



The *Communications* website, <https://cacm.acm.org>, features more than a dozen bloggers in the BLOG@CACM community. In each issue of *Communications*, we'll publish selected posts or excerpts.



Follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/blogCACM>

DOI:10.1145/3638537

<https://cacm.acm.org/blogs/blog-cacm>

## Why Bother Localizing Information Technology Products?

*Alex Tray offers advice and insight into how and why to localize information technology products.*



**Alex Tray**  
**How to Ace IT Product Localization**

<https://bit.ly/3Qoxibq>

October 19, 2023

As information technology (IT) keeps bridging geographic gaps and connecting people from different cultures, the demand for IT product localization has never been more pressing.

Localization not only improves the user experience, but also makes a significant contribution to an organization's global success by making IT products more accessible and user-friendly to multinational audiences.

This post explores what IT product localization is, including how it works and the several benefits it offers businesses that want to expand their presence in foreign markets.

### What Is IT Product Localization?

IT product localization involves tailoring software, websites, and digital content to suit the specific needs and preferences of users in various regions and cultures.

It goes beyond mere translation. It also entails a thorough adaptation that considers language, cultural, and technical factors to ensure the product is not only usable but also appealing to customers in the target market.

### Key Benefits of IT Product Localization

Localizing IT products has several essential benefits for businesses that want to grow internationally and serve diverse markets. These benefits include:

**Improved market accessibility.** Localization allows your IT products to expand into new areas and connect with customers who might not be native speakers of the original product's language. Language barriers are eliminated when your software, apps, or tech solutions are made available in the language of your target audience.

This increases sales and brand recognition by not only expanding your market reach but also making your products more accessible to potential buyers.

**Enhanced user experience.** Customizing the user experience to fit the

interests and cultural norms of your target audience is a crucial component of localizing IT products. Adapting the interface, content, and user interactions can result in a more intuitive and engaging user experience.

This adaptation indicates your dedication to knowing about and helping your target audience, ultimately enhancing consumer loyalty and confidence.

**Increased global market share.** Effective IT product localization may have a significant impact on your global market share. You may outperform regional businesses and well-established global competitors by adapting your IT products to local markets.

Customers like your locally adapted products, which gives you a competitive advantage, expands your market share, and eventually boosts your sales.

**Customer satisfaction and loyalty.** Satisfied customers are more inclined to stick with a business. Localizing IT products shows you care about the needs and preferences of your clients. This builds customer loyalty and promotes a favorable perception of your business.

Customers who are happy with your products are more likely to not only keep using them but also promote them to others, thereby boosting organic growth.

### Factors to Consider When Localizing IT Products

There are several factors that you need to consider before localizing IT products. These include:

**Cultural nuances.** Every region has its traditions, customs, and even sense of humor. To ensure your product appeals to the local market, it should respect and align with these factors.

This may entail adapting the graphics, colors, symbols, and even the user interface to make the user interface more culturally appropriate.

**Quality assurance.** Technical issues, such as broken code, unsuitable typefaces, or problems with user interface elements, usually occur during the localization process. Thorough quality assurance testing is required to find and fix these problems before the locally adapted product hits the market.

Regular testing and debugging are essential to ensure the IT product operates accurately in the target region and language.

**Adaptation to local preferences.** Beyond linguistic and cultural factors, it is important to consider regional preferences and user expectations. Regional differences can be significant in how people use technology. For instance, there may be differences in navigational patterns, payment options, and design aesthetics.

User acceptance and satisfaction can be significantly increased by being aware of and embracing these preferences.

**Internationalization and globalization.** Internationalization involves building your IT product in a way that makes localization easy. This involves using flexible coding techniques and structuring content to be language-neutral for easy market adaptation.

The goal of globalization, on the other hand, is to develop products that are scalable and flexible for a global audience. The time and effort needed for localization can be greatly reduced with a solid internationalization and globalization strategy.

**Localization tools and technologies.** The use of the right localization tool

**Every region has its traditions, customs, and even sense of humor. Your product should respect and align with these factors.**

and technology can improve the accuracy and efficiency of the localization process. The localization workflow can be made more efficient with the aid of translation memory systems, content management systems, and localization management platforms such as Centus.

These solutions make it easier to manage translations, ensure consistency throughout the entire product, and effectively track changes. A successful localization strategy relies on choosing the right tools and technological stack.

### How to Implement an IT Product Localization Strategy

You can ensure your IT product is successful in international markets by considering these steps:

**Conduct market research.** Conducting thorough market research is essential before starting the localization process. This requires locating your target markets and getting to know their specific preferences, cultures, and languages.

You can efficiently adapt your product to meet local needs by conducting market research to gain essential information. You can use it to assess possible demand and competition in the markets you have chosen.

**Build your IT product localization team.** The foundation of successful IT product adaptation is the creation of a talented and diversified localization team. Native speakers of the target languages, cultural experts, software developers, and quality assurance professionals should ideally be on your team.

Apart from maintaining the technical integrity of your IT product, a well-rounded team can successfully man-

age the technicalities of linguistic and cultural differences.

### Use relevant software and expertise.

Use modern localization techniques and technologies to speed up the process. Collaboration platforms, content management systems, and translation memory systems can all improve output and consistency.

If you do not have an in-house expert, collaborate with localization specialists or agencies. Their expertise can help you save time and steer clear of typical errors.

**Localize for each target market.** Remember that when localizing IT products, a one-size-fits-all strategy rarely succeeds. Adapt your products for each market, considering not only linguistic requirements, but also cultural preferences and regional laws.

This can involve translating the user interface, supporting documents, and marketing collateral for your product, as well as adapting features and functionality to meet regional demands.


**Test the IT product localization results.** An important phase in localizing IT products is quality assurance. To ensure your product operates flawlessly in each target market, thorough testing is important. This covers usability assessments as well as language and functional testing.

You can use feedback from local users during beta testing to find and fix any problems that may have gone unnoticed during localization.

### Conclusion

Customers around the world want a flawless user experience in their own language. Therefore, businesses that localize their IT products find it easier to win over new target markets.

Given the importance of localization, your focus should be on how to localize your IT product, not whether you should.

To streamline your IT product localization process, conduct thorough market research, attract local talent, and use professional localization management platforms. 

**Alex Tray** is a system administrator and cybersecurity consultant with 10 years of experience. He is currently self-employed as a cybersecurity consultant and as a freelance writer.