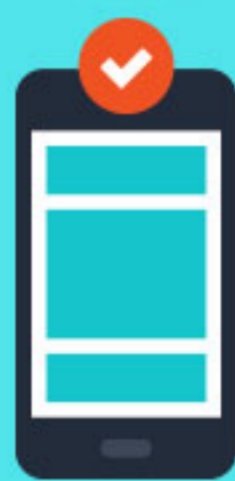# HOW TO

PREP YOUR WEBSITE FOR A TRANSLATION PROJECT

If your company plans to localize its website to serve customers in global markets, these **design and development best practices** can help make your website easier and more affordable to translate.

1 EMBRACE A MOBILE-FIRST PHILOSOPHY

- Smartphones are now the preferred online-connected device for most people around the world.

- Mobile devices are fast becoming the *only* device people use for researching and buying products.

- Search engines around the world are changing their algorithms to show preference for mobile-friendly content.

TIP
Use a mobile-first design approach. Design your website for the smallest screen and work your way up from there. Try using either a responsive or adaptive website design.

TIP
Optimize your website for maximum page speed. You can start by implementing a caching plugin or CDN. Compress images for mobile view, too.

2 USE SCALABLE VECTOR GRAPHICS

- Scalable Vector Graphic (.svg) files are a graphics format that aren't limited to a specific resolution. Instead of being made from pixels, SVGs are made from vector shapes.

- You can display an SVG graphic at any size and it will never appear pixelated or blurred.

- SVG graphics can also be animated; all of the code to make that work can be contained within the SVG file itself.

- You can put an entire icon set inside one graphic, called a "spritesheet."

TIP
As long as you don't use SVGs for photographs (use JPEGs here instead), SVGs often take up much less disk space, and load more quickly, than JPGs and PNGs.

3 CREATE SCALABLE CONTENT & LAYOUT TEMPLATES

- Some languages need more words or characters to convey certain concepts. This common side effect of translation is called "word growth" or "word expansion."

- Many website templates are optimized exclusively for English content. Longer translations can break these templates, creating misalignments and wrecking UX.

TIP
Use a dynamic, flexible template with interchangeable parts that easily expand and contract, depending on word count or size.

TIP
You can also mitigate word growth by enabling linguists to select translated words for **expression and intent** of the content rather than its literal translation.

4 STANDARDIZE CLICKABLE AREAS/BUTTONS

- Word growth issues can compromise the legibility or understandability of button designs in other languages.

TIP
Base website button designs on HTML elements, not on images.

5 PAY ATTENTION TO TYPOGRAPHY

- Font sizes matter when it comes to legibility, especially when translating a website into languages that don't use Latin scripts, as Chinese or Japanese.

TIP
Specify font sizes to ensure readability. Also specify font degradation, since not all fonts are available in other languages.

6 DON'T FORGET ABOUT MULTIMEDIA CONTENT

- Choosing not to translate images or other online multimedia content creates a confusing "mixed language" experience that turns off website visitors.

TIP
Do not embed translatable content within graphics or videos.

TIP
Quickly, easily and cost-effectively translate images and videos by overlaying text content on images, or using dynamically loaded subtitles.

BE CONSISTENT

Have a proper naming convention for all of your CSS classes and IDs, and make sure your website provides the same experience through different screen resolutions and devices.