UDC 33.9 DOI: 10.34670/AR.2026.62.52.033

Localization strategies of Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises in the Russian cross-border e-commerce market

Qi Yuhan

Master's student,
RUDN University,
117198, 6, Miklukho-Maklaya str., Moscow, Russian Federation;
e-mail: 1032254853@rudn.ru

Chen Zheng

Doctor of Philosophy, Lecturer,
Shijiazhuang Institute of Railway Technology,
050000, 87, Tianshan str., Shijiazhuang, China;
e-mail: Zhengchencz@163.com

Abstract

The scientific article examines the comprehensive impact of localization strategies on the performance of Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises in the Russian cross-border e-commerce market, where significant transformation of trade flows has occurred in recent years under the influence of geopolitical factors, the growth of digital infrastructure, and changes in consumer preferences. Localization is interpreted as a multilevel process of business model adaptation encompassing not only the linguistic component but also adjustments to the product assortment matrix, pricing mechanisms, marketing tools, payment solutions, and logistics infrastructure, taking into account the specifics of the regulatory and legal environment, regional characteristics of consumer behavior, and infrastructure constraints. Analysis of the dynamics of key indicators for the period 2020-2024 reveals a steady positive trend: the average annual turnover per enterprise has increased more than 2.5 times, conversion has grown from 2.13% to 3.71%, the percentage of returns has decreased from 11.6% to 6.9%, and average delivery time has been reduced from 28.3 to 11.8 days, with the most pronounced improvements observed among companies implementing deep localization strategies. Comparison of enterprise groups by degree of localization demonstrates that deep adaptation, including the creation of local warehouses, Russian-language support, partnerships with local influencers, product certification, and the development of loyalty programs, ensures 3.5 times higher turnover, an increase in margin by 8.6 percentage points, a conversion rate of 5.67% versus 1.94% with minimal localization, as well as a significant rise in the repeat purchase index to 43.6%. The study of individual localization elements allows their ranking by impact on conversion, reduction of returns, and loyalty formation, revealing the highest effectiveness for brand page creation, collaboration with

Russian bloggers, and product adaptation. Particular attention is paid to sectoral and regional differentiation: the beauty and health categories are characterized by maximum margin and conversion; clothing and footwear by elevated return rates requiring intensive adaptation of sizing grids and packaging; while the Central and Far Eastern Federal Districts demonstrate the best performance indicators owing to developed logistics and proximity to the supplier. The obtained results emphasize the nonlinear nature of returns on localization investments, the synergistic effect of a comprehensive approach, and economic feasibility (ROI 187-235%), which determines the necessity of differentiated strategies accounting for the specifics of product categories and geographical segments of the Russian market. The presented material contributes to the formation of a systemic understanding of the mechanisms ensuring competitiveness of foreign enterprises in digital commerce, allowing assessment of the analysis's relevance for comprehending contemporary trends in cross-border e-commerce and making informed decisions on deepening presence in promising markets.

For citation

Qi Yuhan, Chen Zheng (2026) Localization strategies of Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises in the Russian cross-border e-commerce market. *Ekonomika: vchera, segodnya, zavtra* [Economics: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow], 16 (3A), pp. 348-361. DOI: 10.34670/AR.2026.62.52.033

Keywords

Localization, cross-border e-commerce, Chinese SMEs, Russian market, adaptation strategies, international trade, digital platforms.

Introduction

Over the past decade, cross-border e-commerce has become one of the key channels of international trade, significantly transforming traditional models of export-import operations. Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the most dynamic participants in this process, using digital platforms to enter foreign markets without the need to create a full-fledged physical infrastructure in the recipient countries [Yao, Zhang, 2020]. The Russian e-commerce market, whose volume in 2023 exceeded 6.4 trillion rubles, is a space with a high potential for absorbing commodity flows from China, which is due to both the geographical proximity of the two countries and the strengthening of bilateral trade and economic ties in the context of the geopolitical restructuring of global supply chains [Sharipov, Dyakonova, 2021]. The formation of new logistics corridors, the expansion of payments in national currencies and the growth of digital literacy of Russian consumers create an environment in which localization strategies are crucial for the competitiveness of foreign sellers.

The very concept of localization in the context of cross-border e-commerce is much broader than simply translating content into the target market language. We are talking about a comprehensive adaptation of the business model, including the adjustment of assortment policy, pricing, marketing communications, payment solutions and logistics architecture to the specifics of consumer behavior, the regulatory environment and infrastructure constraints of the host country [Peng, 2020]. For Chinese SMEs that traditionally rely on the platform model of doing business through Alibaba, JD.com The transition to deep localization in the Russian market is associated with a number of barriers-from language and cultural differences to the specifics of customs regulation and the specifics of the work of Russian marketplaces, such as Ozon, Wildberries and Yandex Market [Wang Yi, 2024]. However, it is those businesses that invest in understanding the local context that show significantly higher conversion rates and customer retention.

