

A TELEVERDE SOLUTION GUIDE



MINDING THE GAP:

Best Practices for European B2B Companies
Marketing into the U.S.





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1. Introduction: Balancing Centralization vs. Localization

European companies are increasingly looking to reach U.S. markets. According to a 2015 report by the Economist Intelligence Unit, “a desire to open new markets and gain market share drives corporate expansions abroad...especially as sluggish growth in domestic markets has encouraged many European companies to seek stronger returns overseas.”

Top 5 reasons businesses in Europe are expanding internationally



Source: Economist Intelligence Unit

But how do European B2B companies looking to expand into the U.S. sell to customers in new locations, new time zones, perhaps new languages, with new habits and customs? This Solution Guide shares best practices for European B2B companies marketing in the U.S. The theme is “minding the gap” – understanding the cultural, practical, and legal differences between markets, and how to overcome them through smart localization of key marketing activities.

Actionable takeaways – you’ll learn:

- The cultural, practical, and/or legal differences that make a localization component essential to your success in the U.S. market
- How to determine what marketing and sales activities are centralized and what marketing and sales activities are localized
- How (and why) best practice European B2B marketers localize:
 - Buyer personas and buyer journey maps
 - Content
 - Data intelligence and segmentation
 - Teleservices and Inside Sales

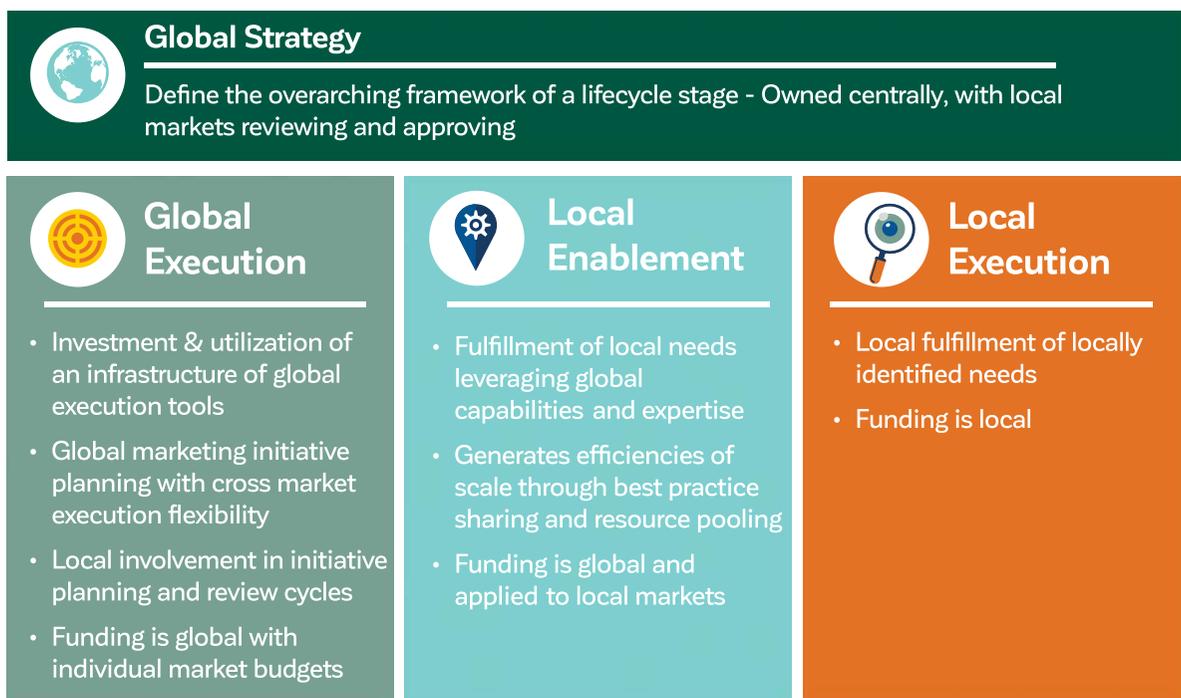
1.1. What's Centralized and What's Localized

Best practice European B2B marketers understand that centralized v. localized is not a black/white, either/or decision. Some marketing activities are best kept centrally in Europe and some are best localized for the U.S. market.

