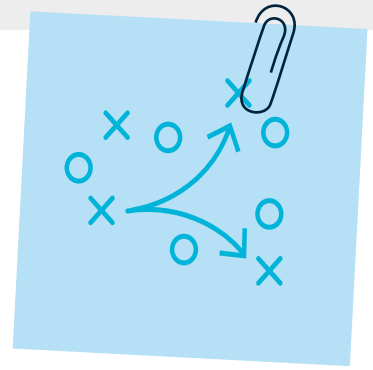


# Be Ready for Global Expansion

How Maersk Enables Asian Brands  
to Scale Internationally



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# Executive Summary

In May 2025, Maersk hosted the Logistics and Services Summit in Hangzhou, gathering industry leaders and supply chain experts from across the region. One theme was clear: Chinese and broader Asian companies are increasingly seeking to expand overseas – not only to capture new markets, but to diversify supply chains amid mounting global uncertainty. This white paper was developed in direct response to those discussions, offering practical insights and a strategic roadmap for international expansion.

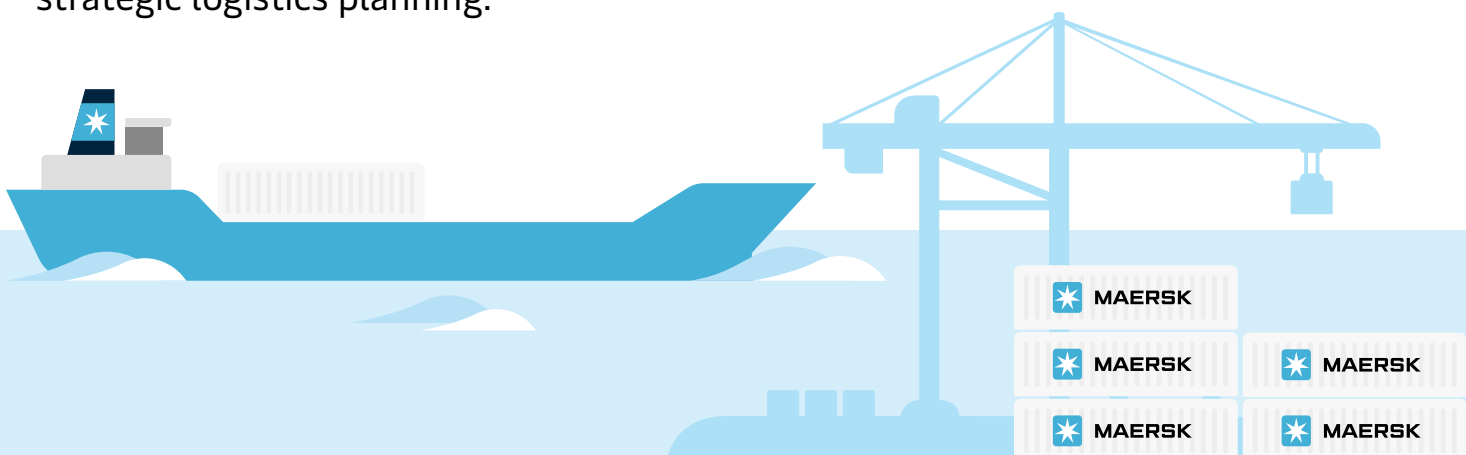
Today, global trade is shaped by volatility – from protectionist tariff regimes to geopolitical instability and climate-driven disruptions. Amid this environment, Asian companies – notably from China, Korea, and Vietnam – are proactively pursuing diversified growth strategies. They are looking beyond traditional markets, eyeing opportunities in Latin America, Africa, North Europe, and intra-Asian routes, while simultaneously managing risk through supply chain resilience and nearshoring.

Maersk is a critical enabler in this journey. With its transformation from a pure ocean carrier to a global integrator of logistics, Maersk delivers tailored, end-to-end supply chain solutions. Its Gemini network promises over 90% schedule reliability as an ambition, supported by expansive local teams and infrastructure across Asia.

## In this e-book, we explore:

- Why 2025 is a pivotal moment for global expansion.
- How Asian brands are navigating customs, cost, and logistics challenges.
- Maersk’s integrated offering that blends global scale with local execution.
- Regional playbooks for Southeast Asia, Mekong, Mexico, Latin America, Europe, and Greater China.

Drawing from Maersk’s expertise and real-world examples, this guide is a blueprint for how Asian exporters can unlock international growth through strategic logistics planning.



