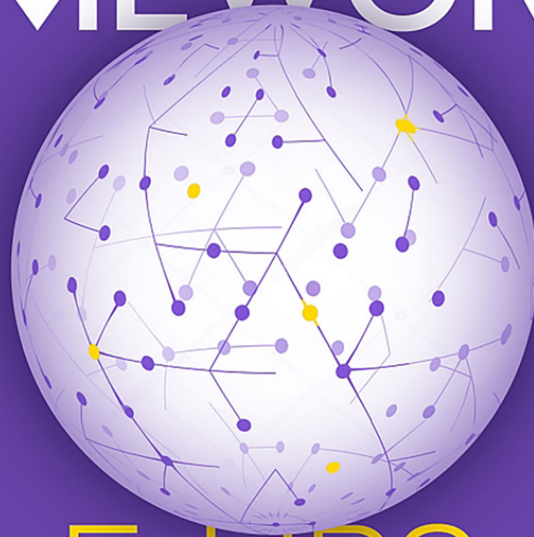


JAN BUIS

GLOBAL  
EXPANSION  
FEASIBILITY  
FRAMEWORK



FOR  
SCALE-UPS

A proven framework for identifying  
the most promising countries  
for international expansion

# Colophon

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For inquiries, please contact JB Telecom & Data at:

[postmaster@jbt.d.nl](mailto:postmaster@jbt.d.nl)

# Preface

By reading this book, you are likely considering a Global Expansion or evaluating your current strategy. Whether you are part of the management team of a Scale-Up or represent a private equity organization aiming to enhance the growth of a client within your portfolio, this book—the first in a series of four—offers valuable insights to guide your expansion efforts.

You will be guided through the process of developing an optimal global expansion strategy tailored to your portfolio. This book aims to help you avoid costly errors, such as pursuing markets that may not provide the initial success you need when expanding abroad. Believe me—these mistakes are common!

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*A well-defined Global Expansion Strategy ensures that opportunities are clearly identified while also highlighting potential pitfalls.*

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I specifically wrote this guide for Scale-Ups—businesses that are entering the phase of revenue growth and expansion beyond their initial customer base. Typically, these businesses have demonstrated product viability, with early customers adopting their offerings. Even though the products may still be under development, expansion into new markets, guided by a clear roadmap, can begin.

That said, certain Start-Ups may need to implement this strategy earlier than expected. Additionally, more mature companies that have faced challenges with their global expansion efforts may benefit from the

insights presented here. Throughout this book, readers will find three case studies that illustrate the achievements possible with the information obtained.

It is highly recommended that you follow the entire framework for Global Expansion, even though it may initially seem overwhelming. Gaining an understanding of the core concepts alone will significantly enhance your strategic direction, rather than relying solely on the more obvious or traditional approaches.

An example will support each stage of the framework to illustrate its practical application. Please note, however, that detailed calculations are not included, as each market is unique and datasets are continuously developing.

If you would like personalized guidance through the process—whether through training, strategy development, or full implementation—please visit [www.jbtd.nl](http://www.jbtd.nl) or contact us at [postmaster@jbtd.nl](mailto:postmaster@jbtd.nl) to request an offer.

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# Global Expansion – Why?

As mentioned in the previous chapter, growing companies, particularly Scale-Ups, often contemplate how they can expand their business to sustain their growth momentum. Before addressing the question of “how,” it is essential to first understand the “why.”

Many people underestimate the challenging task of establishing a presence in any market. Success in the home market does not guarantee the same results in international markets. Therefore, a well-defined expansion strategy is critical to identifying opportunities while also mitigating potential risks.

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*Establishing a presence in any market poses one of the most challenging tasks, which is often underestimated.*

---

There are several compelling reasons for developing a global expansion strategy:

1. **Belief in Portfolio Potential:** A strong conviction that the existing product portfolio can meet demand in new markets.
2. **Leveraging Technology Momentum:** The technology is gaining global attention, prompting strategic discussions.
3. **Stagnation in the Current Market:** Growth has plateaued in the current market, causing the exploration of new opportunities.
4. **New Investment:** Recent capital has been secured to expand market presence and capitalize on growth potential.

5. **Avoiding Decline:** Maintaining the status quo will lead to decline, making the pursuit of new markets critical for sustaining growth.

In essence, there is rarely a wrong reason to expand internationally. However, understanding the “why” behind the expansion is crucial, as it directly influences the “how.”

