**General Style Guide**

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# 1. Objective

This document provides translators with standard guidelines to be followed in translation where no client-specific style guide is provided.

# 2. General Guidelines

## 2.1 Style and Tone

Familiarize yourself with the type of document you are about to translate and its target audience. Make sure you have the updated glossary of your target language. In technical writing, always use simple and plain language that is free of connotation. Slang and meaningless language detract from the purpose and are difficult to translate. Try to capture the essence of the message. Don't translate literally or word-for-word.

Instructions and descriptions should not be written from a marketing point of view. When writing feature overviews, communicate the benefits to the user in a way that is simple, and easy to understand. Don't use a heavy, staid, or arrogant tone; translation should be upbeat and friendly. Word choice, sentence length, voice, and structure influence tone. Short, choppy sentences give the impression of overly simplified content. Extremely long sentences often have the opposite impression of being complicated and difficult to understand.

For marketing materials, the text should read like it was written in your language. Do not translate literally or word for word. The level of formality varies from culture to culture. In marketing translation, it is most important to distance yourself from the source text. The main objective is that the source message is transferred into the localized language rather than words/structures have to be reflected one-to-one. This might mean sometimes that translators must split sentences or use a different sentence structure than the English. Target of all marketing translations is that customers should not notice that they are reading a translation. It should sound natural and fluent.

## 2.2 Consistency

As consistency is very critical to the quality of the translation and very effective in communicating the message to the readers or users, it is very important to maintain consistency in your translation. Avoid providing two different translations for the same feature, function, or term as this will mislead the users or readers. If there are specific glossaries to the project or specific list with some terms to be left in source language, they must be followed strictly.

## 2.3 Titles and Headings

Titles and headings should be translated consistently considering the following factors:

* Use the language of the user so that information is easier to find.
* Headings should be parallel in structure.
* Headings should be descriptive, yet concise.

## 2.4 Spelling and Grammar

Unless otherwise instructed, make sure to follow strictly the spelling and grammar rules of your target language. Make sure to run spelling checker on your work before delivering it to the client.

## 2.5 Measurements, Numbers and Date Formats

Unless otherwise instructed, make sure to follow strictly the measurements style of your target language, and follow its standard date and number formats.

## 2.6 Acronyms

Unless otherwise stated, make sure to follow strictly the general guidelines of how to use acronyms in your target language.

## 2.7 Cross References to Other Pages or Chapters

Make sure that cross-references match section titles.

## 2.8 Callouts

Callouts point to a specific item that the reader should notice in an illustration. Translate callouts just as you would translate the same sentence in your text, but let it be precise and concise. If the callout is a full sentence, it should be ended with a period. Callouts are text on the side of graphics and illustrations, like captions, in the printed documentation. They give, for instance, an explanation or definition of certain functions of the interface. The translation of callouts should generally be kept as short as possible.

# 3. Check Lists

## 3.1 Translation Check Lists

1. Checking assignment details received from the Project Manager (PM) are all correct.
2. Checking that client’s instructions are accurately followed.
3. Running a WC analysis to ensure word count is correct.
4. Checking and confirming that number of translated files is identical to the number of files in the assignment.
5. Checking TM and settings.
6. Checking that provided glossary(ies), reference materials and/or style guides have been followed.
7. Running spell checker
8. Running a QA tool for (consistency, punctuation, untranslated segments, forgotten translation, and extra spaces …. etc.)
9. Making sure to look carefully in the results generated by QA tool reports and apply all necessary changes correctly and precisely.
10. Running Tag verifier if applicable.
11. Checking that answers from questions/queries have been implemented.
12. Delivering to the PM in the same file structure, file naming and number of files as received.