

# 10 HIGHLY USEFUL TIPS FOR LOCALIZING CONTENT

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*As more organizations expand globally, so does the need to localize digital experiences in different regions and countries. These tips will help you market like a native, no matter where your digital footprint may fall.*

# WHY LOCALIZE?

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If you're managing a global organization, or plan to expand internationally, localization has to play a part in the earliest stages of your digital experience planning.

**Localization** is the process of adapting – not simply translating -- all the elements of a website to meet the needs and interests of a targeted segment within a locale, taking elements like geography, language and cultural context into account.

Even in an age where more and more people around the world understand the concept of “globalization,” they still expect marketers to respect and appeal to their own national or cultural norms and traditions.

Whether customizing your product assortment based on local tastes, or changing the images on your home page to reflect the native demographic, you need to show sensitivity to those local factors. They can make -- or break -- your marketing efforts in other regions or countries.

# 56%

*of visitors to websites stay twice as long on sites that are available in their native tongue.*

*Source: Forrester*

# 72%

*of consumers would be more likely to buy a product using information in their own language.*

*Source: Harvard Business Review*

# 56%

*said the ability to obtain information in their own language is even more important than price.*

# THE BENEFITS OF LOCALIZATION

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Having a digital presence in multiple countries becomes more imperative every year for more and more marketers. But many haven't even begun to adopt localization as a strategy:

- A 2015 study by Lionbridge revealed that nearly 40% of companies surveyed said they didn't have a web content localization strategy.
- 13% said they handled localization requests on a strictly ad hoc basis.

So by adopting localization as part of your digital experience planning, you may already be getting out in front of a sizable share of your competition.

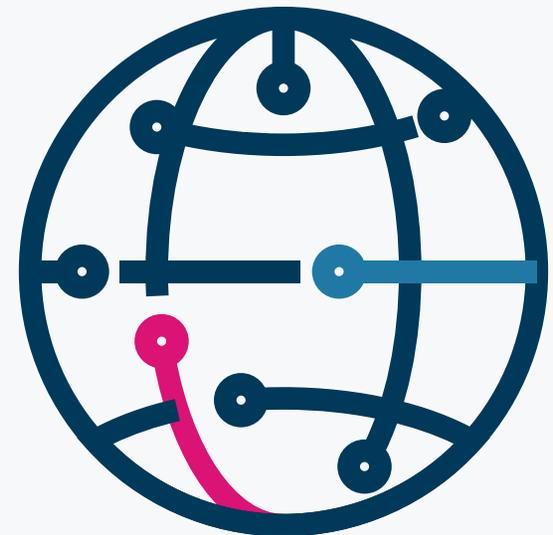
***“As a global startup, it’s important that we are both international and local at the same time. Because of this, we’ve taken many steps toward localization.”***

*– Jason Katz-Brown, Software Engineer at Airbnb.*

**41%**

*of prestige brands maintain at least one local country page on Facebook. These pages have grown at twice the rate of global communities and register 50% higher engagement.*

*Source: Facebook*



# CREATIVITY, LOYALTY AND EVANGELISM

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**It stands to reason that by offering your website in multiple languages, you're projecting a more professional image, which builds credibility. Not to mention capturing the respect and loyalty of local consumers.**

Since a huge amount of product trial and consumer loyalty today is driven by word-of-mouth, especially via social media, earning that local trust can have a major evangelizing effect.

**52%**

*of online consumers make purchases only from websites that present information in their native language. Depending on the product, up to 85% would not buy without first reviewing information presented on a site in their native language.*

*Source: Common Sense Advisory*



# SEARCH ENGINE RANKINGS

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Localization also assures you'll have better presence in search within each country where you've created a localized website or digital touchpoint. Users will be typically searching in their native language, and won't find you unless you've translated your content.

## Some specific ways localization helps SEO?

- Avoiding duplicate content on sites dodges a penalty from search engines, and this applies to content that may be used in countries that share the same language. So leveraging expert translations that adapt to local idioms and usage can create variation that's good for SEO.
- Using country code top level domain (ccTLD) suffixes for sites in specific countries also boosts rankings. The ccTLD for France is .fr, so [www.yourcompany.com.fr](http://www.yourcompany.com.fr) tells Google the site is for France – which can help it rank more highly for users in that country.

