

TITLE: Why Brand Reputation Travels Slower Than You Think



AUTHOR:
**Russ Ziegler, Connect Sales,
Coaching and Consulting**

About the Author:

Russ Ziegler is the Founder of Connect Sales, Coaching and Consulting. He helps international manufacturers enter and succeed in the U.S. dealer market through education, operational alignment, and measurable accountability. With more than fifteen years in the dealer distribution industry, Russ has trained hundreds of professionals and supported manufacturers in building stronger networks and healthier dealers.

Many international OEMs assume that their strong reputation at home will carry them into the U.S. market. After all, if your brand is trusted in Europe, Asia, or Latin America, why would that not translate?

The reality is that brand reputation does not cross borders as quickly as airplanes do. In the U.S., you start almost from zero.

Why Reputation Does Not Transfer Automatically

- **Local Trust Matters More:** U.S. dealers and customers rely on what they see locally — not on awards, sales numbers, or testimonials from other countries.
- **Proof is Required:** Without case studies and references from U.S. customers, most buyers remain cautious.
- **Competition is Fierce:** In a crowded market, even a global nameplate may be treated as “new” until proven.
- **Dealer Reputation Leads the Way:** Often, the local dealer’s standing in the community carries more weight than your global brand. If the dealer is respected, customers are more likely to give your product a chance.



America Ready

Building Reputation the Right Way

- Start with **pilot projects** and highlight early adopter success stories.
- Invest in **local marketing** that shows your presence in the U.S. is real and permanent.
- Leverage your first U.S. dealers as **reference points** to build credibility with others.
- Recognize that **dealer brand equity is your brand equity** in the early stages.

The Bottom Line

Your brand may be global, but credibility in the U.S. must be earned. The OEMs who accept this reality — and partner with strong local dealers to borrow credibility — are the ones who win trust and market share.

Accelerate your entry into the U.S. market with clarity, alignment, and measurable performance. Explore additional America Ready insights, dealer development tools, and U.S. market strategies at www.Connect-CSCC.com.

