



Pathways to Growth: Ready to Go Global?

A workbook to help you pause and reflect on your business, introduce international expansion as a pathway to growth, and get advice from other Canadian small businesses.



Canadian small businesses have **big ambitions.**

Once you've done the hard work of establishing your business, you may be considering what comes next. As you look to scale, tapping into international markets can be a stepping stone to accelerated business growth and new opportunities.

This workbook is designed to help you reflect on how far your business has come, your goals for the future, and how expanding to new markets may provide the next pathway to growth, if you so choose. And of course, we'll provide a few helpful resources along the way.

Not so long ago, FedEx was a small business, too. We want to help small businesses succeed by tapping into billions—not just millions—of customers around the world.

Ready to get started?





Part 1

Where am I at?

INSIGHTS FROM YOUR PEERS

“Know your market expectations. [For example] U.S. consumer expectations are much different than Canada—they expect things fast, for shipping to be cheap or free, and the tolerance for customer service mistakes is definitely a lot lower.”

Let's reflect.

You've achieved so much as a small business owner. To plan for where to go next, it can be helpful to reflect on how far you've already come. Don't know where to start? We've got you covered with a few guiding questions:

1. What key goals have you set and achieved so far?
2. Who are your current customers?
3. Where is your business doing well? What are the strengths of your business?
4. Where and how have you been most successful in the past year?
5. What have you been wanting to spend more time on? Where do you see your opportunities to grow?
6. What hasn't worked as well where you may want to make changes? What do you believe are your biggest barriers to expanding your business?



Part 2

What are my goals?

INSIGHTS FROM YOUR PEERS

“My advice to small businesses looking to expand internationally is to find a distributor. Once you have a distributor you’ve got it made because they’re selling to wholesalers and customers [for you].”

Let's capture your goals.

Now that you've thought about where you've been, let's outline what's next by identifying some of **your goals for the next 6-18 months.**

In this section you can input and review these goals.



Need inspiration?

HERE ARE A FEW THINGS TO ASK YOURSELF

1. What do you want to accomplish for your business this year? I.e., Find new customers, expand to new markets, meet a specific revenue target, etc.
2. What do you think is the next opportunity for your business? I.e., Explore new marketing channels, grow team skills, etc.
3. When you look back on the year, what do you want to say you were able to accomplish?



What's a goal for the next 6 months?

Goal #1:

How will you measure success?

What will help you achieve it?

What's standing in your way?

What are key milestones?



What's a goal for the next 12 months?

Goal #2:

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How will you measure success?

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What will help you achieve it?

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What's standing in your way?

Blank text area for obstacles standing in the way.

What are key milestones?

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What's a goal for the next 18 months?

Goal #3:

How will you measure success?

What will help you achieve it?

What's standing in your way?

What are key milestones?



Part 3

Is international expansion right for me?

INSIGHTS FROM YOUR PEERS

*“You don’t need to be afraid...
there may never be a good time but
anytime will be the best time [to
expand internationally].”*

Let's consider international growth.

For many businesses, finding new ways of generating revenue is a priority—and international expansion can be a way to get there. It's a big step, but it's absolutely achievable and worth considering if it helps you meet your overall business objectives.

But don't just take it from us.

We spoke with a handful of successful FedEx small business customers who've already made the leap to ship internationally. Read on to learn from them and see if international expansion might be right for you too.



INSIGHTS FROM YOUR PEERS

“Navigating different global customs requirements is a lot of work for a small business. We use FedEx Express and the brokerage services that are included [because they] are really helpful if we make a mistake.”



Are you looking to grow your customer base?

Canada's 15 Free Trade Agreements cover 61% of the world's GDP and open markets to 1.5 billion consumers worldwide, creating an opportunity for Canadian small businesses who want to expand beyond Canada ([Canada's State of Trade 2022](#)). The small businesses we spoke to noted that **expanding to new markets like the U.S. led to greater business performance opportunities.**



Have you already been receiving interest from international customers?

It can feel like a big step to service a whole new region but if you've already received interest through web traffic or requests on your Instagram page, you may be missing out on a bigger opportunity. Take it one step at a time, like one of our own FedEx customers did. When they expanded their Toronto-based business to the U.S. for the first time, they started with the North Eastern States to test the waters before expanding across the continental U.S. **Now, most of their business comes from south of the border—and they are glad they took that initial leap.**



Have you just been waiting for the right time to start?

Several of our small business customers shared that they grappled with finding the right time to expand beyond Canada. But they all agreed that once they did, they were happy they did so. **Each saw the positive impact international expansion made and in many cases they wished they had done so sooner!**

Notes:



Are you worried about how complicated customs and international shipping regulations may be?

We hear it from small business customers all the time. Duties & taxes, regulations, and even returns, can seem daunting. International shipping can feel complicated but there are [resources](#) to help. With the right service provider, it shouldn't feel scary. One of our customers shared that they found it especially helpful that **FedEx Express was able to simplify complicated shipping tasks, like managing customs through FedEx brokerage services**. A broker acts as a intermediary between you and your carrier, helping to get your packages where they need to be and manage processes like customs.



Do you feel your company's full potential has yet to be reached?

As one of our own customers put it: ***“shipping internationally unlocked the potential of our business. Canada is great, but expanding [internationally] offered us the sheer size of the market we needed to accelerate our business growth.”***

Notes:

If you're ready to put your thinking on international shipping into action, here are a few more helpful resources from FedEx:



FedEx® International Shipping Assist

With a FedEx login, you can prepare your shipment and ensure that it reaches its international destination without unnecessary delays.



FedEx® Electronic Trade Document

Easily submit customs documents online with your FedEx account prior to, at the time of, or after creating your shipping label.



Book a Coaching Call

Need advice? Book a 30-minute coaching session with a FedEx Small Business Advisor to see how we can help you get started.



A photograph of a man with glasses and a woman with glasses sitting at a table, looking at each other. The man is on the left, wearing a light blue shirt. The woman is on the right, wearing a red shirt. The image is partially obscured by a white diagonal shape on the left and a purple gradient on the right.

Ready to hit go? Here's a bit more to get you started.

You've reflected, you've set goals, you've thought about the possibility of expanding to international markets, and hopefully, you're feeling good about your business strategy.

At FedEx Express Canada, we tip our hats to you and all that you do as a Canadian small business. Running a small business is hard enough. FedEx can help guide you on all things international shipping—we're here to help.

Save with a FedEx Account

Get up to 45% off for the first six months when you open a FedEx account.* Plus, get access to tools and resources to help make shipping easy.

[Open an Account](#)

* Effective the date your FedEx account is created or enrolled in the program. Discounts based on list price (transportation charges only) and exclude surcharges, special handling fees, duties, taxes or other additional charges. For complete details, see the program [Terms and Conditions](#).

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Where now meets next

