

**An International Communication by
Design, Inc. (ICD) White Paper**



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Creating Translation-Ready Documents

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Introduction

This white paper provides guidance for writing content that meets the needs of an international audience and that is easily translatable.

Problem Statement

Companies and organizations in today's marketplace seek to reduce their costs for translation. To help increase sales, businesses want to ensure that their content is well received and understood by customers and potential customers worldwide.

Benefit: Cost Savings

By applying sound and proven principles of writing for global audiences, companies can expect to shorten the time required for translation, resulting in cost savings.

Benefit: Quality

Translated content is more consistent and of a higher quality if you use a consistent approach to writing source content. Readers worldwide can more easily understand the concepts being communicated, yielding enhanced customer satisfaction.

Implementation

To create content for an international audience, writers must learn to

communicate information to any reader by applying certain basic writing principles. In addition, writers should conduct research to understand the needs of the audiences in each geographic region.

Research the Target Culture

To write effectively for an international audience, writers must place themselves in the position of the person who will receive the document. When deadlines loom, taking the time to do in-depth research about the cultural characteristics of your audience may not seem possible. But setting aside time to conduct basic research about your readers and their societies yields benefits beyond your current project.

When you act as an anthropologist and study the cultures, societal beliefs, and value systems of your target audiences in advance, you can apply this knowledge to all of the documents you write.

Apply Fundamental Principles

To improve reader comprehension, avoid ambiguity, and facilitate quality translations, apply these fundamental principles when you write English content:

- Avoid complicated sentence structure; include one thought or action per sentence.
- Use few, if any, idiomatic or colloquial expressions or jargon.
- Review your content for terms or phrases that are ambiguous.
- Define and use standard English terminology and ensure that your terminology has been reviewed by a certified translator.
- Define technical and marketing terms for translators. Even the best translators may have difficulty

translating a key marketing concept or catchphrase.

- Use active voice whenever possible.
- Use prepositions clearly and correctly.
- Avoid over-modified nouns; replace multiple adjectives with prepositional phrases.
- Avoid two-word verbs, such as “break up” that have idiomatic meanings.

Leverage Authoring and Translation Tools

As you define terminology and write content that is suitable for a global audience, you can reuse translation-ready material in both the source and the target language by leveraging appropriate tools. Consider implementing these solutions in your organization:

Define methods and tools for reusing existing content. Some authoring tools will enable you to more easily reuse existing content. If the original content has been thoroughly reviewed for translatability, you can save time and money by reusing that content whenever possible.

Establish standard terminology that is suitable for a variety of audiences. By maintaining translation-ready terms and using tools that check your content for proper terminology, you can help ensure that terms unsuitable for certain cultures are not used in your documents. Consistent use of terminology can also reduce your translation costs.

Maintain translation memories to reuse content in the target language. Once your content has been reviewed by experts in the target language, ensure that your translation memories are updated. This will help ensure that your translated

documents are clear, understandable, and suitable for your target audience.

Summary

Implementing the recommendations provided in this white paper has clear benefits for companies doing business in the global marketplace. Among the benefits are:

- Costs savings through leveraging existing content and translations
- Improved customer satisfaction through delivery of content that is understood by and suitable for native and non-native English speakers
- Reduced review time as reused content and translations have previously undergone review
- Improved quality of translation through reuse of translated content that has previously undergone customer review
- Improved consistency of source and translated content through reuse of source and translations

Want to know more?

For more information on writing content for an international audience and other ways to improve translation and source quality, contact International Communication by Design, Inc. at info@icdtranslation.com.

When you need complete globalization services, trust ICD for on-time and accurate language translation services.