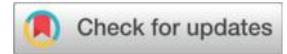




Research on the Optimization of International Marketing Strategies of Foreign Trade Enterprises under the Background of Cross-border E-commerce



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Abstract

Cross-border e-commerce (CBEC) has reshaped how foreign trade enterprises access overseas demand, lowering entry barriers while intensifying competition and compliance pressure. Using secondary data and multi-case evidence from public filings and official statistics, this paper analyzes how CBEC changes the logic of international marketing strategy—from market selection and product localization to channel portfolio design and promotion efficiency. At the macro level, global business e-commerce sales were estimated to rise to nearly US\$27 trillion in 2022, while digitally ordered exports were estimated at about US\$2.5 trillion in 2021, indicating CBEC's growing relevance to international trade. In China, CBEC import–export value reached RMB 2.63 trillion in 2024 (+10.8% YoY), confirming CBEC as a key driver of trade resilience. Case evidence shows that brand-oriented sellers (e.g., Anker Innovations) enhance profitability via product matrices, localization, and diversified channels; platform-driven models (e.g., Temu) highlight traffic acquisition and price competitiveness but also expose regulatory and margin risks. Meanwhile, policy shifts—such as the EU's planned €3 customs duty on low-value parcels from July 1, 2026 and the U.S. move to end de minimis duty-free treatment—raise the strategic value of localized fulfillment, compliance-by-design, and market diversification. Building on these insights, the paper proposes a concise optimization framework for foreign trade enterprises to upgrade international marketing under CBEC: “target-market precision + localized value proposition + channel mix + profit-and-compliance control.”

Keywords: cross-border e-commerce; foreign trade enterprises; international marketing strategy; localization; channel portfolio

1. Introduction

In recent years, cross-border e-commerce (CBEC) has become one of the most dynamic forces reshaping global trade patterns and international market competition. Unlike traditional foreign trade models that rely heavily on intermediaries, bulk orders, and offline distribution networks, CBEC enables enterprises to directly reach overseas consumers through digital platforms. This transformation has fundamentally altered the logic of international marketing. Foreign trade enterprises are no longer merely exporters of products; instead, they are required to operate as integrated market players who must simultaneously engage in brand construction, digital promotion, consumer insight analysis, cross-border logistics coordination, and regulatory compliance management.

Under this new environment, the competitive landscape has become increasingly complex. On the one hand, CBEC significantly lowers the threshold for international market entry, allowing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to access global consumers with relatively limited resources. On the other hand, it also intensifies competition by increasing market transparency and accelerating price comparison. As a result, traditional advantages such as low labor costs or manufacturing capacity are no longer sufficient to ensure sustainable competitiveness. Enterprises must shift from a product-oriented export mindset to a market-oriented and consumer-centered strategic approach.

From a macro perspective, the scale of CBEC continues to expand rapidly. In 2024, China's cross-border e-commerce import-export volume reached RMB 2.63 trillion, representing a year-on-year growth of 10.8%. This growth not only reflects the strong vitality of digital trade but also indicates that CBEC has become an important stabilizer and growth engine for foreign trade. At the policy level, governments have actively introduced supportive measures such as pilot zones, tax facilitation, and logistics infrastructure development, further reinforcing the strategic importance of CBEC in

national economic development.

Table 1. Macro Evidence of Cross-Border E-commerce Development

Indicator	Value	Year	Source
Global business e-commerce sales	~US\$27 trillion	2022	UNCTAD (2024)
Digitally ordered exports worldwide	~US\$2.5 trillion	2021	IMF et al. (2023)
China CBEC import–export value	RMB 2.63 trillion (+10.8% YoY)	2024	Xinhua (2025)
Shenzhen Amazon sellers	~100,000 sellers	Recent years	Reuters (2025)
Shenzhen sellers’ annual sales	~US\$35.3 billion	Recent years	Reuters (2025)

However, despite the favorable environment, many foreign trade enterprises still face significant challenges in practice. Common problems include weak overseas market research capabilities, homogeneous product positioning, excessive reliance on single platforms, inefficient advertising investment, and insufficient awareness of international compliance risks. Moreover, recent changes in the global environment—such as rising logistics costs, tightening platform rules, and stricter customs and tax regulations in major markets—have further increased uncertainty and operational pressure. These realities raise an urgent practical question: how can foreign trade enterprises systematically optimize their international marketing strategies under the CBEC background in order to achieve sustainable growth rather than short-term traffic-driven expansion?