97%

*of consumers search for local businesses online according to Google. So localizing your websites to include local offices and outlets is a best practice, since users employ "keyword+location" in those searches.*



# BOTTOM LINE REWARDS

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Strong correlations have been proven between the number of languages in which a company or brand makes its website available and its financial strength:

- A Common Sense Advisory Research survey of Fortune 500 firms showed how those that expanded their translation budget were **1.5 times more** likely than their peers to report an increase in total revenue.
- A study by the Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA) revealed that a typical business was seeing an **ROI of \$25 for every dollar spent on localization.**
- When Israeli e-tailer Under.me launched a German-language website, **their conversion rate in Germany doubled.** Creating a French-language version for France saw nearly the same results.
- 42% of internet users in 23 European countries never bought products and services in other languages, according to a 2011 Gallup study. So translation and localization gives them a reassuring purchase channel – and opens up sales opportunities marketers might never see otherwise.

95%

*of Chinese online consumers indicate a greater comfort level with websites in their own language.*

*Source: Forrester*



# 10 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LOCALIZATION

01

**Professionally translate all content** including headlines, graphics and the text within graphics. Also, consider if there's a need for language segmentation within a region or country; for example, German Swiss has notable differences from the German spoken in Deutschland. Or you may want to engage people in the Basque region of Spain in their own language.

*It's a good idea to employ expert linguists who either live in-country or are exceptionally familiar with the local dialects, understand local and regional idioms, slang, even how the locals refer to your brand or products. That also creates content variation that's good for SEO.*



**Utilize photography that reflects the local demographic** of your customer. If you're marketing in Asia, then your photos shouldn't be of westerners, and even the settings and situations depicted might need to be appropriate to the audience.

It's advisable to follow the same rule if you're using videos as part of your in-market content. When using video subtitles, remember that some other languages may need more words or characters to get the information across than in English subtitles.

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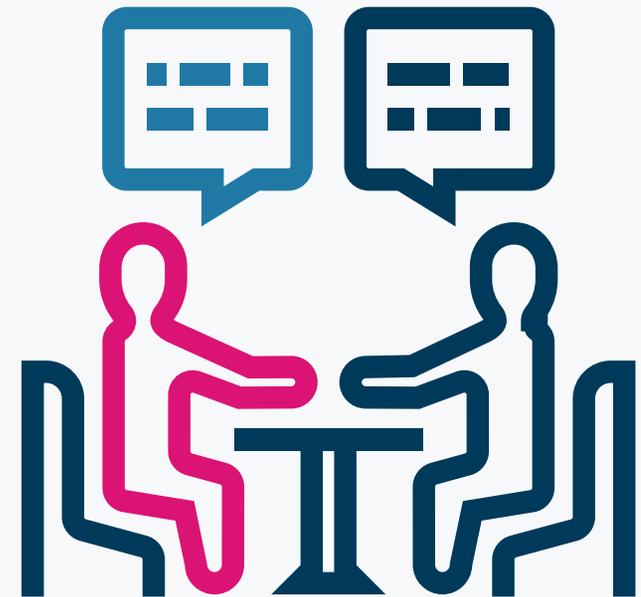


# 10 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LOCALIZATION

03

**Conduct research with people in local markets** to get their thoughts on your logo, brand name, and tag line. Your goal? To make sure there are no unintended meanings in the native language. Whatever you do, don't rely on automated translation tools to do the work. That can translate into disaster. When Nokia rolled out its Lumia smartphone line, it hadn't realized "lumia" was Spanish slang for "prostitute", for instance.