The Russian cross-border e-commerce market has characteristics that make it both attractive and challenging for foreign participants. On the one hand, the share of online purchases in the total volume of retail trade continues to grow, reaching about 13-14% in 2023, and in the largest cities this figure is noticeably higher [Kostin, Shubaeva, Karimova, 2025. On the other hand, Russian consumers are increasingly demanding delivery speed, customer service quality, and product compliance with local standards, which challenges Chinese SMEs to overcome the stereotypes associated with the perception of goods from China as extremely cheap and low-quality [Li Ts., 2020]. The change in the structure of consumer preferences of Russian buyers, who are increasingly focused on price-quality ratio, and not only on cost, requires Chinese sellers to reconsider their usual approaches to positioning.

An essential factor determining the dynamics of localization processes is the evolution of the regulatory environment. Reducing the threshold for duty-free import of goods for personal use, tightening labeling and certification requirements, and introducing new rules in the field of personal data protection form a regulatory landscape to which Chinese SMEs are forced to adapt [Chen Qiujie, 2017]. At the same time, the Russian government implements a policy of supporting domestic producers and marketplaces, which creates additional challenges for foreign market participants. Under these conditions, the development of effective localization strategies ceases to be optional and becomes an imperative for survival in a highly competitive market, where Chinese SMEs face not only Russian players, but also large multinational corporations that are also increasing their presence in the Russian e-commerce segment [Zhang G., 2019].

Materials and methods of research

The methodological basis of this study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to the analysis of localization strategies of Chinese SMEs in the Russian cross-border e-commerce market. The empirical base was formed on the basis of data obtained from several groups of sources: statistical reports of the General Customs Administration of the People's Republic of China, data from the Federal Customs Service of the Russian Federation, analytical reviews of the Association of Internet Trading Companies (ACIT), as well as corporate reports of the largest e-commerce platforms for the period 2019-2024 [Fedosov, Lukashova, 2025]. The total number of sources analyzed was 87 documents, including 42 scientific publications in Russian, English and Chinese, 23 statistical and analytical reports, as well as 22 regulatory acts of two jurisdictions.

The study sample covers 156 Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises that sell on the Russian market through cross-border e-commerce platforms. The criteria for inclusion in the sample were: annual sales turnover in the Russian direction of at least 500 thousand yuan, experience in the Russian market for at least two years, as well as the presence of at least one element of the localization strategy (adapted content, local warehouse, partnership with Russian counterparties) [Zhang Ya., 2024]. The sample structure included enterprises from the provinces of Zhejiang, Guangdong, Fujian and Shandong, representing the main clusters of export-oriented small businesses in China.

Methods of comparative analysis, correlation analysis of financial indicators, as well as content analysis of marketing strategies of the studied enterprises were used as analytical tools. Financial performance indicators of SMEs in the Russian market were structured by categories: revenue, marginality, conversion rate, percentage of returns, and customer satisfaction index [Wang S., Borisova, 2025]. To assess the effectiveness of various localization strategies, we used the method of grouping enterprises by the degree of localization depth, followed by comparing key metrics. Statistical data processing was performed using the SPSS Statistics 27 software package.

Results and discussion

The strategic behavior of Chinese SMEs in the Russian cross-border e-commerce market is formed under the influence of many factors, among which a special place is occupied by institutional conditions, the structure of consumer demand and the technological capabilities of digital platforms. The specific nature of the Russian market is that it combines the features of a developed e-commerce market (high level of Internet penetration, developed payment infrastructure) and a number of features typical of emerging markets (significant territorial differentiation, heterogeneity of logistics infrastructure, exchange rate volatility) [Chen C., 2017]. This duality determines the need to develop multi-level localization strategies that take into account not only national, but also regional specifics of consumer behavior.

To understand the scale and dynamics of the presence of Chinese SMEs in the Russian market, it is necessary to pay attention to the structural changes that have occurred in cross-border trade in recent years. The reorientation of trade flows caused by the geopolitical shifts of 2022-2023 led to a significant increase in the share of Chinese sellers on Russian marketplaces [Liu S., 2024]. At the same time, there was a transformation of the product structure — from the predominance of cheap consumer goods to a more diversified range, including electronics, household goods, sports equipment and products of the smart home segment. The quantitative characteristics of these changes are reflected in the systematized data on the main performance indicators of the studied enterprises (Table 1).

Table 1 – Dynamics of key performance indicators of Chinese SMEs in the Russian cross-border e-commerce market, 2020-2024

Indicator	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024 (forecast)
Average annual turnover per SME, thousand yuan	847.3	1 024.6	1 389.2	1 756.8	2 143.5
Average margin, %	18.4	17.1	14.7	16.3	17.8
Average conversion rate, %	2.13	2.47	2.89	3.36	3.71
Average percentage of returns, %	11.6	10.2	9.4	7.8	6.9
Average delivery time, days	28.3	24.7	19.6	14.2	11.8
Share of enterprises with localized content, %	23.7	31.4	48.6	62.3	74.1
Share of enterprises with a local warehouse in the Russian Federation, %	4.2	7.8	14.3	22.7	31.6
Customer satisfaction index (1-10)	5.87	6.24	6.91	7.43	7.82

The presented data indicate a pronounced positive dynamics in almost all the analyzed parameters. The average annual turnover per enterprise for the period under review increased by more than 2.5 times — from 847.3 thousand yuan in 2020 to a projected 2,143. 5 thousand yuan in 2024. The growth rate of turnover was uneven: the largest jump occurred in 2022 (an increase of 35.6% compared to the previous year), which is explained by the massive switching of Russian consumers to Chinese goods in the context of the withdrawal of a number of Western brands from the market. In the following years, the growth rate slowed slightly (26.5% in 2023 and the projected 22.0% in 2024), but remained at a level significantly higher than the average market indicators of Russian e-commerce as a whole.

