



# Travel & Hospitality Localization Guide

Learn how to take your travel-related company global

Transifex™

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# 01



## Welcome Aboard



Today, over one billion people travel to foreign countries annually, spending over \$1.15 trillion USD on things such as transportation, lodging/accommodations, food/drinks, entertainment, and shopping. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) forecasts that by 2030 the number of international tourist will almost double, bringing it to over 1.8 billion travelers.



Whether your travel, tourism, review or hospitality company does business overseas or strictly within your own borders, in today's go-global mentality, you need to understand the importance of these foreign travellers and find a way to connect with them.

BEST AIRLINES				Boarding Pass		BEST AIRLINES	
HKG ✈️ SYD				HKG ✈️ SYD			
PASSENGER	FLIGHT	TERMINAL	ZONE	FLIGHT	SEAT		
WANG, CAROLYN	HKG468	1	2	HKG468	22F		
BOARDING		SEAT		PASSENGER			
11:15 17 SEPT, 2015		22F		WANG, CAROLYN			
							

BEST AIRLINES				Boarding Pass		BEST AIRLINES	
FCO ✈️ SFO				FCO ✈️ SFO			
PASSENGER	FLIGHT	TERMINAL	ZONE	FLIGHT	SEAT		
FELINI, GIULIA	FCO404	3	2	FCO404	30A		
BOARDING		SEAT		PASSENGER			
09:20 14, FEB 2015		30A		FELINI, GIULIA			
							

BEST AIRLINES				Boarding Pass		BEST AIRLINES	
ATL ✈️ FRA				ATL ✈️ FRA			
PASSENGER	FLIGHT	TERMINAL	ZONE	FLIGHT	SEAT		
MORGAN, LUKE	ATL123	7	4	ATL123	15G		
BOARDING		SEAT		PASSENGER			
18:40 MAR 3, 2015		15G		MORGAN, LUKE			
							

BEST AIRLINES				Boarding Pass		BEST AIRLINES	
GRU ✈️ CDG				GRU ✈️ CDG			
PASSENGER	FLIGHT	TERMINAL	ZONE	FLIGHT	SEAT		
ANES, FLÁVIO	GRU960	2	1	GRU960	45E		
BOARDING		SEAT		PASSENGER			
10:20 2, MAY 2015		45E		ANES, FLÁVIO			
							

BEST AIRLINES				Boarding Pass		BEST AIRLINES	
HNL ✈️ HND				HNL ✈️ HND			
PASSENGER	FLIGHT	TERMINAL	ZONE	FLIGHT	SEAT		
TSUDA, ALEX	HNL1137	3	1	HNL1137	6B		
BOARDING		SEAT		PASSENGER			
07:20 JUN 11, 2015		6B		TSUDA, ALEX			
							

According to the UNWTO's Tourism Towards 2030 report, the number of international tourist arrivals worldwide is expected to increase by an average of 3.3% a year from 2010 to 2030. And as we move towards 2030, international tourist arrivals in the emerging economy destinations of Asia, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East and Africa will grow at double the rate (+4.4% a year) of that in advanced economy destinations (+2.2% a year). As a result, arrivals in emerging economies are expected to exceed those in advanced economies before 2020. In 2030, 57% of international arrivals will be in emerging economy destinations (versus 30% in 1980) and 43% in advanced economy destinations (versus 70% in 1980).

Bottom line: Companies at the heart of the travel industry – airlines, hotels, online booking and review sites – are required to become more global. It is because of this go-global mentality and growth, that localization of content (websites, apps, marketing messages, emails, etc.) will become a more critical part of growth and should be a pillar of a strong business.

### What Is Localization?

If you are new to the localization process, it's important to understand the definitions and to clearly know what differentiates localization from translation.

## Let's take a quick at the global travel market and explore the top destinations, who the travel spenders are, and where in the world they come from.

