

GLOBAL AMBITIONS

Thoughts, Ideas & Inspiration for 2023

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COMPANIES MAKE**
(And How to Fix Them)

HOW PINTEREST
Embraces the Change
for its 400 Million+ Users

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE:
Why It Matters
and How to Get Started

...and much more.

argos
multilingual

Intro.

Dear Reader,

We are all experiencing uncertain times, as humans and as businesses. Many of our existing assumptions are being challenged almost daily. But while many things may be outside our control, we can still shape our future, even though we cannot predict it.

One lesson from past downturns is clear: Difficult times can bring opportunities. Adversity helps spark innovation. Many great companies started up during recessions: Airbnb, Mailchimp, Slack, and Uber are just some examples.

Growth is a must. Every company needs to grow to survive and thrive. Every part of an organization needs to show they are vital to this growth. We all, as individuals, need to contribute to growth to remain relevant.

I think there has never been a better time to look for international growth. For many businesses, from scale-ups to large enterprises, being globally ambitious is the way to go. And anyone involved with global content that drives this growth is, effectively, a "critical worker." There has perhaps never been a better time to work in localization than today.

So, in this issue of Global Ambitions, we want to bring you new ideas and fresh inspiration for

our current times. Like how successful organizations think about and achieve global growth, with new data from recent research commissioned by Lokalise. How a smart approach to localization helps support businesses that embrace product-led growth (PLG) strategies. How to really go about international SEO and in-market copywriting, and what frequent mistakes to avoid.

We live in a fast-changing world, and our requirements for content have changed dramatically. Pinterest leads the way in providing its users with inclusive and accessible experiences, and they show how they achieve this. We also reveal a hands-on approach to assessing content for multi-cultural inclusion.

The latest developments in NLP and AI are breathtaking, so we share a few tips on running NLP data collection projects while showcasing some of our recent real-life applications of AI.

Whatever your role or interest in developing great global content, let me wish you plenty of success. Our times may be uncertain, but they are also fascinating.

Onwards and upwards!



Véronique Özkaya
CEO, Argos Multilingual

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How Pinterest Embraces the Change for its 400 Million+ Users

A diverse world calls for inclusive and accessible experiences



FRANCESCA DI MARCO
Head of Internationalization and Design Operations at Pinterest

Francesca Di Marco is the Head of Internationalization and Design Operations at Pinterest, where she leads the internationalization and global development program for product and marketing. She is passionate about building internationalization orgs from scratch, enabling scalable globalization and localization strategies, and bridging gaps across functions and regional offices. Francesca is a lifelong language nerd and a former lecturer on the History of Modern Japan. In her spare time, she makes documentaries.

It is no secret that tailored experiences help users feel comfortable and valued. And language plays a big part in that. When looking to the future, the international team at Pinterest is diving deep into what creates a psychologically safe, respectful, and welcoming space.

At Pinterest, our localization team is the bridge between global markets and the teams based in the United States where the company is headquartered. We are the bridge between the larger business needs and the requirements and our local market experts.

We collect data from all our markets to make sure that the message we are sending is fine-tuned in a way that resonates with all these audiences. With each new go-to-market strategy, we develop a business plan, outline, target, and a marketing plan along with the marketing and the PMM teams. Each product and market are different, so each go-to-market strategy needs to be thoroughly thought out and planned. Each market faces different challenges, so we need to find specific solutions.

The Universal versus the local

Although our content is localized, our core message is global, and we need to make sure that our message flows through our content universally. To do this we need to ask ourselves three questions:

1. What is the message?
2. What are we targeting?
3. Who is the audience?

Imagine launching an educational campaign for content creators on Pinterest. We know that content creators are different in each market, and we need to address them using a different voice using a different message. And so that's exactly what we're going to

ABOUT PINTEREST	Monthly Active Users:
Founded: 2010	433 million
2021 Revenue: \$2.578B	Languages Supported:
Employees: 3,225	38

English



Curve appeal

French



Rondez-vous

English



Puff love

French



Haute coiffure

English



Spanish



Pearlcore

Perl-fección

English



German



Check yourself

Alles K(l)aro

do. First, we need guidance from our local marketing managers. Second, we need to align with the company branding. And third, we need to adapt all these digital assets for the local market.

To have the right mix of global and local, we break things into two parts. There is a message that is universal, and there is a message that we can translate. In sheer localization terms, this means we can do translation and a review of that universal message. And then there is the local message that needs to be adapted and often copywritten from scratch to truly resonate with the audience.

Here's how it works with the Pinterest Predicts report

With our very popular Pinterest Predicts report, by teaming up with the Insights Team, Marketing Team, and Brand, we made each asset absolutely local.

We changed not just the language — and sometimes the messaging if appropriate — but we changed the insides. We changed the editorial for each market, as well as the in-product links, and we added local data. The result is that our advertisers or business partners will see hyper-localized content for their market and should not notice that the content was originally drafted for the US market.

We translated the universal message and recreated a local message. It was a mix and match of something that resonated globally that was simply translated. Which was paired with local insights, local data, local markets, and local partners so these digital assets were, again, hyper-localized. But across all those markets, the leadership strategy was the same. And of course, the brand was the same.

Looking towards 2023

This strategy takes us into 2023 where we are doubling down on the universal message. What do we need to focus on as a company? What is a truth no matter where you are in the world?