Special attention should be paid to the dynamics of marginality, which demonstrates a non-linear nature. The decrease in the average margin from 18.4% in 2020 to 14.7% in 2022 is due to a complex of factors: increased price competition between Chinese sellers, increased logistics costs during the pandemic restrictions, and the need to invest in adapting products to Russian requirements [Li Yeqin, 2002]. The recovery of marginality to 16.3% in 2023 and the projected 17.8% in 2024 is due to the transition of some enterprises to a strategy of differentiation and positioning in the middle price segment, as well as optimization of logistics costs through the use of local warehouses. Correlation analysis shows that there is a moderately positive relationship between the presence of a local warehouse in Russia and the level of marginality with a coefficient of 0.47, which indicates the economic feasibility of investing in warehouse infrastructure even with relatively small sales volumes.

The decrease in the percentage of returns from 11.6% to the projected 6.9% correlates with an increase in the share of businesses that have implemented content localization (correlation coefficient minus 0.63). This means that a high-quality adaptation of product descriptions, size grids, instructions, and marketing materials significantly reduces the likelihood that the customer's expectations will not meet the product received. The average delivery time decreased from 28.3 days to the projected 11.8 days, which is one of the most noticeable improvements and is directly related to the development of logistics infrastructure, including the creation of fulfillment centers in Russia and the expansion of the network of consolidation warehouses at the border [Su Zh., 2025].

The depth of localization varies significantly depending on the size of the enterprise, industry affiliation, and strategic orientation. For a more detailed understanding of these differences, the sample enterprises were divided into three groups according to the degree of localization: minimal (only product card translation), medium (localized content, adapted pricing, use of Russian payment systems) and deep (in addition to these elements — a local warehouse, a Russian-language support service, partnership with Russian distributors). The results of comparing the financial indicators of these groups allow us to assess the economic effect of various strategies (Table 2).

Table 2 – Comparative financial indicators of Chinese SMEs by the degree of localization in the Russian market, 2023

Indicator	Minimum localization (n=47)	Average localization (n=68)	Deep localization (n=41)
Average annual turnover, thousand yuan	923.4	1 684.7	3 218.6
Average margin, %	12.8	16.1	21.4
Conversion, %	1.94	3.28	5.67
Percentage of returns, %	12.3	7.4	4.1
Average receipt, yuan	187.4	264.3	412.8
Share of repeat purchases, %	14.7	28.3	43.6
Localization costs (%of revenue)	1.3	4.8	9.7
ROI of localization investments, %	-187.3	187,3	234.6
Average number of SKUs	342	518	287
Brand rating by consumers (1-10)	4.82	6.73	8.14

The gap in financial performance between groups with minimal and deep localization was significantly more pronounced than might have been expected based on previously published studies of cross-border e-commerce in other country contexts. The average annual turnover of enterprises with deep localization exceeds the same indicator of the group with minimal localization by 3.49 times, while the marginality differs by 8.6 percentage points — 21.4% against 12.8%. This margin gap is not so much due to higher prices (although the average receipt is indeed higher — 412.8 yuan versus 187.4 yuan), but rather to significantly lower returns and more efficient use of advertising budgets.

The conversion rate shows even more impressive differentiation: 5.67% for the group with deep localization versus 1.94% for the group with minimal localization. The difference of 2.92 times indicates that investments in the adaptation of content, service and logistics have a multiplicative effect on the willingness of consumers to make a purchase [Chen C., 2017]. It is interesting that enterprises with deep localization have on average a smaller number of SKUs (287 versus 342 for the group with minimal localization), which indicates a focus strategy — instead of placing the widest possible assortment, these enterprises concentrate on a limited number of product items, each of which provides a high quality of presentation and service.

The share of repeat purchases — one of the most significant indicators of localization success-is 43.6% for the group with deep localization, which is almost three times higher than the value of 14.7% for the group with minimal localization. Given that the cost of attracting a new customer in Russian e-commerce is 4-7 times higher than the cost of retaining an existing one, a high repeat purchase rate provides businesses with deep localization with a significant competitive advantage in the long term. The ROI of localization investments for the group with medium localization was 187.3%, for the group with deep localization — 234.6%, which confirms the economic justification of increasing the depth of adaptation.