*In 2015, Taco Bell launched a website in Japan that apparently used Google Translate. So their Cheesy Fries became "a low-quality fleece", and their Crunchwrap Supreme - Beef became "Supreme Court Beef." And the phrase "we've got nothing to hide" got more than a little twisted around: it was converted to a Japanese phrase along the lines of "what did we bring here to hide."*



# 10 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LOCALIZATION

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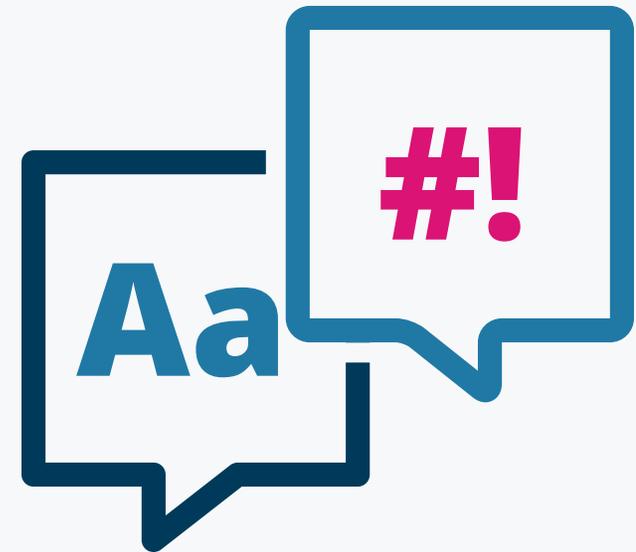
**Create a user interface that accounts for different lengths of phrases and words**, based on the language in which they're written. Some languages require fewer characters than English; others require more. "Search" uses 10 characters in French but just two in Japanese. "Basket" is only 6 characters in English, but when translated to German? It's 13 characters long.

*Certain acronyms or initialisms we take for granted need to be translated, too. NATO should be OTAN in French, for example. Some don't exist in other languages, either. Arabic, for example, doesn't use acronyms -- partly attributable to the fact that it doesn't employ upper case or lower case letters. So acronyms will need to be written out, and accommodated for in site layouts.*



**Work with your IT department in resolving how to display special characters**, especially for Arab and Asian countries where the alphabet is different. Some languages are read right-to-left, so consider that, too.

*Some ideographic languages read top-to-bottom, such as Chinese, Japanese and Korean.*



**Account for the fact that dates, times, currencies and even names may change** across borders, time-zones and datelines. Date formats will be different in many countries (usually transposing the month and day). As for names, many Asians put their family name first: if writing in Chinese, the famous cellist Yo-Yo Ma would write his name as Ma Yo-Yo.

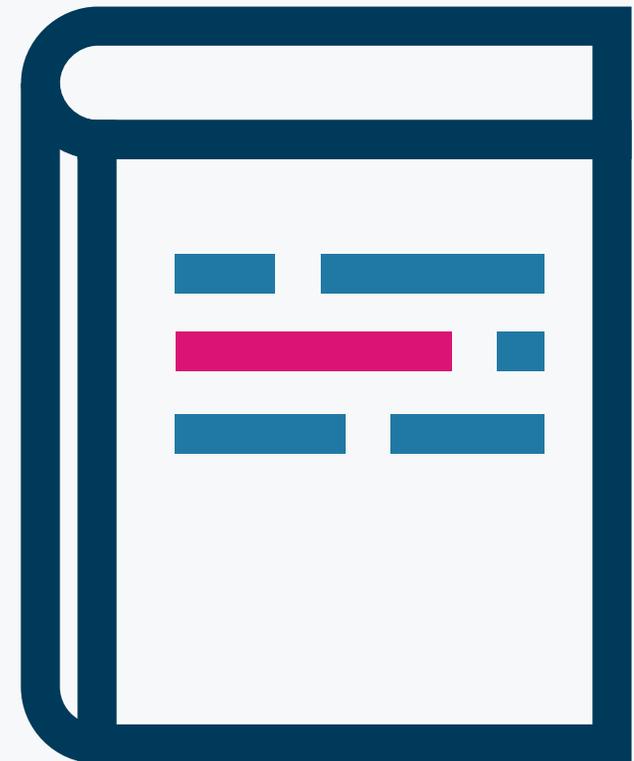
*In the U.S., the first day of the week is Sunday, but in the U.K.? It begins on Monday. In the Maldives? Friday.*



# 10 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LOCALIZATION

07

**Work with local market consultants**, either born in that country or who lived there for an extended period; they'll help you understand the basic differences in customs, tone, and practices. For instance, an expert on Japan would tell you that sarcasm doesn't exist in Japanese culture – so content with ironic tone might be misinterpreted. Also, employ a local legal consultant to assure you're in compliance with the growing number of local laws affecting web content and digital marketing.



