



The
Localization Institute
Quality training for localization and internationalization



Localization Certification Workshop

(Online Material)

Part 1

Introduction to Localization

Contents

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Definitions	1
Globalization (G11N)	1
Internationalization (I18N)	1
Translation.....	1
GILT	1
Evolution of Localization	2
Why is Localization Important	3
Main reasons	4
Distinguishing Web Site Globalization, Internationalization and Localization.....	5
What is Localization (L10N)	7
What kind of content is localized?	7
What do Localization Professionals Do?	7

Introduction to Localization

Definitions

Most of the following definitions are from LISA, the Localization Industry Standards Association (www.lisa.org), who represents the business professionals, customers and global solution providers who play a leading role in the rapidly expanding localization industry.

Globalization (G11N)

Globalization addresses all of the enterprise issues associated with making a company truly global. For the globalization of products and services this involves integrating all of the internal and external business functions with marketing, sales, and customer support in the world market.

Internationalization (I18N)

Internationalization is the process of generalizing a product so that it can handle multiple languages and cultural conventions without the need for redesign. Internationalization takes place at the level of program design and document development.

Localization (L10N)

Localization is the process of adapting products and services (web sites documents, manuals and software application) in accordance to linguistic, cultural, technical and other locale-specific requirements of the target market.

Translation

Reproduction of text in another language so that the meaning is still the same. (Today, Translation and Localization are often used interchangeably, especially in projects where software and documentation or online-help are combined.)

GILT

Globalization, internationalization, localization and Translation (GILT) are prominent areas in which knowledge management is gaining crucial exposure for international business excellence.

Evolution of Localization

(Based on Excerpts from: Evolving Localization and Its Brand Extension, Galaxy Newsletter, Q4 2005)



Figure 1: Localization discipline evolving among three inter-locking phases of industry development

According to industry expert Leon Z Lee the evolution of the localization discipline or as such industry can be divided into three phases namely, technology solutions, marketing strategies and international affairs.

The current phase of **Technology Solutions** possesses characteristics of cost leadership, automated enterprise workflows and technology integration from corporate consolidations. Nevertheless, its competitive posture has been undermined by the inability to push customer relationships beyond the consideration of purchase cost. This situation has become so dire that some corporate professionals actually toy with the idea of sharing competitive customer portfolios and technology feature sets to forestall this commoditization. The harsh reality is that "sameness" is the quickest means of demise in our discipline.

To offset this dilemma, **Marketing Strategies** is the next intermediary phase to embrace. International marketing is a complementary fit for the localization industry, by offering both technology suites in delivering localized information and comprehensive resident knowledge in designing marketing campaigns for geopolitical and ethnographic regions in areas of print advertisement, online brand valuation, website usability analysis, etc. With this repositioning, customers can evolve their appreciation of localization as a holistic experience in managing multiple points of refinement, thus shift the brand awareness to the industry favor. Despite this good momentum, its subtle drawback is overtly emphasizing "localization" as an industry rather than an "umbrella discipline" capable of multiple solutions in politics, language and culture.

To achieve this aim, the final phase is to consolidate **International Affairs** as an integral localization qualifier. This natural extension is not only logical, but self-evident for it finally propels this industry beyond the traditional customer base into new realms of political liaising, cultural specialization, transnational corporate diplomacy, global trade relations, nongovernment organizational projects, etc. By attracting non-technical professionals seeking benefits beyond one-off translation

services, associations such as GALA can finally break the commoditization impasse and serve as a conduit for seamless global knowledge sharing and resource alignments. To "seed the market" in this manner, one must manage the customer experience to optimally execute market equities.

Why is Localization Important?

During the past seven years a whole industry (The Localization Industry) has grown up around helping companies design multilingual web sites and software applications for different countries. A recent industry report estimates the size of the worldwide translation and localization services market at US\$ 8.8 billion (Beninatto and De Palma, 2005). According to this report the commercial market for localization services is estimated at US\$6 billion and the government market at US\$ 2.8 billion worldwide. Table-1 below shows the geographic distribution of the localization and translation market growth projection for the next five years at a compound average growth rate of 7.5 percent per year.

Region	% of Total Market	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
U.S.	42%	3,696	3,973	4,271	4,592	4,936	5,306
Europe	41%	3,608	3,879	4,169	4,482	4,818	5,180
Asia	12%	1,056	1,135	1,220	1,312	1,410	1,516
ROW	5%	440	473	508	547	588	632

Table 1: Localization and Translation Industry Growth
(Common Sense Advisory, Renato Beninatto and Don De Palma, 2005)

