

SEO Localization

QUICK START GUIDE

Why is SEO localization important? 🤔

Companies invest significant resources in creating attractive websites and, when operating internationally, in localizing these sites for different markets. However, what good is this effort if users can't find the site? This is where tools like [Google Analytics](#) come into play. These platforms allow businesses to monitor their web traffic, understand where their visitors come from, and what content is most appealing. What these metrics often reveal is an uncomfortable truth: many localized sites receive very few visits compared to their potential.

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) localization addresses precisely this problem for companies operating in international markets. It's not simply about translating content, but ensuring that this content is discoverable by search engines in each specific market.

What is SEO localization? 🤔

You can think of SEO localization as a type of terminology work. SEO localization focuses on identifying the terms that people actually use when searching for a specific product or service in different markets.

For example, while in the UK they might search for "mobile with good camera," in the US more users would search for "cell phone with good camera." These differences, although they may seem subtle, are decisive for positioning in local search engines.

Your job as an SEO localization specialist consists of building bridges between:

- What users search for in each local market
- The terms your client uses in their original content
- The keywords that will generate relevant traffic in each region

Remember: a perfectly localized website that's invisible in search results is a missed opportunity. SEO localization ensures that the effort of cultural and linguistic adaptation is rewarded with visibility and traffic in each target market.

Key concepts for SEO localization 🔑

The concepts of **keywords** and **search intentions** are related but distinct concepts in the field of SEO.

Keywords

- These are the specific terms or phrases that users type into search engines.
- Examples: "cheap athletic shoes," "iPhone 14 price," "online Spanish courses."

- They represent the “what” of a search - the exact terms used.
- They focus on the vocabulary and specific terminology used in a market.
- They can vary significantly between markets (for example, “cellphone” in the US vs “mobile” in the UK)

Search Intentions

- They represent the purpose or the “why” behind a user’s search.
- They reflect what the user really wants to achieve when performing a search.
- They are generally classified into categories such as:
 - Informational: The user is looking for information (“how Netflix works”)
 - Navigational: The user is looking for a specific site (“LinkedIn login”)
 - Transactional: The user wants to make a purchase or action (“buy plane tickets”)
 - Commercial investigative: The user is researching before a purchase (“best laptops 2025”)
- Search intentions for similar products can differ according to cultural factors and local preferences.

A good SEO analysis considers both the specific keywords and the intentions behind them to create content that truly responds to the needs of local users.

Essential checklist for SEO localization

Although you may not realize it, you’re already familiar with some elements that relate to website SEO. Here’s your checklist of elements to consider. As you review the list, identify the elements of the structure of HTML files you’ve already learned.

Elements to consider in SEO localization

Keywords and search intention

- **What to look for?** Identify terms that local users actually use to find similar products or services.
- **Why does it matter?** Direct translation of keywords rarely works. Users in each market have specific search habits.
- **Practical exercise:** Research keywords in the target language using tools like [Google Keyword Planner](#) or [Ubersuggest](#) or by analyzing Google’s autocomplete suggestions in the target country.

Meta tags (title and description)

- **What to look for?** The meta title and description tags that appear in search results – found in the `\<head\>` of the HTML code.
- **Why does it matter?** They are your “advertisement” in search results and directly affect the CTR (click through rate).
- **Practical exercise:** Localize by including relevant keywords at the beginning, keeping titles to 50-60 characters and descriptions to 120-155 characters.

Header tags (H1, H2, etc.)

- **What to look for?** The hierarchy of headers in the page content.
- **Why does it matter?** Search engines give greater weight to keywords in headers.
- **Practical action:** Make sure each page has a unique H1 with relevant keywords, and use subheadings (H2-H6) to structure the content logically.

Content readability factors

- **What to look for?** The ease with which content can be read and understood.
- **Why does it matter?** More readable and scannable content has better engagement and better positioning.
- **Practical action:** Adapt the length of sentences and paragraphs to the preferences of the local market, use lists and bullets when appropriate.

Image alternative text (alt text)

- **What to look for?** The invisible descriptions that explain the content of images.
- **Why does it matter?** Improves accessibility and gives search engines context about visual content.
- **Practical action:** Translate and adapt alt texts including relevant keywords when natural.

SEO Optimization with Yoast

Yoast SEO is a popular WordPress plugin through which bloggers can monitor their SEO performance while writing.

Yoast SEO Optimization Checklists

Yoast SEO analyzes your content while you write, offering specific guides to optimize both the SEO and readability of your texts. Below, we present two essential Yoast SEO optimization checklists that you can follow when creating or localizing content.

