

Localisation.

Introduction

Translation is the process of rendering text from one language into another so that the meaning is equivalent.

Localisation is a more comprehensive process and addresses cultural and non-textual components as well as linguistic issues when adapting a product or service for another country or locale.

Designers are more and more aware of the critical role copywriting plays in the user experience. Copywriting is a true creative work.



What do we want to say? Who's the target? When and Where? What's the tone?

It provides personality to design, helping to humanise our interfaces. So, why put so much effort into designing and polishing up this personality if it ends up lost in translation?

Translators know it well. Translating a text means, above all, understanding and analysing it thoroughly. Thus good translation allows all users - the original version users as well as others - to value the designer's style.



Why is localisation important?

Nowadays, professional translators are the best international marketers. They present your product or service in its best light, ready for a foreign language or context.

For example, you have 3 terms in a translation project that mean more or less the same thing but they're technically 3 different words in the original message. Logically, a blissful translator translates them without context or knowing it's the same word. In this way, the translation process is less effective, more expensive, and loses the original quality.

This is just one of the endless examples that prove the importance of localising experiences, to give all users equal consideration.

The way in which we express culture differs from country to country. With so many different cultures and customs, it can be easy to bemuse, anger or offend people when marketing your brand on the global stage.



Localisation goes beyond just language

It makes sure your content resonates with your global audience on a personal and cultural level. There are many ways global organizations communicate their brands. Many marketing channels are available to quickly and effectively reach international audiences.

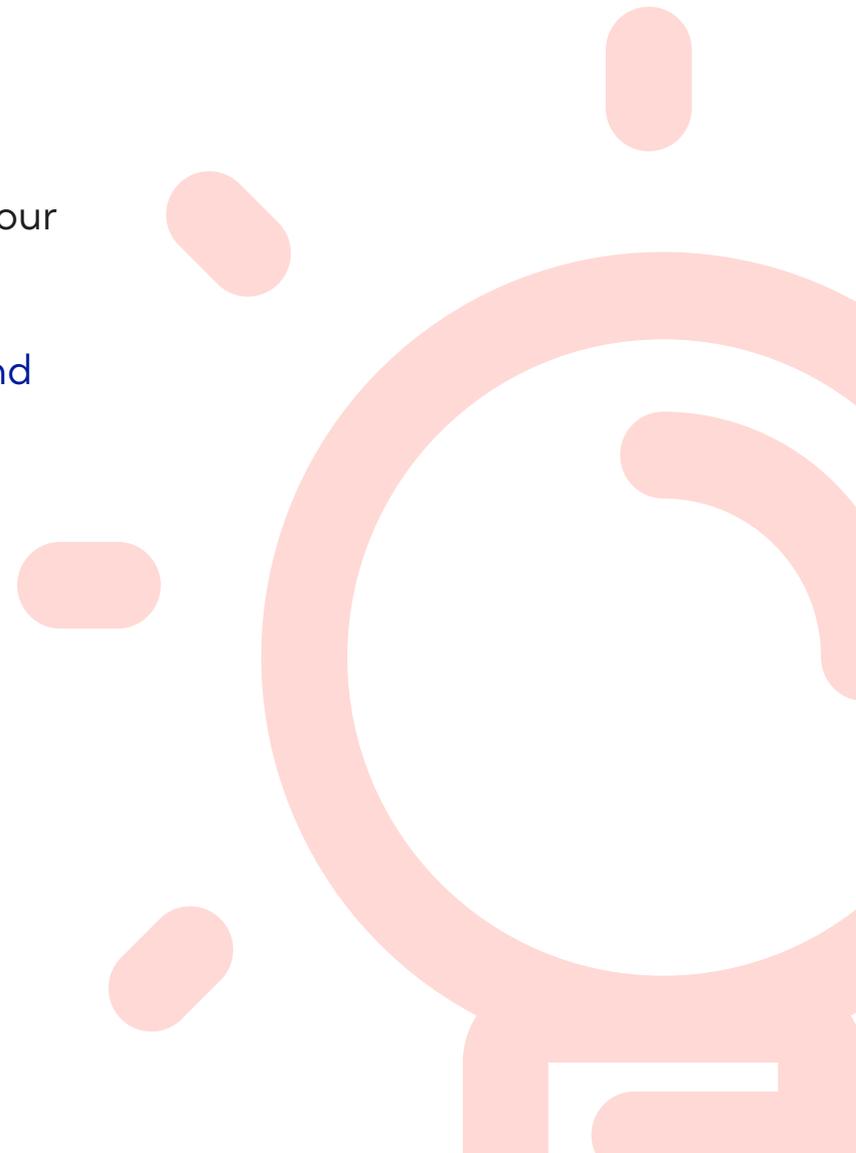
The key is to be mindful of how you portray your brand, whatever country it is marketed in. This means taking into account how your brand's marketing messages are viewed around the world.