Top destinations for international travelers in 2013

	COUNTRY	NUMBER OF ARRIVALS
1	France	83.0 million travelers (2012)
2	United States	69.8 million travelers
3	Spain	60.7 million travelers
4	China	55.7 million travelers
5	Italy	47.7 million travelers
6	Turkey	37.8 million travelers
7	Germany	31.5 million travelers
8	United Kingdom	31.2 million travelers
9	Russia	28.4 million travelers
10	Thailand	26.5 million travelers

Top spenders in international tourism in 2013

	COUNTRY	INTERNATIONAL TOURISM EXPENDITURE (USD)
1	China	\$128.6 billion
2	United States	\$86.2 billion
3	Germany	\$85.2 billion
4	Russia	\$53.5 billion
5	United Kingdom	\$52.6 billion
6	France	\$42.4 billion
7	Canada	\$35.2 billion
8	Australia	\$28.4 billion
9	Italy	\$27.0 billion
10	Brazil	\$25.1 billion

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

**Localization (L10n)** is the process of addressing cultural, linguistic, textual (and non-textual) components of a product or content and adapting them to a specific locale or market. The goal of localization is to give a product the look and feel of having been tailored for the target market and eliminate local sensitivities.

### Examples

#### Translation:

English: What is your name?

Italian: Come ti chiami? (Literally: How are you called)

#### Localization:

Sweater (American English)

Jumper (UK English)

Color (American English)

colour (UK English)

(pt\_PT). Take the sweater example, both countries speak English but there are slight differences between British English and American English. What does this all mean? This means that in order to reach your target audience effectively in each region, you must know which locale (language and country) you're targeting.

Another term you'll hear frequently in the localization space is **locale**. A locale is a combination of a language and the place where it is spoken. "Localize" means to adapt the product to the locale of your target market; it includes both the translation and the differences in culture, format, and usage.

Locale is important because some languages are spoken in several different regions – such as Portuguese (Brazil) (pt\_BR) and Portuguese (Portugal)

## 02

### Unpacking the Question

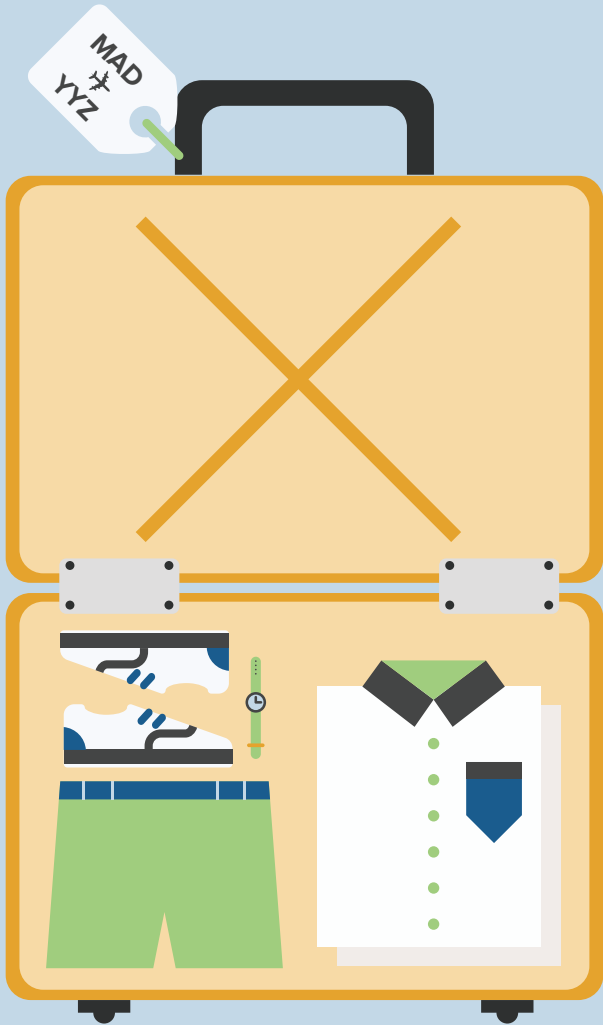
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Often, travel-related content includes websites, apps, collateral, and so on. Let's break down how to localize each type of collateral you may have.

#### Website and Mobile App

Mobile is a driving force behind the exponential growth in online travel booking and sales. By the end of 2018, the number of worldwide mobile users is expected to increase to over 6.2 billion, or roughly 84 percent of the world's population will be using mobile technology.

In the U.S. for example, around 75 percent of travelers own a smartphone — and those numbers are also expected to increase, according to a 2014 study by travel market research company Phocuswright.



Today, 80 percent of all mobile travel bookings are for hotel stays, says Scott Garner, Chief Commercial Officer for travel data analysis company ADARA, adding that he doesn't see mobile bookings slowing down in the future.