Our first conclusion is the need for inclusion and belonging. The language we use needs to represent the diverse perspectives of our users. Not only in terms of language and locale but by a whole host of factors including gender, race, and different abilities. These truths need to flow through the universal message regardless of the local market.

But this is just one step. Another step is putting technology into use from the very beginning to flag sensitive content upstream. With such a large company and so

"Our first conclusion is the need for inclusion and belonging. The language we use needs to represent the diverse perspectives of our users."

much content being produced every day, it only makes sense to implement safeguards such as having every piece of writing scanned by a machine to pick out and flag anything that might be questionable for human review and approval.

But we can't stop there. We have also increased our focus on educating translators, copywriters, and reviewers, to ensure that our content resonates with every user in the world whose abilities, culture, and experiences are different from ours.

Accessibility is the gatekeeper

No matter how impressive or clever the word choice, if it is not accessible, the content is literally meaningless. With this in mind, accessibility is the second piece of our approach for 2023.

For example, the concept of providing accessible event experiences was always a challenge. But now that many events have moved to the digital or hybrid sphere, potential audiences are much wider, and the language pair options potentially endless.

We have started exploring technology options to embrace this opportunity. We have already implemented speech-to-text and simultaneous interpretation services, including sign language and captioning in our events.

We delivered the 2021 "Pinterest Presents" in spoken English with locally closed captions and American Sign Language (ASL), as well as British, German, and French Sign Language. Created in collaboration with Sinéad Burke, the founder of Tilting the Lens, it was certified as a DICE-recommended event with the maximum score of 100%.

The challenges of adapting content are as real today as ever. But going into 2023, it is our responsibility to look beyond the historical focus of the localization field to truly embrace the progress of inclusion and accessibility for all.

How Product-Led Localization Helps 10X Product Adoption Internationally

Localization can build a competitive moat, in good times as well as bad



LIBOR SAFAR

VP of Growth at Argos Multilingual

Libor Safar is currently vice president of growth at Argos Multilingual. With a background in electrical engineering and business administration, his passion for languages and technologies led him to the translation industry in the mid-1990s. Since then, he wore many hats with various roles in translation, localization, quality management, operations, sales, and marketing before joining Argos in 2021.

What do tech companies such as Pinterest, Slack, Figma, Canva, Notion, Loom, Miro or Spotify have in common? Turns out, quite a bit. But one key aspect is that their massive growth over the past several years — including internationally — has been fueled by their adoption of the product-led growth (PLG) strategy.

PLG has been around for some time and is fairly well-known. But its international aspect, and how localization can be intelligently applied to support specific PLG tactics to drive rapid global growth, less so. And yet this is perhaps one secret sauce that helps some companies succeed where others don't.

How it works

Product-led growth (PLG) strategies use the actual product as the main driver for acquiring, activating, retaining, and expanding customers. Instead of spending primarily on marketing or sales, the focus is on product adoption by users themselves, via free trials or freemium tiers with a limited set of features.

The interim goal is to acquire active customers, who can start for free, and then convert them to paying customers, so they can help spread the product within their organizations, or families, further. This approach bypasses the traditional corporate buyers, such as IT or procurement.

Localizing the PLG approach

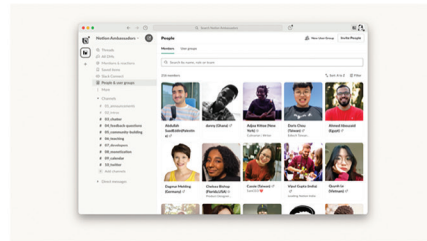
Even with PLG, the simple mantra “localize your product and they shall come” doesn't work so easily. In fact, local-



Notion Ambassadors

What is this program?

- Notion Ambassadors are passionate, volunteer enthusiasts who teach and share Notion with others. They lead local communities, organize online and offline events, produce courses and tutorials, create templates, share translations, and much more.



It takes a village... Build local communities to achieve a wider product awareness. Source: www.notion.so

izing the core product is frequently not even the main priority. That is because using a product in the original English might not be a user preference but is often not a hard obstacle, at least initially.

Instead, international PLG is built on localizing user experience (UX) and the locale-specific tactics related to moving customers through these usual high-level customer acquisition phases.

1. Product awareness

Regardless of whether your product is localized or not, users will tend to search in their own language. This is where local organic product content and international SEO become prominent (see the excellent article by Sarah Presch elsewhere in this issue). International technical SEO should not be underestimated either.

Community is another major source of traffic. Local communities of users help to massively increase the reach and augment your own SEO tactics to achieve a much wider product awareness. Make space on your site for local references and success stories that will be immediately recognizable in specific locales. Locally respected names can work as brand ambassadors to represent and promote your brand in-market. "Local FOMO," related to peers, is way more powerful than a more general and abstract FOMO.

Notion (www.notion.so) is an example of a company that does this really well. The actual product may be currently available in only a few languages, but there are Notion communities in over 30 countries, and growing.

Local social media presence is equally important, but it takes years to grow an audience in each individual market. Instead, build on your existing global social media following and branch off to communicate specifically with your local audiences. You can post on your global social media accounts in local languages specifically only to followers that have a given language as their default, or who are based in selected markets.

2. User acquisition and activation

Acquiring users by encouraging them to "convert" and sign up to one of the product levels available is one thing. Encouraging active use and "deployment" is another one.