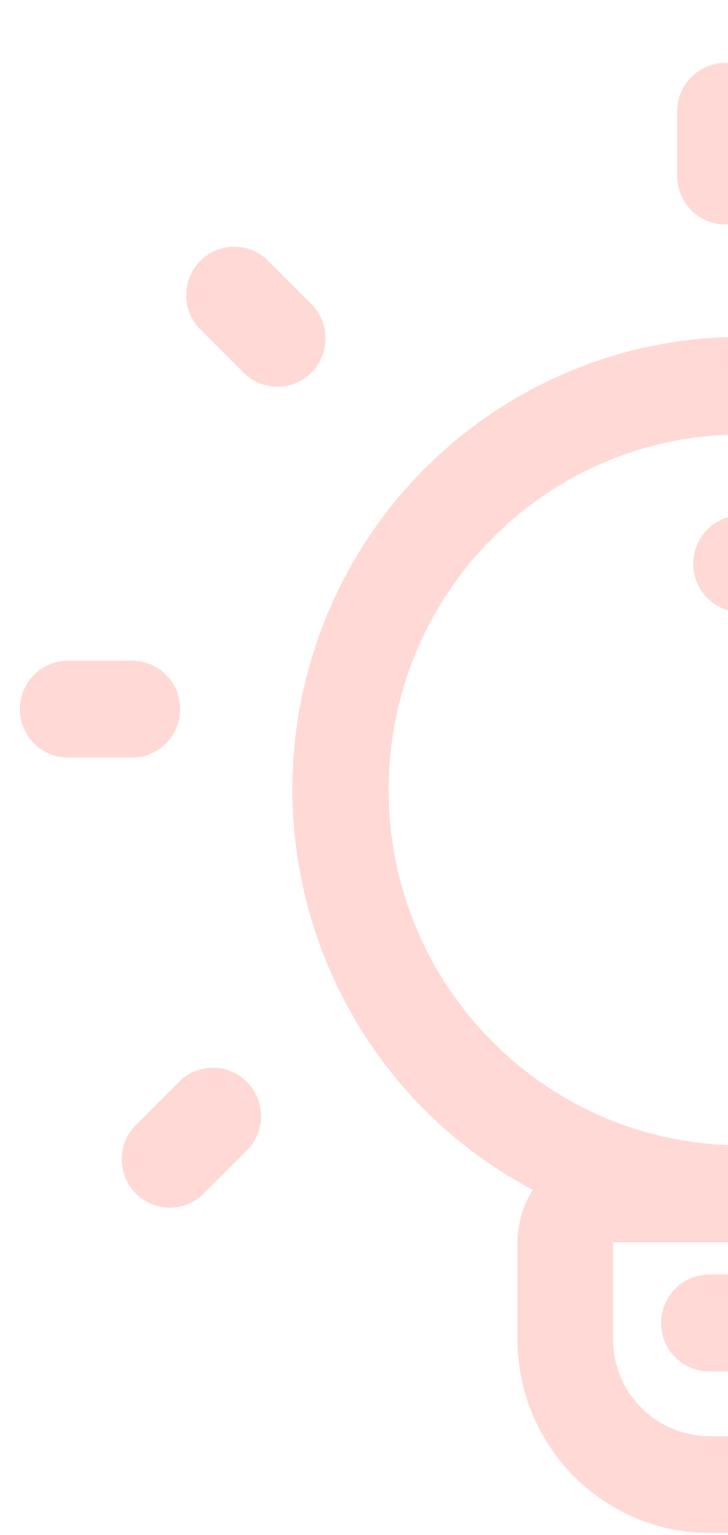
Expand your business

Preparing your business for expansion overseas requires more than just a change in language when translating your business and marketing material.

The key to the success of global growth is localisation, and one of the most important steps for many companies' localisation is tailoring their online presence and website design to their new audiences.



- For example, if the CTA on the right-hand side of your page is working just fine for your US audience, but it is going totally unnoticed by your French and German customers, that's an easy area to fix.
- Or, if your international customers are getting through to a payment page but then dropping out in much greater numbers than on your home-language page, that may point to a problem with the payment methods you're offering.
- Maybe all your images feature people standing on their own. That may work in the UK and US because people feel an individual, personal connection to the person in the image. But in other cultures (for example in India and Saudi Arabia), collective identity is much stronger, so images of groups of people could be more effective.
- If your German customers have a much lower download rate compared to all your other users, that shows there's probably a UX issue that needs to be sorted out immediately.