# A Shifting Global Economy: Why the Time to Expand is Now

The global economic landscape is entering a new, uncertain phase. According to The Economist Intelligence Unit (May 2025), global real GDP growth is expected to fall to 1.9% in 2025 – the lowest since 2020. Contributing factors include a resurgence of U.S. protectionist policies, stalled trade agreements, and geopolitical instability from the Red Sea to Ukraine.

1.9% growth  
in 2025



Asian manufacturers are facing higher tariffs on exports to North America.



Multinationals are seeking diversified supply chains to avoid overreliance on China.



Demand for supply chain resilience has led to growth in Southeast Asia and Latin America.

For Asian exporters, this environment presents both risk and opportunity. On one hand, unpredictability in tariffs and regulatory environments – particularly with the U.S. – has disrupted traditional export models. On the other hand, regionalized trade and nearshoring trends are opening new growth corridors in Latin America, Southeast Asia, and intra-Asia networks. For instance, countries like Mexico are seeing a sharp increase in foreign direct investment due to their proximity to the U.S. and robust trade agreements.

Additionally, intra-Asia and Asia-to-Africa trade routes are gaining importance, driven by demographic growth and urbanization. Boardrooms across Asia now prioritize supply chain resilience, with dual sourcing and logistics diversification at the top of executive agendas.

In this shifting landscape, agility is the new competitive advantage. Companies that can pivot quickly, access new markets efficiently, and manage compliance risks will be better positioned to grow globally. Maersk's role as an integrated logistics provider becomes central – providing the connectivity, flexibility, and reliability required to thrive in a fragmented world.



# The Rise of the Global Asian Brand

From Chinese e-commerce giants entering Africa to Korean beauty brands setting up fulfillment in Europe, the rise of global Asian brands is reshaping the logistics landscape. Southeast Asian firms – particularly from Vietnam and Indonesia – are scaling exports of electronics, food, and FMCG products. At the same time, Japanese and Korean multinationals are enhancing delivery speeds and shortening supply chains to increase competitiveness.

Despite this momentum, challenges remain. Many brands face complex customs environments, fluctuating shipping costs, low logistics visibility, and inefficient inventory management across markets.

## Global logistics challenges

- Regulatory complexity
- Customs delays
- Inflexible shipping schedules
- Lack of real-time supply chain visibility
- Inventory inefficiencies

Maersk addresses these pain points through its integrator model, combining ocean, air, and inland transport with warehousing, customs clearance, and digital tracking. This global-local engine allows Asian exporters to scale with confidence – whether launching a new product in Brazil or replenishing retail shelves in Berlin.

Through Maersk, Asian companies can match global ambition with local execution.

# The Maersk Global-Local Engine: Tailored End-to-End Logistics

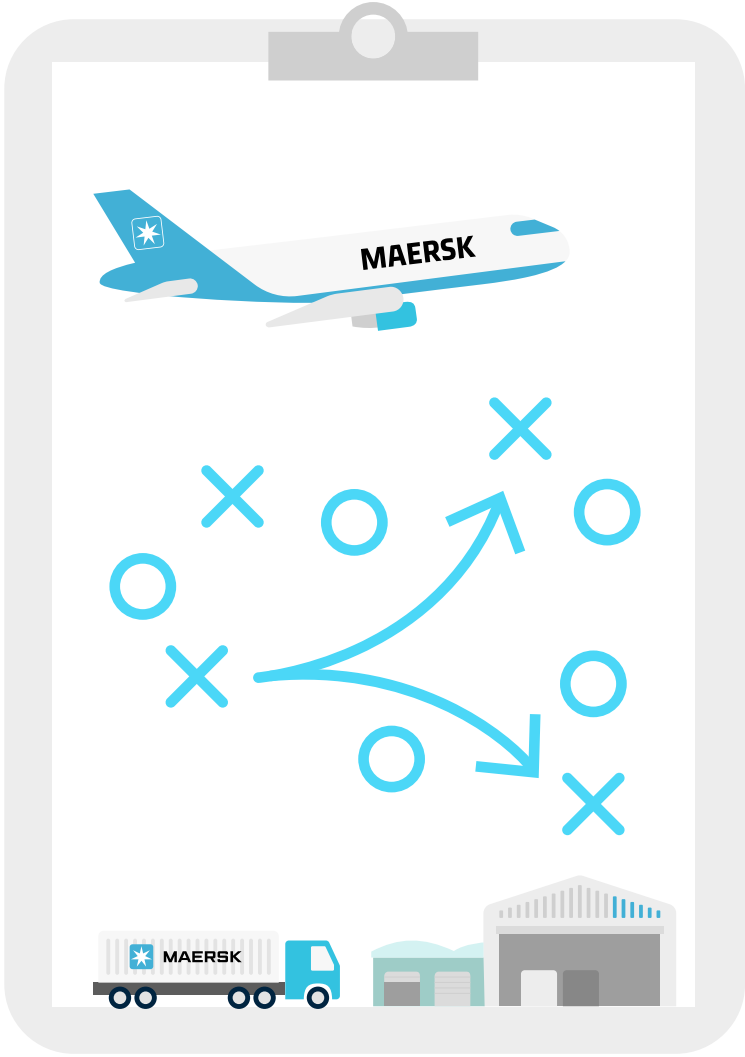
Maersk has redefined itself as a global logistics integrator, offering seamless, end-to-end solutions tailored to the needs of globally ambitious Asian companies. This integrated offering includes ocean, air, inland, rail, warehousing, customs clearance, and digital services – all orchestrated under a unified logistics strategy.

