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## 8 Pitfalls to Avoid During Portal Translation Projects

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Many translation vendors claim they can localize secure customer portals, but they're often outclassed by complex technical and operational demands.

## Introduction

If your organization wants to meaningfully increase engagement, interest and conversions among multilingual and international customers, **it must localize its digital CX**—including its website, omnichannel content and ... perhaps most important of all ... **secure customer portals**.

Translating these private login areas is notoriously difficult. The process is even more challenging than translating traditional public-facing websites, which comes with its own minefield of technical and operational issues.

This makes choosing a localization solution especially critical, especially since most translation vendors don't have the necessary experience in translating portals. If they *do* translate portals, they often use undercooked solutions that create more cost and effort than they're worth.

Here are eight common issues that companies like yours experience as they try to localize their portals. We'll also offer a vital tip on how to avoid these problems.



### PITFALL 1: Complex Technologies Outclass Most Content Detectors

Many companies believe that the actual translation process—the word-for-word conversion of text from language to another—is what generates the most effort in a portal localization project.

The key challenges are in fact related to *technology*, not translation. Selecting a vendor that doesn't understand, or can't keep up with, complex online technologies delay portal localization projects for months—or even more than a year. In some cases, projects are eventually abandoned altogether.

Here's why.

## PITFALL 2: Shortcomings with Third-Party Portal Platforms

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Many “white label” portal providers integrate multilingual capabilities into their offerings for clients. Unfortunately, these features often fall short under the day-to-day demands of portal translation.

These solutions usually shift the complexity and ongoing effort—particularly the resource-heavy technical tasks such as configuration, ongoing content detection and collection, and complex UX QA tasks—onto their customers. This increases customer-side risks and cost.

## PITFALL 3: Old Systems and New Technologies

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Many mature companies still use custom-built CRMs and content databases that were developed years—or decades—ago with now-old frameworks. Most modern translation solutions can’t parse these aged systems for translatable content with much accuracy.

Even contemporary platforms developed by in-house teams create problems for translation vendors. These platforms may be built with several coding languages or frameworks, often crafted by siloed development teams. These disparate approaches confuse translation vendors ... and, more often, derail their unsophisticated content-detection parsers.

## PITFALL 4: Complex Web Applications and Dynamic Content

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Most modern customer portals leverage sophisticated single-page applications, often powered by Angular and React. Nearly all translation vendors can’t handle these complex applications with any reliability.



For starters, their content parsers can't distinguish an application's translatable content from its code. This results in:

- ✗ Words or phrases in code that shouldn't be translated *are* translated, completely breaking the application
- ✗ Actual translatable content isn't reliably detected at all, resulting in a partially-translated application that wrecks the user experience

**Vendors also struggle to reintegrate translated content back into the localized instance of applications, which creates further functionality issues, costs and delays.**

They also face similar issues with AJAX calls that produce dynamic content that isn't always seen "on the page." Nearly all vendors lack robust JSON and XML parsers to detect this content. This leads to an unacceptable, partially-translated UX.

## PITFALL 5: Security Concerns

Can vendors that use underdeveloped technologies—technologies that can't make sense of the technical complexities of portals—be trusted with the private data of your customers, distributors and other business partners?

A vendor's lack of technical expertise can cast a long shadow of doubt. Partners must unequivocally demonstrate that they:

- ✓ Always ensure the privacy of customers, partners and employees
- ✓ Don't have access to, or store, any of your constituents' personally identifiable information
- ✓ Support industry-recommended methods that rely on secure encryption protocols for transmitting data
- ✓ Are PCI DSS Level 1 Service Providers and successfully complete annual independent security assessments
- ✓ Are HIPAA/HITECH Business Associates and regularly conduct independent compliance assessments
- ✓ Are Privacy Shield Certified Organizations (if relevant) to comply with data protection requirements when transferring personal data from the EU and U.S.

## PITFALL 6: Word Growth

Some languages require more words than others to articulate certain concepts. This phenomenon—called *word growth*—is common in translation.

For example, Spanish content is often 25% to 30% longer than its English counterpart.

These longer sentences can wreak havoc on meticulously-designed portal templates, because the templates were often originally designed for English content. The end result? Misaligned titles and disjointed pages that create a sloppy user experience. This can send customers packing.

Great portal translation solutions use tools and technologies that provide a “live view” of how translations will appear on-site, in real-time. Linguists can adjust translations on the fly, preserving the multilingual site’s look and feel—and its credibility.

## PITFALL 7: Translating Multimedia Content

Portal images can often feature text “embedded” within them, which creates problems for most portal translation solutions. Most don’t anticipate the need to translate these images for multilingual portals, or can’t detect them—or won’t translate them at all.

When these untranslated images appear on a multilingual portal, they break the localized customer experience. Multilingual customers don’t like this.

Solutions do exist that can automatically detect these translatable images, flag them for human linguists to translate, and send them to graphic designers to create the translated versions. Ideally, you should never need to provide source files for this image translation. Great vendors can use those on-site JPGs and PNGs as the foundation of their image-translation workflow.

## PITFALL 8: Omnichannel-Ready

Your secure customer portal is certainly a vital channel for your business, but it's not the only one. Your organization needs a partner that can efficiently localize your CX for customers across all channels.

This heaps even more challenges onto most vendors. They can't keep up with the technical demands of localizing content for mobile apps, social network posts, promotional emails and newsletters, product documentation, videos, in-store kiosks, offline documents and more.

This often hails from the limitations of their content-parsing technologies, or their underdeveloped use of *translation memory*, a special database that stores all translations for a localization project. When properly leveraged, these translated phrases can be re-published hundreds—or hundreds of thousands—of times across all channels at no additional cost to the customer.



## Where to Go From Here?

So how can you avoid these technical pitfalls and other costly shortcomings? Look for a translation solution that combines **industry-leading technology and world-class expertise**, and delivers a perfectly functioning, perfectly localized customer portal and omnichannel experience.

Especially consider vendors that offer technically superior fully **turn-key proxy solutions**.

These solutions eliminate nearly all technical and operational effort on your end at launch and ongoing, and provide all the resources needed to build, deploy and maintain localized customer portals and other critical CX experiences.

Turn-key solutions sidestep all the technical and security risks, while making it effortless, cost-efficient and secure to localize your secure login areas.

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