The rationale behind keeping some marketing activities centralized is two-fold. First, to ensure global brand and message consistency in order to deliver a consistent customer experience throughout the lifecycle. Second, to maintain cost efficiency, leverage centralized marketing technology, and minimize duplication of efforts from one locale to another.

The rationale for localizing other marketing activities is to ensure a connection with your local buying audience. A local buyer needs to feel understood, which can depend on cultural affinity. A timely, locally-relevant response is critical, as is adherence to local data collection and privacy laws.

What's global and what's local



This Solution Guide shares how best practice European B2B marketers localize their programs when marketing into the U.S. For general resources of marketing best practices, check out available resources at televerde.com/resources.

2. Best Practice: Localizing Buyer Personas and Buyer Journey Maps

B2B deals are done people to people, not on a digital-only path. Business relationships are based on trust. And trust is based, at least in part, on a sense of mutual understanding. Does the buyer feel understood? Does he feel like the salesperson "gets" what's important to him?

When it comes to feeling understood, cultural differences can be barriers. For example, where brand reputation may be a key decision-making factor for European buyers, return on investment (ROI) is a much more important factor in the U.S. ("Show me the money" as it's said.)

Buying processes are different in the U.S. than in Europe. U.S. buyers are often more direct than European buyers, so best practice European B2B marketers customize the flow of engagement in their buyer journey maps; they might have fewer engagements overall, or simply spend less time engaging with the prospect before making the offer.

You don't know what you don't know when it comes to buyer personas and buyer journey mapping if you haven't previously sold your product or service into the U.S. market. Consider these results from the SiriusDecisions 2015 Buying Study:

- Content decisions – In the U.S., buyers rate sales presentations and analysts reports as equally impactful in the sales process. In Europe, buyers rated analyst reports as much more impactful.
- Influenced interactions – In the U.S., buyers reported attending an industry conference as the interaction that was most impactful on the decision making process. In EMEA, it was a conversation with a buyer-sourced customer reference.
- Orchestrated interactions – In the U.S., buyers reported dialogue with a sales representative as by far the most impactful on the decision-making process. In EMEA, buyers reported dialogue with a vendor customer service representative as being the most impactful.
- Impact of interaction with a sales representative:
 - In the U.S., 45% of buyers in the education phase reported that meeting with a sales rep very positively impacted their decision making; in EMEA, 36% of buyers did.
 - In the U.S., 42% of buyers in the solution phase reported that meeting with a sales rep very positively impacted their decision making; in EMEA, 31% of buyers did.
 - In the U.S., 46% of buyers in the selection phase reported that meeting with a sales rep very positively impacted their decision making; in EMEA, 38% of buyers did.

One factor that could significantly change buyer journey maps in the U.S. is brand awareness. If a company has a strong brand presence in Europe, but not in the U.S., its marketers will need to spend more time upfront educating buyers about the company and why they should consider it to meet their needs.

2.1. How Best Practice European B2B Marketers Localize Buyer Personas and Buyer Journey Maps

B2B buyers and the buying process in Europe is different than B2B buyers and the buying process in the U.S. Best practice European B2B marketers localize their European buyer personas and buyer journeys to reflect their U.S. buyers. After all, developing buyer personas and mapping their journeys is about getting to know the buyers in order to market to them in ways that make them feel understood. “Getting to know” the buyers means understanding how they make decisions – what motivates them, what key factors they consider, who else is involved in the process, what information they are looking for and where they go to get it.

Inbound Marketing vs. Interruption Marketing

What do all of the most effective marketing activities have in common? They only work if you know who you’re speaking to and how to speak to them.



*Moz diagram by Rand Fishkin



Typically, best practice European B2B marketers don't start from scratch when localizing buyer personas and journey maps to reflect U.S. buyers for U.S. marketing. They start with their European buyer personas and journey maps. Then, they create a U.S. online listening post; actively engage with people online; and compile persona research and buyer survey insights through targeted calling and online surveys.