Optimizing for these conversions goes beyond providing localized website content and covers redesigning the site so that it caters for the specifics of local users where needed. This includes offering a range of communications or support options specific to each locale – online, email, local phone, live chat or a chatbot available in a given language, locally preferred currency and payment options, and common cancellation policies.

Blau und Grau System... Lebenslauf von Canva Cre...

Grün und Schwarz Mo... Lebenslauf von Canva Cre...

Cremefarben und Grü... Lebenslauf von Canva Cre...

From a CV to Lebenslauf: localizing templates makes for a true local experience. Source: www.canva.com

For instance, users in some locales may be hesitant to provide their full personal details when signing up initially for a free product. Some may not want to provide their credit card details before this is really needed. So careful optimization of the conversion path for users outside the home market can work wonders. But it does require constant tweaking.

App-store optimization (ASO) and local language support here is one frequently underutilized tactic, as are user reviews. Monitor reviews regardless of their language and respond in the native language of users. You will amplify positive experiences and increase downloads and conversions. This also helps to pick up any negative experience users in specific countries may have and use these to improve the product.

3. Retention and monetization

The key to turning users into paying customers is for them to experience the real value of your product. And to see the benefit before they are asked to pull out their wallet. Localized product experience is what will help drive conversion to paid customers. To realize the real product value, the product should support local use cases where these differ from the core usage.

For instance, providing locale-specific templates is essential. International design templates from Canva are

one good example. Those provided by Notion another. Such templates accelerate product adoption, so users don't have to build things from scratch, and help increase its stickiness.

4. Customer expansion

Done right, all of the above will help drive expanded product usage, encourage more users to sign up (as free or paid customers) and, ideally, go on to promote the product further. Community and encouraging referrals, including outside their organization, are key in this respect.

One valuable tactic that companies continue exploring is getting in-country inputs about their products. This helps them understand the specific local needs and usage behaviors, which can then be used to build a truly localized experience.

From go-to-market to go-to-global-market

If wide product adoption is the goal, then "going global" is the easiest path to ensuring this. And for many companies, it's global or nothing. Any go-to-market (GTM) strategy is actually a go-to-global-market strategy these days. Maybe localization should be best placed as part of the wider growth team. It's a major growth enabler, in good times as well as bad, and product-led localization is the way forward for many businesses.

What do our clients **think of us?**

“There are a lot of reasons to recommend Argos Multilingual, but for us the deciding factor was that nobody else could offer seamless cross-functional collaboration from one easy-to-use platform, which allows us to stay updated on global translation projects, manage sophisticated workflows with just a few clicks, and continually optimize performance.”

GARY FENRICH

Mercury Marine

“After many years as our primary supplier for translations, Argos continues to impress me with their dedication to quality and service. Whether it be helping us to stay in step with the latest technology or providing personalized service to accommodate specialized tools and workflows, Argos gives us the highest level of industry knowledge and dedication to meet our needs and achieve our localization goals.”

DARIN WALSH

Sr. Manager of Product Content
Shure

www.argosmultilingual.com

Why Localization is a Growth Lever Especially In 2023



PETR ANTROPOV

CRO and Co-founder of Lokalise

Petr Antropov is the CRO and Co-founder of Lokalise. Petr started his career in investment banking, then turned serial entrepreneur co-founding Odnoklassniki, social network service OK.ru (sold to the Mail.ru Group), streaming provider Megogo.net, and Roamer app. The latter turned out to be the starting point for Lokalise. Leading all commercial operations at Lokalise, Petr has secured over 2,500 customers from 80 countries, ranging from startups to Fortune 500 companies, including BASF, Monday.com, and Arduino.

The current economic situation is apparently so uncertain that some experts, including prominent investors Jeremy Grantham and Scott Miner, fear we may be in for a stretch as bad as the dotcom bust in 2000 — the year Amazon launched Amazon.fr.

Amazon.fr was the first of Amazon's three foreign sites to be built from scratch, going to great lengths to go native by hiring "a great team of people to make the site local." By 2003, Amazon Europe (the UK, Germany, and France) and Amazon Japan represented 35% of total revenues.

As that example suggests, a recession may not be such a bad time to start localization.

Unprecedented challenges facing companies

With the declines in tech and retail stock prices, layoffs, rising inflation, interest rates, and persistent supply chain issues, companies are facing undeniable adversity.

How should companies respond to these economic developments?

A natural impulse is to cut costs across the board:

- Postpone new projects
- Cut marketing expenditure
- Freeze new hiring
- Reduce headcounts

I believe these aren't necessarily the best strategies for the current times. During a recent conference, I discussed this at length with Reid Christian from CRV and found myself nodding in agreement with his view:

"If you have an opportunity to grow incredibly quickly, customers need your product, you need to continue to build your team to support them, and build out your platform, carry on with the growth."

Someone who thinks, "I better not focus on offensive moves now, because the economy is so bad," is making

Access the
"How localization enables
growth strategies" report.



the same mistake as the people who thought during the boom, “all I have to do is grow at all costs,” without thinking about profitability and business fundamentals.

For most executives, would it not pay to wait until the economy is better before taking the localization leap? Earlier this year at Lokalise, we wondered if waiting for certainty appealed to C-level decision makers, so we commissioned Dimensional Research to find answers.

