



Key Steps To A Successful Globalisation Programme

A quick management guide for companies of all sizes

Is your company going overseas to generate fresh income streams?

More and more companies are doing just that, either by entering new markets or by building on an established customer base.

These companies rely on efficient globalisation programmes to prepare their software products for launch. By establishing clear processes of globalisation they prepare their company, their departments and their software products for success in international markets.

By contrast, companies that adopt a fragmented approach to their globalisation programmes find it hard to control them. These firms are slow to market, and they lose potential market share. Senior managers are unable to measure the success of their globalisation efforts in ROI and revenues.

What steps can your company take to ensure a successful globalisation programme? This report outlines the key steps, the pitfalls to avoid, and the attributes to look for in a multi-lingual vendor of globalisation solutions.

Process Is Key To Globalisation

Successful globalisation is a result of repeatable processes. To generate these processes, companies focus on two steps:

- ◆ Internationalisation (preparing your software product at a technical level to be used without language or cultural barriers)
- ◆ Localisation (translating and enabling the product for a specific market)

Internationalisation makes a software product “localisation-ready.” When done properly, your product is able to handle all the inputs and outputs for localisation. This means you never have to redesign it.

The same applies to localisation. By following established localisation processes, you can make your software perfectly natural to any user, in any country.

The result is that you can take your product into any market, with the knowledge that the logistical, cultural and transactional aspects of that product have been designed to support the language and locale of that market.

What should be localised?

Your first decision is a marketing and business development one, driven by your competitive analysis of the market.

You decide what to localise and into what languages. You look at the sustainability of your product, and you determine whether your product makes sense in your target markets.

In addition to the product itself, successful companies consider the localisation of their pre-and post sale information, such as marketing collateral and communications, product manuals, user guides, and websites.

Another issue is economies of scale. Once a company establishes a localisation programme in one language, it's easy to transfer that initial investment into another language.

10-point Localisation Planning Checklist

1. Which products and components do you plan to localise?
2. In what target markets and languages will you need to localise?
3. What are the legal, regulatory, and commercial requirements in those markets?
4. Do you have a timeline in place?
5. What future updates do you anticipate?
6. How frequently do you expect to have new products for localisation?
7. What are your specific engineering and functionality issues?
8. Are the source files compatible with the languages targeted for localisation?
9. Are voice-over, dubbing or subtitling skills required?
10. What plans do you have for localising your website?

With up-to-date tools and methodologies you can reproduce the same content in different media too.

These tools include translation memory databases and single source content management systems. Many companies today deploy content management systems for their web localisation work.

