

# BEST PRACTICES GUIDE 04: WEB LOCALIZATION

## l10n

### Localization

The process of making an information product viable in a single locale.

## g11n

### Globalization

The process of making an information product viable in multiple locales.

## i18n

### Internationalization

The process of configuring an information product for expedient globalization.



**INTERNATION**

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Any language.  
All media.

**Multilingual Media Services**  
299 Broadway, Suite 1400  
New York City, New York 10007

212.619.5545  
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**Why should you localize your Website?** Because it's good business, and because over 70% of the world prefers its Web content to be in a language other than English.

**How is it best done?** In a word, methodically, which does not necessarily translate as "expensively." The following series of basic steps outlines the industry standard practices for Website localization.

**Step 1. Consider the intended use of the Website.** What locale(s) are you addressing with the site, and in which language(s)? These are two crucial questions that must be answered first and foremost.

**Step 2. Consider the target locale, culture, language.** InterNation will bring in personnel who know the target culture or cultures—cultural consultants—who can review the material to be localized in the context of its stated purpose, and determine what content should be changed or omitted. This includes reviewing things like graphic elements and colors to ensure that they are not offensive or otherwise problematic in the target country/culture.

**Step 3. Evaluate your Web site and determine scope.** What are the technical basics of your site? What Web development technologies (platforms, Web application servers etc.) are in use? How many words? How many graphics, Flash files etc.? Do you use Java or other scripts? Are there audio files that must be re-recorded in the target language?

**Step 4. Internationalize.** Depending on the answers to questions in Step 2, it may be necessary to make some changes to make the site friendly to localization. Specifically, some languages require more characters than others to write the same thing. Spanish and French, for instance, typically have an expansion factor of about 25%. Thus the localized text may not fit in a web page structure that uses frames or is improperly organized. HTML buttons, drop-down menus and other control devices must also be considered with respect to the effect of text expansion.

When possible and as required, it is often a good idea to internationalize graphical elements so that they may be reused for multiple locales without having to be specifically altered at the end of the localization process. This includes selection of background color, as well as layout. In general, by reducing graphical text, one saves time and money.

If you know that in time you will want to add multiple markets to your globalization efforts, and know as well that these markets are linguistically disparate, it is an excellent idea to internationalize your site and its components to avoid added costs down the line. InterNation's experts can determine the best approach based upon your individual needs.

“Since the first job in 1990, we have come to trust InterNation, Inc. to deliver every job on time, on budget and, most importantly, to our complete satisfaction.”

*Helmut Otto Schleicher  
President  
Schleicher GmbH & Co.*

“I recommend InterNation highly to any business requiring speedy, reliable translation services”

*Merek R. Press  
Supervisor  
Jaros, Baum & Bolles  
Consulting Engineers*



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**Step 5. Organize your team.** Here is where InterNation’s vast resources come into play. We will assemble a team of linguists and technologists who will best serve the specific needs of your project.

**Step 6. Extract content to be translated.** In this step, the text is extracted from both the HTML and the graphical elements, and a final word count is determined. This is an automated process in the case of HTML, but requires significant human intervention in the case of most graphic files.

**Step 7. Prepare for translation.** Once the all of the text to be translated has been accounted for, true linguistic evaluation can be done. A best practices scenario includes the development of a **terminology database**. This is essentially a glossary of your proprietary terms as well as industry standard terms that are often repeated in your site, along with specified translations. Consolidating and formalizing these terms and their translations provides consistency, efficiency and accuracy during translation.

**Step 8. Translate.** Typically, translation represents 40% of the cost of localizing a Web site. To help keep translation costs down, InterNation uses teams of highly qualified translators to ensure the highest quality, as well as **translation memory** software to leverage previously translated material as the project proceeds. This provides accuracy, consistency and cost savings, as the per word charge for reused translated text is a fraction of that of newly translated text.

**Step 9. Edit.** Qualified editors review the translation in coordination with the client’s reviewers and the project manager, who then facilitates the appropriate revisions with the translators.

**Step 10. Reintegrate target text.** InterNation’s experts layer translated text back into the graphics. Text strings are automatically integrated into HTML code by the translation memory software.

**Step 11. Adjust graphics.** As mentioned above, due to the expansion factor of a given target language, it may be necessary to adjust graphics. This is an easy step to define, but it may imply quite a bit of time. For this reason, limiting the amount of graphical text can be a real time and money-saver.

**Step 12. Repackage/organize files.** As necessary, files are reorganized into directories that mirror those of the source language site. Note that in the event that the content of the target site differs significantly, it may be necessary to organize the files differently.

“We have found invaluable InterNation, Inc.’s knowledge and understanding of the financial services industry. Our clients have never been less than completely satisfied.”

*Glen Graf  
HP Corporate  
Communications, Inc.*

“Because I have complete confidence in InterNation, Inc., I have recommended your services to many professionals over the years and I intend to continue to do so.”

*Lisa A. Stancati  
Gordon Altman Butowsky  
Weitzen Shalov & Wein*



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**Step 13. Functional QA** It is essential that one test the site—that is, all links and other functionality—on the same platform as the one upon which it will be deployed. Typically, this implies that the site be run on a staging server off line, or on a live server at a secondary URL.

**Step 14. Final linguistic QA** Once all other steps are complete, InterNation recommends that the entire site be proofread and reviewed one last time.

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**InterNation, Inc.** provides a full spectrum of foreign language services to a Fortune 1000 clientele. Services include translation, Web localization, electronic publishing, interpreting, subtitling and voice replacement for audio and video.

Our staff is dedicated to producing the highest quality work on time and on budget.

This guide is one of a series provided as a resource to current and prospective clients.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.