Enabling Globalization

A Guide to Using Localization to Penetrate International Markets

Nabil Freij

Enabling Globalization: A Guide to Using Localization to Penetrate International Markets
www.EnablingGlobalization.com
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About the Author

Nabil Freij is the founder, owner, and president of GlobalVision International, Inc. He is trilingual and holds an MSEE from Brown University, as well as an MBA from Bryant University. With over 20 years' experience in the hardware, software, and localization industries, Freij has traveled the world and lived in five countries.

He is frequently published and quoted. His articles and interviews can be found in magazines, books, and websites by groups spanning the localization industry, academics, business organizations, and beyond.

The Society for Technical Communication invited Freij to speak at the STC Technical Communication Summit and 55th Annual Conference, where he presented "Translation Management Solution (TMS) Benefits during Localization." The Society also publishes his articles in its magazine and its journal of scholarly white papers.

Many of his company's clients have recommended Nabil Freij based on his expertise, customer-focused approach, and high-quality results. His project management skills and ability to accommodate the special demands of a wide range of projects are also often cited as reasons why clients continue to turn to Freij and his company for their localization needs.

Nabil lives with his wife and two children in Massachusetts. You can read his blog at http://blog.globalvis.com.

About GlobalVision International, Inc.

Founded in 1996, GlobalVision International, Inc. is a privately held company specializing in translation and localization solutions for a wide range of industries:

- Information Technology

- Software and Online Documentation

- Hardware

- Medical Devices

- Media and Web Communications

- Telecommunications and Engineering

- Manufacturing and Industrial Production

- Consumer Products

- Business, Legal, and Finance

We are globalization enablers. We help companies penetrate international markets by localizing their products, documentation, websites, pay-per-click campaigns, and marketing and sales collateral into all commercial languages.

GlobalVision International, Inc. has offices in the US, Japan, Europe, and the Middle East. We employ native talent with advanced language, technical, and project management skills to handle not only Latin-based languages, but also other turnkey languages that have double-byte or bidirectional requirements.

Our company relies on the latest technologies in Web 2.0, search engines, databases, workflows, and computer-aided translation to facilitate efficient translation reuse and maximize quality. We use innovative software and communication tools often unique to our company.

Our mission: To enable our clients to reach their global markets by providing them with high-quality localization and translation services, on time and on budget.

www.globalvis.com

Abstract

Comprehensive and easy to read, this book is designed for anyone who is considering penetrating international markets via localization or is currently localizing but wants to do it more efficiently.

The book begins by defining localization and distinguishing it from translation, which is just one step in localizing a product or its documentation. Seven parts clearly mark the topics that its chapters explore. Part 1 explains the benefits of localizing, and then helps readers choose the right markets and strategies. Part 2 illustrates why entrusting localization to experienced professionals is the most cost-effective approach by exposing ten myths and mistakes that cause so many projects to fail.

The industry's best practices are well outlined in depth in Part 3: First, choosing the correct localization process is critical to successful globalization, and each option is explained here. Next, create localization-ready documentation by employing up-to-date methods and a staff that knows how to write and illustrate for a global audience. Then, make quality your primary standard when choosing teams for localization and for in-country reviews. Finally, design a realistic project plan and budget that accounts for all expenses, and involve your localization teams in the early stages.

Part 4 explains how to contain costs while keeping the quality high. Technology is the focus of Part 5: Translation management systems used in collaboration with a professional staff can improve results and afford significant savings. Online tools and techniques offer great promise, but cannot duplicate the quality of an experienced localization team.

Part 6 confirms that both the explosion of the Internet worldwide and the growing Chinese market indicate that it is time to localize websites, and to localize into Chinese. Basic guidelines are given here. Then, Part 7 provides a ten-step guide to conducting an annual self-assessment of your localization strategy.

The wide range of topics, arranged in chronological order with ready-reference markers, make the book an ideal companion for every company with aspirations of penetrating international markets.

Introduction

We've built this guide because despite the need, nothing like it exists: a concise, step-by-step handbook for globalization and localization in the new millennium.

New clients come to us with a desire to go global but unsure of what the process entails. Some face a Catch-22 dilemma. They want to penetrate international markets, but they fear that they cannot justify the involved costs.

Others – some who have been localizing for years – want to know more about the new tools and processes that will improve both their results and their bottom line.

Welcome to ***Enabling Globalization: A Guide to Using Localization to Penetrate International Markets***. Here you will find the practical advice you need to start on your way and follow through to a successful finish.

First, consider this: Of the US's top 10 trading partners, 1.9 billion of these nations' consumers don't speak English. So, does that mean that your solution is to hire a translator? No. Simply translating your products, documentation, and/or website isn't enough to make them accessible to international customers. Translation is merely changing words from one language to another. Making your product usable and appealing in another culture requires professional localization: adapting it to the local styles, customs, needs, and preferences.

Also, just because your products are localized does not mean that clients will beat a path to your door! ***Enabling Globalization*** offers you the essential information you need to accomplish your goal. Over the course of our 14 years' experience, we've seen how many companies do it and have passed along the knowledge we've acquired by offering newsletters and articles covering a wide range of topics related to localization. Here we compile a selection of them, updated to reflect the latest trends and technologies, in a comprehensive guide.

Helpful features make it easy to find just what you need now. Each of the guide's 27 chapters fall within one of seven parts, from Getting Started to Keeping the Commitment. Cost containment, best practices, the latest technologies, and special challenges are just a few of the areas of interest explored along the way.

So, whether you're just entering the wide world of globalization or you're a veteran of the field, this guide is for you. We invite you to take a look inside the industry through the eyes of a successful localization company. ***Enabling Globalization*** will enlighten and inspire you – and leave you eager to tackle your next international market!

Part 1: When and Why to Localize

It's been a couple of years since you began developing a new product for your local market, and you are finally starting to reap the fruits of your labor. Orders are coming in! Clients are happy and referring others! Your controller is at last telling you that you are starting to bridge the gap between your books and black ink!

Heartened by your long-awaited indicators of success and encouraged by a cheap dollar overseas, you start eying international markets in hopes of further capitalizing on your recent triumphs and shrinking your path to profitability. You contemplate hiring an international consultant or signing up value-added resellers (VARs) and distributors, but quickly find out how expensive and expansive the world can be. Undeterred by the challenge ahead, you start your international offensive by strategizing and prioritizing.

Congratulations! You have taken the first step toward joining the global economy. But don't do it unprepared. Navigating your company through treacherous international waters is not for the faint-hearted, inexperienced, or ill-equipped. Going international requires determination, experience, resources, and a finely tuned process to get you where you need to go.

It all might sound overwhelming: Where to start? You've chosen the right place. In this chapter, we'll explore four areas key to launching – or improving – your localization effort:

- Chapter 1: To Localize or Not to Localize?
- Chapter 2: The Visible and Hidden Benefits of Localization
- Chapter 3: Finding The Right Markets
- Chapter 4: Choosing Your Localization Strategy

The information in Chapters 1 and 2, **To Localize or Not to Localize?** and **The Visible and Hidden Benefits of Localization,** will help those who are contemplating localization – and those who've already made their choice. Chapter 3, **Finding the Right Markets**, gives you two approaches to identifying where you'll earn the most profit. **Choosing Your Localization Strategy** (Chapter 4) explains three approaches to localization and how to match yours to your company's goals.