Based on this context, this paper focuses on the optimization of international marketing strategies for foreign trade enterprises under the CBEC environment. By integrating perspectives from international trade theory and marketing management, and by drawing on real data and representative cases, the study aims to explore feasible strategic paths that can enhance market adaptability, brand competitiveness, and long-term performance.

2. Research Design and Data Sources

This study adopts a qualitative research design that combines secondary-data analysis with a multi-case approach to ensure both academic rigor and practical relevance. Such a design is particularly suitable for cross-border e-commerce (CBEC) research, where market structures, platform rules, and regulatory environments evolve rapidly and where survey-based data may suffer from response bias or limited reliability. Qualitative designs based on documentary evidence and real cases are widely recognized as appropriate for strategy-oriented business research when the objective is theory-informed explanation rather than statistical generalization (Saunders et al., 2023). Moreover, recent international reports emphasize that CBEC and digital trade are structurally reshaping global commerce, which requires context-sensitive and institution-aware analytical approaches rather than purely quantitative modeling (IMF et al., 2023; UNCTAD, 2024).

All data used in this study are drawn from public, authoritative, and traceable sources. At the macro level, global CBEC and digital trade trends are informed by UNCTAD reports, which document the growth of business e-commerce sales and the increasing role of online platforms in international trade (UNCTAD, 2024). Conceptual definitions and measurement frameworks for digitally ordered and digitally delivered trade follow the *Handbook on Measuring Digital Trade (Second Edition)* jointly issued by the IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, and WTO (IMF et al., 2023). China's CBEC development scale and policy background are based on official releases and media briefings citing data from the General Administration of Customs (e.g., the 2024 CBEC import–export volume reported by Xinhua/GACC, 2024). At the firm and platform level, case evidence relies on publicly disclosed corporate documents, including Anker Innovations' annual and interim reports, PDD Holdings' earnings releases, and Alibaba's segment disclosures for its International Digital Commerce Group. In addition, this study incorporates recent policy signals from major destination markets—such as the EU decision to introduce a fixed customs duty on low-value parcels and the U.S. move to end de minimis treatment—based on official communications and reputable international news reporting (Council of the European Union, 2025; Reuters, 2025).

The credibility of the research is strengthened through multi-source triangulation, combining international organization reports, national official statistics, audited corporate disclosures, and policy documents. This approach reduces dependence on any single data source and enhances analytical robustness, which is widely regarded as a key criterion for rigor in qualitative business research (Saunders et al., 2023). By grounding the analysis in verifiable real-world evidence rather than constructed datasets, the study improves both its methodological transparency and the practical validity of its conclusions, ensuring that the proposed strategy framework reflects observable dynamics in contemporary CBEC practice rather than abstract theorization.

3. Theoretical Basis and Research Framework

3.1 Theoretical Basis: Integrating International Trade and Marketing Perspectives

Cross-border e-commerce (CBEC) is not only a change in transaction channels but also a structural shift in how foreign trade enterprises enter international markets, allocate resources, and compete. From an international trade and strategic management perspective, CBEC reshapes transaction costs and operational boundaries: while it reduces search, communication, and intermediary costs, it increases compliance, returns management, and platform governance costs. At the same time, institutional differences across countries (customs, taxation, consumer protection, and data rules) directly constrain market choice and operational design, making compliance a strategic factor rather than a purely administrative issue. In addition, sustainable competitiveness increasingly depends on firm-specific resources and dynamic capabilities—such as data-driven decision-making, rapid product iteration, localized operations, and cross-border supply-chain coordination—because market conditions, logistics costs, and platform traffic mechanisms can change rapidly.