If we learned one thing from our research, it’s the sheer scale of localization already under way.

We found that 88% of respondents come from companies that either already localize their products or are planning to do so over the next 18 months.

From speaking to many of the companies surveyed, it’s clear that this growth opportunity is only possible with effective executive and C-Suite buy-in. In fact, 51% of our respondents told us that their executive teams make the big decisions about how localization is accomplished.

New focus on sustainable growth

Recall that the dotcom bust was a reversal of many large public companies, many of which were burning investor money with little or no revenues.

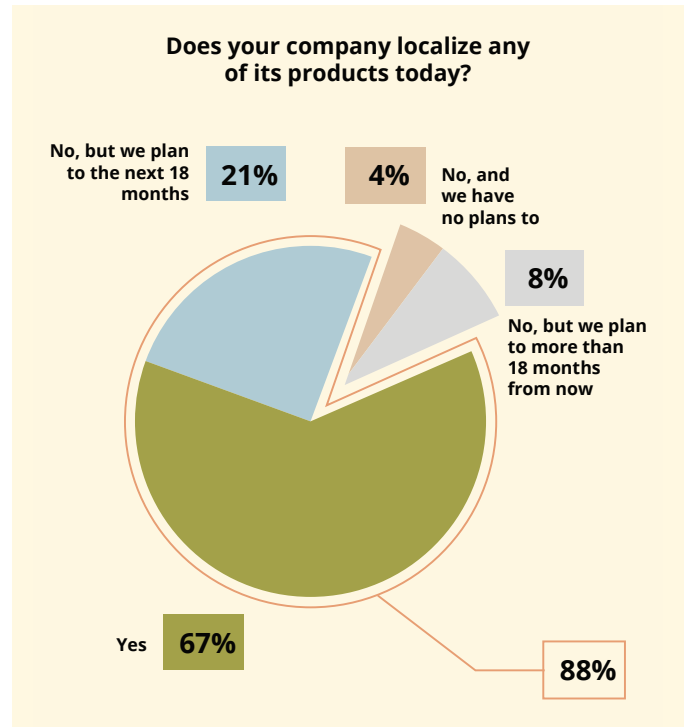
As Reid pointed out to me, “If you’re growing 3X but burning a bunch of money at all costs, you should focus more on growing 2X and burning very little money in a more efficient way.”

One of the best strategies for the current times is to serve more people around the world. Localization is a safe and sustainable growth strategy because it enables companies to expand their customer base in a scalable way. The big-picture insight from our research is that 84% of the companies surveyed plan to expand their global footprint by adding new markets this year.

We’ve always felt that localization is an obvious growth strategy and the easiest way to dip your toes in the waters of a new market. It offers a cost-effective, sustainable way to diversify investment in another market without driving a huge amount of personnel, resources, and funding elsewhere. Increasing efficiency also becomes a priority when other growth opportunities disappear during an economic downturn. Localization is a safe bet in addressing both: sustaining growth and increasing efficiency.

How localization enables growth in economic downturns

As Amazon and other companies leading the way in localization have discovered: Successful international expansion hinges on tying growth to the new languages in which they plan to make their products available. And



the payoff for acting in a bad economy is higher than for waiting. Here’s how companies can benefit from localization in this volatile environment:

- **Expand while competitors are cutting back.** Bad times mean less competition. It’s the right time to gain market share by attracting customers from competitors with a better customer experience as they cut down on customer services.
- **Buy assets and companies on sale.** From 2008 to 2010, companies like Apple, Google, Microsoft, and Facebook acquired over 150 companies and thousands of new IPs from smaller tech companies that were forced to close due to the recession.
- **Acquire top talent in more countries.** Talent is global and more available now than during an expansionary phase (especially with the massive layoffs in the tech sector.)

It’s also easy to forget that localization can be a smart defensive tactic. For example, you’re the incumbent anticipating a new entrant in the local market. New localization efforts can help entrench your position as an established brand.

A global meltdown in the economy doesn’t mean these benefits don’t add up. It’s not time to slow down globalization. On the contrary, it’s time to accelerate it. As Intel’s CEO confessed in the great recession of 2008: During downturns, Intel doubles down on R&D, looks for more talent to fill future needs, and accelerates expansion plans.

Top iSEO Mistakes Companies Make

And How to Fix Them



SARAH PRESCH

Director of International SEO at Argos Multilingual

Sarah Presch is Argos Multilingual's Director of International SEO. It's her job to put together solutions for clients looking to expand into new markets using digital channels such as SEO, PPC, and social media marketing.

Sarah started as a military-trained translator before completing her Masters in digital marketing. Now, she's currently working towards a BA in psychology and sociology at Dublin City University.

She has been working in international digital marketing for 10+ years now and previously founded her own boutique marketing agency, which was named Ireland's second-best start-up. Her campaigns have won numerous European awards and saw her named Northern Ireland's Young Business Personality in 2019. She also teaches SEO to Masters students at the University of Strasbourg.