One of the best ways to "get to know" B2B buyers in the U.S. is through market research. Best practice European B2B marketers work with a U.S.-based teleservices partner to take their existing buyer personas and journey maps and use them to develop a script for research calls into likely buyer prospects. For example:

- If the European buyer persona says that a fundamental challenge is a lack of internal capability and resourcing, one of the research questions might be "Do you struggle with internal capability and resourcing challenges?"
- If the European buyer journey map shows that buyers begin their education by downloading an analyst report but you've heard that sales presentations are well received in the U.S, then a research question might be "When you begin looking for a new solution, how important is a vendor sales presentation or an analyst report."
- Best practice marketers also include a question to assess brand awareness.

Once best practice European B2B marketers have tested their European buyer personas and journey maps against actual U.S. prospects, they customize their personas and journey maps accordingly. Next, they apply a local pivot to their European strategy framework. So in the end they have a broad global strategy that is localized to each market based on that market's buyer personas and journeys.



3. Best practice: Localizing Content

As buyer personas and buyer journeys are localized, the content designed to speak to them needs to be localized as well. But as in every case, there's a balance to be struck. Localization of content is important for accuracy, nimbleness, and relevancy; but centralization is important for cost-efficiency, consistency, and control. How the balance gets struck ultimately comes down to the question, "What needs to be globally templated, localized or created to market our product or service most effectively in the U.S. market?"

3.1. Centralized Content Strategy and Assets

Best practice European B2B marketers typically keep centralized:

- **Branding and messaging** – to ensure the consistency of the global brand
- **Distribution tools** (for example, marketing automation technology, database management, process management, and CRM)
- **Metrics** – to ensure consistent reporting and measurement across all locales
- **Development resources** (for example, templates for the most common content assets, and access to a central team of creative developers)

3.2. Localizing the Content Strategy

The first step to localizing content for the U.S. market is to take the centralized or global content strategy and customize it to fit localized buyer personas and buyer journeys, and to integrate local market insights. Elements of a centralized strategy that best practice European B2B marketers localize include:

- **Value Proposition** – to align global brand messaging with local buyer personas and local competitive environment
- **Timing and frequency** – to align with the local buyer's journey
- **Distribution channels** – to account for local industry preferred channels and local influencers
- **Customer references** – to align case studies, testimonials, proof points, and other references to customers that local buyers find familiar
- **Asset types** – to account for differences in preferred communication formats

Determine the degree of cultural and linguistic variation from the source material required to be effective in each market. What business needs and external influences affect the decisions of key buyer personas, such as the presence of local competitors that offer a fully localized experience? How different are the industry watering holes frequented by personas in each market?

– SiriusDecisions

3.3. Localizing the Content Assets

Once you've localized your content strategy, you'll need to conduct a content audit across all touch points in the buyer journey. Determine what content assets exist which can be customized to fit the U.S. market, and what new content assets need to be created. For content assets that already exist and fit with the localized content strategy, best practice European B2B marketers localize:

- **Language** – including translating colloquialisms and translating statistics or other measurements (for example, the U.S. doesn't use the metric system)
- **Customer references** – to ensure that customers who are quoted or otherwise referenced are familiar to local buyers
- **Calls to action**
- **Offers**
- **Images** – including landmarks (the Eiffel Tower doesn't resonate in the U.S. the same way it might in Europe)
- **Legal requirements**—which may need to be localized not only to the country, but possibly to a particular state.

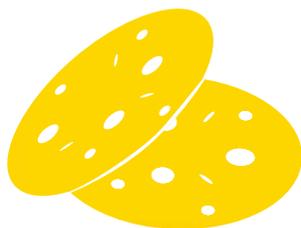
Almost everywhere in the world,
this is a football:



In the U.S., this is:



In the U.S., this is a cookie...



