CREO GLOBAL

CLUE
Cultural & Linguistic Understanding of Ethnicity©

CREOGLOBAL offers communication solutions to effectively reach culturally diverse markets and audiences. We ensure that your creative expression and message are appealing, persuasive and on strategy, no matter what audience.

Multicultural Communication Services
Communications Planning & Consulting
Marketing & Branding
Advertising & Design
Multilingual Copywriting
Typesetting & Desktop Publishing Services
Audio-Visual & Online Media Production
Web Site Localization
Foreign Language Talent

Industry Expertise
Biomedical & Healthcare
Financial Services
Agriculture, Food & Beverage
Building & Construction
Hospitality, Sports & Leisure
Travel & Transportation
Manufacturing & Hi-tech
Retail
Government and Non-profit organizations

? Did you know that only 10% of the world's population uses English as its first language? In fact, 37 million Americans do not speak English at home.

Fourth Quarter 2002

Web Site Localization for Global Companies

If your business has a presence on the Web, chances are the Internet has already taken it around the world and opened up international trade opportunities. By providing direct access to information and products around the clock and around the world, the Internet is reshaping the way we do business and opening new venues for growth. This conclusion is supported by a slew of statistical data:

- E-commerce revenue grew 73%, from $355 billion in 2000 to $615 billion in 2001;
- While 44% of this revenue is generated in the US, less than 30% of internet users reside in the US;
- By 2003, 70% of the world's purchasing power and 92% of the world's population will live in countries where English is not the native language.

Although the Web has predominantly been an English-centered medium, today, over half of Web users speak a native language other than English. Therefore, companies looking at increasing their sales and customer base can leverage the Internet to reach foreign and US ethnic markets by offering versions of their Web site in each of the languages spoken by their target markets.
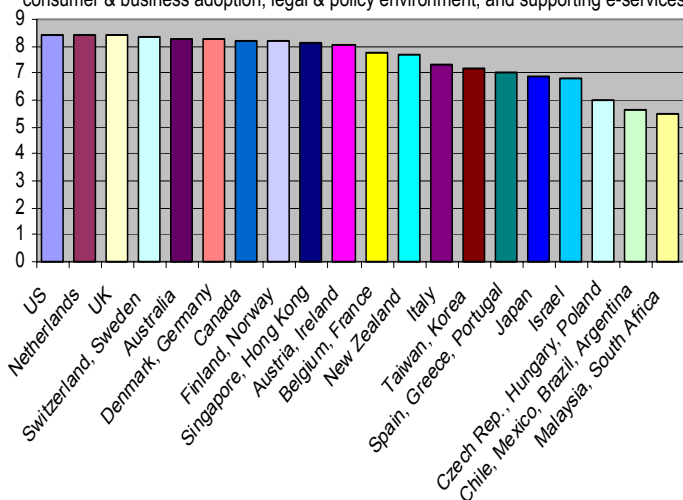
Why should you address your audiences in their native languages?
- Web users are up to four times more likely to purchase from a site that communicates in their language.
- Visitors stay twice as long on translated Web sites ("site stickiness").
- To increase name recognition and brand loyalty for your products.
- To comply with local laws. In Canada and France, a localized version must be provided along with the English-language version.
- To increase the size of your market. A product released solely in English is missing out on vast segments of markets worldwide.
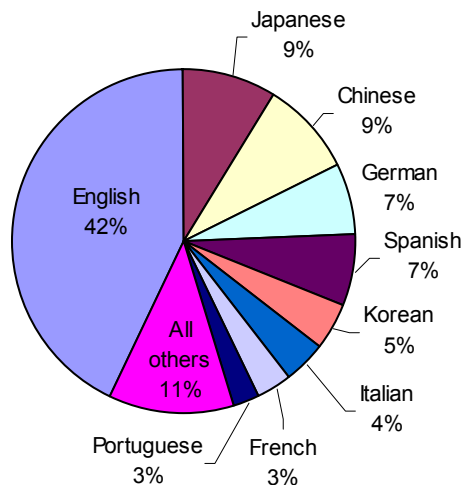
Web site localization is the process of making your Web site content and format relevant to a customer's language and culture. In order to effectively sell your products and/or services, this process has to go beyond listing a local distributor or adding a Spanish page to your Web site. With its many levels of cultural, linguistic, design and technical adaptation, this complex process can be daunting to the inexperienced.

E-Readiness

A measure for a country's conduciveness to Internet-based commercial opportunities (connectivity, technology, social & cultural infrastructure, business environment, consumer & business adoption, legal & policy environment, and supporting e-services)

Bar chart with y-axis 0 to 9. Countries along x-axis:
US; Netherlands; UK; Switzerland, Sweden; Australia; Denmark, Germany; Canada; Finland, Norway; Singapore, Hong Kong; Austria, Ireland; Belgium, France; New Zealand; Italy; Taiwan, Korea; Spain, Greece, Portugal; Japan; Israel; Czech Rep., Hungary, Poland; Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina; Malaysia, South Africa

Online Users by Language

Pie chart:
- English 42%
- Japanese 9%
- Chinese 9%
- German 7%
- Spanish 7%
- Korean 5%
- Italian 4%
- French 3%
- Portuguese 3%
- All others 11%

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Understanding of Ethnicity ©

Localizing a Web site includes not only the adaptation of visible components such as body text, graphics (navigation, buttons, banners), multimedia and downloadable files, but also hidden components such as keywords, scripts and databases.

In addition, the site itself may need to be redesigned or modified to accommodate your global audiences. This takes into consideration design issues such as layout conventions, font types and sizes, colors, the use of culture-specific and religious symbols and iconography. Number formats, e.g. for measurements, time, date, currency, phone numbers, will need to be adapted as well to comply with local standards.

Furthermore, additional space may be needed in text and graphics with text, since foreign language versions traditionally run approximately 30% longer than the English text. Special attention has to be paid to compliance with different character sets, especially when it comes to double-byte languages (e.g. Japanese) or bi-directional languages (e.g. Arabic).

Which languages should you localize into?

The data regarding *online populations* and *e-readiness* provide a useful tool in this decision (see charts above). In addition, consideration should be given to the languages spoken in your existing and potential target markets outside and inside the US.

In a global economy, multilingual Web sites are no longer an exotic luxury, but rather a critical imperative. No matter what extent or level of localization you desire for your company's Web site, CREO will be ready to answer your questions and help you establish a global online presence.

More References

Localization Industry Standards Association
www.lisa.org

Unicode Consortium
www.unicode.org

John Yunker
Beyond Borders: Web Globalization Strategies
New Riders Publishing, 2002

Upcoming Conferences

The LISA Global Strategies Summit USA
March 3-6, 2003
San Francisco, CA

23rd International Unicode Conference
March 24-28, 2003
Prague, Czech Republic

STC Annual Conference
(Society for Technical Communication)
May 5, 2003
Dallas, TX

In our next issue of CLUE:
Asian-Americans and Healthcare

Sources: Aberdeen Group; Economist Intelligence Unit & IBM; Forrester Research; Global Reach (www.glreach.com); IDC (www.idc.com); Newsfactor Network Report, July 5, 2000; US Department of Health.

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