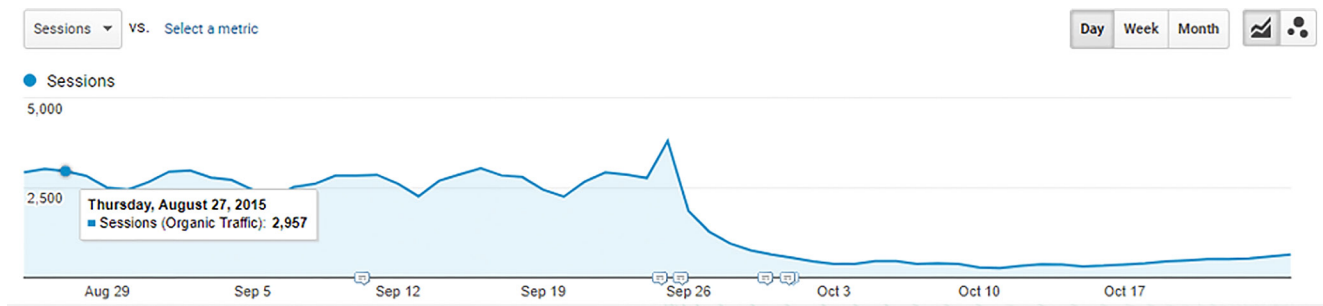
International SEO (iSEO) is a term that's been floating around the language industry for a while. But does that mean that it's become a full-fledged service comparable to SEO you'd get from a digital marketing agency? I don't think we're quite there yet, but there are companies out there giving it a pretty good try. However, it's left iSEO buyers in limbo — do they need a linguistic service? Or do they need a digital marketing service? The answer to that is both — and we're going to explore how it's done by looking at the most common iSEO mistakes I see and how to avoid them in the future.

iSEO mistake # 1: Choosing standard translations for online content

Corona has changed how we do business, and companies need to have an online presence to survive. Look at Netflix. They've disrupted the entertainment industry, which has seen traditional stores like Blockbuster go out of business because online is what consumers are after.

Anyway, what does this all have to do with your translations? Quite a lot. You see, translating something into another language is great. But what if your potential customers can't find it? If you can't be found online, all that effort and money you've spent on getting that perfect translation will be for nothing.

Here's an example — a company got its website translated into Chinese to increase its sales in China. But because they haven't SEO'd their website, their website isn't even indexed on Baidu, which means that they're



A web re-design gone wrong... Source: Search Engine Land

not going to be getting any inbound leads any time soon.

So, while you might be worried about budget, incorporating SEO into your translation workflow will cost you less in the long run. You'll see increased traffic, more leads, and inbound sales, and you won't have to pay double in the future because you have to go back and re-SEO your website.

iSEO mistake # 2: Not thinking of iSEO the minute you start a website re-design

If you're looking to redesign your website, I can't stress enough how important it is to start SEO right at the beginning. You need to start with an audit and strategy to ensure you're not losing the rankings you've worked hard to get. Then before you build, you need to plan your site structure and brief writers (and translators) on your SEO strategy, so you're not paying to have your new content edited to be SEO-friendly. Next, you must ensure that your web dev team knows your SEO goals and plans because, surprisingly enough, SEO doesn't come with most web design packages — you have to ask for it if you want it. And that also means you have to ensure your new design takes technical SEO best practices into account.

If you don't, you risk your rankings dropping when you re-launch your new site, like in the chart above.

"...while you might be worried about budget, **incorporating SEO into your translation workflow will cost you less in the long run.**"

iSEO mistake # 3: Not investing in international strategies

Companies pay thousands to get an SEO strategy created for their home market but rarely do the same for international markets. So, it's no surprise when I hear, "My English website is performing great, but my international sites are falling way behind." Therefore, it's essential to keep the following in mind:

- Not every market uses Google as its main search engine, so you need to consider different ranking factors.

English	SV	Literal Czech Translation	SV	Adapted Keyword	SV	Back translation	Why?
gifts for her	74,000	dárky pro ni	10	dárky pro ženy	8,100	Gifts for women	Czechs search differently
christening gifts	33,100	dárky ke křtu	0	Dárek ke křtinám	480	Christening gift	The Google translate keyword has 0, but a proper translation has 480
personalised gifts	74,000	personalizované dárky	10	originální dárky	3,600	Original gifts	This is another way of saying personalised gifts
valentines gifts for him	27,100	valentýnské dárky pro něj	0	dárek k svátku pro muže	590	name day present for men	From a cultural point of view, name days are more popular than Valentines
baby shower gifts	18,100	Dárky na babyshower	0	dárek pro miminko	2,400	present for baby	Baby showers aren't a Czech tradition, you'd tend to buy the baby a present for when you meet them for the first time

Adapted keywords will beat simply translated keywords, easily.

- What works in English doesn't always work well abroad, which means you're translating content that won't work if you're not doing things separately.
- Different markets equal different opportunities, which you'll miss out on if you only have one strategy.
- PPC channels are different around the world, too.
- You often go up against local competitors, so you need to research them as well.

If you build all these points into a strategy, it'll make a world of difference.

iSEO mistake # 4: Translating keywords

Keyword research is called keyword research for a reason — you need to find what people are searching for, which varies greatly in different markets. This is why it's important that you do more than just translate your keywords; you research each market separately.

The biggest mistakes I see are people:

- Sticking too closely to the source keywords and not giving themselves scope to explore opportunities specific to a foreign market.
- Forgetting to research using different search engines like Baidu.
- Not localizing between locales (e.g., EN_UK and EN_IE).
- Using Google Translate to translate keywords and then using a tool like Semrush to see if they have search volume.