## The Obvious will become a Pitfall

It is relatively easy for companies to select what they perceive as the “obvious” markets for expansion. This decision is often driven by factors such as a shared language or the sheer size of the market. While these factors are undoubtedly important, they are far from the only considerations. By focusing solely on these elements, companies risk overlooking numerous challenges that are likely to emerge once they enter the market. While companies may achieve initial success, they often encounter barriers to long-term, sustainable growth, which can result in frustration and, in some cases, a decision to withdraw from the market.

Another common pitfall is simply replicating the sales strategy used in the home market. While this existing strategy may serve as a sound foundation for expansion, requiring only minor adjustments, it’s important to remember that each market comes with its own unique challenges. What worked domestically may not directly apply abroad, as entering new markets often involves limited resources and a lack of local customer examples. Each market entry requires its own process of adaptation and refinement to ensure success.

There are many cases where companies enthusiastically entered a new market, only to conclude after a year or two that withdrawing was their

only viable option. Such experiences can leave lasting scars, often leading to reluctance and hesitation when considering future global expansion.

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*A painful market withdrawal can be avoided by taking the extra time to adopt a unique approach to assessing market potential.*

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### Is there a way to avoid the obvious?

Taking a few extra weeks to gain a broader perspective on the potential of each market can yield valuable insights and fresh perspectives. Rather than rushing into the obvious choices and confronting challenges head-on, consider exploring smaller or less apparent opportunities where it may be easier to establish foundational knowledge about conducting business in a new market, country, or territory.

In the next chapter, a framework will be introduced designed to help you draft a strategic roadmap for your globalization expansion. This concept will also highlight areas where it may not make sense to focus your initial efforts.

By applying this approach, there will be a strong indication of short-term success. However, it's important to note that this is not the final Global Expansion strategy—it's a starting point that you will refine by gathering more market-specific insights.

### Case Study 1: Global Operating System Integrator

Who:	A large networking System Integrator based in Germany, serving a global customer base.
Why:	There was a potential risk of losing customers if the

	entire network could not be serviced adequately.
What:	The focus was on understanding the specific network constraints within this market segment.
How:	A subset of the vendor's portfolio was selected to obtain the necessary global certifications, enabling seamless service across various regions.
Results:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The System Integrator forwarded their requirements to their preferred vendor under the consideration that the vendor would be obliged to take the related costs.</li> <li>- The System Integrator supported this investment by outlining a firm forecast and an initial order. This allowed the vendor to take the solution to other Systems Integrators and resellers.</li> <li>- Based on the "why?", the vendor used the Global Expansion Framework to consider which new markets could potentially be entered based on the expected revenue.</li> <li>- Identifying the most attractive markets, local resellers were then signed on.</li> </ul>

# Global Expansion: How?

The “how” of entering new markets comes with its own set of complexities, and there is no universal approach. This underscores the importance of conducting a thorough analysis of your current sales strategy and the rationale behind it when developing a global expansion plan. Recognizing and adapting to these key factors is critical for the success of any market entry initiative.

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*Successful selling in the home market does not guarantee the same results in other markets.*

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By keeping these factors in mind, the creation of a robust and adaptable strategy that effectively addresses the complexities and opportunities of expanding into new markets will not be difficult. The key questions remain:

- In which country should the presence be established first, and which countries should you avoid?
- What makes sense in the short term, and which markets could be addressed later?

To answer these questions, it is essential to evaluate the feasibility of each country in relation to your home market and the available product portfolio.

Within the realm of marketing strategies, there are several frameworks for assessing potential markets and determining the best approach. Over time, researchers and experts have developed and tested many models.

This book introduces one such framework, which is grounded in significant real-life experience and has proven to be closely aligned with market realities. Not that other models are flawed, but to highlight that the approach presented here has yielded practical and reliable results according to the experience of the author of this book.

## Global Expansion = Global Marketing

Before delving into the framework, it's important to recognize that it falls within the academic field of **Global Marketing**. Global Marketing involves the planning, production, positioning, and promotion of products or services across multiple countries and regions.

This discipline requires the development of marketing strategies that account for the cultural, economic, and regulatory differences between international markets, all while striving to maintain a consistent brand identity worldwide.

The outcome of effective Global Marketing often necessitates adapting products, messaging, and marketing campaigns to suit local tastes, cultural nuances, and legal requirements—a process commonly referred to as localization. Hence, localization involves much more than simple translation; it encompasses the full customization of offerings to align with the unique characteristics of each market.