Separate consideration should be given to the specific elements of localization strategies that have the greatest impact on performance. Among the studied enterprises, there is a significant variability in approaches to adapting various components of the business model. Some companies focus on logistics localization, creating warehouse stocks on the territory of Russia to ensure fast delivery. Others focus on marketing adaptation, attracting Russian bloggers, creating content for social networks and using local promotion channels [Yao, Zhang, 2020]. Still others invest mainly in product localization, modifying the packaging, composition or functional characteristics of goods, taking into account the preferences of Russian consumers.

Analysis of the relationship between individual localization elements and key performance indicators makes it possible to identify priority investment areas for Chinese SMEs with different levels of resource availability. The systematization of these data is presented below (Table 3).

Table 3 – Impact of individual localization elements on key performance indicators of Chinese SMEs, 2023

Localization element	Percentage of applying SMEs, %	Average conversion growth, %	Average reduction in returns, percentage points	Increase in repeat purchases, percentage points	Average investment, thousand yuan / year
Professional translation of product cards	62,3	+0,74	–1,8	+3,2	28,6
Adapting dimension grids and standards	41,7	+0,52	–2,6	+2,1	14,3

Localization element	Percentage of applying SMEs, %	Average conversion growth, %	Average reduction in returns, percentage points	Increase in repeat purchases, percentage points	Average investment, thousand yuan / year
Local warehouse in Russia	22,7	+1,13	–1,4	+8,7	186,4
Russian-language support service	34,6	+0,89	–1,9	+11,3	97,2
Partnership with Russian influencers	28,4	+1,47	–0,3	+6,4	63,8
Adaptation of packaging and labeling	36,2	+0,31	–3,1	+4,8	42,7
Integration with Russian payment systems	78,9	+0,68	–0,7	+2,9	11,4
Creating a brand page on the Russian marketplace	19,3	+1,82	–1,2	+12,6	124,3
Product certification according to Russian standards	27,8	+0,43	–2,8	+5,3	73,6
Loyalty program for Russian customers	12,1	+0,96	–0,9	+16,8	54,1

The largest increase in conversion is provided by creating a full-fledged brand page on the Russian marketplace (+1.82%), but this element is used only by 19.3% of the sample enterprises, which is associated with relatively high investment costs (124.3 thousand yuan per year) and the need to create extensive content in Russian. Partnering with Russian influencers ranks second in terms of impact on conversion (+1.47%) with moderate investments (63.8 thousand yuan), which makes this tool one of the most effective in terms of cost-benefit ratio.

From the point of view of reducing the percentage of returns, the most effective element is the adaptation of packaging and labeling (-3.1 p. p.), followed by product certification (-2.8 p. p.) and adaptation of dimensional grids (-2.6 p. p.) [14]. All three elements relate to the so-called "product localization" and are aimed at eliminating the discrepancy between consumer expectations and the actual characteristics of the product. It is noteworthy that the creation of a local warehouse, despite its significant contribution to increasing conversions (+1.13%), has a relatively modest impact on reducing returns (-1.4 percentage points), since speeding up delivery itself does not eliminate the reasons for dissatisfaction with the product.

The strongest impact on repeat purchases is provided by the introduction of a loyalty program (+16.8 percentage points), which, however, is used by only 12.1% of enterprises. Creating a brand page (+12.6 p. p.) and a Russian — language support service (+11.3 p. p.) also significantly stimulate repeated requests, which is logical-these elements make the consumer feel like working with a full-fledged local seller, and not with an anonymous supplier from abroad [Kostin, Shubaeva, Karimova, 2025]. When calculating the complex efficiency, taking into account the volume of necessary investments, the most attractive ones for SMEs with limited resources are integration with Russian payment systems (minimal investment with a stable positive effect), professional translation of product cards and adaptation of size grids.

In addition to financial indicators, the analysis of the product sales structure of Chinese SMEs in the Russian market and its transformation depending on the localization strategies used is of considerable research interest. Different product categories have different requirements for the depth of adaptation, and the effectiveness of localization investments varies significantly from category to category. Electronics and home appliances require mandatory certification and Russification of interfaces, clothing and footwear need to adapt size grids and adjust stylistic solutions, and home goods and decor need to take into account the aesthetic preferences of Russian consumers [Peng, 2020].

The analysis of industry specifics allows us to identify the categories in which Chinese SMEs achieve the greatest profitability in the Russian market, and those where competition with local manufacturers and Western brands remains the most acute. The relevant data are summarized in a structured form (Table 4).

Table 4 – Performance indicators of Chinese SMEs in the Russian market by product category, 2023

Product category	Share in total turnover, %	Average Margin, %	Conversion, %	Returns, %	Growth by 2022, %
Electronics and Accessories	27,3	14,2	3,87	6,3	+18,4
Clothing and footwear	19,8	19,7	2,64	14,8	+31,6
Home and interior products	16,4	22,3	3,41	5,7	+27,9
Sports and recreation	11,7	17,6	3,12	7,2	+42.3
Beauty and health	8,9	24,8	4,23	8,6	+36,7
Children's products	7,3	16,4	2,97	9,4	+22,1
Car Accessories	5,4	21,6	3,54	4,3	+15,8
Other	services 3,2	13,9	2,18	11,7	+9,3

Electronics and accessories account for the largest share of turnover (27.3%), but the marginality in this category is one of the lowest — 14.2%. This is due to the high price transparency of the segment: Russian consumers easily compare prices for electronics between different sellers and platforms, which limits the possibility of extra charges. At the same time, the conversion rate in this category is quite high (3.87%), and the percentage of returns is moderate (6.3%), which indicates that the characteristics of electronic goods lend themselves well to a standardized description and do not create a significant information gap between the buyer's expectations and the product properties.

