

**Grow.**

# Coming to America

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The Definitive Guide for International  
B2B Tech companies to grow and  
**succeed in the US marketplace.**



# It may be a double standard...

but while international customers are often comfortable with US technology vendors, prospects in the US are not accustomed to buying from non-US companies. B2B technology vendors eyeing the world's largest single market can be successful if they address these key factors when **Coming to America**.

Here are

**11** rules  
to  
follow

to succeed in the US

# 1

## Don't just test the market – **Commit.**

Move your best person - such as the smartest executive, best story teller, or most impactful product leader - to the US, even if on a temporary assignment. Maybe the CEO needs to be here as well. This sends a signal internally and to the market of how serious you are about being successful in the US.



# 2

## Sell Direct First.

Nobody else can sell your product  
**until you know how to sell it yourself.**

In many countries the indirect sale comes first, with local partners providing a channel for large technology vendors. In the US, the direct sale is much more common. Often, companies assume they can find a US channel partner, reseller or integrator to do the heavy lifting for them by developing a repeatable sales process and compelling messaging.

Until you have a successful recipe for how to find and close deals, you've got to work it yourself with an internal team that is completely dedicated to your - and nobody else's - mission.



# 3

## Americans buy '**Merican.**

**Right or wrong, it's a fact.** American B2B customers are accustomed to dealing with US based sales and pre-sales support, with teams who are accessible and understand the local market. You need a US team to support sales. "Flying in" expertise sends a strong message that you are not serious enough to support a US customer. Sales, support and technical sales need to be a part of the core US team. Legal, PR & Marketing can be outsourced to US companies who specialize in these functional areas, as long as they are US based.

# 4

## Don't use the **Queen's English.**

Nothing gives away the fact that your technology, support, and product features are oriented to a non-US market faster than marketing materials and documentation written in British English.

**Do yourself a favor** (*not a favour*) and use US specific language and terminology.



**THIS:**

FAVOR

COLOR

RECOGNIZE

ANALYZE

TRAVELING

DEFENSE

CATALOG

**NOT THAT:**

FAVOUR

COLOUR

RECOGNISE

ANALYSE

TRAVELLING

DEFENCE


CATALOGUE





# 5

## The golf course sale Is Dead.



Americans buy products. They need a credible product, a roadmap and technology substance. It is true that “people buy from people”, and trusted relationships are important. But prospects are accountable to others in their tech purchasing decisions - it can't be just about the relationship.

The old notion of closing a deal with a handshake on the golf course, without first presenting a credible product that solves a real business problem, **is a thing of the past.**

# 6

## No Pain, **No Gain.**

This applies everywhere, not just in the US, but many hopeful technology companies still haven't figured it out. Prospects will engage when you **identify a specific business problem - a pain** - of concern and have a credible solution. Features and vague benefits - "save money" - will not generate initial interest. Some prospects have very specific pains that are feature oriented, such as a Chief Digital Officer with a mission to introduce a user interface feature. But more often, the driver will be a business issue.

Later in the sales cycle, product features will become important in edging out competition, **but you won't get in the door until you connect with the customer pain.**

# 7

## Stories Sell.



The best way to communicate your value and understanding of the market is to **tell stories of successes with other customers**. Stories show your unique knowledge and help establish your place with the target customer community. They bring business benefits and successes to life. Of course it's a chicken and egg situation, where **you can't have success stories without first getting customers**.

But you can describe international successes, just don't give location details until you are already in a meaningful customer dialog, and by then the conversation is already moving.



8

**Don't fish for whales**  
from a Rowboat.



In many countries, establishing wins with the largest global names is essential. In the US, there are so many mid-sized companies that you don't necessarily require the biggest names in order to have a successful launch. In fact the size mis-match between a growing international tech firm and a US based giant may be enough to swamp the company. The worst outcome is to chase the prospect for months or years, devoting resources, and only achieve a small trial in a bureaucratic evaluation process.

**So don't go after the big logos first.** Better to get credible logo wins and success stories under your belt because there are plenty of mid-sized companies to win.



