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Translation of an e-Learning content: what to consider

Involving a global workforce in your training content involves localizing e-Learning translations for each market. What does it mean when talking about multilingual e-Learning projects?

Making e-Learning translations - or translating digital training content - does not just mean translating the text word by word. It also means considering location, making sure that all translated e-Learning content is relevant and engaging for employees working in different regions.

The localization includes the linguistic translation, but also takes into account the habits, the graphics, the colours, the format and much more, that are useful to ensure a material not only understandable, but also usable, culturally appropriate and meaningful. So has localization to be considered a necessary element for your next e-Learning translation project? Let's find out together.

When localization is necessary

It is very important to know the various cultures if you do not want to indisposition the people to whom the e-Learning content is addressed, because a word used in one place, if used in another, can mean very different things. This does not happen only when we choose certain words, but also when we insert a sign or an icon, which can be misunderstood in certain countries.

There are many translation possibilities for different words or specific phrases. It is important to know what is in common use and how it is widely understood by the relevant public.
Do not forget the audio recordings! If you want to translate Spanish content for Spain, Argentina and Mexico, you may need 3 separate translations, including voiceovers. There are regional variations in both written and spoken Spanish, as well as differences in accents.

If you have already created e-Learning content, this requires translation for various types of markets. How to act?

1. Complete a cultural review

An experienced bilingual colleague from your target market will be able to examine the original language content in such a way that you can give feedback on what works and does not work in your region.

2. Identify the changes to be made

Reduce the cost of translation by making changes before delivering the project to a translator. You can replace culturally specific images with more appropriate images and rewrite the text if it includes inappropriate cultural references.

3. Agree a terminological glossary

Collaborate with auditors on the market to agree on a list of business and sectoral terminology. Be sure to use the most relevant terms of consistency in your e-Learning content. This reduces the risk of misinterpretation and also saves time and money, as the translated content will no longer require subsequent changes.

So I recommend: if you are starting a new e-Learning project from scratch and you are thinking of having it translated at some point, do not forget to consider the location!

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