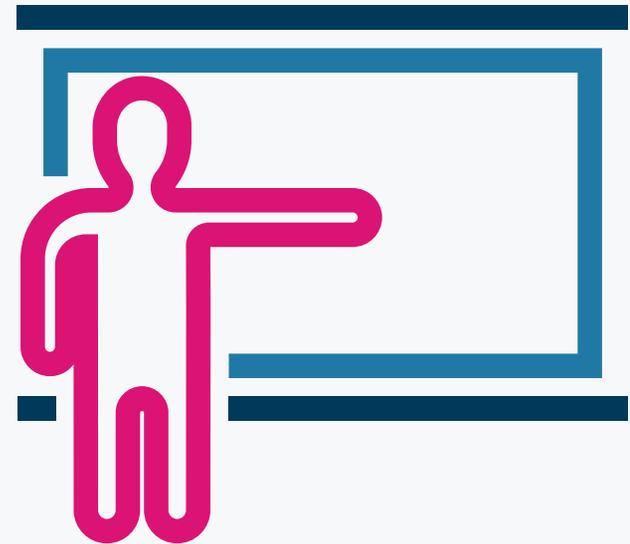
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**Confirm the relevance and clarity** of your marketing campaigns and messages within the customer's cultural context; you may want to do this through pre-publication testing.

Whoever does the testing should have excellent linguistic skills in not just the "target" language and culture, but in the "source", as well. In localizing a website from English to Greek, for example, it's important that the tester precisely understands what the English-speaking marketer intends to say, before assessing how well the content will work for users in Greece.

*Hoping to reset US-Russia ties, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton presented Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov with a red button that said "Reset" in English and "Peregruzka" in Russian. She learned shortly afterwards that "peregruzka" actually means overcharged in Russian.*

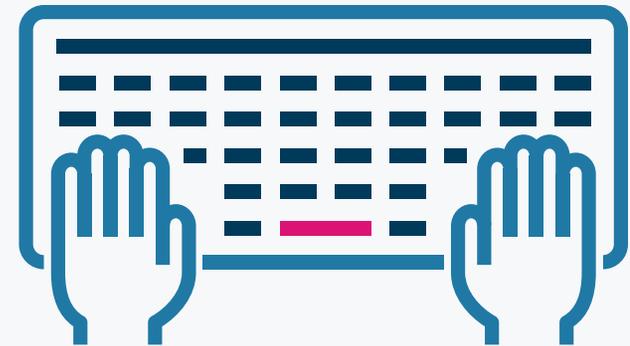


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09

**Determine if your existing deployment infrastructure enables localization.** Can centralized managers deliver localized content and assets to different regions? Often, organizations use multiple CMS or web management tools in different countries, which compromises their ability to coordinate localization, and makes the process expensively inefficient. Even a platform applied across all global markets may lack necessary features. Consider a Digital Experience Management (DXM) solution that enables centralized control from a single dashboard.

*A study by the International Institute for Management Development found the vast majority of business leaders think at least 4 of the world's top 10 companies won't survive the next 5 years, brought down by disruptive technologies and their own lack of agility.*



# 10 TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE LOCALIZATION

10

**Employ a localization-capable web management platform.** Being able to consolidate their digital governance of branding, quality control and regulatory compliance across all markets is why many global organizations are replacing their old WCM systems and adopting new Digital Experience Management (DXM) systems instead. These balance the c-suite's demand for digital governance and centralized oversight with the ability to enable local marketing teams to manage elements and initiatives that are region-specific.



# crownpeak

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Founded in January 2001, Crownpeak was the first company to offer web content management through a SaaS solution. Today, leading brands trust Crownpeak's cloud-first Digital Experience Management (DXM) platform to quickly and easily create, deploy and optimize customer experiences across digital touchpoints at scale. Crownpeak provides a complete solution for DXM featuring content management, personalization, search and hosting, in addition to fully integrated Digital Quality Management (DQM) to ensure brand integrity and meet compliance requirements. More than 180 customers including Unilever, BNY Mellon, Thomson Reuters, Eli Lilly, and Aflac rely on Crownpeak to deliver engaging experiences that delight customers, promote loyalty and deliver results.