# 9

## Inside Sales Works.

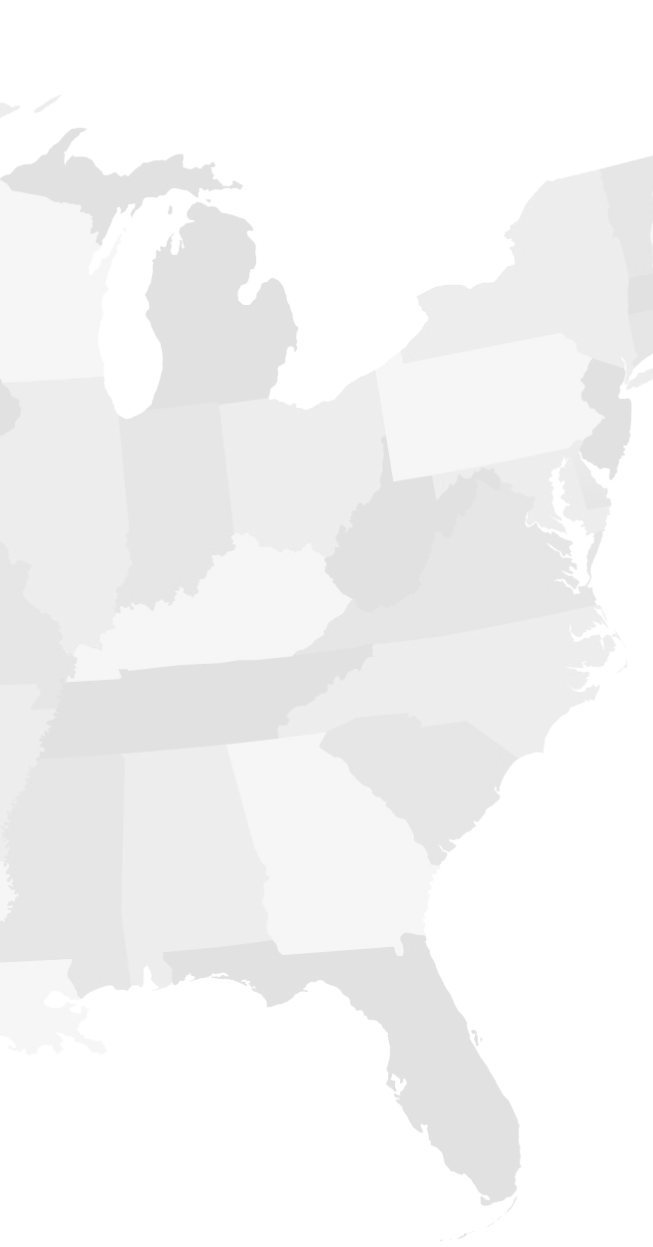
In the US, inside sales and marketing techniques are generally more effective than they are internationally. One reason is that you can still do email marketing, since GDPR and opt-in restrictions are not nearly as restrictive and are more favorable to business. Services that provide high quality contact information, with phone numbers and email addresses for direct one-to-one prospecting are far more available in the US than anywhere else.

A centralized inside sales, SDR, and automated marketing effort is the **preferred method of attacking the market.**



# 10

The US is a  
**Big Place.**



# There are 4 time zones and at least **4 different cultures.**

Even with a centralized marketing and inside sales effort, you will need some direct presence spread around the country. New Yorkers won't warm up to a California sales or technical rep flying in and vice versa. Put people in the hot markets - **east, west & middle**. For a headquarters, some of the hottest locations are centrally located - think Denver and Austin - with great flight and time zone coverage to both coasts. As you might have seen in the news, it's not such a "united" states.

Last but not least...

# 11 Don't be afraid of **Co-opetition.**

Look for partnerships - US companies have a lot of casual partners with loose technology alliances, even if they may compete in some areas. International companies with US technology partnerships will appear to be more integrated into the US market.

Local sales relationships will help open doors. Especially between smaller technology companies, basic marketing partnerships are easily established and don't carry much impact or restrictions on paper. Then with active cooperation in the field you can wring out real value.

The background of the entire page is a dark, grayscale image of the Statue of Liberty. The statue is shown from the waist up, holding the torch in her right hand and the tablet in her left. The crown with its spikes is clearly visible. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the contours of the statue against a dark background.

# Grow.

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