



# HOW TO MARKET TO GERMANY

TOP TIPS

# 1

## LANGUAGE

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Use a **formal tone** in business communication (**Sie** form, not **du**).

Be mindful of **gender-neutral** language (e.g., "Kundinnen" for customers).

Consider **regional variations in dialects** (e.g., Bavarian vs. High German) but **Hochdeutsch** works best for national marketing.

# 2

## WHAT TO LOCALISE

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Adapt **idioms, references, and place names** to sound natural to German consumers.

Avoid unnecessary **Anglicisms** unless commonly used (e.g., "Online-Shop" is fine, but not "Sale").

**Images and symbols** should reflect local culture (e.g., avoid overly Americanised stock photos).

**Legal notices and T&Cs** must comply with strict German consumer protection laws.

# 3

## BRANDING

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Ensure your **brand aligns with German values**: quality, reliability, and sustainability.

Avoid **unintended double meanings** – some English words might sound strange or inappropriate in German (e.g. Clairol's 'Mist Stick' 'Mist' = 'Manure' - not ideal for beauty product!).

Localise **slogans** and product names to be clear and culturally relevant.

## 4

## IMAGERY

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Avoid **stereotypical imagery** – Germans appreciate authenticity.

**Colours matter:** Blue suggests trust, green is linked to sustainability, red can signal urgency but also danger.

Show **diverse and realistic people**, as Germans value inclusivity and authenticity in marketing.

Avoid **historical sensitivities** (Nazi symbols, uniforms, military aesthetics).

## 5

## CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

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Be aware of **religious sensitivities**, especially in Catholic regions (e.g., Bavaria).

**Gender equality is valued** – ensure advertising reflects modern roles.

**Direct selling approaches are less effective.** Focus on data-driven, fact-based persuasion.

Avoid **aggressive humour** or controversial jokes in marketing.

## 6

## COMMUNICATION

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Germans prefer **clear, structured, and professional communication**. Avoid exaggerated claims.

**Email and written formats** are preferred over calls for business communication.

Sales should be **consultative and factual** rather than overly persuasive or emotional.

## 7

## VALUE PROPOSITIONS

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**Highlight quality, precision, and reliability** – Germans are highly brand-loyal if they trust a product.

**Be transparent about pricing, guarantees, and after-sales service.**

Conduct **market research** – one-size-fits-all messaging doesn't work across regions (e.g., Berlin startups vs. conservative Bavarian companies).

# INDUSTRY HIGHLIGHT: SELLING LUXURY GOODS INTO GERMANY

German buyers often compare luxury goods based on craftsmanship rather than brand status.

The culture of discount shopping (e.g., outlet stores, duty-free shopping in Switzerland/Austria) affects full-priced luxury sales.

High VAT (19%) makes luxury goods expensive, leading Germans to buy abroad (France, Italy, Switzerland).

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Emphasise craftsmanship, sustainability, and precision engineering (e.g., German luxury car brands like Mercedes-Benz excel at this).
- ✓ Offer exclusive in-store experiences, personal tailoring, and premium warranties to justify the price.
- ✓ Consider loyalty programs & limited-time benefits instead of direct discounts, which can devalue the brand.

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