A cornerstone of this transformation is the **Gemini network**, co-developed with Hapag-Lloyd. Fully transitioned in May 2025, Gemini achieves over 90% schedule reliability and minimizes transit disruptions, making it a game-changer for companies facing unpredictable supply chain environments.

At the same time, the **Global Trade & Customs Consultancy (GTCC) unit** provides strategic insights, customs advisory, and compliance solutions tailored for each market.

- Gemini Ocean Network: Achieving 90%+ schedule reliability
- Air Freight Services: Own-controlled and partner-operated networks across 90+ countries
- Warehousing: 153 sites in Greater China and hundreds more globally
- Intermodal Capabilities: Truck, rail, and barge transport integrated with port operations
- LCL Solutions: Consolidated shipping with door-to-door visibility
- GTCC Consulting: Trade compliance, customs strategy, and free trade agreement utilization

# Regional Playbooks: How Maersk Helps Asian Companies Expand Globally



# Southeast Asia



Strategic Hub  
for Regional &  
Global Reach

Southeast Asia is a rising star in global trade, offering cost-efficient production, growing consumer demand, and close proximity to major Asian markets. As companies diversify sourcing beyond China, the region's strategic location and expanding trade links make it essential.

With major logistics nodes across Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines, Southeast Asia is both a critical sourcing region and a dynamic consumer market. Maersk's regional setup includes 25 offices, 5,000 employees, over 1.1 million sqm of warehousing, and dedicated multimodal services across 35 port calls.

Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) in Malaysia is the largest ocean transshipment hub in Maersk's global Network, offering direct connectivity to 90+ ports, bonded zones, sea-air transshipment, and close proximity to Singapore PSA Port. The bonded FreeZone facilitates extended transit times, air cargo routing, and customs simplification.

Across the region, Maersk provides intra-Asia services, LCL consolidation, and first/last-mile support with over 300,000 truck moves annually. Cross-border logistics connect Southeast Asia with Greater China and Northeast Asia, enhancing market access and resilience.


Maersk is also improving coverage between Greater China and Southeast Asia through increased service and ports, covering key ports between China and the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia, helping to enable fast access to market and connectivity with the region and the world.

**Use Case:** The world's largest garment retailer faced severe supply chain disruptions due to the Red Sea Crisis combined with tight capacity due to Chinese Lunar New Year. Maersk helped them continue the flow of goods from APAC to Europe through an integrated Sea-Air service, bringing goods from around Asia to the major hub PTP, transferring to Singapore where they could store goods until shipment, and then utilizing air freight to Europe. Maersk transported 370 tons of goods within an astonishing 13 days.

"Southeast Asia is seeing major Chinese investment, especially in EV and battery production in Indonesia and solar tech in Malaysia. Our region is now a key 'China+1' sourcing base."

**Jez McQueen - Head of Sales,  
Maersk South East Asia Area**

# Mekong Region



Factory  
Relocation &  
Market Entry

With manufacturing shifting from China, Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia are attracting investment for their lower costs and trade access. The Mekong region offers dual benefits: export capabilities and growing domestic markets. Maersk has built a strong footprint here, with ocean terminals, extensive warehousing, and regional control towers – making it a reliable platform for factory relocation and ASEAN distribution. Major infrastructure developments – spanning ports, railways, and airports – are further enhancing logistics capacity across the region.