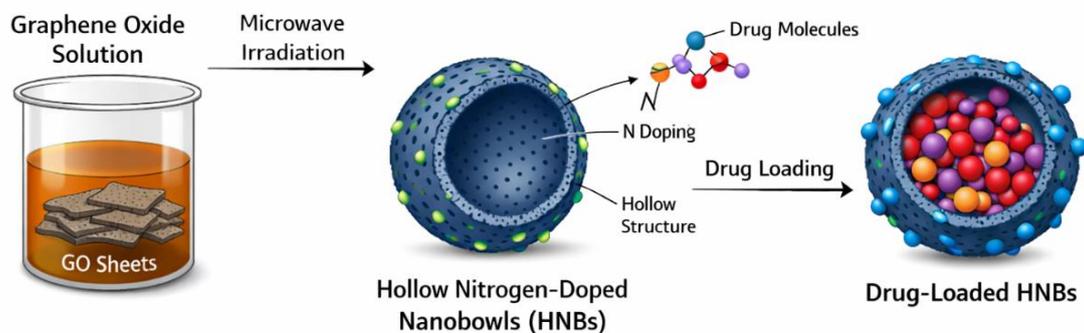
From a marketing management perspective, CBEC strengthens the consumer-facing nature of international marketing and amplifies the importance of strategic clarity and execution efficiency. Data-rich platform environments allow more refined segmentation and targeting, but also accelerate imitation and intensify price transparency. Therefore, effective international marketing under CBEC requires not only STP (segmentation–targeting–positioning) optimization, but also coordinated

marketing mix decisions across product, price, channel, and promotion. In highly competitive overseas markets, customer relationship management, service quality, ratings, and repeat purchases become critical drivers of long-term performance, meaning that branding and customer operations should be viewed as core strategic investments rather than optional enhancements.

3.2 Research Framework

Building on the above theoretical insights, this study proposes a concise analytical framework that links external conditions, strategic choices, capability support, and performance outcomes. Specifically, the CBEC external environment—including platform rules, competition intensity, logistics constraints, and regulatory pressure—shapes the feasibility and cost structure of cross-border operations. Enterprises respond by optimizing international marketing strategies, mainly through target market selection, localized positioning, and the design of marketing mix and channel portfolios. However, strategy effectiveness depends heavily on capability support, particularly digital marketing and data analytics capability, localization capability, fulfillment and returns capability, customer operations capability, and compliance governance capability. The interaction between strategy and capability ultimately determines performance, reflected in sales growth, conversion efficiency, profitability stability, brand reputation signals (ratings and repurchase), and risk outcomes such as disputes and compliance incidents.

Figure 1. Analytical Framework of CBEC Strategy Optimization



3.3 Research Propositions

To guide subsequent analysis and ensure that the framework is operationalizable, this study advances three integrated propositions. First, enterprises are more likely to achieve sustainable outcomes when target market selection is based on the “fit” between demand potential and cross-border constraints (such as compliance requirements, logistics feasibility, and competitive intensity), rather than relying only on short-term traffic opportunities. Second, localized value propositions—combining product adaptation, localized content communication, and service standards—tend to improve conversion and customer retention, forming the basis for brand differentiation under platform competition. Third, the performance impact of strategy optimization is strengthened when supported by key operational capabilities, especially data-driven marketing, efficient fulfillment/returns systems, and compliance-by-design governance. These propositions provide a structured lens for later chapters to compare cases and synthesize strategy optimization pathways under changing policy and cost conditions.

4. Case Evidence

This section uses four publicly traceable cases to illustrate how CBEC reshapes international marketing strategy in real operations. The cases cover (i) a brand-oriented seller (Anker), (ii) a representative SME cluster facing cost and policy shocks (Shenzhen Amazon sellers), (iii) a traffic- and subsidy-intensive platform model (PDD/Temu), and (iv) a scalable cross-border ecosystem (Alibaba AIDC). Together, they reveal a consistent message: under CBEC, “marketing strategy” must be understood as an integrated system linking positioning, channels, fulfillment, and compliance—rather than isolated tactics such as listing optimization or ad spending.

