each market.*

### **Is your return policy localised and easy to understand?**

*Adapt your policy for local regulations and clearly communicate return costs and process.*

### **Are you displaying localised trust signals?**

*Showcase recognised security and quality badges and certifications, as well as reviews and testimonials specific to the shopper's country.*

### **Are your product pages, checkout, and communications fully localised?**

*Provide seamless language support, localised pricing, and region-specific units such as measurements.*

### **Do you proactively display delivery duties, shipping times, and costs before checkout?**

*This transparency increases conversion and reduces cart abandonment.*

### **Are you offering locally relevant customer support options?**

*Include local phone numbers, chat, or email in multiple languages and time zones.*

### **Are you working with a partner who is an expert in ecommerce localisation?**

*ESW specialises in providing cross-border ecommerce solutions for retailers and brands, offering services such as localised checkout experiences, efficient delivery and returns, and expert support in navigating international regulations and compliance.*



# Worldwide ecommerce, made powerful, made simple

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We offer the right expertise for localised ecommerce expansion. From localised checkouts that boost conversion rates, solutions that simplify complex logistics, duties and taxes, and a dedicated client-partner approach, ESW provides data-driven strategies to ensure profitable growth.



End to end local pricing



Localised languages  
in each market



Offering the right local  
payment methods



Guaranteed duty and  
tax landed costs



Multiple shipping  
options



Easy and transparent  
returns



Merchant of record and  
fraud management



Best practices and local  
market insights

“With ESW’s support, we’ve streamlined our import processes and enhanced our online shopping experience, ESW [is] a key part of our success in reaching more customers around the world.”

**Raffaele Nardo, Chief Digital Officer, DSQUARED2**

“Since the beginning of our global expansion, ESW have functioned as a partner, not just a provider, by sharing and integrating their expertise in global DTC ecommerce.”

**Andrea Ferrazzi, Head of Digital, Damiani Group**

“ESW has been a critical partner in our international growth strategy. Their expertise and end-to-end solutions have allowed us to reach new markets and deliver an exceptional experience for our customers globally.”

**Senior Director, Strategic Initiatives at Athletic apparel, footwear and accessories brand**

Reach out and learn how  
ESW can grow your brand  
around the world.

[growmybrand@esw.com](mailto:growmybrand@esw.com)