Above is some keyword research done in Czech to show you the difference. You can see that the results are

"Keyword research is called keyword research for a reason – you need to find what people are searching for, which varies greatly in different markets"

much better when you've adapted the keywords rather than just translated them.

iSEO mistake # 5: Not asking for help

No matter how big your marketing department is, it's unlikely you will have an SEO ready to cover every market, and that's OK! Agencies like ours exist for a reason — to help companies reach their SEO goals without having to invest in having someone in every single market. So, to wrap things up, don't be afraid to reach out for help because having a partner for all things iSEO can make a massive difference to your results.

ISEO CHECKLIST

Planning

- Which search engine is used in this particular country?
- Does this piece of content work for the market you're targeting?
- Is it culturally sensitive?
- Does it fit into your SEO strategy for that market?
- Is it inclusive?

Pre-Translation

- Have you researched three suitable keywords (primary, secondary, and tertiary) for this piece of content?
- Are the keywords you've chosen unique to this page?
- Have they been added to your keyword map?
- Have you created a brief for linguists/writers on your SEO requirements and aims?

During Translation

- Have you made sure you're ordering a creative service like transcreation or native content creation?
- Has the researched keyword been provided to your localization team?
- Are you allowing your localization team to step outside of a CAT translation environment to ensure they can be as creative as possible?
- Is the translation following on-page best practices?
 - Meta title must include the primary keyword and be between 45 and 60 characters long (half for Asian languages)
 - Meta description should include a keyword and be between 145 and 160 characters long (half for Asian languages)
 - URL contains the primary keyword (for Cyrillic languages, the keyword should be the target keyword written in the Latin alphabet; for Asian languages, URLs are normally left in English)
 - Pictures contain alt text which also includes the primary keyword
 - There is only one 'Header 1' that contains the main keyword
 - The page title is different from the header one and the meta title
 - The text is broken up by headers
 - About half of these headers contain keywords
 - The keywords have been distributed evenly throughout the text
 - There's no keyword stuffing (you can read your text aloud, and if the keywords sound robotic, then you've added too many)

Post-Translation

- Has the content been uploaded following the best practices above?
- Are you using hreflang tags on your website? (Remember – languages like Brazilian Portuguese need to be pt-BR, not just pt).
- Are you tracking the success of your content?
- Has the page been indexed?

Inclusive Language: Why it Matters and How to Get Started



MARIANA ROLIN

Director of quality and creative solutions at Chillistore

Mariana Rolin (she/her) is currently the director of quality and creative solutions at Chillistore, leading the quality development team in designing and maintaining workflows that would suit different content standard needs. She's always looking for innovative solutions to help localization thrive in global organizations with collaboration and transparency. Mariana is also a visual artist, spending the other half of her day on illustration projects.

As one of the most important topics in the localization industry in the past couple of years, inclusive language in content strategy is in high demand. Language is fundamental to human expression, reflecting our cultural views and biases. As organizations gain awareness of the impact of their spoken and written words, inclusive language becomes a priority.

Adopting inclusive practices has its known challenges, and there is no shortage of articles, books, and webinars highlighting how it shouldn't be a box-ticking exercise. Companies that join this effort are expected to demonstrate how they are on an ongoing journey for improvement.

Adapting for language

In localization, this challenge is multiplied by as many languages as are required. For example, one of the most discussed topics involving DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) policies in a language is the adoption of gender-neutral constructions in translation. Teams must find creative solutions to fulfill language requirements while avoiding biased constructions.

Languages in which gender is only identified via personal pronouns (like English or Swedish) are more easily adapted. On the other hand, languages, where genders are embedded in nouns, personal pronouns, and other grammatical elements to which those are connected (such as Spanish), are more challenging. Professionals working with these languages will need to seek different forms of inclusive communication. For instance, shifting

from active to passive voice can help avoid using a gender marking by changing or omitting the agent.

Another method, common in Portuguese, replaces vowels that usually indicate gender ("a" and "o") with "e" to address readers of binary and non-binary gender identities equally. So, instead of "todas" and "todos," we would have the neutral "todes." While not formal, this method is seen in colloquial speech as a replacement for the now outdated "x".

Adapting for ability

Graphics and solutions that do not follow phonetic language rules bring yet another concern: accessibility. These are usually not immediately suitable for screen readers, highlighting that inclusion goes beyond written or graphic content.

The case is strong

Still, the case for inclusivity is solid, with many relevant points to be considered. The first and most obvious one is: It's the right thing to do, with an increasing public concern around equality and belonging. By choosing not to address inclusivity and accessibility strategies in your localization, organizations could be excluding current audiences and potential future ones.

Second, companies investing in this topic now are helping to shape how the next few years will look in the industry. This is not a trend; it's a necessary and meaningful approach with real-life consequences.

Finally, it's an opportunity to encourage internal teams to join the conversation and strengthen the sense of belonging with the companies they work for. While performative inclusion is harmful, collective construction is lasting.

How to get started

Making these initiatives an integral part of your localization plan can and will reduce the extra work down the road. In our experience, these conversations will best start upstream in content development when it comes to multicultural inclusivity strategies.

We rely on human expertise and AI (artificial intelligence) strategies to navigate such complex scenarios. These methods have allowed us to prepare for future work as well as review past translations in the light of inclusivity requirements:

- **AI-assisted checks** with company-defined algorithms read and flag sensitive topics our clients would like to address as part of their policies. These bias checks can examine previously published material while also being included in a regular content creation process.

