SEO TOKYO maker

SEO & WEB MARKETING



DOWNLOAD →

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Japanese company can have an accurate English website, excellent products, and decades of experience, yet remain nearly invisible to Western searchers. The problem is often structural rather than linguistic.

Western market entry requires a distinct approach to search intent, information architecture, credibility signals, conversion paths, and digital authority.

The five strategic priorities:

- Conduct independent English-language keyword research instead of translating Japanese keywords.
- Restructure website navigation and page hierarchy around Western buyer needs.
- Build credibility through quantified case studies, relevant third-party reviews, and visible leadership.
- Adapt content and conversion paths to the target category and its evaluation habits.
- Establish Western-market content marketing, digital PR, and link-building capabilities.





THE REVERSE LOCALIZATION PROBLEM

Consider a Japanese manufacturer launching an English website. Its translation is accurate, its product information is complete, and its domestic reputation is strong. Yet six months later, organic traffic from the US and Europe remains negligible, while incoming inquiries fail to progress.

This is the reverse of the familiar problem facing Western companies entering Japan: the language may be correct, but the website does not reflect the target market's search behavior, trust expectations, or conversion preferences.

The underlying issue: A Japanese website translated into English can retain a structure that makes sense domestically but fails to communicate effectively with Western buyers.



TRANSLATING IS THE WRONG STARTING POINT

Direct translation often preserves assumptions that do not transfer well across markets.

Japanese-market convention	Potential Western-market problem
Comprehensive corporate information throughout the site	Value propositions and next steps can become difficult to find
Founding year, capital, and employee count as prominent trust signals	Buyers may look for customer outcomes, reviews, and leadership visibility
Consultation and brochure-request forms as primary conversion paths	Buyers may expect self-service evaluation options
Formal, conservative visual presentation across categories	The website may feel outdated or poorly matched to the category

The objective is not to make every website look American or European. It is to make the website work for the intended audience, industry, and buying process.



INDEPENDENT KEYWORD RESEARCH

Japanese SEO experience is valuable, but Japanese-market keyword assumptions cannot simply be transferred to English-language campaigns.

Dimension	Japanese search patterns described in the article	Western US/UK patterns described in the article
Query formulation	Shorter queries and refinement through related searches	More specific queries, including “how to,” “best,” and “vs.”
Comparison research	Portal sites and ranking aggregators	Review platforms, Reddit discussions, and “best X for Y” content
Brand discovery	Established brand names can be especially important	Generic category searches can help buyers discover unfamiliar brands
AI-assisted research	Traditional search remains prominent	Conversational and AI-assisted tools increasingly support evaluation
Device usage	Mobile is important even for B2B research	Desktop remains important for in-depth B2B evaluation
Local intent	Often strongly influenced by proximity	More dependent on the business category



MAP SEARCH INTENT TO THE BUYER JOURNEY

A Western keyword strategy should reflect what prospective buyers need at each stage of evaluation.

Funnel stage	Example query	Appropriate content
Awareness	“What is a [sensor type] used for?”	Educational articles explaining applications and problems
Research	“[Sensor type] vs [alternative technology]”	Technical comparisons with accessible explanations
Vendor discovery	“Best [sensor type] manufacturers”	Vendor-selection content and credible third-party placements
Evaluation	“[Company] reviews” or “[Company] vs [competitor]”	Comparison pages and relevant review-platform presence
Decision	“[Sensor type] supplier USA”	Targeted landing pages with clear next steps

A translated keyword list usually reflects existing Japanese terminology. Funnel-based research instead identifies the questions Western buyers ask as they move from understanding a problem to selecting a supplier.



CONTENT STRATEGY: LEAD WITH THE CONCLUSION

Japanese B2B content often establishes context gradually before introducing the solution. Western B2B content, particularly in the US, more often presents the conclusion or value proposition first and then supports it with evidence.

This is a difference in rhetorical expectations, not a judgment about the quality of Japanese writing.

Recommended content sequence:

1. State what the company offers and whom it serves.
2. Explain the customer problem or business outcome.
3. Support the claim with evidence, examples, or technical details.
4. Provide deeper context for readers who need it.
5. Offer a relevant next step.