The "beauty and health" category shows the highest rates of both marginality (24.8%) and conversion (4.23%), despite a relatively high percentage of returns (8.6%). This paradoxical combination is explained by the specifics of the segment: Chinese and Korean cosmetics are increasingly popular among Russian consumers, and their willingness to pay for innovative formulas and unusual products is significantly higher than in other categories [Sharipov, Dyakonova, 2021]. However, a high percentage of returns is associated with individual reactions to cosmetic products and the mismatch of shades to the visual representation on the screen. Sales growth in this category was 36.7% compared to the previous year.

The most impressive growth dynamics is shown by the category "sports and recreation" (+42.3%), which reflects the general trend of increasing spending of Russian households on sports equipment and goods for outdoor activities. Chinese SMEs in this segment successfully fill the niches created after the departure of a number of Western sports brands, offering functional analogues at significantly lower prices [Liu S., 2024]. A margin of 17.6% and a conversion rate of 3.12% indicate a balanced ratio of price attractiveness and customer interest.

The clothing and footwear category has the highest percentage of returns (14.8%), which is a typical problem of cross-border e-commerce in this segment. Differences in size standards, the perception of color and texture of fabric through the screen, as well as cultural differences in stylistic preferences-all create significant obstacles to a seamless purchase. It is in this category that investments in the adaptation of dimensional grids and detailed visualization of products give the greatest return in terms of reducing returns.

In addition to the product structure, regional differentiation of the Russian market is essential for the formation of localization strategies. Consumer preferences, logistics availability, and digital literacy differ significantly between federal districts, which requires Chinese SMEs to take a flexible approach to territorial targeting. The distribution of sales and efficiency by region gives an idea of the geographical priorities of localization strategies (Table 5).

Table 5 – Regional structure of sales and efficiency of Chinese SMEs in the Russian market, 2023

Federal District	Share in sales, %	Average receipt, RUB	Conversion rate, %	Delivery time, days	Repeat purchase percentage, %
Central	34.7	2,847	4.12	8.6	34.2
Northwestern	12.8	2 634	3.87	9.3	31.7
Volga	14.3	2 186	3.24	12.4	27.8
Ural	9.6	2 413	3.18	13.7	26.3
Siberian	11.4	2 094	3.47	11.2	29.4
Far Eastern	8.7	2 568	3.93	7.8	33.6
Southern	6.1	1 943	2.76	15.3	22.1
North Caucasus	2.4	1 712	2.14	18.7	17.4

The Central Federal District is expected to be the leader in terms of sales share (34.7%), average receipt (2,847 rubles) and conversion rate (4.12%), due to the high concentration of solvent population, developed logistics infrastructure and minimal delivery time (8.6 days). However, the indicators of the Far Eastern Federal District are quite remarkable, which, with a relatively modest share in sales (8.7%), shows the second largest conversion rate (3.93%) and the shortest delivery time (7.8 days) [Fedosov, Lukashova, 2025]. The geographical proximity to China, developed cross-border trade and the historically established habit of the population to consume Chinese goods create a favorable environment for cross-border sales in this region.

The Siberian Federal District occupies an interesting intermediate position: with a relatively low average receipt (2,094 rubles) it shows a conversion rate of 3.47% - higher than the Volga and Ural districts with higher average receipts. This may indicate that in Siberia, consumers ' price sensitivity is offset by a high willingness to make online purchases due to limited access to offline retail in small and medium-sized cities [Wang Yi, 2024]. Delivery time of 11.2 days is an intermediate value that is acceptable for consumers who are used to longer delivery times compared to residents of metropolitan areas.

The Southern and North Caucasus Federal Districts are lagging behind in all indicators, which is due to both a less developed logistics infrastructure for cross-border shipments, and cultural features of consumer behavior, which imply a higher share of offline purchases. The delivery time to the North Caucasus Federal District (18.7 days) is more than twice the same indicator for the Central District, which critically reduces the competitiveness of cross-border sellers in comparison with local retailers. For Chinese SMEs considering the possibility of expanding their presence in the southern regions of

Russia, the creation of intermediate warehouses in Rostov-on-Don or Krasnodar may become a necessary condition for increasing sales efficiency [Li Yeqin, 2002].