Maersk supports the Mekong with deep market insights, project logistics, and end-to-end assistance in setting up operations, including customs and tax advisory. The Maersk Mekong Ocean network provides broad regional coverage with simplified connections to Shanghai and Tanjung Pelepas.

In Vietnam, Maersk operates terminals in Hai Phong and Vung Tau, supported by 290,000 sqm of warehousing and robust multimodal links, offering strong export flows to the U.S. via the Gemini service. Thailand boasts over 250,000 sqm of warehousing, inland rail access, and a dedicated berth at Laem Chabang port.

In Cambodia, flexible exports are enabled through Sihanoukville port and barge connections to Vung Tau. In Myanmar, Maersk leverages the Mandalay–Yangon rail and dual port calls at MMMIP and MMMIT, with direct sailings from China. New projects like a deep-sea port and international airport promise even greater connectivity ahead.

“The Mekong is no longer just an alternative – it’s a major global production hub, with abundant labor, raw materials, and rapidly improving infrastructure.”

**Kevin Stuart Burrell - Managing Director,  
Maersk Mekong Area**

# Mexico



Nearshoring for  
U.S. Access

Mexico's rise as a nearshoring destination is driven by its proximity to the U.S., favorable trade agreements, and mature infrastructure. For Asian exporters, it offers a faster, lower-risk path to North American markets.

Maersk connects reliable Far East–Mexico ocean services with multimodal inland transport – including truck, rail, and depot solutions – to optimize supply chains, reduce disruption, and cut costs through container consolidation and storage at key ports. This end-to-end logistics approach provides tariff mitigation, improved cash flow, and seamless access to the U.S. market with full operational visibility.

Maersk's footprint includes warehouses in Mexico City, Manzanillo, and Tijuana; rail and truck links via Laredo and Eagle Pass; and terminals in Lazaro Cardenas and Progreso. The AC2 ocean service from Asia ensures consistent connections to Manzanillo and Lazaro Cardenas ports.

**Use case:** A Chinese automotive spare parts OEM entering the Mexican market to serve the U.S. and Latin America needed a logistics partner with local expertise. Maersk provided a full end-to-end solution, including multicarrier ocean freight, inland drayage from Lazaro Cardenas to a warehouse near Mexico City, customs brokerage, inventory management, and final distribution – ensuring full visibility and operational efficiency across the supply chain.

“With geopolitical shifts, Chinese companies are turning to Mexico as a strategic manufacturing base, taking advantage of its proximity to the U.S. and favorable tariffs under the USMCA.”

**Patrica Perez Salazar**

**Country Managing Director, Maersk Mexico**

# Latin America



Resource-Rich  
& Underserved  
Markets

Latin America presents untapped potential for Asian exporters, with its growing middle class and demand for consumer goods. Yet, complex logistics often pose a barrier. Maersk unlocks access through Panama's MCC model and infrastructure across 60+ ports and 22 warehouses. The result is faster, more cost-effective access to Colombia, Peru, Brazil, and beyond.

Panama serves as a pivotal logistics hub, strategically located and politically stable, offering an ideal environment for Maersk's operations. The country's use of the US dollar since 1904, low incidence of natural disasters, and established free trade agreements further enhance its appeal as a reliable logistics center. Maersk leverages Panama's strategic position to offer comprehensive Less-than-Container Load (LCL) services and bonded warehousing solutions.

The Panama Multi-Country Consolidation (MCC) hub is designed to consolidate shipments, thereby improving velocity, reducing inventory carrying costs, and enhancing overall supply chain efficiency. This integrated solution also provides visibility, streamlines coordination, and supports revenue recognition for distributors.

Furthermore, extensive ocean services connect Asia to key Latin American markets such as Peru, Colombia, and Brazil, while robust inland rail and cross-border trucking services extend Maersk's reach into the broader Andean and Caribbean markets. The Posorja Port, for instance, offers deepwater access, saving significant navigation time.

**Use case:** MCA global truck and engine manufacturer leveraged Maersk's Panama Regional Distribution Center to manage 2,500 monthly spare parts orders across Latin America. By integrating MCC (Multi-Country Consolidation) through Panama, the customer gained enhanced inventory visibility, reduced lead times, and improved container utilization – cutting logistics costs and enabling faster deliveries to key markets like Colombia, Chile, and Peru.