Localising design

Getting international UX right can be tough. There's a lot to think about, a lot that can very easily go wrong, and a lot that you just can't assume about the way your different customers act online

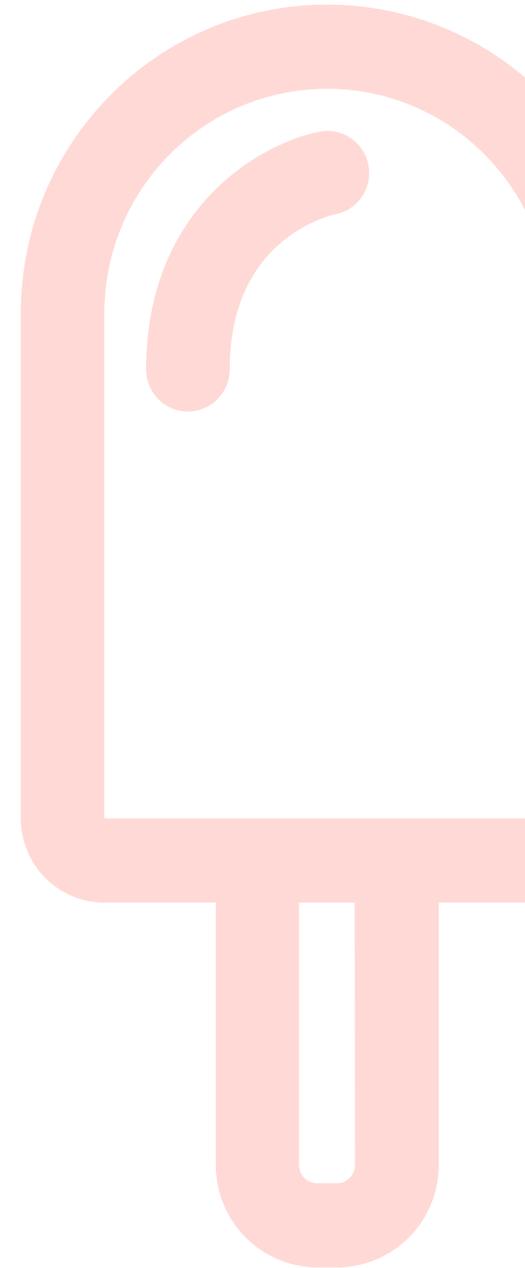
BLUE

The colour blue, for example, can be soothing and represent trustworthiness to Americans.

Blue to Mexicans is their color of mourning. But did you know that blue is a really important colour in France? It's the national colour and French people generally have a positive reaction to it.

Testing your 'Buy now' button colour in blue on your French site could lead to more clicks.

However, in Germany, people have a more problematic relationship with the national colours—lots of yellow, red, and black on your site is likely to put them off.



Localisation vs Translation

In US and most European markets, it's important to keep it simple – straight to the point and avoid busy websites full of texts as users will lose interest and will leave the website feeling overwhelmed.

However in Asian websites, it's the opposite; the more descriptions and heavier the website, the better.

Also, using symbols may not have the effect you intended. Another essential aspect to keep in mind is the formality of the tone of voice.

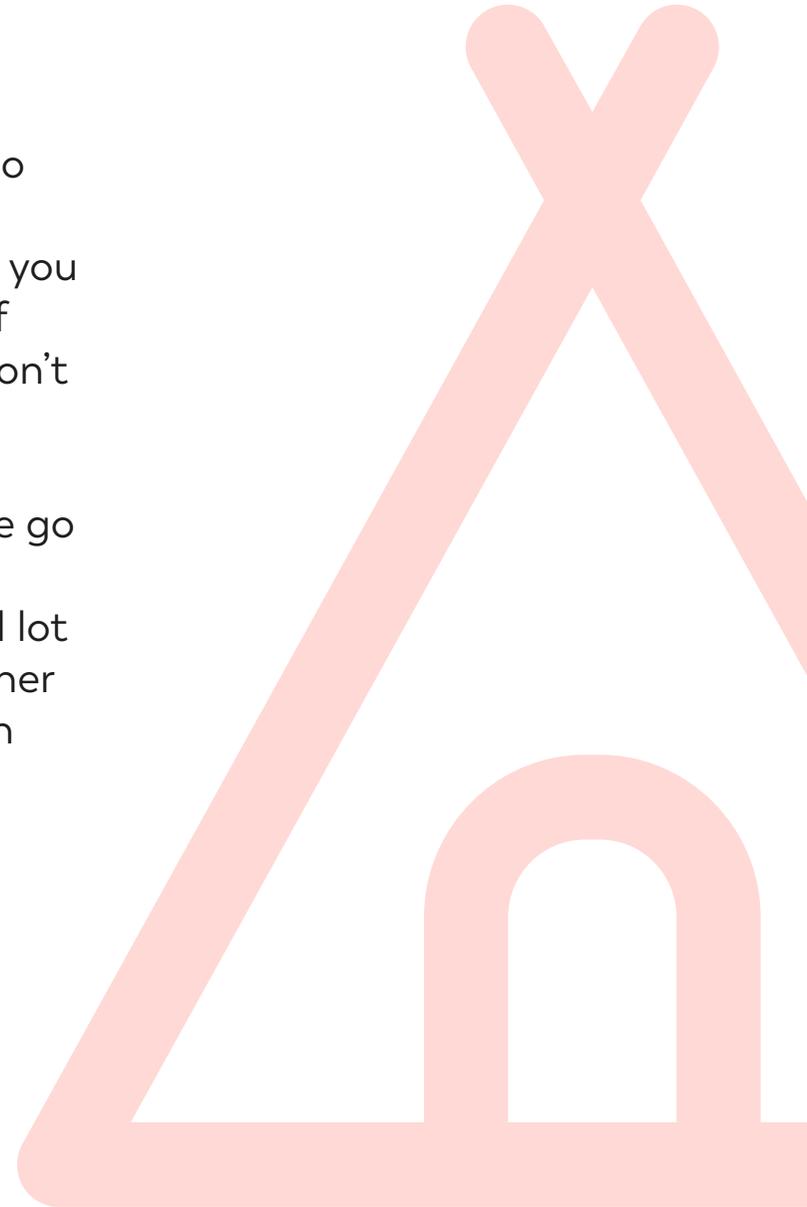
There's an informality of language and a minimalist approach to information in some places, in others language needs to be formal and a lot more information is expected from a business.