The goal is to preserve the precision, reliability, and depth that can distinguish Japanese companies while making the value immediately understandable.



REPLACE GENERIC CLAIMS WITH SPECIFIC EVIDENCE

Western B2B buyers often compare vendors through claims that can be evaluated side by side. Statements about quality, reliability, or customer focus are more persuasive when accompanied by measurable evidence.

Generic claim	Evidence-oriented alternative
“We provide high-quality products.”	A verified defect-rate metric with its measurement scope and methodology
“We have many years of experience.”	A founding or supply-history date supported by relevant industries or client examples
“We put customers first.”	A documented support-response metric, customer satisfaction measure, or review-platform reference



MAKE CONTENT EASIER TO SCAN AND EVALUATE

Western B2B content must serve both traditional search discovery and readers who are comparing solutions or using AI-assisted research tools.

A useful structure combines concise explanations with enough technical depth to support a serious buying decision.

Recommended elements:

- Descriptive headings that communicate the takeaway.
- Short paragraphs with one primary idea each.
- Bulleted comparisons where they improve clarity.
- Tables for specifications, capabilities, and alternatives.
- FAQs that answer genuine buyer questions directly.
- Clear links to supporting evidence, case studies, and relevant product pages.

Scannability should not come at the expense of substance. Technical and industrial buyers still need accurate specifications, limitations, application guidance, and evidence.



THE TRUST STACK

Credibility markers that work in Japan may not carry the same weight in Western markets. Japanese companies need to identify which signals their target buyers actually use when evaluating a supplier.

Trust element	Strategic role in Western markets
Named executive team and professional profiles	Makes leadership visible and researchable
Quantified case studies	Demonstrates outcomes in relevant customer contexts
Third-party review platforms	Supports independent evaluation where relevant to the category
Internationally recognized certifications	Provides recognizable assurance of specific standards
Western trade press and business media	Helps establish visibility and external credibility
Active LinkedIn presence	Supports company and executive research in B2B buying
Awards	Adds value when the recognition is understood by the target audience

Founding history can remain valuable but should be paired with evidence of current capability and innovation.



WHY CASE STUDIES DESERVE EARLY INVESTMENT

The article identifies the absence of detailed English-language case studies as one of the most persistent credibility gaps for Japanese companies entering Western B2B markets.

Strong domestic results may exist, but they are often underreported because of confidentiality requirements or a preference for understated claims.

A practical case-study structure:

- **Customer**: Name the company when permitted, or describe it specifically without identifying it.
- **Challenge**: Define the operational or business problem.
- **Solution**: Explain why the customer selected the product or service.
- **Implementation**: Describe the process, scope, and relevant constraints.
- **Results**: Present quantified outcomes with a clear timeframe and measurement basis.

Where naming the customer is prohibited, a specific description of the customer type and verified results can still provide useful evidence.



REASSESS WEBSITE INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

Western-facing websites should prioritize the information buyers need to understand the offer and assess its suitability.

Website element	Recommended adjustment
Homepage hero	State what the company does and whom it serves within the first screen
Main navigation	Prioritize products, solutions, use cases, pricing where appropriate, and resources
Product pages	Explain the problem and outcome before presenting detailed specifications
Pricing	Publish prices, tiers, or ranges where category expectations make this appropriate
Contact paths	Separate sales, support, partnership, and press inquiries where useful
Footer	Organize contact information, social links, and sitemap for easy access
Resources	Build a maintained content section that supports search discovery and evaluation

The task is to reorganize the experience around Western buyer needs, rather than reproduce the original Japanese site structure in another language.



MATCH CONVERSION PATHS TO BUYER EXPECTATIONS

A single “Contact Us” form may not suit every product, service, or stage of evaluation.

For some Western SaaS, e-commerce, and smaller-ticket B2B categories, buyers may expect to explore a product before speaking with sales. More complex industrial purchases may still require consultation and detailed technical discussions.

Possible conversion options:

- Free trial, where the product supports self-service use.
- Demo video or product walkthrough.
- Transparent pricing or a clear explanation of pricing structure.
- Technical documentation and downloadable resources.
- Sales consultation or quotation request.
- Separate support and partnership contact routes.