Consideration of the totality of the data obtained allows us to formulate a number of generalizations regarding the mechanisms and patterns of localization of Chinese SMEs in the Russian market of cross-border e-commerce. There is a stable relationship between the depth of localization and financial results, and this relationship is non-linear: the marginal return on additional localization elements increases with the complexity of the approach. Businesses that implement several elements at the same time — localized content, local warehouse, Russian — language support, and marketing adaptation-get a synergistic effect that significantly exceeds the sum of the effects from each element separately.

Geographical differentiation of efficiency confirms the need for a regional approach to localization. The "single window" strategy, which treats all Russian consumers as a homogeneous audience, demonstrates limited effectiveness. The most successful companies from the sample use a differentiated approach, building different logistics routes and marketing messages for different regions. The Far Eastern and Central Federal Districts act as natural entry points to the market, while developing a presence in other regions requires additional infrastructure investments.

At the same time, the results obtained indicate that there is a certain threshold for investment in localization, below which costs do not bring a noticeable effect. Businesses that limit themselves to mechanical translation of product descriptions using automatic translators without subsequent editing and cultural adaptation do not gain a statistically significant advantage over businesses that do not perform language localization at all. This confirms the thesis that the quality of localization is no less important than its presence as such, and superficial adaptation can even be counterproductive, creating a negative impression of the seller's professionalism among consumers.

Conclusions

The study of localization strategies of Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises in the Russian cross-border e-commerce market revealed a complex, multidimensional picture in which the success of entering the market is determined not so much by the scale of investments, but by their structural balance and compliance with the specifics of specific product categories and geographical segments. The average annual turnover per enterprise increased from 847.3 thousand yuan in 2020 to 1,756. 8 thousand yuan in 2023, and enterprises with deep localization reach an average turnover of 3,218. 6 thousand yuan, which is more than 3.4 times higher than enterprises with minimal adaptation. The marginality in the deep localization group (21.4%) is 8.6 percentage points higher than in the minimal localization group, and the conversion rate differs almost three times (5.67% vs. 1.94%).

Among the individual localization elements, creating a brand page on the Russian marketplace (+1.82%) and partnering with Russian influencers (+1.47%) provide the highest return in terms of conversion impact, while adapting packaging and labeling (-3.1 percentage points) and product certification (-2.8 percentage points) are the most effective ways to reduce returns.The ROI of localization investments is 187.3% for enterprises with an average degree of adaptation and 234.6% for enterprises with deep localization, which clearly confirms the economic feasibility of these costs.

Product differentiation of efficiency indicates that there is no universal localization strategy. The "beauty and health" category shows the highest marginality (24.8%) and conversion rate (4.23%), but requires specific visualization approaches and mandatory adaptation of ingredient descriptions to Russian standards. The clothing and footwear category, with a significant share in turnover (19.8%), suffers from an unacceptably high level of returns (14.8%), which can be reduced mainly through investments in product localization. The category "sports and recreation" shows the maximum growth dynamics (+42.3%), which makes it the most promising direction for new market participants.

Regional analysis reveals a twofold gap in conversion between the most and least efficient federal districts (4.12% in the Central Region versus 2.14% in the North Caucasus), mainly due to differences in delivery times and the development of logistics infrastructure. With a minimal delivery time (7.8 days) and a high conversion rate (3.93%), the Far Eastern Federal District is an undervalued market whose potential can be realized through deepening cross-border logistics solutions. The formation of a distributed warehouse network with nodes in Moscow, Novosibirsk, and Vladivostok can significantly even out regional imbalances and reduce the average delivery time to 10-12 days for most Russian regions.

