

Customizing Search on OneLink Sites

Leveraging OneLink to Build Search Tools for Your Localized Web Sites



Search Options

Overview

There are several ways to enable search on your localized sites.

Each technique has its different strengths and weaknesses.

A customized search utility provides great advantages.

OneLink has tools to help implement customized search.

Every organization has the following goals for its localized web sites:

- Guaranteeing that content is translated
- Assuring that users can rapidly access information they need in their native language

OneLink, of course, is the solution for web site translation. Information search in target languages, on the other hand, can be implemented in different ways. TransPerfect is ready to work with you to determine which of these search options is best for your organization:

Proxy Reverse Search (PRS) - This approach leverages your native search tool and serves results in a similar format on the translated sites. It relies on the keywords that your search tool uses. In addition, a reverse translated TM is created so that a search term made on the localized site is translated into English to retrieve results which are then translated and served on the localized site. This can be configured with Machine Translation to allow for a large number of potential search terms for your site.

Google Search Appliance (GSA) - With this option, indexing and search results on the translated domain use Google search func-

tionality. Main advantages are that the whole localized site is indexed and so the search results are optimal. The main disadvantage is that the results are displayed in a Google style format rather than in your native format.

Customized Search - If you decide to create your own search tool, TransPerfect supplies the OneLink API that lets you build your own search tool. A customized search solution can support search term auto-completion, search term normalization, and suggested search item functionality.

If your localized sites need to support advanced features, then a customized search approach will make more sense. This is especially true if the origin web site has features such as search term auto-completion, search term matching, or statistics based search results. If this describes your organization, maybe the best solution is to build your own localized search engine.

A customized search tool offers distinct advantages over the other options. First, it can be configured to support any search keyword, while PRS is generally limited to terms that exist in TM. Customized search can offer auto-complete capabilities. In addition, a customized search tool can be implemented to collect statistics on the items searched and on the pages visited.

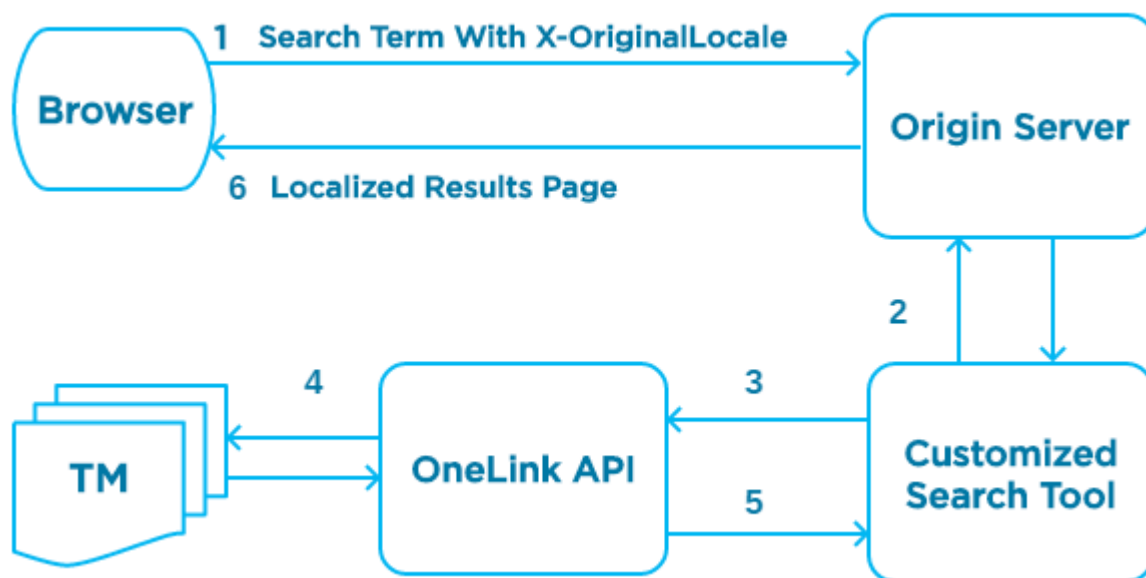


Behind the Scenes of a Customized Search

To understand why a customized solution can provide greater flexibility than other search mechanisms, it might be helpful to understand how a search request is processed in this kind of solution:

1. On a localized site, a user enters a search string.
2. The search string with an X-OriginalLocale identifier is forwarded to the Origin Server and from there to the Customized Search Tool. Depending on the needs of your organization, this tool can be made to offer search string auto-completion and search term normalization. Then via a call or look-up of some kind - CMS, API, DB - the string is translated to the source language and is searched on the origin site.
3. The Customized Search Tool then forwards the results page to the OneLink API for translation.
4. The OneLink API translates and parses the results page, using Translation Memory and the parsing engine on the proxy server.
5. The localized results page is composed and returned to the Origin Server.
6. The Origin Server serves the localized results page which is then displayed in the browser.

These different stages in a customized search request are illustrated below.



Data Flow in a Customized Search



On balance

Customized Works Better

Auto-Completion of Search Terms

A customized search solution can implement the auto-completion of search terms following a user's initial input. Translations.com can help start the process, by translating all the autocomplete terms used in the origin site's search tool. You can then re-alphabetize the translated terms appropriately in each target language. The search tool will display localized auto-complete search strings based on the value of the X-OriginalLocale header that was passed from the browser.

Search Term Normalization

Terms can be normalized before they are translated and searched on the origin server. Using the OneLink API, a localized search tool can map strings that are most likely to be misspelled to the intended search term. Search term normalization of this kind can make searches on localized sites more efficient and less frustrating for end-users.

Statistically Weighted Search Results

Some customer organizations analyze search terms in order to determine what is most likely to interest the user in addition to what is actually requested. This kind of interest-matching is commonly employed on retail sites. A search for a kayak on a sporting goods site might be used, for example, to display results that include life preservers, based on a correlation between purchases of both products. A customized search approach can integrate the use of statistics in generating and displaying search results.

Best Search Solution

You should consider implementing a customized search tool if resources and time permit. While other strategies may provide an easier implementation or an outsourced solution, the customized approach can help visitors to your localized web sites find exactly the information they need. In addition, this kind of solution can help you improve the overall search experience by displaying items of possible interest in addition to those that were requested.

But whatever you decide, keep in mind that effective searching on your localized web sites should be an important aspect of your overall localization strategy. Investing some time and effort can result in improved satisfaction for your customers and, for retail sites, higher sales volumes as well.



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