Table 2. Comparison of Representative CBEC Cases

Case	Type	Key Evidence	Strategic Implication
Anker Innovations	Brand-oriented seller	Revenue RMB 24.71 bn (2024); Net profit RMB 2.11 bn	Brand + product matrix supports sustainable margins

Case	Type	Key Evidence	Strategic Implication
Shenzhen Amazon sellers	SME cluster	Tariff shock → price increases, ad cuts, market shift	Single-market dependence creates vulnerability
PDD / Temu	Platform traffic model	Marketing spend ≈ 28% of revenue (Q3 2025)	Traffic-first growth increases cost dependency
Alibaba AIDC	Platform ecosystem	Revenue RMB 33.6 bn (+22% YoY)	Ecosystem supports localization & scaling

4.1 Case A — Anker Innovations

Anker’s disclosed results indicate strong growth and a clear shift from traditional “export sales” to “brand-based international marketing.” For the full year 2024, Anker reported revenue of RMB 24,710.08 million (YoY +41.14%) and net income of RMB 2,114.43 million (YoY +30.93%). Its 2024 semi-annual disclosure also reported RMB 9.648 billion revenue (YoY +36.55%) and net profit attributable to shareholders of RMB 872 million (YoY +6.36%). These figures suggest that the firm’s growth is not merely volume expansion but is supported by an ability to maintain profitability during scaling.

From a marketing-strategy perspective, Anker’s approach can be summarized as “brand portfolio + category matrix,” which allows cross-selling, differentiated positioning, and a clearer premium rationale. Instead of competing solely on price, a product-matrix strategy enables the firm to bundle consumer value around scenarios (e.g., charging convenience, home/portable energy use, audio-visual experience), which strengthens perceived value and reduces pure price comparability. While this paper does not infer non-disclosed operational details, the financial outcomes are consistent with a marketing logic that emphasizes brand assets, product differentiation, and systematic category management rather than one-off “best-seller” dependence.

A second implication is risk resilience through diversified category and channel exposure. When external shocks occur (tariffs, logistics volatility, platform policy shifts), a firm that operates multiple categories and markets can rebalance product mix and geographic focus, which reduces

the fragility commonly seen in single-product/single-platform growth. In CBEC, this resilience is itself a strategic asset because “market accessibility” is increasingly shaped by policy and compliance dynamics rather than demand alone.

4.2 Case B — Shenzhen Amazon Seller Cluster

A Reuters report highlights the operational reality faced by CBEC-oriented SMEs. It notes that Shenzhen alone hosts around 100,000 Amazon sellers, generating an estimated US\$35.3 billion annually. Under sharp tariff shocks and rising uncertainty, interviewed sellers reported intentions to raise prices (up to ~30%), reduce advertising spend, and in some cases exit the U.S. market or shift investment toward other regions such as Europe, Mexico, and Canada.

For SMEs, this case shows that international marketing under CBEC is inseparable from policy risk management and market portfolio management. When the landed cost structure changes suddenly, “promotion optimization” alone cannot protect margins; firms must adjust market focus, revise pricing architecture, and redesign fulfillment and inventory policies. The implication is practical: SMEs should avoid strategy designs that assume stable rules and stable logistics, and instead build a minimal capability for multi-market option evaluation (e.g., regulatory barrier screening, logistics feasibility assessment, and competitive intensity analysis) to prevent being forced into reactive decision-making.

This case also clarifies that “traffic efficiency” is not purely a marketing-operations issue; it becomes a survival variable when margins compress. SMEs that rely on paid traffic without brand pull are more likely to cut ad spend under shocks, which can trigger a vicious cycle of declining visibility, lower conversion, and further margin deterioration.

4.3 Case C — PDD/Temu

PDD’s Q3 2025 unaudited results show total revenues of RMB 108,276.5 million, while sales and

marketing expenses were RMB 30,322.9 million. Based on these disclosed figures, sales and marketing spending is approximately 28.0% of quarterly revenue ($30,322.9 / 108,276.5$). This ratio is consistent with a traffic-first growth model where customer acquisition and platform activity are supported by substantial marketing investment.