References

1. Chen, C. (2017). Krossgranichnaya elektronnaya kommertsiya mezhdu KNR i RF: proshloye, nastoyashcheye i budushcheye [Cross-border electronic commerce between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation: past, present and future]. Vestnik Amurskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta. Seriya: Estestvennyye i ekonomicheskiye nauki, (79), 107-111.
2. Chen, Q. (2017). Kitaysko-rossiyskaya krossgranichnaya elektronnaya kommertsiya: sostoyaniye i vozmozhnosti [Chinese-Russian cross-border electronic commerce: current state and opportunities]. Ekonomika i politika, (10), 68-71.
3. Fedosov, Yu. A., & Lukashova, O. A. (2025). Problemy i perspektivy razvitiya rossiysko-kitayskoy krossgranichnoy elektronnoy kommertsii [Problems and prospects for the development of Russian-Chinese cross-border electronic commerce]. Nauchno-tekhnicheskoye i ekonomicheskoye sotrudnichestvo stran ATR v XXI veke, 1, 811-815.
4. Kostin, K. B., Shubaeva, V. G., & Karimova, L. A. (2025). Osobennosti krossgranichnoy elektronnoy torgovli mezhdu Rossiyey i Kitayem [Peculiarities of cross-border electronic commerce between Russia and China]. Ekonomika, predprinimatelstvo i pravo, 15(10), 7127-7144.
5. Li, C. (2020). Problemy i perspektivy razvitiya rossiysko-kitayskoy krossgranichnoy elektronnoy kommertsii [Problems and prospects for the development of Russian-Chinese cross-border electronic commerce]. Innovatsii i investitsii, (6), 65-70.
6. Li, Y. (2002). Razvitiye transnatsionalnoy khozyaystvennoy deyatelnosti kitayskikh predpriyatiy [Development of transnational economic activity of Chinese enterprises]. Problemy sovremennoy ekonomiki, (3-4), 57-60.
7. Liu, S. (2024). Rossiysko-kitayskaya krossgranichnaya elektronnaya torgovlya: sostoyaniye, problemy i perspektivy [Russian-Chinese cross-border electronic trade: current state, problems and prospects]. Sovremennaya nauchnaya mysl, (3), 209-216.
8. Peng, B. (2020). Funktsionalnaya kharakteristika i sovremennoye sostoyaniye elektronnoy torgovli v Rossiyskoy Federatsii [Functional characteristics and current state of electronic commerce in the Russian Federation]. Ekonomika i predprinimatelstvo, (125), 208-211.
9. Sharipov, F. F., & Dyakonova, M. A. (2021). Perspektivy razvitiya krossgranichnoy elektronnoy torgovli mezhdu RF i KNR [Prospects for the development of cross-border electronic commerce between the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China]. Putevoditel predprinimatelya, 14(3), 18-28.
10. Su, J. (2025). Analiz i tendentsii razvitiya rossiyskogo vnutrennego i mezhdunarodnogo rynkov elektronnoy torgovli (na primere rynka Kitaya) [Analysis and trends in the development of Russian domestic and international electronic commerce markets (on the example of the Chinese market)]. Izvestiya Instituta ekonomicheskikh issledovaniy, (2), 84-92.
11. Wang, S., & Borisova, D. V. (2025). Kitaysko-rossiyskoye krossgranichnoye sotrudnichestvo v oblasti elektronnoy kommertsii [Chinese-Russian cross-border cooperation in electronic commerce]. Konkurentosposobnost v globalnom mire: ekonomika, nauka, tekhnologii, (4), 114-118.
12. Wang, Y. (2024). Problemy i vyzov razvitiya krossgranichnoy elektronnoy kommertsii Kitaya v Rossii [Problems and challenges of developing cross-border electronic commerce of China in Russia]. Tendentsii razvitiya nauki i obrazovaniya, (113-2), 67-70.
13. Yao, Y., & Zhang, Y. (2020). Sderzhivayushchiye faktory kitaysko-rossiyskoy krossgranichnoy elektronnoy torgovli [Constraints on Chinese-Russian cross-border electronic commerce]. Kreativnaya ekonomika, 14(8), 1725-1736.
14. Zhang, G. (2019). Tendentsiya razvitiya sotrudnichestva v sfere krossgranichnoy elektronnoy kommertsii mezhdu Kitayem i Rossiyey [Trend in the development of cooperation between China and Russia in cross-border electronic commerce]. Sovremennaya nauka: aktualnyye problemy teorii i praktiki. Seriya: Ekonomika i pravo, (7), 53-58.
15. Zhang, Ya. (2024). Issledovaniye kitaysko-rossiyskoy ekosistemy elektronnoy kommertsii [Research on the Chinese-Russian e-commerce ecosystem]. Tendentsii razvitiya nauki i obrazovaniya, (114-4), 155-158.

Стратегии локализации китайских малых и средних предприятий на российском рынке трансграничной электронной коммерции

Ци Юйхань

Магистрант,
Российский университет дружбы народов,
117198, Российская Федерация, Москва, ул. Миклухо-Маклая, 6;
e-mail: 1032254853@rudn.ru

Чэнь Чжэн

Доктор философии, преподаватель,
Шицзячжуанский институт железнодорожных технологий,
050000, Китай, Шицзячжуан, ул. Тяньшань, 87;
e-mail: Zhengchencz@163.com

Аннотация

В научной статье рассматривается комплексное влияние стратегий локализации на результативность деятельности китайских малых и средних предприятий в условиях российского рынка трансграничной электронной коммерции, где за последние годы произошла существенная трансформация торговых потоков под воздействием геополитических факторов, роста цифровой инфраструктуры и изменения потребительских предпочтений. Локализация интерпретируется как многоуровневый процесс адаптации бизнес-модели, охватывающий не только лингвистическую составляющую, но и корректировку ассортиментной матрицы, механизмов ценообразования, маркетинговых инструментов, платёжных решений и логистической инфраструктуры с учётом специфики нормативно-правовой среды, региональных особенностей потребительского поведения и инфраструктурных ограничений. Анализ динамики ключевых показателей за период 2020-2024 годов выявляет устойчивую положительную тенденцию: средний годовой оборот одного предприятия увеличился более чем в 2,5 раза, конверсия выросла с 2,13% до 3,71%, процент возвратов сократился с 11,6% до 6,9%, а среднее время доставки уменьшилось с 28,3 до 11,8 дней, причём наиболее выраженные улучшения наблюдаются у компаний, реализующих стратегии глубокой локализации. Сопоставление групп предприятий по степени локализации демонстрирует, что глубокая адаптация, включающая создание локальных складов, русскоязычную поддержку, партнёрства с местными инфлюенсерами, сертификацию продукции и разработку программ лояльности, обеспечивает превышение оборота в 3,5 раза, рост маржинальности на 8,6 процентных пункта, конверсию на уровне 5,67% против 1,94% при минимальной локализации, а также значительное повышение индекса повторных покупок до 43,6%. Исследование отдельных элементов локализации позволяет ранжировать их по степени воздействия на конверсию, снижение возвратов и формирование лояльности, выявляя наибольшую эффективность создания бренд-страниц, сотрудничества с российскими блогерами и продуктовой адаптации. Особое внимание уделяется отраслевой и региональной дифференциации: категории красоты и здоровья характеризуются максимальной маржинальностью и конверсией, одежда и обувь –

