

An iceberg floating in clear blue water. The tip of the iceberg is visible above the surface, while the much larger, jagged base is submerged below. The background shows a bright blue sky with a few wispy clouds and a distant, hazy horizon. The overall color palette is dominated by various shades of blue.

motionpoint

The Hidden Costs of **Website Translation**

Unforeseen expenses can delay,
degrade or derail your project.

Introduction

Companies that are new to website localization often believe their project's costs will hail from the act of translating their origin site's content, and little else.

That's not the case. Paying an agency to translate your website for global customers is merely the tip of the iceberg. For the uninitiated, lurking just out of sight, are a host of associated costs that can sink your budget—unless you recognize them in advance and find a solution that accounts for them.

These hidden costs, which stem from quality assurance, coordination, training, technology management, vendor oversight and more, can add up quickly. Workforce-related costs in particular can skyrocket due to a heavy toll on employee productivity and focus, caused by website translation duties.

Unanticipated costs can take you by surprise in the middle of a website translation project, too.



Paying for them can threaten your budget, forcing you to put the initiative on hold—or scale back from a full website to a microsite.

Most short-term ways of avoiding or minimizing these costs can backfire. Yes, you may save some money by limiting the scope of your project, or skipping quality-assurance steps such as editorial review. But the results can be disappointing at best and disastrous at worst. Local customers notice when companies phone in their translated sites. That negatively impacts your brand and revenues in new markets.

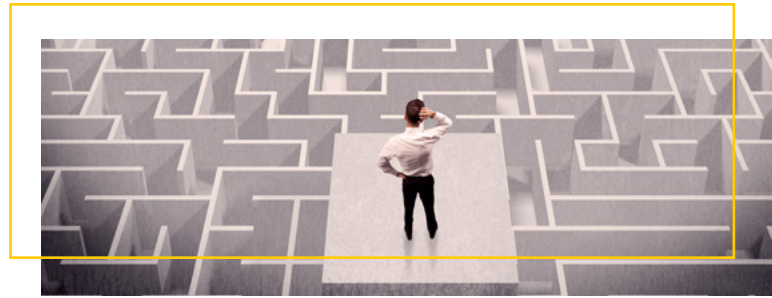
This e-book describes the hidden costs of website translation that you should consider when designing your digital expansion strategy and budget. It also highlights the importance of advanced technology-based solutions that can help you control these costs without sacrificing quality, efficiency and speed.

The High Cost of Complexity

The main source of hidden costs is the complexity of website localization, beginning with content translation. To deliver accurate, authentic translations, your linguists must pay attention to countless delicate details—such as your corporate messaging, branding, voice, cultural relevance and consistency. These seemingly in-the-weeds nuances may seem inconsequential, but they're very important to your global customers and your business.

Then there's translation scope. Are you accounting for all of your website's content as you create your strategy and budget? Beyond the obvious visible text on your website's pages, other elements require localization, such as images with embedded text, graphs and charts, metadata, third-party apps, forms and linked documents.

Further, the process required to translate, launch and operate the website is complicated. It's time-consuming and iterative, and may require assistance from many different departments within your organization.



Technology also comes into play, especially if you plan to integrate translations with a localized instance of your CMS.

Finally, there's the endless task of identifying and translating new content and changes to keep the site current. That's an ongoing, time-consuming process. For in-house teams, it's also prone to error—which leads to experience-wrecking untranslated content to appear on your localized websites. That's a big turn-off for global customers.

The complexity of website localization generates several types of costs that affect your budget and the business, both directly and indirectly:

- ✓ Workforce costs
- ✓ Translation workflow costs
- ✓ Costs of comprehensive translation
- ✓ Coordination costs
- ✓ Costs to your business

Let's learn more about each, and an industry-leading way to sidestep the risks they pose to your website translation project.

Workforce Costs

A translation vendor does not operate in a vacuum. Traditional vendors must collaborate with your organization to ensure translation quality, timeliness and consistency. This means some of your employees will have to take on additional duties of managing that relationship and the translated content the vendor provides. Alternatively, you may need to hire more people.

These traditional translators require training on your corporate messaging, branding and style, particularly at the beginning of your web translation project. They'll often need hand-holding to learn about your industry sector, products and services. As you develop new messaging or launch new products, the linguists will need updates and refreshers.