After defining the Global Expansion strategy, localization becomes a logical next step. The upcoming book, "Global Expansion: Remote Marketing for Scale-Ups," will explore the topic of localization further.

## CPA-CAGE-PMA Framework

You probably have a military or tech-driven background if you feel at ease using acronyms. The Global Expansion Framework outlined in this book follows the same principle, and thus the abbreviation is appropriate.

The Global Expansion Framework comprises three distinct layers:

1. **Potential (CPA)**
2. **Attractiveness (CAGE)**
3. **Feasibility (PMA)**

These layers represent the process to be followed, from assessing market potential to evaluating its attractiveness relative to the home market, and finally determining the feasibility of your portfolio within that market.

The first step, **Country Potential Analysis (CPA)**, evaluates the high-level potential of each target market. This is a relatively straightforward phase, closely aligned with the “obvious” factors mentioned in the previous chapter.

The second phase, attractiveness, is often overlooked or misunderstood. This phase is crucial for determining how attractive a specific market truly is. Just because a market is large doesn't necessarily mean it's easy to penetrate. Understanding and examining the **Cultural, Administrative, Geographical, and Economic (CAGE)** factors is crucial in determining the true attractiveness of a market.

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*The attractiveness of each country, determined by the CAGE analysis, will set priorities within the Global Expansion strategy.*

---

The last phase examines whether it is feasible to enter a market successfully. Which focuses on whether the portfolio is viable for the

chosen market. This phase includes elements that are standard tasks for Product Marketing managers. While the **Product Market Analysis (PMA)** might not seem particularly challenging, it demands a high degree of honesty about the portfolio's capabilities to ensure an accurate feasibility assessment.

## Case Study 2: Rest-of-the-World Strategy

Who:	A European-based equipment manufacturer specializing in the development of internet access Customer Premises Equipment (CPE).
Why:	The company regularly received product requests from regions outside of its standard operating area.
What:	To avoid spending excessive time assessing the viability of each request individually, the company sought a more efficient approach.
How:	The <b>CPA-CAGE-PMA Framework</b> was employed to analyze the feasibility of entering each country.
Results:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The analysis included nearly every country, considering the current region as the primary sales domain rather than focusing solely on the country where the company's headquarters is based.</li> <li>- Three categories of countries were established. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>High potential for success</b></li> <li>o <b>Not feasible to serve</b></li> <li>o <b>Dependent on the size of the opportunity</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>- Countries that were not feasible to serve could be filtered out easily, and a polite, explanatory</li> </ul>



(automatic) response was provided.

- Countries that fell into the “dependent on opportunity size” category were further assessed, with some potentially moving into one of the other two categories based on additional analysis.

