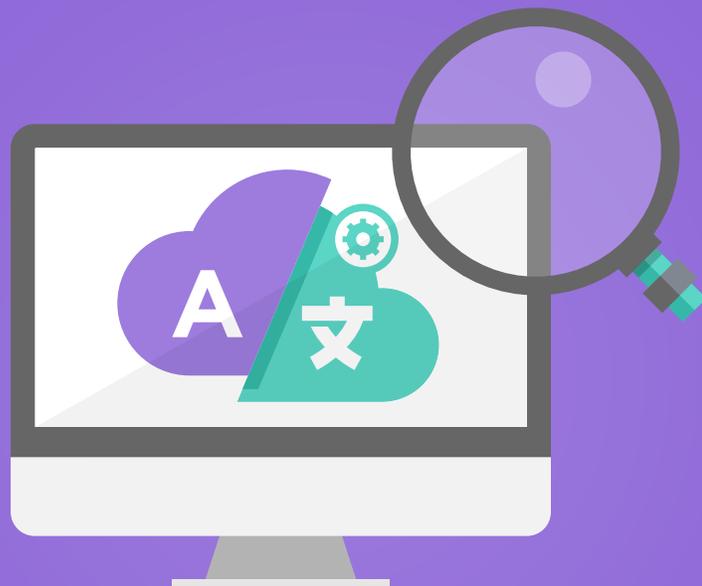


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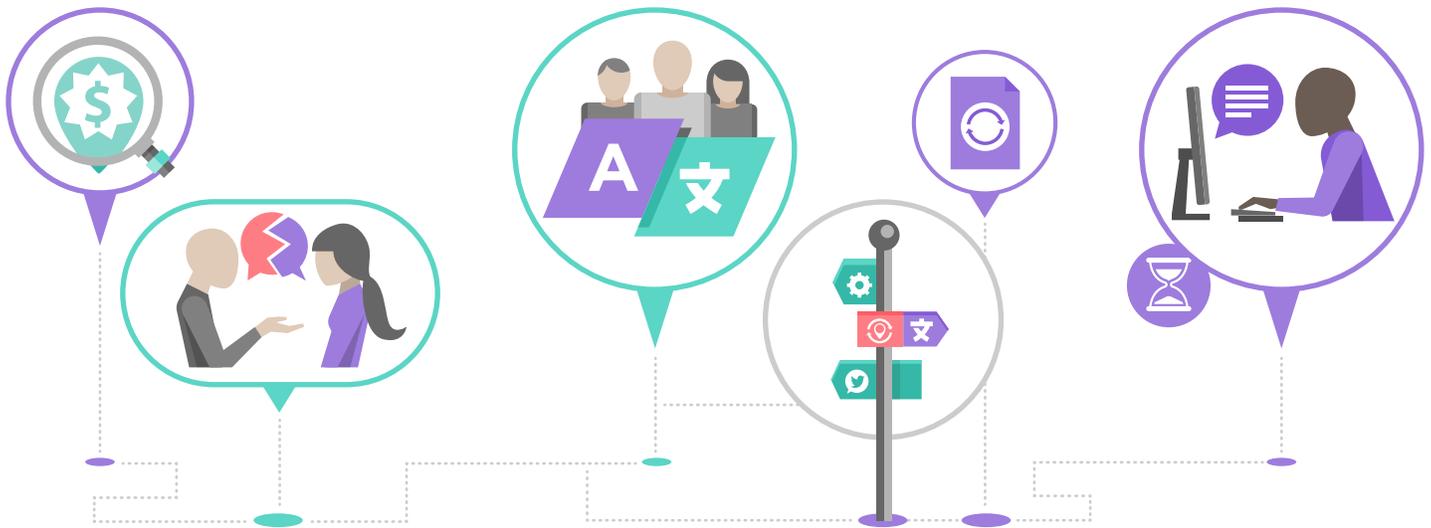
A Simple Guide to
Understanding & Evaluating
**Translation Management
Systems**



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Challenges Faced with Localization and Translation Management

Localization is essential, but it isn't easy. Understanding the challenges currently faced when expanding into new markets will help companies better prepare for the road ahead and choose the TMS best aligned with their globalization strategy.

1. Not Knowing Where to Start

Localization is a growing industry. Companies looking to expand to new territories are often uncertain where to begin. Before researching localization platforms, it's important to understand your company's needs. Things like how often translated content will be published, how many translators will be working on projects, and whether or not content will be uploaded manually or automatically are all key considerations when choosing a Translation Management Platform.

