



Top tips for localising your website

Website localisation is the process of adapting a website specifically for a particular country, region or area, with written and visual content to fit with the local cultural outlook. Website localisation works together with website translation and there are an increasing number of providers specialising in this area.

English use on the internet declined from 51% in 2000 to 29% in 2009, making it vital that businesses looking to trade overseas translate and adapt their websites for an international audience.

In general, a good example of a website that has been localised correctly for the target market will feature:

- Browser recognition so visitors can be taken to their dedicated language area
- Links to the other language version by the name of the language rather than a flag – as languages are often spoken in more than one country
- Unique domain name in the language of the target market – this will be particularly important as the first Internationalised Domain Names, in non-Latin characters, will be available from 2010.
- Hosting in your target country and link popularity with sites hosted in the target market – i.e. links back from French websites to your own site
- Optimisation for search engines in your chosen country such as using keywords in the target language that are popular in the target market
- Appropriate colours and images – e.g. in Islamic countries green is used for Holy purposes and in Korea, names written in red means the person is dead
- Search engine friendly copy written particularly for the target audience
- Correct display of numbers, currency, date and time, weights and measures.

Remember that:

- ✦ Translating from English to some European languages will increase the amount of text and you may have to tweak existing website templates
- ✦ Not just the text will need translating but also the tone and key messages to suit your audience
- ✦ Certain things will not need to appear on the other-language versions

Once you have chosen a website localisation supplier make sure that you are clear about your objectives and remain fully involved throughout the whole process. Check, re-check and proof read final copy and always query things if you are not sure.

To find website localisation providers in your area please contact the Regional Language Network on 0121 329 3297 or info@rln-westmidlands.com