If they can't



They won't buy.

Why your content must go global,
and the smart way to get it there.

SDL | Language Cloud


Most people don't recognise the value of translation until they **can't understand** something

When over 80% of people say they are more likely to purchase a product that's presented to them in their own language, there can be no shortcuts.

With 72% of internet users preferring a language other than English, how much content is translated and the quality standard to which it is completed, is critical to successfully growing brands and businesses.

Translation… an 'activity', or a strategy?

Consistently delivering content that works in all regions demands a strategy that articulates what success looks like, and what, in turn, that demands. This will drive the standards you set (machine translation, human translation, transcreation), the resources you use (in-house vs external specialists) and the processes and systems you employ to take the pain out of delivering brilliant content.

Budgets, resources and ROI will demand hard decisions

The principle of fit-for-purpose applies to localising content as it does anywhere else. Primary content, such as advertising, webpage content, marketing and newsletters, is delivered direct to new and current customers and as such needs to be highly accurate and speak to the reader in a natural voice. This content should be transcreated by human translators, whenever possible.

High volume supplementary content, such as reviews and forums, can be handled more cost-effectively using machine translation.

At the heart of all successful localisation strategies is an intelligent analysis of the customer journey from awareness to consideration and trial phases through to puchase and post purchase interactions. When much of this journey is digital, use web analytics to define what online content is most important to your audiences.

It's not just budgets that will dictate the priorities. Your overall marketing strategy – ie priority territories, the level of local understanding within the business and the internal resources able to manage the production, approval, deloyment and updating of content all have their part to play in your planning and processes.



Are you thinking language, or territories?

A key decision is whether to localise your content based on territory or language: will the same content in French be targetted at customersin France, Benin, and Quebec? It's not just that cultural differences exist, there are also different market dynamics in play and individual countries consume media in different ways. These considerations may determine what content is 'unversal' and what will always be singled-out for specific localisation.

SEO and mobile is key to any strategy

The SEO implications of localisation is a major consideration in any multilingual strategy. It's essential that localised keywords are added to your keyword database, to ensure consistency and correct density. A thorough analysis of the most useful keywords within each territory is essential – the best ones are not always the most obvious ones!

Equally critical is mobile app localisation, especially when expanding into countries like Russia, China and Brazil where mobile devices are the most common way to access the internet.

The goal is being global, but local makes it or breaks it.

There are many ways a message can go sideways when it's localized, and a lot of those can be avoided by being vigilant when writing the initial source content.

The Big 6 rules of localised content

1. Numbers, colours and animals – be aware they can have different meanings in different countries.

2. Dates and seasons – while you may be used to four seasons, other parts of the world only have two. Some countries also use a different calendar system.

3. Colloquial expressions – they cannot be literally translated and are best avoided.

4. Maps and flags – avoid using maps or flags of regions with border disputes.

5. Cultural references – they can liven up copy but must be used carefully.

6. Social norms – these vary from place to place, so be wary of assuming certain points in your content will be understood.



Understand best practice, then apply it.

As with any content creation, translation and transcreation come with best practices that help today's marketer to achieve operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness when delivering high-quality localised content.

Style guide: Establish a dedicated style guide for multilingual content which sets the standards for writing and designing documents, from spelling and tone of voice, to formatting issues. Social media and editorial guidelines should also be part of your style guide. Consider using Unicode fonts so accents can be reproduced.

Glossary: a well considered glossary of terms specific to your business enables integration between your marketing and ecommerce sites. An SEO keyword list should be drawn up, along with taglines, trademarks and your company values.

Translation memory: This is a library of "content segments", from parts of sentences or headings to whole paragraphs, which have already been translated, and can aid human translator



Practicalities to consider:

- **Paper size standards for printing vary from country to country.**
- **Length of content varies by language, so global templates are needed to accommodate this.**
- **Editable source files such as InDesign files with fonts and graphics separate are better for translation than PDFs. Avoid embedding text.**
- **Search engines other than Google are popular in different countries, for example Yandex in Russia and Baidu in China.**
- **An XML sitemap can differentiate translated content between localised sites and can also drive SEO.**
- **For videos, look beyond YouTube and use voiceover rather than on-screen speakers. Use separate audio and video tracks to allow for easier editing. Scripts can be pre served and reused.**
- **Use linguistic and functional testing on mobile platforms for each of the target languages**

Conclusion

No business aiming to grow internationally can afford to treat localisation as an afterthought, as the final stage in a process. Talking to people in their own language is central to success. Just make sure you are using the right language.

SDL Language Cloud - Managed Translation is the simpler, smarter way to manage your translation projects. SDL has a unique combination of expertise, experience, resources and technology that businesses of any size can leverage to accelerate their international success.

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