2. Lacking Resources

Successful localization goes beyond choosing a translation management platform. Finding the right translators or translation agency is also important. High-quality translations lead to increased engagement, more conversions, and improved SEO efforts, while poor translations can make the company look unprofessional and even run the risk of offending local customers.

3. Manual Processes

Traditionally, translations have been completed by putting translatable strings in a spreadsheet, sending the document to translators, waiting for confirmation the document has been received, waiting for the translated strings to be sent back, then having developers manually enter the translated strings into the code or CMS. Manual processes are not only antiquated and inefficient, they have a higher margin of error and are not as cost-efficient as streamlined automated processes.

4. Delayed or Extended Launches

Manual processes also contribute to delayed or extended launches, as does lacking the right translation tools.

This combination can lead to increased translation time, result in low-quality translations that often require a rework before being deployed, or force translators to use complicated source code that can make it challenging to clearly understand and accurately translate the source language.

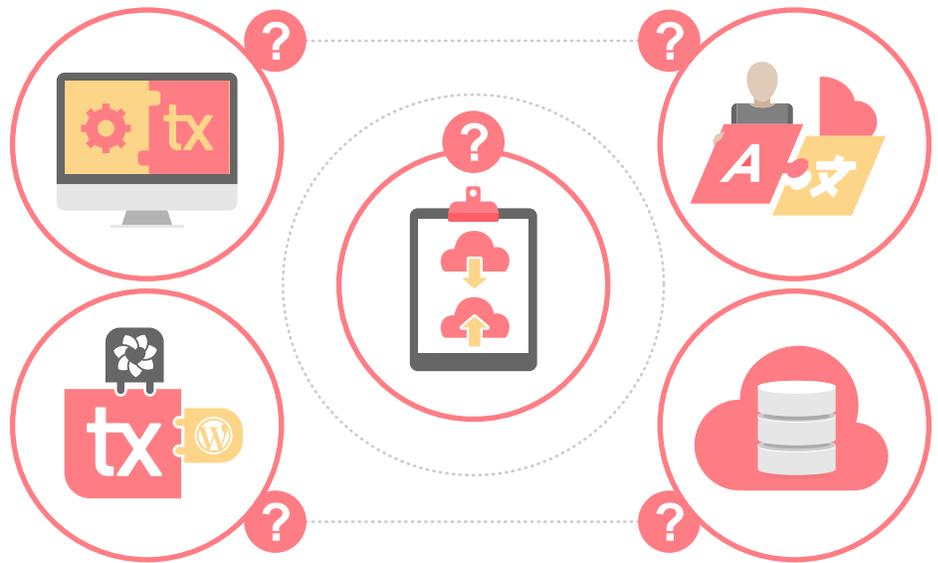
5. No Communication

Without clearly understanding a brand's values, product benefits, communication style, and target audience, translators will have a hard time providing quality translations that will resonate within the local market. In addition to keeping the lines of communication open throughout the translation process and encouraging collaboration, it's crucial to provide translators with context for their translations.

6. Not Shopping Around

In a nascent industry like localization, some companies choose to work with whatever platform appears to be the biggest and best or the cheapest. There is no one-size-fits-all solution to localization, and what works for a Fortune-500 company may not work for a growing startup. What's most important is finding a solution that not only fits the company's present needs, but one that is agile and can be scaled easily to accommodate growth as well.





Essential Questions to Ask When Evaluating Localization Platforms

Start the evaluation process by asking these questions that will help you determine the key functions of potential localization platforms.

? Does the platform work with my business’s current technologies?

If you’re evaluating localization platforms, you likely have a specific project that you are interested in translating, like your website or application. That project will be written in a specific file format. For instance, html, PHP, or Android XML.

While you may only be interested in translating a single project, like your website, translation is often the first step of a global expansion plan, meaning you’ll likely want to translate additional projects, like your mobile app, in the future. If this is the case, selecting a localization platform that offers comprehensive file format support is crucial to smooth and efficient ongoing localization efforts.

Note - If you’re considering website translation, you’ll need to figure out if your website is internationalized, meaning your site’s framework supports multilingual content. If your website wasn’t built with internationalization in mind, you’ll need to invest in engineering resources to create a fully internationalized site, or you’ll need to find a solution that doesn’t require such rework like Transifex Live.



? What integrations are available?