Languages operate differently. That means there may be things you need to address on the technical side in order to display text correctly.



Things that might be necessary to take into account:

- Many Western languages run left to right. Many others do not. Arabic runs right to left. Japanese and Chinese can be written top to bottom. You'll want to consider the way that you layout the page for localization. The traditional "F" shape of Western websites can be a strong deterrent to users who don't read or scan pages in the same way that we do.
- Spacing is another issue that can mess up a website if we go with conventional translation. For example, most Chinese words consist of one or two characters. You can fit an awful lot more Chinese in a space than you can fit English into it. Other languages, like German, often require a lot more space than English.

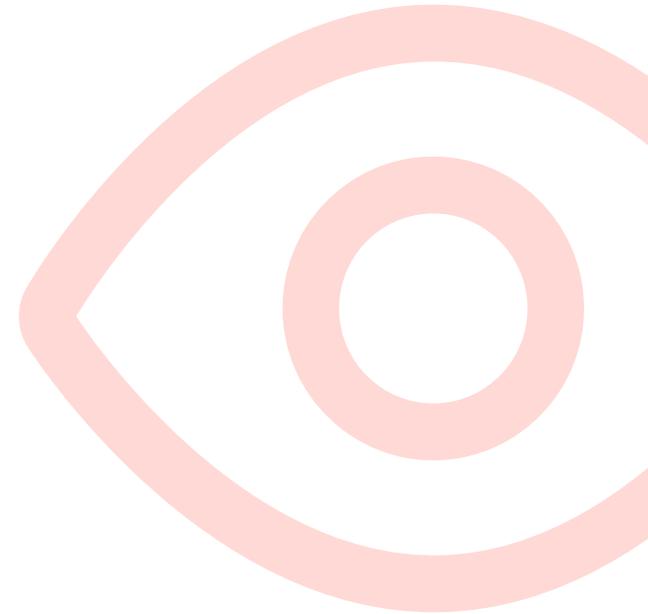


Localising resources

A style guide and glossary are vital tools for increasing translation quality and localisation effectiveness. Creating an internationalisation kit is also essential.

Glossary of terms. It links design and translation together and ensures copy consistency. It takes care of the content while the stylesheet takes care of the form. This includes company, industry and audience specific terms, as well as keywords. It ensures consistency in each language from translator to translator or across departments.

Internationalisation kit. Internationalisation is the process of planning and implementing products and services so that they can easily be adapted to different languages, regional differences and technical requirements of a target locale, a process called localisation. So it's essential to create a guide that gathers the different ways to format the time, currency, numbers, symbols, etc, depending on the country.



Style Guide. A style guide tends to be unique for each language/market. It is a set of standards and expectations that your organization wants to maintain within your material across international markets. Style guides are created to keep consistency and quality of the message and ensure uniformity in brand image with easy-to-follow rules (and examples) of style: Tone of voice, buyer persona or audience (defining key objectives, KPIs, etc), spelling and grammar guidelines (capitalization, tenses, jargon, etc).



**What's
your brand
missing?**

**BOB'S YOUR
UNCLE**