повышенным уровнем возвратов, требующим интенсивной адаптации размерных сеток и упаковки, в то время как Центральный и Дальневосточный федеральные округа демонстрируют лучшие показатели эффективности благодаря развитой логистике и близости к поставщику. Полученные результаты подчёркивают нелинейный характер отдачи от локализационных инвестиций, синергетический эффект комплексного подхода и экономическую целесообразность (ROI 187-235%), что определяет необходимость дифференцированных стратегий, учитывающих специфику товарных категорий и географических сегментов российского рынка. Представленный материал способствует формированию системного представления о механизмах обеспечения конкурентоспособности иностранных предприятий в цифровой торговле, позволяя оценить релевантность анализа для понимания современных тенденций трансграничной электронной коммерции и принятия обоснованных решений относительно углубления присутствия на перспективных рынках.

Для цитирования в научных исследованиях

Ци Юйхань, Чэнь Чжэн. Стратегии локализации китайских малых и средних предприятий на российском рынке трансграничной электронной коммерции // Экономика: вчера, сегодня, завтра. 2026. Том 16. № 3А. С. 348-361. DOI: 10.34670/AR.2026.62.52.033

Ключевые слова

Локализация, трансграничная электронная коммерция, китайские МСП, российский рынок, стратегии адаптации, международная торговля, цифровые платформы.

Библиография

1. Ван И. Проблемы и вызов развития трансграничной электронной коммерции Китая в России // Тенденции развития науки и образования. 2024. № 113-2. С. 67-70.
2. Ван С., Борисова Д.В. Китайско-российское трансграничное сотрудничество в области электронной коммерции // Конкурентоспособность в глобальном мире: экономика, наука, технологии. 2025. № 4. С. 114-118.
3. Ецинь Л. Развитие транснациональной хозяйственной деятельности китайских предприятий // Проблемы современной экономики. 2002. № 3-4. С. 57-60.
4. Костин К.Б., Шубаева В.Г., Каримова Л.А. Особенности трансграничной электронной торговли между Россией и Китаем // Экономика, предпринимательство и право. 2025. Т. 15. № 10. С. 7127-7144.
5. Ли Ц. Проблемы и перспективы развития российско-китайской трансграничной электронной коммерции // Инновации и инвестиции. 2020. № 6. С. 65-70.
6. Лю С. Российско-китайская трансграничная электронная торговля: состояние, проблемы и перспективы // Современная научная мысль. 2024. № 3. С. 209-216.
7. Пен Бо. Функциональная характеристика и современное состояние электронной торговли в Российской Федерации // Экономика и предпринимательство. 2020. № 12 (125). С. 208-211.
8. Су Ж. Анализ и тенденции развития российского внутреннего и международного рынков электронной торговли (на примере рынка Китая) // Известия Института экономических исследований. 2025. № 2. С. 84-92.
9. Федосов Ю.А., Лукашова О.А. Проблемы и перспективы развития российско-китайской трансграничной электронной коммерции // Научно-техническое и экономическое сотрудничество стран АТР в XXI веке. 2025. Т. 1. С. 811-815.
10. Цюцзе Ч. Китайско-российская трансграничная электронная коммерция: состояние и возможности // Экономика и политика. 2017. № 2 (10). С. 68-71.
11. Чжан Г. Тенденция развития сотрудничества в сфере трансграничной электронной коммерции между Китаем и Россией // Современная наука: актуальные проблемы теории и практики. Серия: Экономика и право. 2019. № 7. С. 53-58.
12. Чжан Я. Исследование китайско-российской экосистемы электронной коммерции // Тенденции развития науки и образования. 2024. № 114-4. С. 155-158.

13. Чэнь Ц. Трансграничная электронная коммерция между КНР и РФ: прошлое, настоящее и будущее // Вестник Амурского государственного университета. Серия: Естественные и экономические науки. 2017. № 79. С. 107-111.
14. Шарипов Ф.Ф., Дьяконова М.А. Перспективы развития трансграничной электронной торговли между РФ и КНР // Путеводитель предпринимателя. 2021. Т. 14. № 3. С. 18-28.
15. Яо Яо., Чжан Ян. Сдерживающие факторы китайско-российской трансграничной электронной торговли // Креативная экономика. 2020. Т. 14. № 8. С. 1725-1736.