Finding a localization platform that is designed to integrate seamlessly with your favorite tools including GitHub, Python, Ruby on Rails, Django, Bigcommerce, and Shopify can streamline the creation and publishing of multilingual webpages or apps. At Transifex, our most popular integrations include our [International SEO by Transifex plugin](#) for WordPress websites and [Zendesk Sync](#) for translating customer support content. However, our platform integrates with any CMS or content repository through our API and Command-line Client or via a line of JavaScript with our Transifex Live solution.

? How are translations completed?

There are a number of translation resources available, which you can read more about in the “Determining How to Translate Content” section below. Each resource has its own set of pros and cons, and most companies find that using a hybrid translation workflow best meets their budget and business requirements. In fact, many companies use different hybrid workflows for different types of content. You need to select a system that not only supports the workflow of your current project, but also supports additional workflows you might adopt for future translation projects and can support both in parallel.

? How is content stored and served?

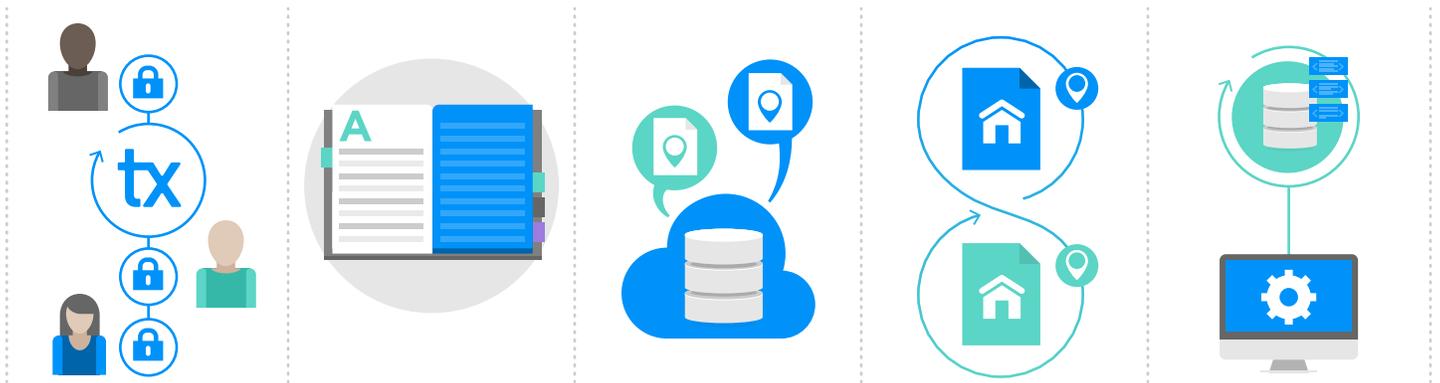
Industry experts recommend choosing a localization platform with a cloud-based repository where all your source content and translated content can easily be stored and accessed by anyone involved with the translation project. Having all your content in one centralized location makes it easy to find, update, and translate files as needed.

Of course, how your content is stored is just as important as how it's served. Unlike a proxy solution, Transifex does not serve your website, only your translations. This allows you to maintain total control of the website, reducing latency and increasing uptime.

? Who controls content upload and download?

With a TMS, it's easier to identify new translatable strings that can be added directly to the translation workflow in the platform. When the translations are finished, a review process can be implemented to ensure content meets business and quality standards. When translated content is approved, the content is ready to be pushed back to the website, without any engineering or development assistance required.





What Tools and Features Are Available in a TMS?

Translation Management Systems are filled with tools that enable better workflows and functionality, but make sure your TMS, at the very least, provides the following.

Team Management

Unlike traditional methods of translation that involve creating a spreadsheet of translatable strings, sending them for translation, getting them approved, and then making them available to developers, a localization platform makes team management easy. Anyone can be given access, from developers and project managers to translators and marketers. This allows for open discussions and more collaboration, which will help ensure everyone involved in the project remains on the same page throughout. It also increases efficiency by automating the process and eliminating the need to send translations back and forth.

Translation Glossary

Rework from inconsistent terminology accounts for 15 percent of translation project costs, according to some studies. Creating a comprehensive translation glossary that includes industry and company-specific terms and phrases will help reduce costs, ensure consistency throughout your content, and create a cohesive user experience.



Translation Memory

When translations are approved, they are captured and stored in a database with the corresponding source text. These translation units are available to translators as they work on new or similar content. As this database grows, translations become more efficient and consistent. The costs of translating are also reduced, as translation agencies typically discount the costs for fuzzy and exact matches.

