

# Best practices for translating **Training & elearning**

Educate, engage & inform across cultures





## Educate, engage & inform **across cultures**

Expanding your business or operations into a new region requires you to undertake significant localization measures. In addition to your local marketing and branding efforts, it is a good idea to professionally translate your training and elearning content.

Translation and localization of your company's elearning and training content allow you to deliver consistent, targeted and relevant instruction to both employees and customers. In addition to getting the message across, localization and transcreation are translation techniques that help ensure your multimedia elearning materials accomplish their intended purpose: to educate, engage and inform.

Regardless of the language or the market, this process can be overwhelming.

Since elearning is a multimedia experience, your content will consist of visual, written and audio components. It is necessary to consider the challenges of each, both separately and together, to ensure that your training materials remain consistent and effective when translated.



**Keep in mind the following best practices for translating elearning content to help you more efficiently create global training and informational materials to enhance your brand and business.**

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Tip 1

## Think about translation during the **entire** content creation process

When developing new eLearning content, keep translation in mind to save yourself a lot of time, money, and frustration. These tips can help:

- 1 Steer clear of slang and idiomatic expressions** to reduce the amount of time that you have to spend translating your materials.
- Similarly, **avoid culturally specific references** or technical jargon unless absolutely necessary.
- Use simple sentences with clear, concise language.** Choose strong, active verbs and limit abbreviations and contractions. Whenever possible, select words with a single meaning instead of multiple meanings. Avoid double negatives and difficult tenses or grammatical phrasing.
- If you use pictures, navigation icons, symbols, or graphics, make sure you **use relatable or universal images.** Check with international colleagues or professionals to ensure you are selecting ones that are free of culture- or country-specific connotations.
- Limit unnecessary or culturally specific gestures.** Hand movements or signs can be confusing or fail to communicate their intended meaning when materials are translated.



Ideally, a business would take into consideration the best practices for **translating elearning** content throughout the whole content creation process.

Tip 2

## Choose your images **carefully**

As you incorporate images into your elearning content, avoid embedding text in graphics. If text is placed directly in an image, altering it will require much more work.

This can result in delays and unnecessary additional expense during the course of translation and localization. You'll eliminate all of these steps by using images without embedded text; just use captions.

Many countries, especially in Europe, utilize helpful standard and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) approved symbols to convey a message without having to translate it.

Be careful when using non-standard symbols, custom designs, or logos. Sometimes, a graphic depiction or symbol that seems perfectly ordinary and straightforward may take on a different meaning **in another culture** or may be too confusing to effectively convey your meaning. Researching symbols before you begin elearning translation can streamline the process, saving time and money.



**Your elearning content will translate more seamlessly when you select culturally neutral images with minimal symbols or metaphorical representations.**



Tip 3

## Consider your **space**

When preparing to translate written content, consider how you'll have to adjust your main text blocks as well as smaller text areas accordingly. Building in extra space from the beginning of your content creation to allow for future translation makes good long-term sense.

Watch out for feedback dialog boxes, sidebars, pop-up boxes, interface elements, labels, and tables – particularly row and column headers. These may not correspond correctly once the placement and length of the text changes. When you're working with multiple-page documents, expanding the text may also affect pagination. If you make references to other sections of the document, choose words like "preceding" or "following" instead of "above" and "below" to avoid confusion. This extra space may also make written materials longer, which can increase your production costs for printed versions.

**Video translation** presents similar problems. When translating a video script into a language that extends the spoken content by 30% or more, the length of the video may have to be changed to fit the length of the translated voice-over. When initially creating a video, make sure to keep the speed of narration nice and easy, and leave a little silent time between sections where possible. Include at least some still images or video footage that won't be degraded by slowing it down, to allow visual space for narration expansion.



When you're translating elearning content from English into other languages, you may need anywhere from 30% to 200% more space for your text.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "User Interface: **Text Translation Design**." IBM i Globalization. 2017. (Accessed 10 March 2021)

Tip 4

## Don't make translation of training videos an afterthought

In addition to elearning content, it's likely you also have other training assets that need translation, like instructional videos.

Video enhances and accelerates the training process, reduces costs and increases employee understanding and interaction. By combining multiple modes of learning, it improves user interest, comprehension and retention of information.

Using video as a training tool allows you to work with these common behavioral trends, encouraging engagement with the material and reducing the need for short-term re-training.

Video training can bolster your employees' skills and keep them informed about the latest



products, technology, and industry standards. This allows them to improve their efficiency and your profitability. Using instructional video in training sales staff increases net sales up to 50% per team member.

A choppy video overdub or shoddy **subtitles** can undermine the value of video training, resulting in ineffective transfer of knowledge and costly re-training exercises. Choose native voice actors with the correct dialect and accent, maintain consistently high production values and ensure smooth post-production integration of voice and subtitles.

Any breakdown in the chain can result in additional expense and inferior quality production. Preserve the value of your investment in these training materials by making their translation a priority.



**An overwhelming majority of employees – 75% – report that they are more likely to watch video-based training sessions than read documents, emails or web articles.**

Tip 5

## Cater to your **potential customers**

Having well-translated instructional content is also vital for customer education. Videos that are effective and accessible to your customers in every market are an integral part of growing your business.

Warranties, manuals, instruction books and other written materials that support elearning need to be both understandable and accessible to your audience. You should develop with or provide to your translation team a **style guide** of preferred practices, expressions, and translations to ensure consistency within your documents, videos, and other elearning content.

Having your content evaluated by a localization professional, conducting a survey, interview, or focus group beforehand, and speaking with the managers who will be overseeing each new local market can help you get an idea of what should (or should not) be included when translating your elearning curriculum.



# 73%

of consumers say they are more likely to make a purchase after watching videos that explain a product or service.



# 58%

of consumers consider companies that produce video content as part of their online presence to be trustworthy.

Tip 6

## Choose a trusted **translation partner**

Look for a company who offers strategic, scalable localization programs for your training and elearning content. A collaborative translation partner will take the time to understand your workplace culture, operations and needs. Then, they'll help customize and put in place repeatable, efficient processes that help you meet deadlines and goals for growth.

Choosing a **translation partner** that provides an end-to-end solution for translating elearning content enables you to reach new markets on time and within your budget.

Defining your goals upfront will help you keep translation in mind while developing training and elearning content. When your content is translation-ready from the start, you protect

your investment with a process that's strategic, scalable and efficient. And your brand's unique voice and message connects with employees and customers across the globe.

Effective translation and localization of your organization's training and elearning content can drive customer satisfaction, boost sales efforts, and help your company thrive in new markets.



**Your translation provider is instrumental in ensuring that your message gets across as intended and that the translation process itself is smooth and well-organized.**







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Your success is our success, and our project managers will be with you at every step. We run a flexible process tailored to your team so you'll always know how your translation requests are progressing and what to expect. Our self-service portal, **My Acclaro**, makes managing progress easy.

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### We believe in the power of partnership.


We believe inspired solutions come from close collaboration – no one knows your business better than you do, and no one does localization like we do. By taking the time to understand how we each work best, we'll combine your strengths and ours to create **tailored solutions** that serve your goals.

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 eLearning & training

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