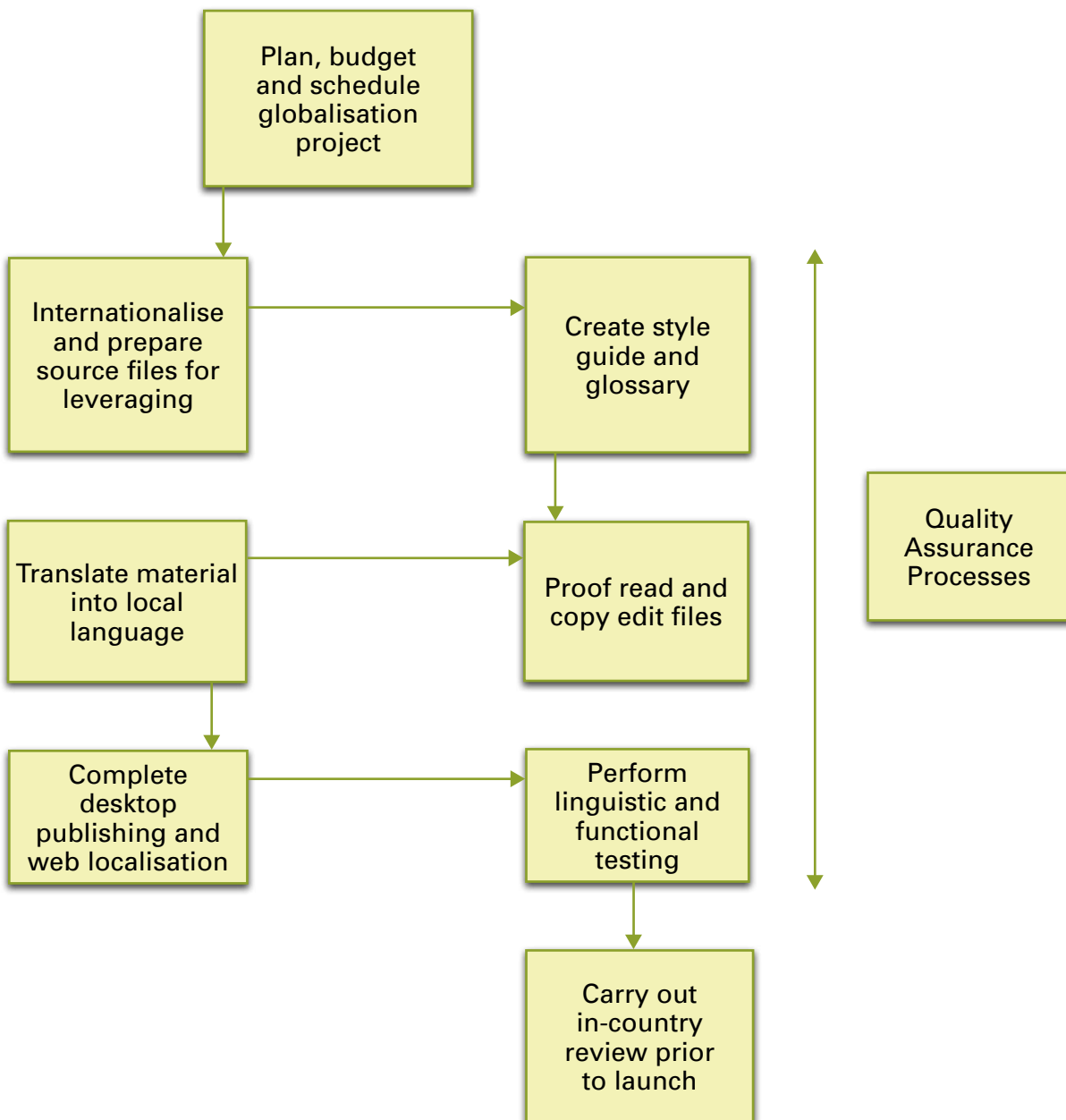
Getting started

To successfully globalise your software products you need experienced people, clearly defined workflows and a commitment to five key skills.

These key skills are Quality Assurance, Engineering, Translation, Multilingual Publishing, and Project Management. They come into play at every stage of the process.

To perform these tasks well, it's essential to have experienced teams in place. These can be either in-house, or supplied by an outside partner. Of course, you may also prefer to have your partner manage the entire project for you.

Successful globalisation programmes follow clearly defined processes and workflows:



Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance plays a major role throughout the localisation process.

The first step is translation quality. After internationalising, this step ensures you have your source materials ready to translate into your target language.

If you choose an outside partner, they should supply teams of locally-based translators to prepare style guides, a glossary, and a list of terminology in your target language. Then they translate your work.

Next they review your print and online materials for consistency and visual appeal. Is the graphic content right for your locale?

Functional testing follows. At this point, engineering teams check your software and website are functioning properly. After this, your product is ready for a complete in-country review before launch.

Engineering

Engineers play a pivotal role in your globalisation programme.

Prior to localising your software, they work on internationalising it. For example, they uncover errors in the source code which may later create problems when you roll out across markets. In this way, they also help you to budget time and money for your localisation work.

When localisation starts they accelerate the translation process. Through the efficient use of translation tools, they improve the quality and consistency of your translations. This makes the job of translators easier. And prior to final delivery they perform functional testing and ensure your product's readiness for launch.

Translation

Why is the translation step so important?

It's because accurate translation is a measure of the quality of your localisation work.

Customers prefer to buy a localised product. By translating your software product and marketing materials into their language and locale, you can hit home with them. You can use the same language within your product, across product suites and in later releases. You create a brand customers will identify with, and stay loyal to.

Multilingual Publishing

You can have the finest translations in the world, but it only takes a tiny typo or layout error to lose the confidence of your readers. That's why it pays to think of desktop publishing as the guardian of your brand values.

Skilled multilingual publishing teams produce localised online and print-ready materials to precisely match your source documents, and meet the linguistic and typography standards of your target language and locale.

In addition, they can carry out audio localisation. Web sites feature increasing amounts of audio information, for example in webinars and videos. You may also need dubbing and subtitling services.

Website localisation requires you to adapt your graphics and messages to the culture of your target audience too.

Project Management

Good communication is central to an efficient localisation process.

An effective project manager communicates your needs to the localisation team working on your project, and relays the issues back to you and your colleagues.

How do they do this? By ensuring your localisation work meets the defined quality criteria at every stage of your project:

- ◆ They prioritise tasks, manage change and risks, and communicate effectively with all the members of your localisation project team
- ◆ They coordinate engineers, translators and designers at your office and on the ground
- ◆ They create efficient, collaborative reporting structures
- ◆ They set up regular production and project meetings
- ◆ The result? Your product and its supporting materials are delivered on message, on time, and on budget.

What to look for in a localisation partner

Success in overseas markets requires commitment from your localisation partner. Look for a multi-language vendor (MLV) who can collaborate easily with your teams. In particular, check their credentials against these criteria:

- ◆ Commitment to the highest Quality Assurance standards at each stage of your project
- ◆ In-country translation skills
- ◆ Engineers with experience and expertise in up-to-date technologies and testing
- ◆ Subject matter expertise in your area
- ◆ Multilingual publishing expertise
- ◆ Experienced project managers committed to the success of globalisation projects
- ◆ A history of success with their existing clients
- ◆ A partner with long-term partnership and process-focussed approach to how they supply localisation services

About Acorn Localizations

Acorn Localizations is a dynamic young company that helps both large and small businesses expand their interests into all regions of the globe. With our worldwide network of specialist teams, we provide you with the expertise to break into new overseas markets or build on the successful start you have made in other regions.

Our teams of professional and highly skilled linguistic experts live and work in the very market you want to reach. They understand the specific cultural and linguistic nuances of your target locale. So they can adapt your materials to fit a changing market and culture fast.

We have engineering teams available in all major localisation markets too. This means we can visit your offices to work onsite with your software and development teams. Collaborating with our localisation engineers in this way, you maintain tight control over the costs and timing of your project.

Our multilingual publishing team are available to carry out all tasks associated with the production of multilingual documentation and online systems. We also deal with the challenges associated with web localisation, especially around the graphical nature of these sites.

Acorn Localizations' project managers are long serving localisation professionals with years of expertise on large, complex, multilingual projects. They rely on sound project management practices to deliver your successful localisation project.

In addition, through our consultancy service and our programmes of workshops and seminars we can work with you to embed the key internationalisation, localisation and globalisation skills processes in your company.

Established localisation processes are helping more and more companies of all sizes to enter new markets. With Acorn Localizations you can create globalisation strategies for your software products, enter new markets quickly, and start generating new income streams.

For more information about Acorn Localizations please contact info@acornl10n.com