The strategic lesson for foreign trade enterprises is not that “high marketing spend is wrong,” but that a traffic-first model creates a structural trade-off: it can accelerate demand capture in the short run, yet it increases dependence on continued spending and can pressure seller margins if the ecosystem shifts costs downstream through ad auctions, service fees, or price competition. Therefore, for enterprises operating within such environments, the key is to avoid being locked into a single lever (“low price + heavy ads”) and to build compensating assets such as differentiated products, stable ratings/reviews, and repeat-purchase mechanisms that reduce marginal acquisition cost over time.

This trade-off becomes sharper when compliance and customs rules tighten, because cost increases at the border undermine low-price positioning. The firm-level implication is clear: if an enterprise competes mainly on price supported by paid traffic, policy tightening can quickly erode competitiveness; a more sustainable approach is to combine performance marketing with localization, fulfillment reliability, and brand trust-building.

4.4 Case D — Alibaba AIDC

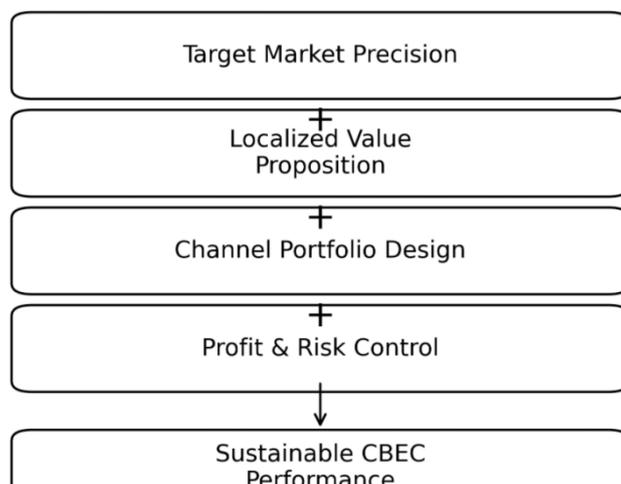
Alibaba’s disclosure for the quarter ended March 31 (released May 15, 2025) reports that Alibaba International Digital Commerce Group (AIDC) delivered 22% YoY revenue growth to RMB 33,579 million, driven primarily by cross-border commerce, while continuing to improve operational and investment efficiency and narrowing losses. In its FY2025 annual report, Alibaba further states that operating efficiency improved and it remained confident in achieving a profitable quarter for international commerce in the coming fiscal year, alongside efforts to enhance local supply and diversify offerings in key markets.

This case highlights the role of ecosystem capability in CBEC marketing outcomes. In large platform ecosystems, sellers benefit when they can operationalize localization (assortment, content, service standards), connect efficiently with fulfillment solutions, and comply with multi-market requirements at scale. The competitive advantage is not merely “listing and selling,” but the ability to translate platform infrastructure into consistent delivery performance and customer experience. In practical terms, platform ecosystems reward enterprises that treat marketing as an end-to-end system—linking front-end demand generation with mid-end supply and logistics coordination and back-end governance for returns and compliance.

5. A Simple and Practical Optimization Framework for Foreign Trade Enterprises

Based on the above empirical evidence and theoretical analysis, this study proposes a concise but operational optimization framework for international marketing strategies of foreign trade enterprises under the CBEC context. The framework consists of four interrelated modules: target market selection, localized value proposition, channel portfolio design, and profit–risk control. These elements jointly reflect the shift from fragmented tactical adjustments to systematic strategic coordination, which has been widely emphasized in recent CBEC and digital trade research (UNCTAD, 2021; OECD, 2020).

Figure 2. A simple four-module optimization framework for international marketing under CBEC



5.1 Target-Market Precision: From “Single-Country Betting” to Portfolio Thinking

Traditional export-oriented firms often prioritize one or two large markets and allocate most resources accordingly. However, recent studies suggest that over-reliance on a single market significantly increases vulnerability to policy changes, logistics disruptions, and demand shocks in cross-border environments (WTO, 2020; UNCTAD, 2022). Therefore, this paper advocates a market portfolio approach.

Specifically, enterprises can structure their international market layout into three layers: mature high-value markets (such as the EU and the United States), high-growth emerging markets (such as the Middle East and Latin America), and geographically or culturally proximate regional markets. This diversified structure enables firms to balance revenue stability with growth potential while reducing systemic risk exposure.

