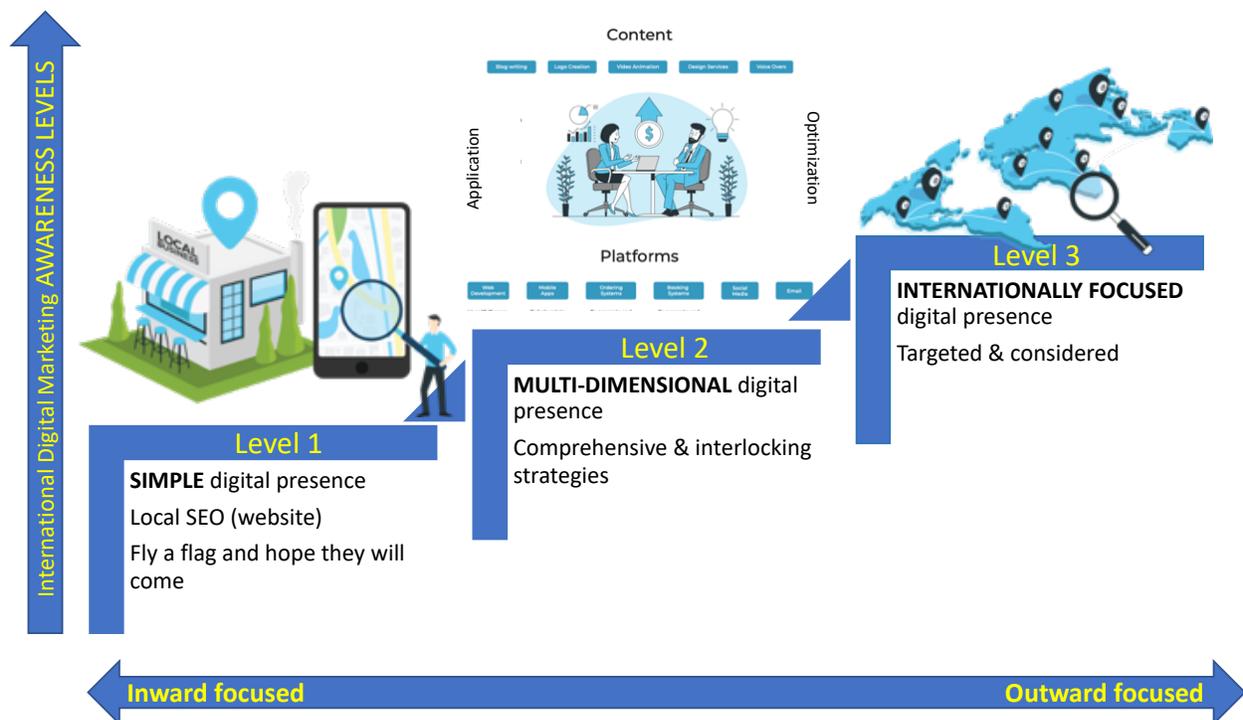


Is your digital marketing presence geared to reach an international audience?

So, you have a website, people can find you online. But are you reaching your international target audience?

Or, are you just hanging out your shingle and hoping for the best? Is your digital presence optimized to reach your international target market?

What is your level of digital awareness?



At Level 1 businesses has Simple digital presence mainly just consisting of a website focus allowing local customers to find them. At Level 2 businesses have a more comprehensive approach with an optimized digital presence. At Level 3 the international audiences are targeted in a focused way.

Do you have the right level of digital presence?

All digital presences require some form of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) optimizes your website for search engines so that you can be found for the various pieces of content on your website you have created.

However,



*International SEO* becomes important when you have a website that is either multilingual, which means that it offers the same content in more than language when it is multi-regional, meaning that you serve different content to users located in different countries or both.



*Local SEO* targets local clientele and is characterized by search for “*find nearest dentist/restaurant, etc*” which have a very different set of characteristics and benchmarks. Being locatable in Google Map back is important while the quality of backlinks is not.

But what if your business goals include reaching an international market?

A multilingual website would provide identical versions of the site, written in different languages. A multi-regional website would also change the content itself, vary branding and a different currency.

## Digital Marketing for an International Audience

What are your business goals?

Finding the best possible solution for your business in regard to international SEO depends first and foremost on your **business goals**.

Therefore, you first have to define which users you want to target.

1. Do you want to target users speaking a certain language? (**language targeting**)
2. Do you want to target users in a **specific country**? Create content customized to them. (**geotargeting**)
3. Do you want both? Do **both (language targeting and geotargeting)**.

## Challenges with International SEO

The following are important design decisions to make to ensure your digital platform performs optimally depending on your business goals.

1. How to structure the different versions of content on your site or sites.
2. How to tell search engines which version of the content is best suited for which audience.

Does your website designer avoid the following pitfalls?

An internally focused website's performance can be compromised by the incorrect use of the following techniques.

1. The use cookies or JavaScript
2. IP Address & Browser Based Redirects

## Website Address Structuring

It is important to establish a URL structure that is easy to comprehend for crawlers. ccTLD (country code top-level domain) and gTLDs (generic top-level domains) are domains that are not country-specific which can be done with Subfolders or, with Parameters

So, what are the best options for you?

ccTLDs	Require the most resources to set up and maintain especially in regard to content are therefore best suited for already well-known brands with large audiences in their target countries.
gTLDs (with Subfolders)	Are best suited for businesses that have fewer resources and that want to keep their maintenance costs at a bare minimum. Also, in case you have a well-established website you can benefit from an already built-out link profile.
gTLDs (with Subdomains)	Allow the set up local servers in multiple countries. However, they come with downsides, rather use ccTLDs or subfolders over subdomains.
gTLDs (with Language parameters)	Are a scalable solutions and easy for tagging but not an elegant design

### Factors to consider

**Geotargeting** Is used to expand your business into another country but it is very important that your new content differs from the old, but don't use Hreflang, with geotargeting create new, country-specific content, not a translation

**Hosting** is not important when using ccTLD but for gTLDs, server location can be a signal for your site's intended audience.

**Regional Targeting** to geotarget cross-national to a whole region does not work, you have to claim each domain, subdomain or subfolder one at a time and specify which country you want to target.

**Language targeting** best solution, if user location does not influence the content of your website

**Combination** If you want to target users in a specific country speaking a specific language, you have to use a combination of language targeting and geotargeting.

### The Bottom Line

The key step is to identify your business objectives so that you can:

- differentiate between language and geotargeting.
- And then choose the URL structure that best suits your needs and apply the different international SEO techniques.

With its local presence and international footprint, **Vibe Marketing** is ideally positioned to help local business growing internationally.

