Blog Post/Article

How many languages do you need to reach your world?

Every good communicator knows, one of the first things you do when preparing to write is to consider your audience. Who, if all goes as intended, will be reading your words, why do they care about what you have to say, and what do you hope they'll do with the information?

Consider the language your audience prefers

One more important thing to consider is, in what language would your audience be most inclined to read, remember and act? Those of us in the English-speaking world tend to assume everyone reads and understands our language the same way we do, but that's not necessarily true.

While many in global business *can* read in more than one language, most have a preferred, or native, language – one that doesn't require translating in their head or reaching for the translation app on their phone. If you must compete with other content for your potential reader's attention, wouldn't it be easier if what you have to offer is already in their preferred language?

How many languages do you need?

It may not be as challenging as you think. Many language industry experts suggest you can reach as much as 90% of the world with as few as 12 languages. The question is, which languages, and which regional versions of those languages, are best for your business?

For example, if you want to market your products in France, you will obviously translate your content into French. Can you use the same content in other French speaking countries, such as Belgium, Canada, Switzerland and many African nations, such as Congo and Tunisia?

And many residents of neighboring countries such as Belgium, Luxembourg, Monaco, Germany, Italy and Switzerland also speak French. Would it make sense to expand your footprint into those countries?

The answers depend on many factors, including the specific regions and countries where you compete, the diversity of languages in those geographic areas, market potential, how you engage with prospects, and your typical customer's journey.

What devices and platforms reach your audience?

Customer engagement is increasingly digital, and your applications and content must be ready for a wide variety of platforms and devices. As you move into digital technologies, it's even more important that you have, and follow, a long-term plan.

If you develop your applications and content for English, and then later decide to expand into other markets and languages you may have to re-write code, if not re-design

applications, to allow for differences such as variations in field lengths, formatting, page size, character sets and more. This can be extremely expensive, particularly if you move from Western languages into right-to-left languages such as Arabic, Hebrew or Urdu.

How do you decide, and then what?

To make those decisions, you need a partner with decades of experience, global reach, and an intimate understanding of the competing pressures you're dealing with in an enterprise organization. It would be helpful if that partner also had industry-leading expertise in technologies such as enterprise and cloud applications, mobility, analytics, and digital transformation.

XYZ Globalization (XYZG) is the language services business within one of the world's leading IT services companies, XYZ Technology. With 25+ years of experience serving global enterprises, XYZG is a reliable partner for language translation, software and web localization and global rich media to help you communicate effectively with international audiences.

We can help you decide which languages are most effective for your organization and develop a detailed plan to communicate effectively with your prospects, clients, partners and other stakeholders. Our expertise includes globalization consulting, detailed project management processes, efficient workflow, consistent quality and cost-effective content management services.

Whether you're going global, or just across the nearest border, you can depend on XYZG to provide the international services you need to do so successfully.

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How many #international languages do you need? #Translate your digital applications and content with #XYZG. [LINK]