With mobile becoming increasingly popular and prevalent, more and more travelers will inevitably search for information on mobile devices while they are travelling; you should keep this in mind when you are creating your travel website or app. Not only should you consider localizing your mobile content, but you should also make your content mobile-compatible. Making things more mobile-compatible could mean having a responsive design that makes it easy for customers to find places to grab a quick bite, book a cab, or book last-minute airline tickets on the go, and/or making it easy for users to switch/choose languages with a prominent language/country selector button.

## Things to consider for website and mobile content localization

### Screen size limitations

You may have designed your travel-related website or app to be read well in English, but it may not read as well in German, Russian, or other languages in which words might take up more space. Some target languages increase the character count by as much as 35 percent over the English source content. In order to prevent text run-over, when designing for the English user interface (UI), try to leave text boxes a little larger. Fonts are another thing you need to keep in mind when localizing mobile content. You can learn more about fonts in the hospitality section.

### Text vs. Icons

Icons are a great visual indicator and are used in almost every desktop and web application to help convey a large amount of functionality and action in a relatively small space. Icons used in a mobile space must often stand alone (without text) and convey an idea.

### Examples of successful icons

These globally recognized, universal icons do not need text with them to relay the meaning:

- Home (🏠)
- Magnifying glass (🔍)
- Phone (📞)
- Play (▶)
- Stop (■)
- Fast-forward (⏩)
- Rewind (⏪)
- Printer (🖨️)

Why should you consider using icons in your mobile website or app? They take up less space. As we mentioned above, words in English can be significantly shorter than their German or Russian counterpart, for example; when you are designing a mobile layout, you don't have a lot of space to explain your content to begin with, and then if you translate your content and it expands, you may run into UI issues. Keep in mind that some icons have different cultural significance, so make sure the icon you choose works in your target market.

## **Multilingual SEO**

Here are some tips and tricks to keep in mind:

### **Understand global search engines –**

Google is very popular in the United States, but cross into another country and it's not necessarily the search engine of choice. For example: Korea uses Naver, China uses Baidu, Japan uses Yahoo! Japan, and Russia uses Yandex. Limiting your multilingual SEO strategy will limit your exposure to a large international customer pool.

**Optimize for UTF-8 characters –** Make sure that your website will be able to accommodate foreign characters by using UTF-8 encoding. Why is this really important? Because if a word becomes illegible because it has corrupted characters, all of your hard translation work will be futile and wasted.

It's also good to note that good SEO is built upon more than just the content on the page; your image alt tags, titles and keywords must also be in your target language.

**Pay attention to URL structure –** country code top-level domains (ccTLD) such as .it (Italy) or .de (Denmark) or .tw (Taiwan) or .uy (Uruguay) tell search engines which country a website is designed for.

**Hreflang –** If your website is localized into more than one language, you should get to know hreflang. Hreflang is an HTML tag that goes into the <head> section of the page's source code and is used to tell Google and other search engines the language used on that specific page. Search engines use the hreflang tag to redirect the visitor to the page in the right language.

## **Examples**

### **Different URLs with the same language**

#### **Google US**

```
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en-us" href="http://us.example.com">
```

#### **Google Australia**

```
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en-au" href="http://www.example.com/au">
```



## Marketing Content

Creating brand loyalty and referral programs is also important when there is a diverse market of travel companies for potential customers to choose from. While specific marketing content will vary by company size and type, here are some you should consider localizing:

- Advertisements
- Blogs
- Newsletters
- Customer resources
- Social media posts
- Email
- Banners
- Flyers
- Press releases

You may also want to create a style guide to ensure consistency, especially if you have a lot of content or multiple team localizing your work. Marketing strategies for travel companies should be careful to target different demographics and interest groups appropriately in all supported languages.

**Note:** Because marketing content often runs through different teams before being launched, it's important to have a smooth localization workflow. A smooth workflow is one where there are no files that need to be sent back and forth, and it's relatively easy to communicate with your translator.

## Things to consider for marketing content localization

### Using imagery

Using culturally appropriate visual components is a key part of getting your travel message across. But it's important to keep in mind that different cultures and regions have different interpretations of what's appropriate when depicting people. A low-risk option is to use graphics that are more symbol-based and less people-based. You can consult your professional translator to help you choose appropriate imagery if you have concerns.

### Understanding the law

Boring but crucial: You want to make sure you stay out of legal trouble when crossing the borders with your email campaign.