In-Context Translations

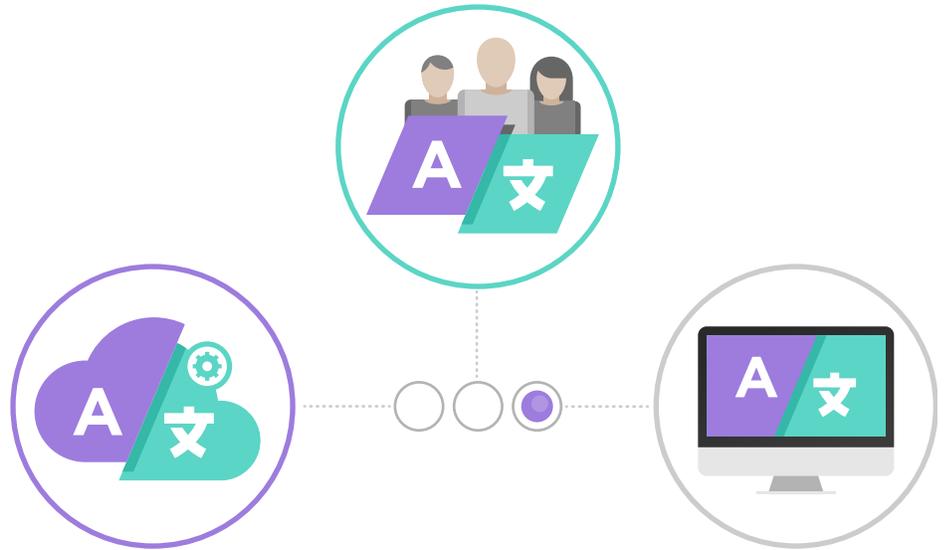
When translating, context is important because there are countless words, across all languages, that have multiple meanings. Let's use the word "home" in English as an example. "Home" often references where a person lives, however, on a website, the word "home" indicates the "home" or main page of the website. While the word for both these cases is "home" in English, the same cannot be said for other languages. In Spanish, the word for "home" that references the place a person lives is "hogar" while the word "home" on a website is denoted by the word "Inicio".

As the example above demonstrates, context is essential for delivering the proper messaging and intent of your original source content. To make sure your translators have the information they need to produce quality translations that engage your target audiences, you'll want to look for a localization platform that gives you options for providing context, like attaching product or website screenshots to specific strings. This is key in creating native experiences for your global users.

Automation

A localization platform can integrate with a website or application through an API or Command-line Client to automatically collect strings for translation, which are stored in a central repository that anyone working on the project can access. Reviewers and managers can easily see which strings have been translated and are ready for review, and they can also leave additional comments for translators to provide context and ensure accuracy. Once translated strings are approved, the platform automatically pushes the translated strings back to the app or website.





Determining How to Translate Content

Businesses launching in new international markets will also need to decide how to translate website content.

Machine Translation (MT)

In an effort to lower the cost of translations for the customer, many localization platforms have an integrated Machine Translation option where content is translated using a tool like Google Translate. While this does result in faster delivery of translated content and upfront cost savings, opting to use Machine Translation instead of human translators can result in long-term damage that goes far beyond monetary costs.

Machine Translation is unable to pick up on cultural nuances in language and cannot understand contextual clues in content. Because of this, these types of translations are not only prone to grammatical errors, they may even be offensive to the local audience, both of which can make a company look unprofessional. Translations produced using MT are also word-for-word, which can dilute marketing and brand messages. Industry experts often recommend against using Machine Translation for customer-facing content whenever possible.



Crowdsourcing

A popular option for obtaining cost-effective and accurate translations is crowdsourcing. Active and engaged website or app users can provide translations for content as needed. While this method may keep costs low, it can be inefficient given the time it takes to manage the dozens, hundreds, or even thousands of community members translating. Quality can also suffer since many contributors lack the expertise needed to create high-quality translations. You may also find the tone and style of your content is inconsistent due to the large number of individuals working on the project.