Market selection should not be driven solely by traffic potential but by a realistic assessment of cross-border feasibility. Practical decision criteria include whether the product has a clear certification pathway, whether return rates and after-sales costs are manageable, and whether logistics channels are sufficiently stable. Recent research highlights that alignment between market opportunity and operational feasibility is a key determinant of sustainable CBEC performance (OECD, 2020; UNCTAD, 2023).

5.2 Localized Value Proposition: Integrating Product, Content, and Compliance

CBEC intensifies consumer choice and price transparency, which means that pure price competition is increasingly difficult to sustain. As a result, scholars emphasize the growing importance of localization and differentiated value propositions in digital internationalization (Kano et al., 2020; UNCTAD, 2021). Localization is not limited to language translation but involves systematic adaptation across multiple dimensions.

At the product level, localization includes adapting specifications, plug types, labeling, packaging, usage scenarios, and warranty terms to match local consumer expectations and regulatory requirements. At the communication level, localized content (product descriptions, images, customer service scripts, and brand storytelling) significantly improves consumer trust and conversion rates in online environments (OECD, 2020). At the institutional level, compliance-by-design is increasingly recognized as a strategic necessity. Integrating certification requirements, customs documentation, and consumer protection standards into product development and marketing processes can reduce listing interruptions, customs delays, and reputational risk under tightening regulatory scrutiny (UNCTAD, 2022; World Bank, 2020).

Therefore, localization should be understood as a coordinated system of product design, marketing communication, and governance alignment, rather than as an isolated tactical adjustment.

5.3 Channel Portfolio: Combining Marketplace Efficiency with DTC Control

Another key trend identified in recent CBEC research is the increasing strategic importance of multi-channel coordination. Large platforms such as Amazon, AliExpress, and Lazada provide strong demand discovery mechanisms and standardized transaction environments, which help enterprises achieve rapid international market entry. However, excessive dependence on a single platform can lead to high exposure to rule changes, algorithm adjustments, and rising advertising costs (UNCTAD, 2021; OECD, 2020).

In response, many studies recommend a hybrid channel strategy that combines marketplace participation with the gradual development of DTC (direct-to-consumer) channels such as brand websites and social commerce. Marketplaces are effective for traffic acquisition and early-stage scaling, while DTC channels allow firms to accumulate first-party consumer data, enhance customer lifetime value, and reduce long-term dependency on paid traffic (Kano et al., 2020; UNCTAD, 2023).

The case evidence discussed earlier—particularly the brand-oriented development logic of Anker—supports this perspective. Enterprises that gradually shift from purely platform-dependent sales to a

more balanced channel portfolio are more likely to build sustainable brand assets and strategic autonomy in international markets.

5.4 Profit and Risk Control: Integrating Landed Cost into Marketing Strategy

Recent policy changes in major markets, including stricter supervision of low-value parcels and increased customs and tax compliance requirements, indicate that the cost structure of CBEC is becoming more complex and less predictable. International organizations have noted that rising regulatory scrutiny and logistics uncertainty are transforming cross-border operational risk into a core strategic issue for firms engaged in digital trade (WTO, 2020; UNCTAD, 2022).

Under such conditions, marketing strategy can no longer be designed around “front-end low price” alone. Instead, firms need to adopt a total cost perspective, where pricing and positioning consider delivery speed, authenticity assurance, local return convenience, and after-sales reliability. These factors increasingly influence consumer choice and platform ranking mechanisms, especially in mature markets (OECD, 2020).

In addition, for enterprises with sufficient order volume, investing in regional inventory systems or third-party logistics (3PL) solutions can significantly improve delivery stability and customer experience. Empirical research shows that localized fulfillment not only enhances conversion rates but also reduces the negative impact of customs friction and policy uncertainty (World Bank, 2020; UNCTAD, 2023). Therefore, logistics configuration and risk management should be treated as integral components of international marketing strategy rather than purely operational concerns.

