Website translation made easy.

Technology and proven processes deliver high quality results.

Introduction

In business, you have to speak the language of your customer and more often than not, customers go online to look for information, compare prices and make purchase decisions.

With over 6,500 different languages spoken around the world, a multilingual website can help you sell more and keep your customers satisfied.

Research* indicates that the vast majority of people prefer to read online information in their native language and are more likely to buy when doing business in their own language. In fact, they may even pay more for the privilege!

Running a bilingual or multilingual website is often considered to be complex and costly. The good news is that it's easier than ever to translate websites, thanks to advances in technology and proven processes.

There are two major types of websites – static and dynamic. Static websites are fairly basic in structure and deliver information in pages exactly as they are stored. Dynamic sites are more complex and deliver information via applications such as content delivery systems.

As you might expect, the more basic static websites are easier and less costly to translate than complex dynamic sites.

This document focuses on the translation of basic static websites and will help you understand how easy it is to translate them into multiple languages.

Getting started

TARGET LANGUAGE(S) AND CONTENT

Once you have chosen the target audience's country and desired language(s) for your website, you will need to determine the specific content to be translated, which may be different based on language and/or locale.

You should engage a bilingual subject matter expert in each locale to help you identify what content is required. Certain products or services may not be available in certain locales. It does not make sense to translate large amounts of irrelevant content.

The content that requires translation should be identified on a site map, or other manner, to allow the web developer to identify the required topics when preparing files to send to the translation service provider.

If it is appropriate to translate all the content of your site into the target language(s), then file preparation and production is simpler. The "translate it all" approach is cost effective when you have a modest amount of content since the cost to translate all the content may be lower than the additional work required to produce customized language-specific versions.

Estimating translation costs

To provide accurate costs and timelines, your translation service provider needs to understand the details and overall scope of the project. Your Web Developer has a lot of the required information, and should be part of the project team.

ITEMS REQUIRED BY THE TRANSLATION SERVICE PROVIDER

The following list of requirements is for a project where all the website content needs to be translated. If different language-specific versions of the site are being created, your Web Developer and the translation provider should determine how to provide the briefing information, which may include:

- Your website URL(s) so the current site can be reviewed to understand your business, target markets, style and tone of content, functionality and navigational design.
- Site map.
- Brief description of the site's architecture (technologies and tools used).

- A working copy of the source files of your website in their original folder/file structure. (Content may change from the time of quotation to production).
- Editable source files (i.e. Microsoft Word, InDesign) of any PDF's, graphics, art, buttons or pictures that include text which require translation.

WHY YOU SHOULDN'T USE A WEB SPIDER FOR ESTIMATING COSTS

We are often asked to use a website copier tool to grab content for the purposes of generating a budgetary quote. This is not recommended as it could result in such a highly inaccurate cost estimate that it is of no value. Here's why:

- Spiders will grab everything off the site including pictures, images, text and PDFs.
- Spiders will grab old and new files.
- The website source files may contain other languages that are blocked. The tool will grab those.

CRITERION FOR ESTIMATING COSTS

Once the briefing information has been received, the Translation Service Provider (TSP) will speak to team members from each functional area (translation operations, coordinator, IT Project Manager) and determine costs based on:

- Word counts including words embedded in graphics or pictures.
- Complexity of subject matter.
- Rates per language.
- Rates and time required for desktop publishing services (for text embedded in PDF's and image files).
- Source and target file formats issues (if any).
- Revisions, client side review and final approval process.
- Specific workflow requirements and time allocation of team members.
- Overall turn-around time.

Starting the project

Once the estimate has been approved, you'll need a plan to ensure the project runs smoothly. If your project is large, with many moving parts such as those found in dynamic websites, it's good to involve a Project Manager. They are trained to handle details, facilitate communication and data transfer between stakeholders, resolve problems, and follow timelines. For typically small and medium sized static website projects, a Coordinator or Manager can draft the plan and keep everyone informed of progress.

SEND THE ACTUAL WORKING FILES AND CONTENT

To start the translation process the service provider needs to conduct a source file review and prepare the files to use translation memory technologies.

Your Web Developer will need to send the actual content (i.e. HTML, XML, etc.) and style sheet in their original folder and file name structure to the translation service provider who will translate the material and return translated versions in the exact same format as was supplied.

> **Why should you send copies of the actual files?**
> After the translation is complete, your Web Developer will only have to enable multilingual functionality and import the translations to each of the respective language tables on the site. It's that easy!

Translation tasks

ASSURING OVERALL CULTURAL SUITABILITY
Provide direction regarding the TSP's scope of work. You may wish to request that the TSP also ensure basic cultural suitability or identify any major issues that require customization; such as the need to customize a graphic, change a local phone number or even suggest a change to a picture that may not be well received by the audience.

GLOSSARY DEVELOPMENT
To maintain accuracy and consistency the translation team will leverage existing client glossaries (if they exist), or develop new client-specific glossaries for future use if the client is new to the translation service provider. If working with a TSP for the first time, provide any exiting source and target language text(s) you may have to ensure they remain consistent.

TEXT IN GRAPHICS
All the text embedded in art, pictures, navigation buttons, or graphics will be extracted and translated following the standard translation workflow. The translated text can be inserted back into the original element by the service provider. You need to provide editable source files.

DESKTOP PUBLISHING (DTP) WHEN REQUIRED
Documents as well as images containing text on the website may require additional DTP services to format the translated text so it matches the source documents in terms of layout, fonts, graphics, and overall design. Files will be returned in the same format as supplied, or they can be converted to another format upon request.

TRANSLATION, PROOFREADING AND REVISION
The translation process for words in website content follows the same team-based workflow as other projects, except here, both the professional human translator and second team member who proofreads and reviews the work for quality assurance are unable to see how the text will flow once laid out until after being posted on the website.

WEBSITE QUALITY ASSURANCE (QA) AFTER TRANSLATION UPLOADING - OPTIONAL

Once the translated versions of the website are available for viewing/testing in their staging environment, a professional linguist should check the site for cosmetic or linguistic issues which will improve the user experience.

CLIENT REVIEW

It is essential that a bilingual subject matter expert review the entire translated website, once it has been uploaded and is in the staging phase. One round of translation errors will be corrected by the TSP, which is usually detailed in the cost estimate. Subjective or stylistic changes do incur additional service charges.

MEMORY UPDATING AND FILE ARCHIVING

Once the project is complete, the client's translation memory and glossaries are updated, and all source files are securely stored.

Summary

1. Choose the country and language of each target audience, together with the content for each if it is to vary between languages.
2. Compile and send the editable source files to the translation service provider to request an estimate.
3. Approve the estimate.
4. When the translations are completed, send them to your web developer.
5. Once the files are uploaded to the staging site, provide your TSP with hyperlinks to key pages and request a professional linguist review them to ensure the text flows well, and that there are no cosmetic or linguistic issues.
6. Engage a client reviewer to read through the translated website.
7. Request input from the TSP as to whether suggested changes be introduced, and make the final adjustments, if any.
8. When the final site is approved and launched, advise the translation service provider to update the translation memory and glossaries, as well as archive the source files.