Guiding principle: Offer the evaluation path that matches the category and buyer's level of commitment. Self-service should be added where appropriate, not imposed indiscriminately.



E-COMMERCE LOCALIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Japanese consumer brands selling directly to Western customers face additional requirements beyond corporate website localization.

Product presentation: Adapt size charts to relevant local sizing conventions and explain fit where necessary. Unit conversion alone may not communicate how a product fits or performs.

Photography: Combine detailed product images with lifestyle or in-context imagery where it helps buyers understand use, scale, and relevance.

Payments: Assess the target market's preferred payment methods. The source article contrasts Japanese convenience-store payments and bank transfers with Western expectations that may include credit cards, PayPal, and buy-now-pay-later options such as Klarna or Afterpay.

Visual: A three-part e-commerce checklist: sizing, imagery, and payments.



BACKLINKS AND DIGITAL PR

Japanese companies cannot assume that domestic PR relationships and established outreach practices will transfer directly to Western markets.

The source article highlights several routes for earning relevant coverage and links:

Approach	How it can contribute
Original research and data releases	Gives journalists and industry writers citable findings
Guest contributions and bylined articles	Makes company expertise available to relevant trade publications
Journalist-response platforms	Creates opportunities to provide expert commentary
Industry associations and trade shows	Can generate directory links, speaker coverage, and event-related mentions
Western-market PR partnerships	Provides familiarity with local media expectations and outreach practices

Strategic principle: Earn authority by contributing useful evidence and expertise to the target market, rather than relying exclusively on translated domestic publicity.



TURN PROPRIETARY KNOWLEDGE INTO A PR ASSET

Companies in manufacturing, electronics, logistics, and B2B technology may possess valuable operational or industry data that is not being used in Western content marketing.

Research becomes more useful to external audiences when it includes a clear question, a transparent methodology, and findings that can be cited accurately.

A practical data-led PR process:

1. Identify an original dataset or a meaningful industry question.
2. Define the methodology and limitations.
3. Prepare the findings in clear English.
4. Create a report or data page that journalists can cite.
5. Develop relevant commentary for trade publications and industry writers.
6. Track earned coverage, referral traffic, and relevant backlinks.

Original research should offer real informational value. A company announcement alone is not equivalent to independent, useful research.



THE ENTRY ROADMAP

The article recommends sequencing foundational work before scaling content production and digital PR.

Phase	Priority actions	Intended outcome
1. Research	Independent English-language keyword and intent research	A market-specific search strategy
2. Structure	Rework information architecture before translating pages	A website organized around target buyers
3. Credibility	Develop leadership visibility, reviews, and two to three case studies where feasible	Stronger evidence for vendor evaluation
4. Conversion	Localize core pages and conversion paths	Clearer value propositions and next steps
5. Content	Establish a resources section and consistent publishing cadence	Coverage across the buyer journey
6. Reviews	Build relevant third-party review presence in parallel	Accumulating independent feedback
7. Authority	Start Western digital PR and link building once core pages are credible	More relevant external visibility
8. Measurement	Track Western-market search and conversion metrics	Better decisions based on target-market performance



CONTENT CADENCE AND COMPOUNDING GROWTH

The article suggests publishing two to four articles per month as a modest starting cadence for a Western-facing resources section.

The value comes from consistency and strategic coverage, rather than publishing volume alone.

A practical content mix could include:

- Educational content for awareness-stage questions.
- Technical comparisons for research-stage visitors.
- Vendor-selection resources for evaluation.
- Product and application pages for decision-stage searches.
- Case studies that substantiate the company's claims.

Each asset should serve an identifiable buyer question and connect logically to relevant product or service pages.



MEASURE AGAINST WESTERN-MARKET PERFORMANCE

Domestic Japanese performance is not an adequate standalone benchmark for a website targeting the US, UK, or other Western markets.

Core measurement dimensions:

- **Organic visibility**: Traffic and rankings by target country and funnel-stage keyword group.
- **Engagement**: Whether visitors reach relevant product, solution, and resource pages.
- **Conversion**: Inquiry and conversion rates by traffic source and landing page.
- **Lead quality**: Whether inquiries match the intended customer and market.
- **Authority**: Relevant earned coverage, backlinks, and third-party review presence.
- Competitive position: Performance relative to relevant Western competitors.



