

# Logistics experts help African SMEs expand international footprint

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Breaking into new markets is necessary for any business looking to grow in today's hyperconnected world, and many are doing just that by choosing the right logistics solutions.



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While businesses of all sizes have faced challenges due to COVID-19, the need to find new markets and income streams remains. The most dynamic new small and medium businesses are setting their sights on new territories, and looking to offer greater value for their customers.

A powerful way to do this is to change how they view the services of logistics providers. Logistics providers should be a partner that will help businesses reach new locations and customers and a partner that will provide unique services for customers.

## Understanding the shipping process

While the first step for small and medium businesses is to identify which countries they want to expand to, it's crucial they also research the customs rules and requirements for their products or services. When they make a sale, they need to be confident that they have the documentation needed and can provide all information required for their goods to clear customs, and reach the customer as quickly as possible.

Choosing a shipping provider is important, not just for the safe and speedy delivery of goods, but for the support they can provide.

A logistics partner that can offer practical advice, ensure that all paperwork is available, and can properly file documents for easy and direct customs clearance of goods is a major business advantage.

In today's international trade environment, it is vital to also work with logistics service providers that have a global presence and can offer resources and tools to help small and medium businesses through the export process, including online resources that can be accessed when it suits the shipper.

## **Better service through data**

When businesses know what their customers want, what their pain points are, and where they are located, they can target their products and services to fit customers' needs. To help them deliver on this commitment, businesses should look for a shipping service that has strong data-gathering capabilities to help them make informed decisions about their business.

Businesses can take advantage of an increasing amount of data available (from channels like apps and connected devices) and use this information to improve customer interactions and understand how to close any gaps to achieve complete [customer satisfaction](#).

## **Continuous evolution and taking advantage of the e-commerce boom**

As online shopping across the globe continues to grow, so do customer expectations. Businesses need to provide either a unique product or service not available anywhere else, or value-added offerings that set them apart from their competitors. Free delivery for orders over a certain value or quantity, for instance, is a strong selling point.

On the other hand, delivery, when and where promised, is non-negotiable for customers. Choosing established and reliable transportation providers that can get shipments to customers on time, regardless of the area, and options that are cost-effective is key for small and medium businesses.

With home delivery still a preference for many customers, it can be difficult to serve all global locations. However, it's possible for small and medium businesses to provide this kind of exceptional customer service even to remote areas, by engaging logistics providers who have an international reach and a wide delivery network in local territories.

Additionally, logistics providers can help small businesses through smart logistics solutions, where customers can collect deliveries from central locations such as grocery stores, pharmacies, offices, or shopping malls.

## **Logistics 'secret weapon' in expanding international footprint**

Small and medium businesses must look for a delivery partner that can simplify their growth journey through globally connected networks, seamless, cost-effective shipping tools, and data-savvy e-commerce solutions.

These services will help small and medium businesses grow, with peace of mind that their products are being delivered on time, delivering not only the item, but complete customer satisfaction!

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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