

HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE A MULTILINGUAL LOCALIZATION PROJECT (1)

Scenario: In order to sell more and gain more shares in the international markets, many international companies need to localize their products and services into many languages and publish their products along with the documentation, user manuals, marketing materials etc., offline or online, printed or on-screen, simultaneously in the languages they aim at.

In other words, they need to get their products say the language of the countries they are going to target at. It's critical to involve an experienced localization partner who has not only the necessary resource but also the industry know-how and the best practice, to take care of the mission.

Solution: As one of the leading players in the localization world, CCJK has ten years of experiences in helping international client successfully tapping into both mature Western European and Northern America markets and emerging markets such as BRIC by localizing their products and services into more than 45 popular languages. In this article, we will brief how CCJK works with client to successfully manage a multilingual localization project.

Prerequisites: multilingual talent pool by subject area

Due to the mental intensive and knowledge concentrated nature of the translation business, the industry still extensively depends on a well-

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educated linguist's skill and experience to produce a good work. While a linguist can only be an expert in one or two fields, It's encouraged to manage and use a linguists' skill only in his or her area of expertise.

It takes not short to create a talent pool in good scale with plenty of qualified resource. However, a well established system can recruit, test, evaluate and train the resources efficiently. The following serves as a guideline and criteria for recruitment, selection, and maintenance of a pool of qualified translators:

1. The translator must be a native speaker of the target language and have current, in-country experience of the source language
2. The translator must possess an extensive background and in-depth knowledge of their subject areas as well as a minimum of three years of professional experience in the field of translation.
3. The translator must pass skill assessment tests in both their areas of expertise and linguistic ability.
4. Keep record of and place considerable importance on the translators' prior performance, ability to follow instruction and deliver projects on time.

The confidence of success operation of a localization project builds on nothing but a reliable pool of resource who maintains sound track record and high capacity and availability. For a big multilingual project, it's necessary to engage many translators to assemble a team for simultaneous production in order to meet the challenging deadline.

This is when the role of project manager plays in coordinating the team, minimize possible lapse, maximum efficiency and keep consistency

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throughout the production. The first step a capable PM need to draw enough attention is to work out a project checklist based on the client's specific requirement.

Project Checklist

Due to the diversity of different projects from different clients in different industries, the instructions and requirements vary from each localization project. The UI translation, for example, has specific instructions to modify the original interface in respect of local conventions, time/date displays, measurement systems, numbers and currency, character encodings and fonts as well as dropdown list of cities and areas.

Before kicking off a project, the project manager needs to work closely with the client to understand the work scope, instruction, requirement and specification of the project. Furthermore, the PM needs to work out a project specific checklist to be shared among all team members to make sure everybody on board in on the same picture. The following is an example list of which areas need to be addressed:

1. Enforcing FTP or email usage convention
2. Folder structure of source kit and deliverable.
3. File naming convention
4. Translatable and Non-Translatable product name or string
5. Instructions to UI translation
6. Instructions to formatting: date, time, currency, number, address, telephone number, calendar, units of measurement, capitalization, font, line and word breaking, sorting etc.

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7. Instructions to linguistic issues

8. Other and more instructions to be added with the progress and feedback of the project, always maintain and share a most update one among all team members.

If the product is complex enough, provide necessary training to the team members by illustration of screen capture, teleconference or videoconference. The purpose of the whole project checklist is to make sure every step strictly follow the instructions for a consistent quality production thus meet and beyond the expectation of the client. In the next section, we will introduce three tools that help maintain consistency in multilingual localization project: Glossary, Style Guide, and Translation Memory.

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