READINESS AUDIT: CONTENT AND TRUST

Use this audit to identify the gaps most likely to limit market-specific search performance and credibility.

Keyword and content strategy

- English-language keyword research was conducted independently.
- Keywords are mapped to awareness, research, evaluation, and decision stages.
- A blog or resources section is maintained at least monthly.
- Content leads with the value proposition and conclusion.
- Claims are specific, measurable where possible, and supported by evidence.

Trust and credibility

- The executive team is visible, with appropriate professional profiles.
- At least two or three detailed English-language case studies are available where feasible.
- Relevant third-party review platforms are established.
- Internationally recognized certifications are clearly displayed where applicable.
- The company maintains an active, professional LinkedIn presence.



READINESS AUDIT: WEBSITE AND CONVERSION

Site structure

- The homepage explains what the company does and whom it serves above the fold.
- Main navigation prioritizes products, solutions, and useful resources.
- Pricing is available or its availability is explained where buyers expect it.
- Contact paths are separated by inquiry type where appropriate.
- The footer provides clear access to contact details, social profiles, and the sitemap.

Conversion path

- Self-service evaluation is available where the category supports it.
- The primary CTA matches the buyer's expectations and level of commitment.
- Forms use relevant local conventions and avoid unnecessary fields.
- Product pages provide sufficient evidence for informed evaluation.



READINESS AUDIT: AUTHORITY AND LINKS

Authority-building checklist

- A digital PR strategy has been designed for the target Western market.
- The company is pursuing relevant Western trade or business media coverage.
- Original research or a useful data asset is available for external citation.
- A Western-market PR agency or suitable in-house capability is established.
- Industry associations, trade publications, and events have been evaluated for relevance.
- Link acquisition focuses on relevant, earned authority rather than volume alone.

Key takeaway: A website can be technically sound and well localized yet remain difficult to discover if its content and external authority are weak.



COMMON FAILURE MODES TO AVOID

Several recurring mistakes can undermine a Western expansion project even when the English copy is accurate.

Translating the keyword list: This misses differences in how target buyers phrase questions and compare vendors.

Retaining the domestic site structure: Extensive corporate information can overshadow product value and relevant next steps.

Relying on generic claims: Quality and reliability statements need concrete evidence to stand out in competitive evaluation.

Underinvesting in case studies: Strong domestic results provide limited value if Western buyers cannot understand their relevance or outcomes.

Treating digital PR as a later add-on: Authority-building is more effective when the website already contains credible pages and useful resources.

Using a single conversion route for every audience: The appropriate path depends on the product, category, purchase complexity, and buyer expectations.



TIMELINE: WHAT TO EXPECT FROM THE WORK

The source article distinguishes between improvements to an existing conversion path and longer-term organic growth.

Workstream	Timeline
Foundational structure and conversion improvements	Potential conversion improvements within four to eight weeks
Organic SEO and content	Meaningful ranking improvement discussed around six months, with compounding growth from twelve months onward
Digital PR and earned links	Slower initial results, with stronger contribution potentially developing from around month six

The source article distinguishes between improvements to an existing conversion path and longer-term organic growth.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Western expansion requires more than making a Japanese website readable in English. It requires aligning the digital experience with how target buyers search, assess credibility, and decide.

The essential principles:

1. Research Western search intent independently.
2. Organize content around the buyer journey.
3. Lead with the value proposition, then provide evidence and depth.
4. Build a trust stack suited to the target category.
5. Invest early in specific, quantified case studies.
6. Restructure navigation and conversion paths where needed.
7. Develop Western-market content and digital PR capabilities.
8. Measure performance against the target market, not domestic Japanese baselines.

A credible Japanese company should not have to rely on its domestic reputation alone. Its Western-facing website must make its value, evidence, and relevance visible to buyers who do not already know the brand.

About Us

Tokyo SEO Maker helps global B2B companies adapt their digital strategy for the Japanese market—from localization and SEO architecture to platform strategy and conversion optimization

READY TO ENTER THE JAPANESE MARKET STRATEGICALLY?

Contact Tokyo SEO Maker for a market readiness assessment