"Our region benefits from a growing middle class and rising consumption, creating strong demand for Chinese goods – especially automotive, machinery, and now electric vehicles."

**Efrain Osorio Baxter - Managing Director,  
Maersk Central America, Andina &  
The Caribbean Area**

# North Europe



Mature  
Market Access  
with Green  
Solutions

Europe demands high speed, compliance, and sustainability – making logistics here both complex and strategic. Maersk’s integrated model combines green rail and electric trucks with major hubs in Amsterdam and Frankfurt. With bonded storage and over 35 warehouses across the region, Maersk simplifies fulfillment into this high-value, regulation-heavy market.

The Frankfurt Gateway, part of Maersk’s Air Freight grid, is a strategic geographical location offering year-round operations. Cargo moves via own-controlled flights or strategic airline partners, with end-to-end visibility and customs services. Maersk also offers extensive ocean as well as inland options, through a flexible model system based on your needs.

Maersk warehouses are present in 15 European countries, with over 35 warehouse facilities. Flexible distribution, from full truck loads, less than truck loads, and even parcel delivery, increases speed to market, reduces own assets costs, and increases options in your supply chains. This is backed by Maersk’s EU customs expertise.

“Chinese shippers entering North Europe can benefit from our end-to-end capabilities – integrating ocean, inland haulage, warehousing, and visibility tech – to reach final markets across Germany, Benelux, and Poland.”

**Ole Trumfheller - Managing Director, Maersk North Europe Continent Area**

# Greater China



The Launchpad  
& Transforma-  
tion Core

Greater China remains the world's manufacturing powerhouse and a key base for companies expanding abroad. Despite diversification, it's still central to global trade strategy.

Maersk supports over 30,000 customers, offering a full logistics suite including ocean, rail, air, LCL, Spot, and inland transport. Our key pillars include reliable ocean shipping service, end to end logistics & services, seamless digitalization, and commitment on sustainability.

Key facts & figures:

- Air: 6 gateways across China serving 90+ countries
- Intermodal: China inland coverage of over 90%
- LCL: Lower inventory and easy online bookings in 4 hours
- Cross Border: An alternative solution connecting ocean network and other logistics solutions including our Middle Corridor solution

The region handled over 9.6 million TEU in 2024 and maintains over 12,000 employees. Maersk's integration of ocean, warehousing, customs, and digital platforms like Maersk Spot and Flow enables high-tech, retail, and auto firms to expand into Europe and beyond.

Maersk's Custom Service Network supports clients throughout their logistics journey, with scalable solutions tailored to local requirements, tax regimes, and market dynamics.

"In Greater China, we are accelerating the development of our logistics capabilities, improving punctuality to over 90%, and focusing on digitalization and sustainability to support our 2040 net-zero carbon goal."

**Silvia Ding - Managing Director,  
Maersk Greater China Area**

# Future-Ready Supply Chains: Resilience, Sustainability, and Compliance

As global supply chains adapt to new norms, resilience, sustainability, and compliance are no longer optional – they're foundational. Maersk supports these priorities through its multi-pronged strategy.

Resilience begins with diversification. Maersk enables multi-origin sourcing and multi-modal transport options – including ocean, air, rail, and inland – to reduce dependencies and mitigate disruption risks. Flexible fulfillment models support just-in-time and just-in-case strategies, ensuring business continuity.

Sustainability is embedded in Maersk's roadmap. The company is actively deploying green methanol-powered vessels, electric trucks for inland transport, and low-carbon intermodal options across key trade corridors. These efforts help shippers reduce emissions and meet corporate ESG goals.

Compliance is enforced through the Global Trade & Customs Consultancy (GTCC), which offers end-to-end regulatory support – from HS classification to AEO certification and customs optimization. This is particularly vital in an era of volatile trade rules and digital border enforcement.

With a growing focus on decarbonization, ESG disclosures, and customs digitization, Maersk empowers businesses to turn compliance into competitive advantage.



# Conclusion: Let's Expand, Together

In today's fragmented trade environment, partnering with an agile, integrated logistics provider is more important than ever. Maersk offers a powerful combination of global scale and local insight, helping Asian companies navigate complexity with confidence.

From emerging startups in Southeast Asia to established conglomerates in China, Maersk's end-to-end capabilities and regional presence enable scalable, resilient, and sustainable growth.

Let's co-create the next chapter of your global expansion journey – by transforming your supply chain into a strategic advantage.

**Ready to go further? Let's expand, together.**





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