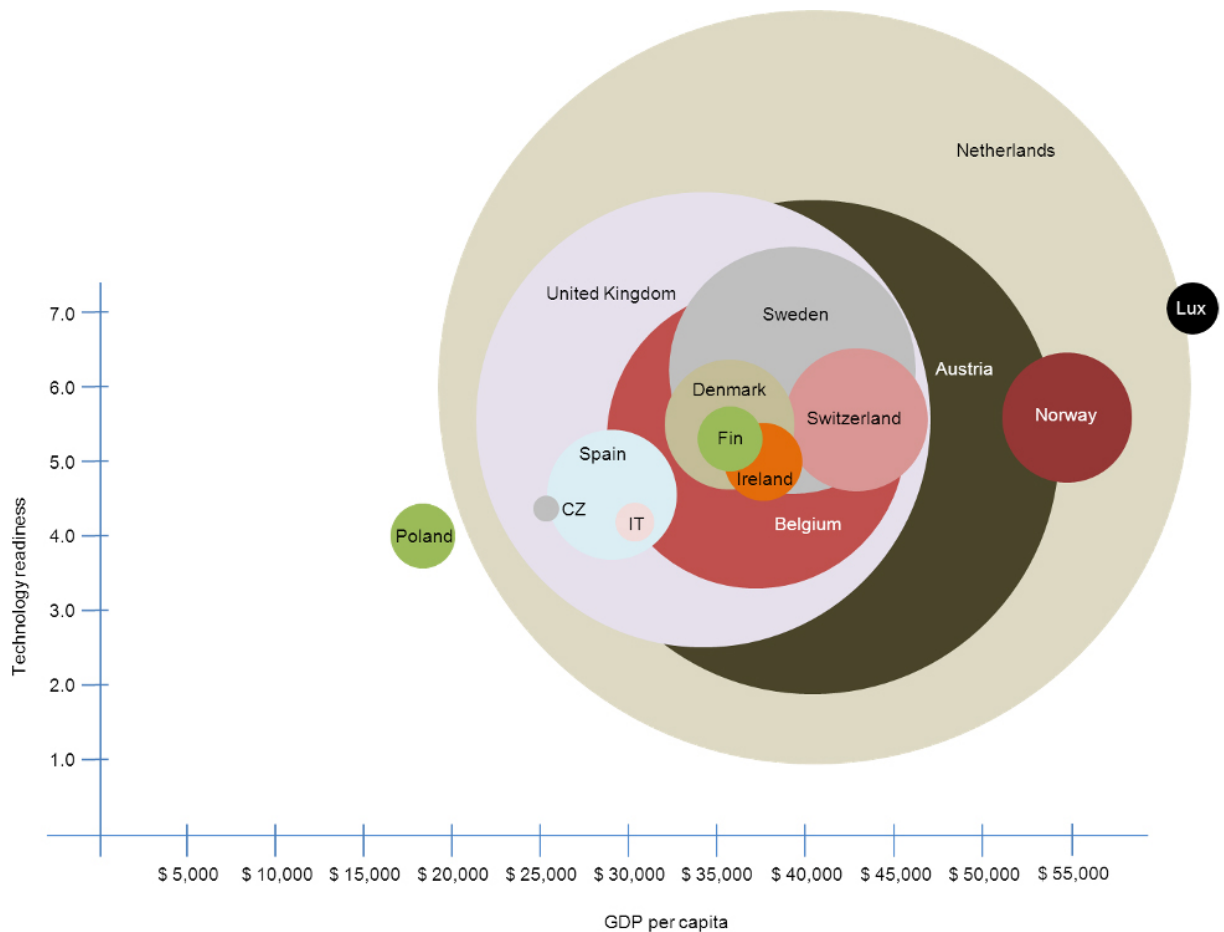


Figure 6: Full CPA-CAGE-PMA analysis result (example)

It's also worth considering the bundling of certain countries to enhance feasibility. For instance, in Europe, there are regional groupings like Benelux (Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg), ACH (Austria and Switzerland—often part of the DACH region with Germany), or the Nordics (Scandinavian countries). While these regions are not single markets, companies often treat them as unified sales regions during the early phases of expansion. However, it's important to be cautious, as each country within these regions has its own unique characteristics.

Figure 7 provides a global perspective from another study, emphasizing the importance of bundling regions. This approach helps assess whether the collective attractiveness of a region can compensate for the lower

attractiveness of individual countries within that region. In this analysis, Germany continues to serve as the reference point.