### Copy

We have already mentioned that part of the localization process is translation-based, but it's also worth considering localizing your call to action — especially if you are using images or buttons as a background for your CTA. You need to be careful because even a short sentence in Portuguese such as “Mais informações” localizes/translates into a four-word sentence in English, “Learn about upgrade options,” and you don't want your text to run off the button.

### Fonts

The majority of the content you give your customers in the travel and

hospitality environment is accompanied by text. Part of creating the content involves designing it out, and part of that means choosing a font. While choosing a font may appear simple at first glance, there are a lot of things you should keep in mind.

### **Language direction & character size –**

Not every font works for languages that read right to left or vertically, and you may be required to use multiple fonts across your localized website. Furthermore, character-based languages are often difficult to read when displayed in the same font size as English text. You may need to increase the default font size on your localized website to accommodate this font difference.

**Font styles –** If you use multiple font styles and weights in your content, you will probably need to make sure that the font you select supports these styles in multiple languages. Character-based languages — such as Japanese, Korean and Chinese — are known to be difficult to support, because these languages have so many characters and many fonts often only offer a limited number of choices. The new Adobe and Google-Noto Sans CJK font — an Open Source font for Chinese (both Simplified and Traditional), Korean, and Japanese — offers the most choices with seven different weights!

**Diacritical marks –** In many languages, words have completely different meanings when they have a diacritical mark (such as an accent, cedilla, or circumflex).

### **Examples**

Italian: e (and), è (is)

French: pêcher (to fish), pècher (to sin)

If these markers are not displayed, the whole meaning of your content could change, and it can drastically impair your content's readability. The font you choose needs to be able to support these marks.

### **Currency units and measurements**

Menus, room-service cards, distance from a restaurant/hotel, and so on are where you will typically find currency units and measurements. Localizing currency and measurements shows your customers that you are trying to make their experience as seamless as possible. For instance, if you are operating in Hawaii and you receive a large customer base from Japan, you may consider showing a currency conversion, such as "\$100 (¥12,560)." This way you save your customers time from figuring it out on their own.

Now let's take a look at measurements. Say you stated something in imperial metrics, or the airport is 1 mile away. This would work fine if you are operating in a locale that uses the imperial system, but if not, this will cause confusion. It makes sense to have all measurements work in the culture/location that you're working in.

## Hospitality

If you work in the hotel industry, you may also consider localizing your hospitality content. When you localize your hospitality content, you are showing your customers that you took the time to think through their whole experience. Hospitality content could be, and is not limited to:

- Menus
- Safety information
- Weather information
- Check-in forms
- Activity pamphlets
- Spa services and gym brochures
- Amenity and hotel guides
- WiFi login information and landing page

There is also a trend among the travel and hospitality industry to appeal to tech-focused travelers. A few examples of this include: in-room touch-screen controls that operate everything from television and lighting to the thermostat (seen in the St. Regis San Francisco and ARIA Resort & Casino), and complimentary iPads available for use in hotels like the Weekapaug Inn, XV Beacon and SLS South Beach, among others.

Localizing your hospitality content will not only make your customers more comfortable, but it will also give your staff an edge up when interacting with multilingual customers.

## Something to consider for hospitality content localization

### Paper size

This may not sound like a big deal, but a printed document that is designed for European A4 paper (210 by 297 mm, or 8.27 × 11.7 inches) would look and react differently if printed on American letter-size paper (8.5 x 11 inches). These slight differences in size can impact formatting and page breaks and should be taken into account.

### Using imagery

Using culturally-appropriate visual components often are a key part to getting your message across. But, it's important to keep in mind that different cultures and regions have different interpretations on what's appropriate when depicting people. A low-risk option is to use graphics that are more symbol-based and less-people based.

## 03

### Tray Tables Up

Travel and hospitality is one of the most fiercely competitive industries in the world, and localization is a must have user experience. It also goes a long way in building consumer trust.

As we illustrated earlier, consumers tend to gravitate towards making reservations for flights, hotels, cars, and activities in their own language. Localizing travel listings can significantly increase conversion rates for online travel agencies and booking sites among multilingual customers.

You can also read more about how successful travel websites reach global customers on our blog here:

<http://bit.ly/1ra2QSQ>



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## About Transifex

Transifex is a Localization Automation Platform that accelerates the process of launching digital products and content in multiple languages. Built for companies with rapid development cycles, more than 300,000 users and 20,000 organizations rely on Transifex's SaaS platform, including Atlassian, Busbud, Eventbrite, Orbitz, SoundCloud, Travelplanet24, and Waze.

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