... and this is a biscuit

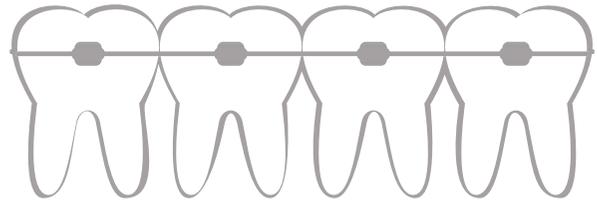




In the U.S., these are not braces...



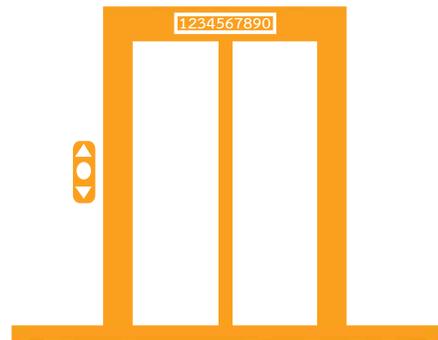
these are



This is a lift...



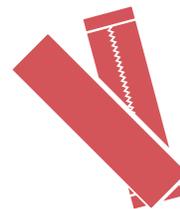
... and this is an elevator



In the U.S., this is glue



this is gum



The risks of getting lost in translation between Europe and the U.S. are perhaps more subtle than the risks companies have encountered moving into Asian markets. Most people in the U.S. understand that what the world calls football they call soccer. But B2B marketing depends on rapport, and rapport only grows when the buyer feels an affinity with the seller. That means, when best practice European B2B marketers sell into the U.S., football becomes soccer and biscuits become cookies.

4. Best Practice: Localizing Data Intelligence and Segmentation

Since U.S. data collection and privacy laws are quite different than in most European countries, it's important to localize data intelligence and segmentation. Beyond the regulations, the abundance of data sources in the U.S. enables robust segmentation, targeting, and personalization that might be difficult to obtain in other countries.

There is more to data intelligence and segmentation than buying a list online. Effective data intelligence requires familiarity with the local market. At Televerde, for example, we have over 5 million conversations with B2B buyers every year, and we use the insight we get from those conversations to update and complement a broad database compiled from industry leading sources.

Good data is an essential prerequisite to an effective campaign. Because even the best data deteriorates over time, cleansing and appending any data you already have is an important part of the data intelligence and segmentation process.

The value of data extends beyond lead development and inside sales. Even when a company is first entering the U.S. market, data can provide insight into what products/services to bring to market and how to position them.

Because effective data strategy goes beyond getting a good list, best practice European B2B marketers follow U.S. best data practices when they're marketing into the U.S. Broadly, that means a six-step process:



4.1. Localized Data Sourcing and Aggregation

Data sourcing and aggregation is the integration of information about the people (including social data), information about the company (for example D&B Data, Hoovers, fiscal year, installed tools data, procurement requirements, org developments, etc.), and market insight – to reveal the right approach and touch for each buyer or groups of buyers.

Data strategy goes way beyond “a good list”



4.2. Localized Insights and Targeting

Data is just information if it's not made actionable with insight. Best practice marketers develop insights in three areas:

- **Behavioral** – buying behaviors are the considerations and actions contacts exhibit when they are in the process of deciding what to buy and from who to buy. Many of these inputs are taken from buyer's online behavior or “digital body language”.
- **Demographic** – characteristics such as industry, level of authority, needs, certifications and education, group memberships, and job role or responsibility.
- **Psychographic** – lifestyle and other factors such as values, beliefs and preferences. How do buyers like to be contacted? What sales style or approach gets them to react? How do they react to FUD (fear, uncertainty and doubt) tactics?