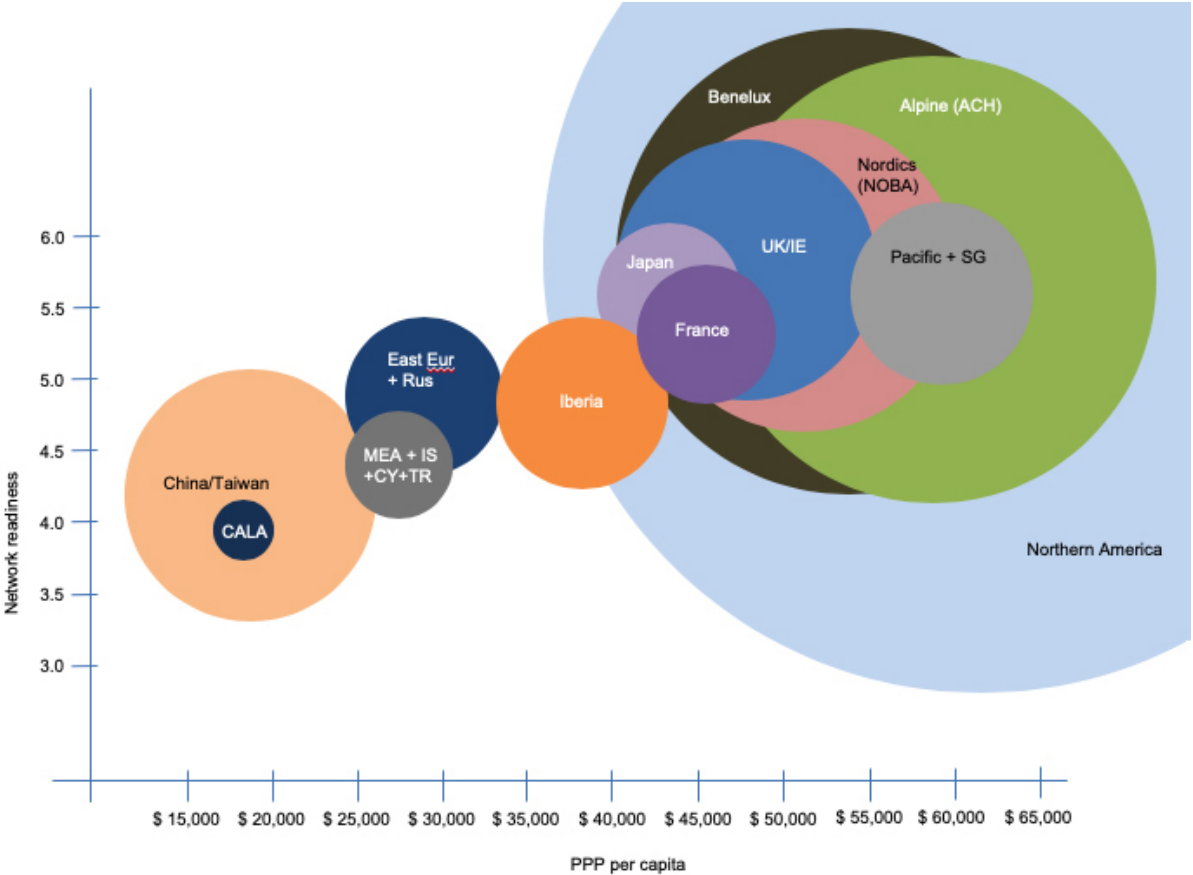


Figure 7: Alternative global representation of the framework outcome per region

Besides the expected regions within Europe, it is refreshing to note that regions such as the Pacific are more feasible for expansion than a neighboring country like France. Furthermore, Japan has emerged as a strong candidate for global expansion.

While the assessment provides valuable insights into where global expansion could be successful in both the short and long term, the final decision should also consider key elements, such as remote sales strategies, remote marketing efforts, and integrating remote teams.

# References and Further Reading

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This book, titled “Global Expansion Framework for Scale-Ups”, is the first in a series of four. It is the essential first step in developing a successful global expansion strategy.

For Scale-Ups, in particular, with limited budgets, taking the wrong approach in global expansion efforts can be far more costly than anticipated. Missteps not only result in financial losses but can also leave lasting scars and foster negative sentiments toward future expansion efforts.

With the limited time available to Scale-Up management teams and their investors in mind, this book—and the entire series—is based on real-life, practical knowledge. It encourages stakeholders to invest a little more time and resources upfront to ensure that both the company and its leadership are better prepared for the journey of becoming a global player.

By 2025, the **Global Expansion** series aims to complete and will prioritize additional key topics such as **Route-to-Market options**, **Remote Presence**, and **Remote Visibility**—all specifically tailored to the needs of technology-driven Scale-Ups.

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JB Telecom & Data is an independent boutique management consultancy firm with a focus on supporting innovative technology start/scale-up’s developing their global Route-to-Market strategies.

Jan Buis, founder of JB Telecom & Data, brings over 20 years of experience in global expansion. He has consistently demonstrated his talent at growing business and sales operations by swiftly implementing essential structures and processes, all while considering the cultural context. His expertise enables him to establish connections quickly with



a diverse range of stakeholders, resulting in successful outcomes in various markets.

Jan's career path has led him through a diverse array of organizations, ranging from large public-listed corporates and mid-sized companies to start-ups. He worked in several technology sectors with global operations, primarily in Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

He was privileged to be educated at several levels: In 2012, Jan attained Dual Executive Master of Business Administration (MBA) with a focus on "International Master's in Management" at Purdue University Daniels School of Business in West-Lafayette (IN), United States of America and at the TIAS School of Business and Society based in Tilburg, the Netherlands. Prior to that, from 1994 to 1997, he attended the Eindhoven University of Technology, earning a MSc in International Technical Development Science. The undergraduate studies took place from 1990 to 1994 at Windesheim in Zwolle, earning a BEng. in Industrial Management.