Your marketing team will probably be tasked with providing this training. Marketing's help may also be needed to develop supporting materials for the translators, such as corporate style guides and glossaries.

When working with old-school translation agencies, your employees will probably also oversee the quality and accuracy of the translated content.

Obviously, they need to be fluent in the local language to pinpoint errors— not just grammar and punctuation, but also terms that might be culturally offensive. This means in-country marketers will probably be tapped to edit content themselves, or supervise third-party editors.

This pulls your people away from their core job functions—a liability for your brand.

Another huge drain on employee time is the back-and-forth between the translation service and the web design team to ensure the translated content “fits” properly into your website’s page templates. Because different languages take varying amounts of space to say the same thing, adjusting translations is an ongoing challenge.

The hidden costs:

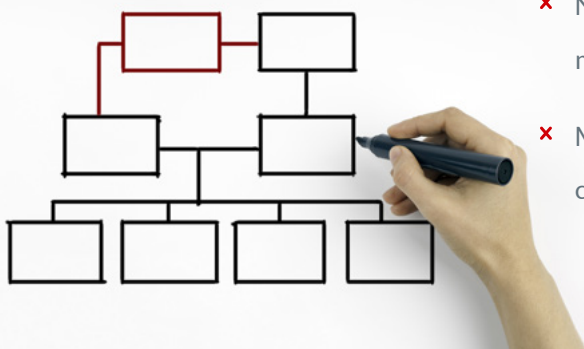
- ✗ Lower employee productivity
- ✗ Lack of focus on key marketing activities
- ✗ Worker burnout from added responsibilities
- ✗ Expense of hiring/training more staff

Translation Workflow Costs

The complex workflow required to translate content is another major cost generator. Here, time is the main culprit—and time, as they say, is money. A typical website translation workflow encompasses multiple, time-consuming steps, including:

- ✓ Identify new or updated content for translation
- ✓ Manually extract the content from your CMS or other database, and compile it for translation
- ✓ Send it to the translation agency
- ✓ Retrieve the translated content from the agency
- ✓ Review the translation for accuracy and send it back if it needs revising Inject the final content into the localized website
- ✓ Make sure the content displays properly and does not affect website templates

Many translation services have slow turnaround times for new content and updates. The workflow is often even more cumbersome and sluggish in the beginning of the project, when a steep learning curve is required to familiarize translators with your company's unique brand, style and preferences.



Your website launch may be delayed by months, which disrupts business milestones for the new market.

Speed is especially critical for content updates once the site has gone live. Delays in translating these additions and changes can put localized sites seriously out of sync with your primary site, leading to customer confusion. Customers become irritated when they see untranslated text on their local websites. They often bounce. Some never come back.

Also, these lags in content translation can impact your business activities. Your in-country marketing team may be unable to promote new products, services and special offers in a timely way. Salespeople and partners may lack the up-to-date web resources they depend on to educate customers. Everybody loses.

The hidden costs:

- ✗ Loss of competitive advantage
- ✗ Delays in achieving business goals (sales, new customers)
- ✗ Negative brand impact from outdated or missing content
- ✗ Missed opportunities to run promotions/campaigns

Costs of Comprehensive Translation

Creating a comprehensive, localized website with rich functionality requires translating a wide range of elements—many of which are not stored in your CMS system. Beyond conventional text in formats such as Word, Excel, PDF and PowerPoint, you'll undoubtedly want to also translate:

- ✓ Metadata and structured data
- ✓ Images with embedded text
- ✓ Videos
- ✓ Mobile applications
- ✓ Dynamically loaded third-party functionality such as customer review systems
- ✓ Dynamic PDFs such as customer account statements
- ✓ Code in JavaScript applications

Many traditional translation services lack the technology and expertise to detect this translatable content in your website.

This forces your marketing or IT team to locate, extract and deliver them to your vendor. In some cases, the service cannot translate the assets at all. You'll need to find experts who can.

This parallel process not only takes place outside the efficiencies of the CMS system, it raises the risk of overlooking certain elements, resulting in a partially translated site or one with restricted functionality.

The extra work, and the ongoing risk of delivering a half-translated site, is a hard pill for any lean team to swallow.

The hidden costs:

- ✗ Inefficiencies from duplicative workflows
- ✗ Additional workload for your team
- ✗ Demands on your technical staff
- ✗ Unsatisfying experience from partial translation/limited functions

Coordination Costs

A website translation project may succeed or fail based on the effectiveness of day-to-day workflow management. However, the issue— and costs—of coordination extend far beyond the collaboration between your team and a translation agency.