- **Reviewers and sensitivity readers** will apply their expertise to evaluate complex nuances in content. We work in collaborative teams to achieve a standard of content quality that works within our clients' inclusivity policies. These teams can also check for contextual and graphic references, ensuring that all visuals are suitable and make sense for their identities and cultures.
- **Accessibility planning** for digital content is the third layer in inclusive practices as it touches on the availability of information, including textual clarity and image descriptions.

Inclusive content practices as a competitive advantage

There are considerable opportunities in introducing inclusive practices as a conscious strategic practice, keeping in mind market expectations and natural societal shifts. Our industry can and should be actively participating in these efforts. Although evergreen work, there are a few points to be considered if you're hoping to adopt more inclusive content practices:

- 1. Define your priorities in your content and localization strategies.** Inclusivity policies in language will be authentic if they align with your company's goals, content, and audience.
- 2. Encourage questions.** As established before, there are formal and informal strategies to avoid bias in content localization. The only way to identify what is unconsciously projected is by relying on professionals who can speak the language, live the culture, and participate in the experiences described.
- 3. There will be limitations, and that's ok.** This is part of a broader concern, and while language plays a pivotal part, localization will have to navigate many other challenges in daily work.

This article has its own bias and limitations, as it's virtually impossible for a single person or group to define a solution, nor would it be advisable. As we've seen repeatedly in this industry — even as recently as the past few months — the perception of what is inadequate regarding content engagement is not as commonplace as we would probably like it to be. Creating more inclusive content should be rooted in a company's internal practices and built collaboratively through diverse voices and experiences.

Deciding to approach this topic regularly means being willing to join this conversation. As society and culture change, so should language. Following suit, localization practices must adapt to ensure content is available and inclusive of all.

Navigating the Challenges of NLP Crowdsourcing



CHRIS PHILLIPS

Chief Solutions Officer/Business Unit Managing Director, Argos Multilingual

Recognized by industry colleagues as a person who simplifies the impossible, Chris considers himself an individual who thinks outside the box and questions everything in search of a better solution.

Chris successfully set up and architected Argos' Data division managing large-scale/complex projects for all data collection clients including four of the major big tech organizations. Chris has designed 10+ custom technology solutions for human-in-the-loop to enable scalability, creativity in collection methods, quality control, and UX.

Language-related data collection projects are becoming more and more complex. With the power of neural networks, our clients are ever more specific and targeted with their requirements — forcing us to be more creative during project set-up and with our human-in-the-loop practices. We are also seeing a trend of clients demanding more quality over quantity. Fortunately for us, our programs have always been structured around quality, making us the preferred partner during these changing trends. Here is how we do it.

Sourcing the right talent

You want to ensure that contributors have the necessary expertise, whether it's for data production or evaluation. Yet governing the demographics of "The Crowd" is challenging within a virtual environment. This means investing in screening, training, profiling, testing, and quality assurance. This will result in higher costs at the start but saves on rework and provides confidence for your clients.

Moreover, the success of NLP crowdsourcing depends on the quality of data fed to it. Even with articulate instructions, continuous quality control, and customized project-specific technology, it's still a one-sided conversation between you and "The Crowd," so make sure you are communicating and continuously sampling to guarantee you receive exactly what you need.

Be ready to support the crowd daily. Assign a single person or dedicated team to collect queries and categorize

them. Ensure the entire program team meets regularly to review the queries and respond promptly. This will usually involve: supply chain, language leads, project managers, technical support, and finance.

Plan for attrition

Attrition is nearly inevitable in NLP data collection projects. Most of these projects are unique and require specialist expertise sourced specifically for the task. But even when we plan things out carefully, the size and scope of the project may evolve rapidly when you actually get down to work. Sometimes a specialist realizes the project isn't in their wheelhouse when they begin their work. You may also need to replace people due to non-compliance with guidelines and quality. Budgeting in 10% attrition into your scope is a good starting point, but you need an experienced team to assess this comprehensively based on the project complexity.

Fair pay

As the saying goes: You get what you pay for. So, how do you secure the right talent and pay fair compensation without breaking the bank?

Research fair hourly compensation rates for the target region/locale. You will need different rates depending on the complexity of the task. Many clients will want rates per utterance, annotation, word, etc., so your next step is to test productivity to increase the hourly throughput.

"Most tools focus on input and output. However, we have discovered that the throughput is even more important."

Payment methods

Once you settle on the amount of remuneration allocated to hiring the appropriate resources, decide on the best

"Attrition is nearly inevitable in NLP data collection projects."

payment solutions. It may be bank transfer, PayPal, Payoneer, cash, gift vouchers, etc.

How you choose to compensate your workers makes a difference. However, each payment method comes with its own challenges. It's also important to assess the different fees associated with each method, availability, and talent preferences when devising your payment strategies.

Work closely with your finance team, but the more options you have available, the easier this will be during talent sourcing.

The problem with NLP data collection tools

Most tools focus on input and output. However, we have discovered that the throughput is even more important. If your tooling is cumbersome, your attrition rate will be higher. Trying to develop a catch-all platform is also the wrong approach.