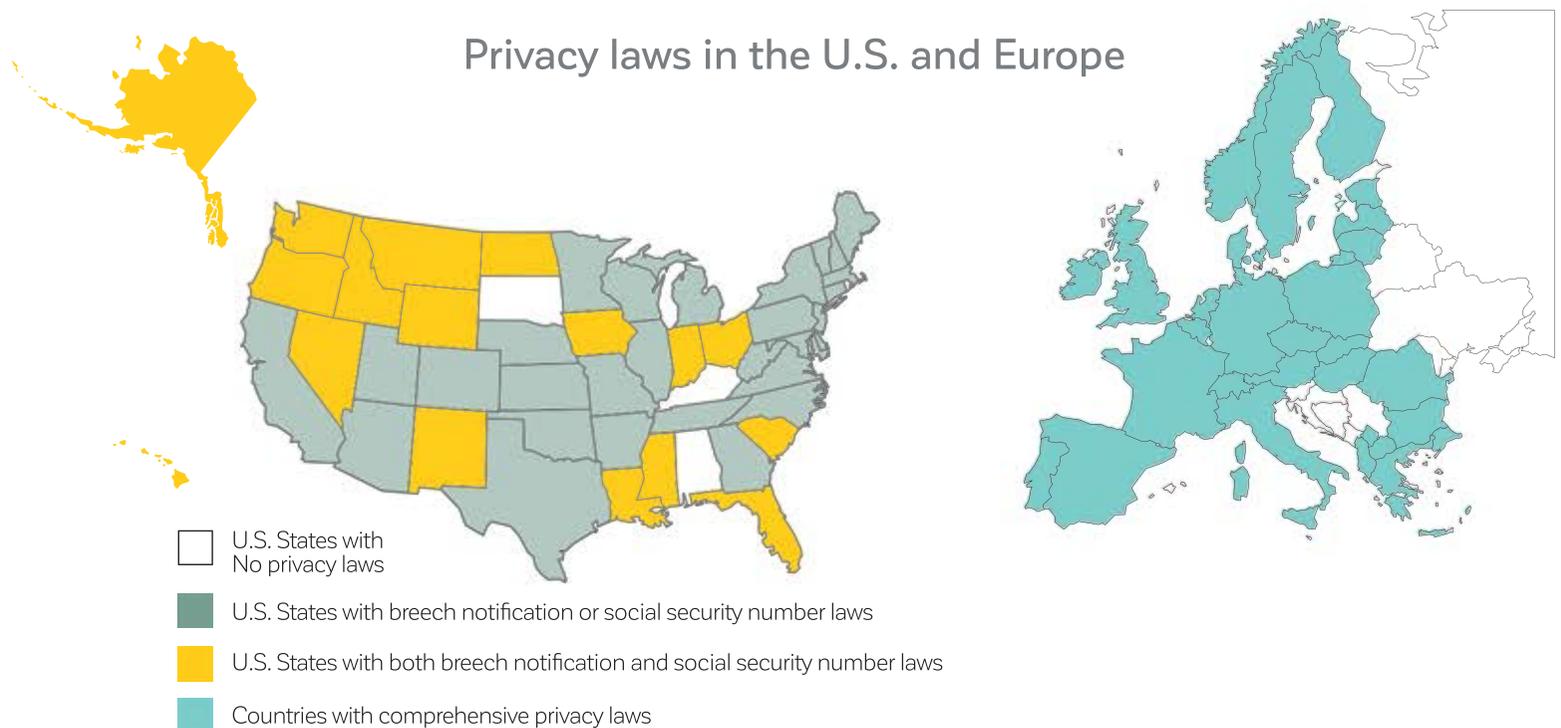
4.3. Localized Strategy and Planning – Segmentation

Best practice European B2B marketers take the strategic segmentation developed centrally and localize it to ensure target segments are measurable, accessible, and profitable.

- **Measurability:** the degree to which segment size (e.g. number of organizations) and purchasing power (e.g. budget) can be assessed
- **Accessibility:** the degree to which intended target segments can be reached efficiently through unique communications and distribution strategies
- **Profitability:** the degree to which identified target segments are large enough or have sufficient sales and profit potential to warrant unique marketing programs

4.4. Localized Execution

The actual execution of localized campaigns can be done by an in-market team or a centralized shared resources team. Those campaigns must be developed - and executed - accounting for local data collection, content relevance, and privacy regulations. In general, laws regarding digital marketing, including email, are less strict in the U.S. than in Europe. The same is broadly true for telemarketing (marketing calls to businesses). Many European companies have more communications freedom - and more contact opportunities - in the U.S. market than in their home markets.