Main reasons

- Localization, translation and internationalization of software applications, documents, and web sites is needed, to reach a world wide audience and 1.08 billion web users in 230 countries, speaking 6,700 languages, using 147 currencies and living in 24 time zones.
- Marketing always takes place in the language of the target market.
- Every company doing business on the web is potentially “Born-Global” from day one, as its web site can be accessed worldwide. However, more than half of the global online population is non-English speaking and needs content in local language.
- The majority of web users prefer to read web content in their local language. They feel more at ease and inclined to stay on a site in their native language.
- According to Forrester research the number of customer service issues decreases when instructions are available in local languages.
- When the web site and content is in the local language and is culturally customized to the locale it leads to higher navigational control, more perceived usefulness, better attitude towards the company and the product and higher purchase intentions.
- With global customers, businesses cannot stay domestic. The next competitor could come from any part of the world and localization helps to tap global markets online.
- Several countries impose linguistic and legal requirements when developing content for their markets. (for example the IVDD – Invitro Diagnostics Directive, which defines what materials need to be in the local language, so that the product can be marketed and sold in this country)
- Localization of content can help companies participate in the 12.8 trillion worth e-commerce market

This level of growth requires manpower that is trained to develop, coordinate and maintain these multilingual international web sites and software. However, there is a dearth of trained professionals who can manage and coordinate localization efforts and effectively work with technical writers, software developers, translators, and colleagues from different countries to implement international business strategies.

Distinguishing Web Site Globalization, Internationalization, and Localization

Traditionally globalization has been equated to operating with resolute constancy across the world, selling the same thing in the same way everywhere (Levitt, 1983). But on the web, for a firm to successfully sell worldwide, it has to adapt its web site linguistically, culturally, and in all other ways accessible to the global consumers. Globalization in the context of e-business is a much broader term that includes web site internationalization and localization. According to the Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA), web site globalization involves integrating localization throughout a company after proper implementation of internationalization and product design, as well as marketing, sales, and support in the world market.

Thus web site globalization incorporates two complementary processes; web internationalization, i.e. developing a global web template to support front-end customization, and web localization, which uses this global web template to create country-specific web pages. In order to achieve web site globalization it is necessary to involve overseas subsidiaries and local partners for their local input, and the technology must be complemented with backend processes that ensure quality, reliability, and accountability (Globalsight.com, 2000).

For example:

'Zinc', a media agency, designed Saab's global web site. The agency designed a global web template to achieve standardization of back end process, and used it to design localized templates for Sweden, France, Germany, and UK. It also synchronized backend processes and databases and designed intranet sites for each UK dealer to enhance coordination and localization (Gray, 2000).

Thus, the process through which back end technologies are used to create modular, extensible, and accessible global web site templates is called 'Internationalization'. According to LISA, internationalization is the process, which is as culturally and technically 'neutral' as possible, and which can therefore easily be localized for a specific country or locale.

Internationalization helps the companies to develop global platforms for future localization, and reduces the non-conformance costs by addressing global web site design issues before hand. However, many companies in haste of globalization, or due to insufficient resources, tend to ignore this important back end process and develop separate global templates for different countries or use just machine-translated versions of the parent homepage.

For example:

Idiom technologies conducted a "Global Quotient Survey," and found that 36 percent of e-business executives interviewed have done nothing to prepare their web site's back end processes to meet the need of international users, while an additional third have only adjusted a minority of their site capabilities (www.idiominc.com/worldwise/interview.asp).

While web internationalization aims at creating modular and culturally neutral web templates, web localization is the process of adapting all aspects of a web site to meet the language, cultural, and other requirements of a specific target environment (www.lisa.org). For example when localizing a web site to a specific country or culture, special attention needs to be paid to local conventions, time and date, currency and number formats, units of measurements, addresses and phone numbers, layout and orientation, icons and symbols, language and verbal style, colors, and aesthetics.

For example:

Yahoo has web sites for almost 24 countries in 12 languages, and employs localization teams based in target countries to develop and maintain country specific web sites.

According to Forrester research, localization leads to better usability and satisfaction of target consumers, and turns visitors into customers.

For example:

Dell Computer Corporation has almost 85 country specific web sites in most of the world languages, and these web sites yield \$1 million in revenues. Dell expects international sales to account for 32 percent of this quarter's revenues.

What is Localization (L10N)?

L10N stands for the 10 letters between L and N. (www.globalization.com; Esselink, 2000). The term derives from the word "locale", defining the market area for which a product is being adapted.

1. Making visual or graphics, technical and textual modifications to the document or the site content.
2. Localization included the diligent process of rewriting the text, translating the text, and ensuring translation, idiomatic, and conceptual equivalence of the translated text.
3. Modifying graphics, data fields, tables, forms, layout, colors and tables etc.
4. Modifying the cultural content of the site, software or document to be congruent to the local culture.

What kind of content is localized?

- Content localized for different locale include
- Software products and applications, including user interfaces, online help systems, and documentation.
- Internet, intranet, and interactive content.
- Online technical support.
- eLearning courseware.
- Sales and marketing information

What do Localization Professionals Do?

Broadly speaking a localization professional needs' to be trained in handling multilingual content, have some knowledge of foreign languages and language technologies, have computer and web design skills, understand cross-cultural communication and research, and have an international business orientation. A Localization Professional can explore jobs in areas (Depending on the educational background):

- Project management and vendor management
- Business development
- Translation and localization engineering.
- Translation, technical writing and documentation
- Global content management
- Marketing and sales of localization products and services
- Global web site strategy and design
- Quality assurance and testing

E-marketing and international e-business



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