You can't predict the following project's specifications, and forcing a project to adapt to the system may work from an input/output perspective but will more than likely impact throughput and productivity. Instead, develop tooling that has foundational functionality for onboarding, assigning, and monitoring but ensure you have resources to adapt the UX for project-specific workflows.

Conclusion

Though a popular and practical approach for collecting data and annotations, NLP crowdsourcing is not without its challenges. However, there are tried and true practices and principles that have proven effective in yielding high-quality data.

Tech Innovations to Keep an Eye on:

AI TM Cleanup and AI Backtranslation



ROBERT BRODOWICZ

Product Owner, Argos Multilingual

Robert was a linguistic QA solutions engineer for several years, where he worked on creating custom regular expressions for QA checks and on the general upkeep of the QA system. Currently, he's the product owner for the TMSQA and CFT (client feedback tracker) systems at Argos Multilingual.

His grand purpose is to make TMSQA the best quality system on the market and to transform it into a tool that can be used with any CAT tool. He dabbles in AI, cooperating with Magdalena Wójcik and the broader AI team. They labor to bring innovation into the old QA status quo.

For as long as there has been a localization process, linguistic errors have not been far behind. The introduction of machine translation (MT) has gone some way to even out the bumpy road of translation quality.

However, it comes at a cost: neural machine translation (NMT) engines may introduce linguistic errors that no human ever would. And with complicated, specialized content, this risk only increases.

The recent progress in AI, however, makes it possible to deploy algorithms that help clean language assets or help automate the process of language QA. Let's look at a few such innovations.

Take translation memories (TM), for example. The sad truth of the matter is that TMs deteriorate over time, depreciating their value. This could be because multiple target equivalents of one source segment are saved to the TM (creating inconsistency). It could be because segments that are split in the source language cannot be split in the target language in the same way due to word order differences. Or it could be that the terminology or linguistic style used in the past is no longer applicable. In any case, a little spring cleaning every so often is necessary.

Why should I run an AI TM cleanup?

Submitting a TM for manual review is expensive, as this is a time-consuming and complex task. This means most TMs rarely undergo the necessary maintenance.

A semantic analysis feature (more about this later) allows our artificial intelligence (AI) model to process seg-

ments accurately in just a fraction of the time it would take for a human to do the same. The AI TM Cleanup tool allows for cost and time savings and improves linguistic quality in all future translation projects. You can have your TM back as good as new!

How does the cleanup work?

This tool relies on AI's capabilities to automatically target potentially low-quality TM segments and flag them for review.

Step 1: Our AI model analyzes the health of the TM before defining a scope of content required for review alongside auxiliary services.

Step 2: A distribution report is generated from the analysis, and a quote is rendered based on the total number of issues.

Step 3: After the AI model has detected errors, misalignments, etc., our professional linguists make the necessary corrections, followed by QA (quality assurance) checks.

Step 4: A comparison report between the status and TM health pre- vs. post-cleanup is generated.

Our AI TM Cleanup tool's main feature is its ability to perform semantic analysis. This feature allows the model to process, for example, 100,000 segments and then identify thousands of segments within the larger set that are of suspicious quality. This allows you to flag things that need to be reviewed by a human translator and what doesn't.

What else can I use AI for?

Back translation: This is a standard element of some Quality Assurance (QA) workflows, especially in regulated industries. Traditionally, this involves a third-party linguist translating the target text back into the source language, manually comparing the back translation to the source. Sounds time-consuming, right? That's where AI technology comes in.

What makes AI back translation better?

Aside from the aspect of time, traditional back translation may be complicated. For example, mistranslations that still make sense in the context make it unclear that it's a mistake. The same also goes with textual omissions. If the translated text still makes sense even with part of the text left out, it's hard for a linguist to identify the error.

By integrating AI into the back translation process, we can detect potential omissions and mistranslations, errors that are notorious for being difficult to spot.

"Our AI TM Cleanup tool's main feature is its ability to perform semantic analysis. This feature allows the model to process, for example, 100,000 segments and then identify thousands of segments within the larger set that are of suspicious quality."

How AI back translation works

AI enhances this traditional process by having two separate models "analyze" the differences between source and the back-translated target, assigning each model a binary score depending on the likelihood of a genuine error in the segment. Scores are added together to create a final score.

- **Score 0:** Neither AI model suspects any error within a segment.
- **Score 1:** One of the AI models suspects there is an error within a segment.
- **Score 2:** This occurs when both AI models suspect an error within a segment. This is likely an omission. The back translation comparison report prioritizes segments with the highest score (2).

On top of using these models for error detection, we also use a third AI model to identify potentially erroneous segments in the report. This is done by training the model with historical data and creating artificial errors.

Beyond accelerating the back translation process, this tool aims to reduce a quality specialist's exposure to false positives, increasing the accuracy and efficiency of the report review.

Get ready for a smoother process!

AI Backtranslation and AI TM Cleanup are two examples of innovative use of "small AI." These tools have provided tangible improvements to the translation process and are only set to continue advancing over time.



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Go-to-Market Strategy at Pinterest



MELANIE WEIGHWAY

Leading Internationalization



MAJU NURMINEN

Impact Localization



PAULINA MAKLES

Globalization Strategy on the Client Side



JEFF BEATTY

How Mozilla Manages 212 Languages for Global Accessibility



ITI SARAI

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TERESA MARSHALL

Gain a Seat at the Table, Talk Strategy not Translation



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