Source: Behunin & Associates, P.C.

4.5. Localized Measurement and Benchmarking

Broadly, the measurement of marketing activities should be centralized to ensure consistent reporting and measurement across all locales. Here are a few U.S. data benchmarks that best practice European B2B marketers keep in mind:

- 95% postal mail deliverability rate using local post office standards
- No more than 15% of emails should hard bounce
- 95% of records should have a valid business activity code and valid number of employees
- Valid contact names – 0 invalid strings or descriptions
- 70% of named contacts should be selectable by function

4.6. Localized Data Quality Control

Typically, 5-7% of the contact records in a U.S. marketer’s database go bad every month. Without on-going contact data maintenance and appending, that bad data becomes very costly. In an example calculated by Sirius Decisions, reducing a B2B marketers’ bad data rate from 25% to 10% resulted in:

- A 25% rise in inquiry-to-marketing qualified lead (MQL) conversions
- A 12.5% rise in MQL-to-sales accepted lead (SAL) conversions
- A 66% increase in revenue

Data degradation is inevitable. Common reasons data goes bad include a lack of control over inbound lead forms; inaccurate data entry by CRM users; and the fact that people and companies change situations. Data quality control isn’t so much about preventing data degradation as it is about knowing what data is degraded and cleaning it up. That requires a partner with best-in-class local data intelligence resources.

Data quality health check – because bad data can cost you

Summary

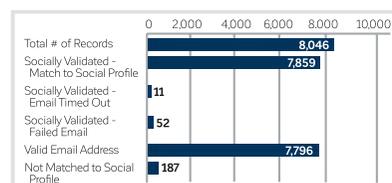
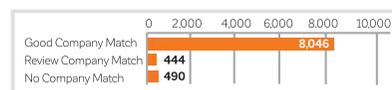
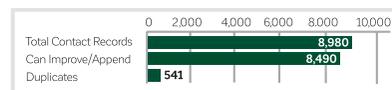
Total Contact Records	8,980	100.0%
Can Improve/Append	8,490	94.5%
Duplicates	541	6.0%

Company Data Quality

Good Company Match	8,046	89.6%
Review Company Match	444	4.9%
No Company Match	490	5.5%

Social Validation Quality

Total Number of Records	8,046	100.0%
Socially Validated - Match to Social Profile	7,859	97.7%
Socially Validated - Email Timed Out	11	0.1%
Socially Validated - Failed Email	52	0.6%
Valid Email Address	7,796	96.9%
Not Matched to Social Profile	187	2.3%



5. Best Practice: Localizing Teleservices

With all the growth in digital marketing channels, it's easy for marketers to get buried in activity and overlook the importance of the human touch in the buying cycle. New research confirms the importance of human interaction throughout the buying cycle. SiriusDecisions has found that 67% of the buyer's journey is now done digitally. But the research firm clearly explains "The 67% statistic in no way says that no one talks to a salesperson before getting halfway through the buying cycle, but this is how some have interpreted it. Just because buyers spend time online doesn't mean sales is not involved at all stages of the buyer's journey, including the early and late stages."

"Digital marketing is part of the journey, but isn't THE journey. People buy from people and conversations are critical throughout the buying cycle."

– Ray Kemper, CMO, Televerde

In B2B selling in the U.S., people buy from people. Even though a buyer's journey begins online, actual self-service is rare. It takes an integrated human touch throughout the process to win the prospect's business. Indeed, a lot of deals are won on subtlety – e.g., understanding people's behaviors and their needs. It's very much about the relationship; all else equal, people buy from people they like.

One of the easiest ways to infuse the human touch in the buying process is teleservices. But in teleservices, perhaps more than any other activity, localization is essential. Why? Cultural affinity and responsiveness.