Table 3. Key Policy Shifts Affecting CBEC Operations

Region	Policy change	Timing	Strategic Impact
EU	€3 fixed customs duty on parcels <€150	From July 1, 2026	Raises landed cost, weakens ultra-low-price model
United States	End of de minimis exemption	2025	Higher compliance and tax costs for DTC sellers
Global	Stronger customs data requirements	Ongoing	Compliance becomes part of marketing design

of which raise the risk of margin erosion if firms compete only on front-end low prices. Traffic spending should be constrained by contribution margin and LTV rather than ROAS alone—e.g., pausing keywords/audiences that remain negative after ads and returns, upgrading localized PDP content and warranty/compliance claims, and improving review/service routines—tracked by a minimal KPI set such as CM2 (contribution margin after ads) for core SKUs, weekly return/refund rates, monthly listing interruptions/compliance incidents, and customer rating/complaint indicators (UNCTAD, 2024). In Stage 2 (3–9 months), scaling should prioritize diversification and standardization: expand into a second region and/or marketplace to reduce single-policy exposure (Council of the European Union, 2025; Reuters, 2025), and formalize a channel mix where marketplaces drive demand discovery while early DTC (brand site/social commerce) begins to accumulate first-party data and retention pathways (UNCTAD, 2024). In parallel, build standardized “product-line compliance files” (test reports/certifications where required, declarations, labeling templates, safety documents, HS classification logic, and shipment data fields) to keep listings, clearance, and customer claims consistent across channels, aligning with WCO’s cross-border e-commerce standards (WCO, 2022). Finally, Stage 3 (9–18 months) should shift from acquisition efficiency to brand and retention asset accumulation—developing community content and after-sales credibility, and deploying influencer/creator programs tied to localized positioning—because meta-analytic evidence indicates influencer marketing can meaningfully affect consumer outcomes while its effectiveness depends on identifiable drivers and boundary conditions (Pan, 2025); simultaneously, strengthen first-party CRM routines (email/messaging/loyalty/referral) to raise repeat purchase and reduce CAC sensitivity as low-value parcel governance tightens and total-cost value propositions (delivery reliability, authenticity assurance, and local returns) become more decisive in mature markets (Council of the European Union, 2025; Reuters, 2025).

Table 4. Staged Implementation Plan and Key Performance Indicators

Stage	Period	Strategic Focus	Representative KPIs
Stage 1	0–3 months	Stabilize unit economics & compliance	CM2 \geq 0, return rate trend, listing interruptions
Stage 2	3–9 months	Diversify channels & markets	Revenue share top market \leq 50%, delivery timeliness

Stage	Period	Strategic Focus	Representative KPIs
Stage 3	9–18 months	Brand & retention building	Repeat purchase rate, LTV/CAC ratio, organic share

7. Conclusion

This study argues that CBEC should be treated as a strategic environment rather than merely a new export channel. In line with the measurement logic of modern digital trade—where transactions are increasingly enabled by digital ordering and cross-border digital/physical delivery—foreign trade enterprises must integrate marketing decisions with fulfillment design and governance capability (IMF/OECD/UNCTAD/WTO, 2023). Meanwhile, global evidence shows that business e-commerce sales and platform-mediated transactions have expanded rapidly, reinforcing the structural role of platforms in international commercial activity (UNCTAD, 2024).

Case evidence and policy trends jointly indicate that sustainable CBEC marketing performance depends on four tightly coupled elements: market portfolio selection, localized value proposition (product–content–compliance), channel mix design, and profit/risk control based on landed-cost realism. This integration becomes more urgent under tightening low-value parcel governance in major markets—for example, the EU Council’s decision to apply a fixed €3 customs duty on small parcels from 1 July 2026 and the U.S. policy shift ending the de minimis exemption, both of which raise the operational and compliance requirements for DTC-style cross-border flows (Council of the EU, 2025; Reuters, 2025).

Finally, the proposed roadmap translates the strategy framework into a staged implementation logic: (1) stabilize unit economics and compliance, (2) scale via channel/market diversification and standardized governance, and (3) accumulate brand and retention assets to reduce paid-traffic

dependence. The managerial implication is straightforward: in CBEC competition, “marketing strategy” is most effective when it is designed and measured as an end-to-end system spanning demand generation, cross-border delivery, and compliance-by-design (WCO, 2022; UNCTAD, 2023).

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