Your localized website is a tool to support and enable sales, marketing, business development, partnerships, investment and regulatory compliance. But it plays an important role in other parts of the business, too.

If the initial launch and subsequent updates and additions are not coordinated with business functions and activities, your global site may not deliver its expected value.

For instance, close coordination is required to ensure that translated content is posted in time to:

- Promote new products or services
- Feature new partners or investors
- Demonstrate compliance with new regulations
- Highlight a key customer's success
- Generate demand for new marketing assets, such as a white paper or infographic
- Showcase a blog on a hot topic

Blowing these opportunities in high-value global markets puts everyone on your team—especially you—at risk.

Another risk of subpar coordination hails from the inability to scale up from a single localized site to multiple sites as your organization grows. If the translation workflow for one language is slow, and business units are already complaining about delays in seeing their content on the site, adding more websites could prove disastrous.

The hidden costs:

- ✗ Missed sales, partnership and investment opportunities
- ✗ Friction across business units
- ✗ Constraints on global growth

Costs to the Business

The mere fact that your company has launched a translated website is rarely enough to satisfy your new customers in global markets.

Studies have shown that international customers have high expectations for translation accuracy, completeness, cultural sensitivity and relevance. Prospects, partners and employees who have a negative experience on your site will quickly (and easily) run into the waiting arms of your competitors.



Out-of-date, partial or poor-quality translation also impacts your corporate image and brand in the new market—right at a crucial point in your planned growth trajectory. Adding to the pain, irate customers can use social media to immediately relay unflattering comments about your site.

That's why it is vital to make a great first impression with your newly launched site, and maintain that high standard over time.

The hidden costs:

- ✗ Diminished reputation and brand
- ✗ Competitive disadvantage
- ✗ Disappointed prospects and customers
- ✗ Failure to meet business goals

The Answer: Technology-Based Translation Solutions

There's a way to elegantly sidestep these costly pitfalls. Advanced technology-based solutions address— and in many cases, eliminate—these costs by:

- ✓ Minimizing labor-intensive processes
- ✓ Avoiding duplication of effort
- ✓ Seamlessly integrating with existing web management systems
- ✓ Accelerating workflows through automation

They can lift the burden of coordination, oversight and quality reviews from your in-country marketing staff and other team members, freeing them to focus on their primary jobs.

One of the most powerful solutions for addressing hidden web translation costs is the turn-key proxy.

Proxy-based solutions regularly crawl your primary website to detect changes as they occur, and automatically schedule them for translation with an approved service—without requiring notifications from marketing managers or anyone else in the company. That eliminates effort and overhead on your end.

Once the translated content is received and stored in the proxy solution's translation memory database, it's used to populate the localized website or assets in other channels.

This process saves time and effort, and ensures that your localized site is up-to-date.

Any type of technology or content that must be included in the localized website—text, images, videos, PDFs, JavaScript, AJAX, JSON or third-party

content—can be identified by the proxy-based system and translated by world-class linguists. There's no need for your team to hunt down and translate these hard-to-find elements.

To ensure that the translated content fits web templates, a turn-key proxy solution can also supply “contextual integrity” interfaces to the translators. These interfaces provide a live view of their translations, enabling them to see how the content will appear on the published website.

They can tweak translations in real time to accommodate the site's page templates, instead of going back and forth with web designers.

Another benefit of this approach is easy scalability from a single localized site to multiple sites. There's no need for you to hire additional staff, or settle for partial translations, microsites or other customer-alienating compromises.



Conclusion

Website translation is far more involved than it might first appear. The complexity of traditional approaches can mean unpleasant surprises in the cost department. As a result, your budget, your team and your business objectives can suffer.

The latest technology-based solutions—such as a turn-key proxy—can get these costs under control while delivering fast, high-quality, comprehensive translations that help your localized site meet the highest expectations of your global customers ... and your company's leadership.

About MotionPoint

MotionPoint solves the operational complexity and cost of website localization. Unlike all other approaches, our technology and turn-key solution are built specifically for this purpose.

We translate, deploy, and operate multilingual websites, optimizing the customer experience across all channels.

motionpoint

MotionPoint Corporation

info@motionpoint.com

www.motionpoint.com