5.1. Cultural affinity

Cultural affinity helps the buyer to feel like he can connect with the person on the other end of the phone. Cultural affinity is also an important determinant of a sales person's ability to get around the buyer's gatekeeper – also essential for the success of teleservices.

Cultural affinity means:

- A common understanding of social etiquette, colloquialisms, and customs.
- A local accent. Even if the European sales team speaks English, if the accent is different, the buyer may not feel a cultural affinity.
- A familiar style or approach. In contrast to the more passive European sales approach, in the U.S. buyers expect communication to be direct. "If you're selling something, sell it to me."

5.2. Responsiveness

5 minutes. That's how long marketers have to respond when a buyer reaches out online.

"The odds of making a successful contact with a lead are 100 times greater when a contact attempt occurs within 5 minutes, compared to 30 minutes after the lead was submitted. Similarly, the odds of the lead entering the sales process, or becoming qualified, are 21 times greater when contacted within 5 minutes versus 30 minutes after the lead was submitted." That's according to the Lead Response Management Study conducted by MIT business professor James Oldroyd.

Best practice European B2B marketers recognize that it's hard to respond within 5-30 minutes to a prospect in a time zone that's 6-9 hours behind GMT. Even beyond the effectiveness of quick response, U.S. buyers expect communication to be on their timetable. So telesales agents have to be available during the hours when buyers are doing business.

"The human channel is the most expensive – and the most potentially effective – channel. Use it well."

– Forrester analyst
Lori Wizdo



For more information on how modern marketers ensure data is clean, accurate and complete, check out available resources at [Televerde.com/resources](https://www.televerde.com/resources)

6. Executive Summary

When marketing into the U.S., best practice European B2B marketers localize:

- **Buyer personas and buyer journey maps** – With their European buyer personas and journey maps as a starting point, best practice marketers: create a U.S. online listening post; actively engage with people online; and compile call research and survey insights. Then, they adjust and build their personas and journey maps accordingly.
- **Content strategy** – Best practice marketers take the centralized or global content strategy and localize buyer personas, buyer journeys and market insights.
- **Content assets** – With their localized strategy in hand, best practice marketers conduct a content audit across all touch points in the buyer journey, to determine what existing content assets can be leveraged to fit the U.S. market, and what content assets need to be newly created.
- **Data sourcing and aggregation** – Best practice marketers gather and integrate information about the people (including social data), information about the company (including D&B data), and market insight to reveal the right touch point for each buyer.
- **Insights and targeting** – Best practice marketers make data actionable with behavioral, demographic and psychographic information.
- **Accounting for local data collection and privacy regulations** – The execution of localized campaigns can be done by a local team or a centralized shared resources team. But those campaigns must be developed – and executed – accounting for local data collection and privacy regulations.
- **Teleservices and Inside Sales** – Best practice marketers understand the importance of the human touch in the marketing and sales process, and know that human touch works best when there's cultural affinity and quick responsiveness (within 30 minutes) to buyers' inquiries.

6.1. How Televerde Can Help

Televerde can be your strategic partner and U.S. localized marketing team by working with you for: buyer persona development, buyer journey mapping, content strategy, content asset development, data intelligence, segmentation and world-class teleservices.

Televerde advantages:

- We've been in the U.S. market for over 20 years – that's a lot of human connections (there are 150 million B2B buyers in our database)
- We've had the experience to show what works and what doesn't. We've generated more than \$6.5 billion in sales pipeline for our clients
- Our understanding and expertise in the human factors combined with access to data and processes can allow a company with limited visibility or understanding of the U.S. market to successfully meet their selling goals
- With a dedicated Client Services Manager, you'll get feedback on what's working, and what's not; we partner with you to continuously improve and meet your goals
- Leveraging our knowledge and experience in the marketplace, we can very quickly bring your brand into the U.S. market and help position it appropriately, shorten your sales cycle, accelerate sales and support your revenue growth

Whether Televerde or someone else, having a local partner to help you mind the gap as you market into the U.S. can save you a lot of headache, lost time, and wasted dollars. To see how we can help you, ring us at **888-787-2829** or visit **televerde.com**.