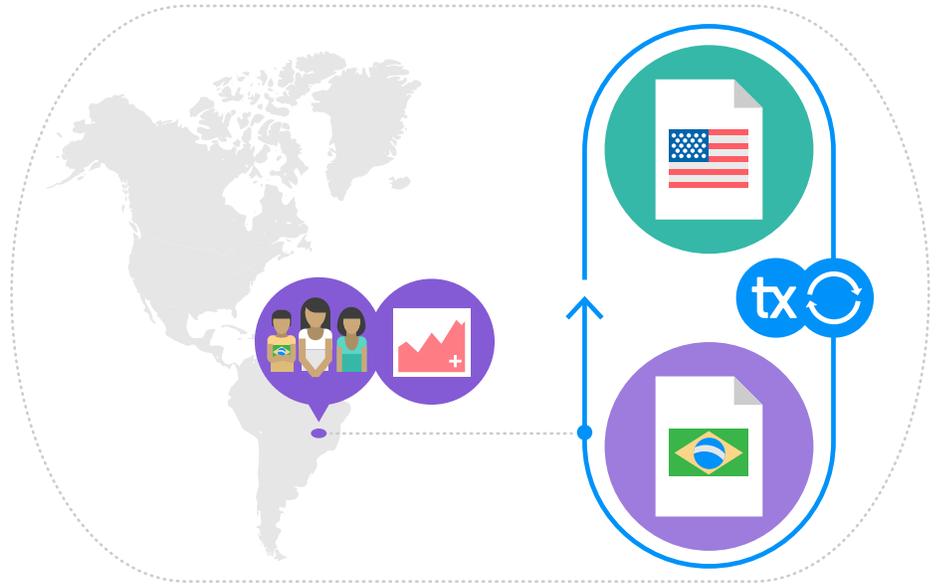
Translation Agencies

Translation agencies employ professional translators who typically hold a degree in translation studies, linguistics, or a similar field and have the expertise to provide high-quality translations. These agencies often provide professional review and project management support in addition to ancillary services like international keyword expertise that can further enhance project quality.

Before selecting an agency to work with, it's essential to vet their areas of expertise to ensure they align with your translation and localization goals and to determine whether they have the ability and proficiency to work with a technology solution. Businesses want to select a translation partner that complements the benefits of a TMS and elevates the localization process rather than working against it.

Regardless of which translation method a business chooses, the most comprehensive option for managing translation resources is a flexible translation platform, which enterprise companies often choose for their security, quality, and ongoing support. With a translation platform, businesses can not only translate content, they can manage content, interact with translators, and automate the localization process.





Connecting with New Audiences Through Translated Content

A Case Study Snapshot

As consumers' digital experiences evolve, it becomes increasingly important for businesses to keep pace. Providing high-quality translated content helps companies facilitate the best possible user experience and allows customers in new international markets to engage with content in a meaningful way.

When Trello integrated with Transifex and launched in Portuguese, the company doubled its signups and has seen use in Brazilian Portuguese grow by 35 percent.

Since adopting the Transifex TMS, Trello has successfully launched in 20 different languages.

“Transifex was crucial to our process in that it provided a centralized, standard location for all of our developers and translators to work on translations. The translation UI is excellent; this allowed our translators to work quickly and effectively, and our developers to jump in and answer questions where needed.”

Stella Garber, Trello's VP of Marketing



Why Localize?

Adapting a website to the local market is the number one way a business can show its target consumer base it is truly invested in the community and respects the population's heritage and culture. In fact, in a competitive market, consumers typically gravitate towards the company they feel best understands them and their specific needs.

In a study conducted by Common Sense Advisory, the results of which were published in 2014 in a paper called "Can't Read, Won't Buy," the research company found that 55 percent of respondents preferred to buy in their native language, with 53 percent saying they felt more at ease when making a purchase in their native language. Organizations that choose to localize will also:

✔ Maximize Marketing Efforts



Failing to translate content into the native language of your target market leaves your marketing message open to misinterpretation. By translating content, businesses can be sure their target audience understands their message, their brand values, and, most importantly, understands the solution being offered.

✔ Build Brand Loyalty



Not only does translating content make it easier for customers to get the information they need to make an informed decision, it shows a company values customer interaction. This is most effective when it extends beyond the initial purchase. The CSA study also reported that 74 percent of people polled would be more likely to make another purchase if post-sales support was available in their language.

✔ Increase Revenue



In addition to the CSA study, other studies have found the majority of people will only engage with websites in their native language and nearly half won't purchase products from a website that's in a foreign language. By translating content, companies increase engagement and conversions.

Ultimately, localization bridges the gap between technology and marketing. There are numerous ways to implement a TMS across platforms, and it offers a solution for needs that span multiple departments. Once implemented, companies find they derive significant value from the streamlined workflow, easily expanding their efforts and projects as their business grows.

transifex[®]

We're a global leader in Localization Automation solutions.

Our [Transifex Live platform](#) is an ideal solution for mid-market companies that need an end-to-end solution for translation management and global site hosting.

For companies with more mature, continuous localization requirements, integrating with Transifex using our API or Command-line Client is the optimal solution.



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