Yoast SEO Checklist

- Set a focus keyphrase of an appropriate length (not too short, not too long); try to use a focus keyphrase that you've not previously used
- Use the focus keyphrase at the start of the SEO title and the slug

- Keep the SEO title to the viewable limit within search results
- Write a meta description within the viewable limit in search results that uses the focus keyphrase, preferably at the start
- Distribute the use of the focus keyphrase throughout the text with a frequency that is appropriate for the text length; use the focus keyphrase in the introduction, preferably at the start of the paragraph
- Add inbound and outbound links to the page/post; add images to the page
- The page should be of an appropriate length (not too long)

Yoast Readability Checklist

- Word complexity: Use vocabulary suited for a larger audience
- Write in an active voice; only 10% of the content should use the passive voice
- Write in short sentences; only 25% of sentences should be longer than 20 words
- Use headings and subheadings to improve SEO; sections longer than 300 words should be separated by subheadings to improve readability
- Keep paragraphs to a suitable length; don't write paragraphs that are too long
- Use variation in writing; avoid starting multiple sentences in a row with the same word
- Use transition words (and, but, so, because) to help the reader understand the relationship among the phrases, sentences and paragraphs of the text

These checklists are especially useful when you're localizing content for different markets, as they help you maintain both SEO optimization and readability in the target language. Remember that SEO practices are focused on improving the end user experience, so following these guidelines will not only improve your search engine positioning but also the overall quality of your localized content.

Yoast also offers a free course on SEO optimization. If you're interested in this topic, you should take the course!

[Free SEO training: SEO for beginners by Yoast](#)

Figure 1. Automatic SEO Analysis by Yoast

The screenshot shows the Yoast SEO analysis interface. At the top, there are four tabs: SEO (selected), Readability, Schema, and Social. Below the tabs, a section titled "Focus keyphrase" contains the text "installing Label Studio". A button labeled "Get related keyphrases" is present. Under "Preview as:", the "Mobile result" option is selected. A preview card for "LocEssentials" (locessentials.com › blog › 2025 › 0...) displays the title "Installing Label Studio for Text Annotation - LocEssentials" and the date "Feb 27, 2025". The preview card also includes a snippet: "This post covers installing Label Studio on a VM on Google Cloud to ready yourself for text annotation tasks." Below the preview, there are sections for "SEO title", "Slug", and "Meta description", each with "Use AI" and "Insert variable" buttons.

SEO Readability Schema Social

Focus keyphrase ?

installing Label Studio

Get related keyphrases

Preview as:

Mobile result Desktop result

LocEssentials
locessentials.com › blog › 2025 › 0...

Installing Label Studio for Text Annotation - LocEssentials

Feb 27, 2025 - This post covers installing Label Studio on a VM on Google Cloud to ready yourself for text annotation tasks.

SEO title

Title Page Separator Site title

Slug

Meta description

This post covers installing Label Studio on a VM on Google Cloud to ready yourself for text annotation tasks.

Technical Adjustments

Elements related to technical adjustments are generally not under the direct control of translators, but it's important to know them to understand the complete ecosystem of SEO localization.

Elements to consider in SEO localization

Hreflang tags

- **What to look for?** Tags in the code that indicate the relationship between pages in different languages – also in the <head>.
- **Why does it matter?** They help Google show the correct version of the site according to the user's location and language.
- **Practical exercise:** Verify that each page has the appropriate hreflang tags for all available versions (e.g.: <link rel="alternate" hreflang="en-us" href="https://www.site.com/us/page" />).

URL structure

- **What to look for?** How web addresses are structured for localized versions.
- **Why does it matter?** Localized URLs improve user experience and relevance for local search engines.
- **Practical exercise:** Consider whether URLs should contain localized keywords, and evaluate the overall structure (example: www.site.us/category/product vs www.site.com/us/category/product).

Local site structures

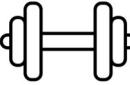
- **What to look for?** How the different localized versions of the site are organized.
- **Why does it matter?** It affects how search engines index and rank localized content.
- **Practical action:** Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each approach:
 - Subdomains: us.site.com (good for very different content)
 - Subdirectories: site.com/us/ (better for maintaining domain authority)
 - Country-specific domains: site.us (strong signal of geographical relevance)

Want to go further? Explore these technical aspects of SEO localization



Server location (globalization)

Ensure that content is hosted on local servers or use a CDN (Content Distribution Network) to guarantee fast loading times in each region. A page that takes time to load will lose visitors and ranking.

	<p>Site weight</p> <p>Optimize the size of files, images, and scripts for regions with bandwidth issues. A lighter site not only loads faster but is also more accessible to users with limited connections, especially in emerging markets.</p>
	<p>Geolocation in search engines</p> <p>Correctly configure geolocation in Google Search Console and similar tools to indicate to search engines which versions of the site should be shown in which regions.</p>
	<p>Mobile optimization for global audiences</p> <p>Ensure that your site is responsive and works well on mobile devices, especially in markets where most web traffic comes from mobile. Device usage patterns vary significantly between regions.</p>

Conclusion

SEO Localization: A Strategic Investment

SEO localization is not simply a technical or linguistic task; it's a strategic investment in a brand's global visibility. In an increasingly competitive market, it's not enough to be present in different languages, it's essential to be discoverable and relevant in each one.

By mastering SEO localization techniques, you're offering your clients much more than a translation. You're giving them the opportunity to genuinely connect with local audiences, respecting their search habits, cultural preferences, and specific needs.

Remember that effective SEO localization combines:

- Meticulous research of local keywords
- Cultural adaptation of content
- Technical optimization for each market
- Continuous analysis and data-driven improvement

As you advance in your career as a localization specialist, consider SEO localization as a fundamental competency that adds significant value to each project. You won't just be translating words; you'll be building digital bridges that connect brands with global audiences.