



26-Point Software Localization Checklist

- 1. Use consistent and capable character encoding—Unicode and UTF-8 work well internationally
- 2. Adopt a consistent key-value pair layout, clear delimiter, or XML schema for resource files
- 3. Avoid concatenating strings
- 4. Remember that programmatically adding an “s” will not make words plural in most languages
- 5. Remove text from graphics, deleting it completely or putting it in software strings
- 6. Leave room in controls for text expansion—some words can be 2–3 times longer when translated
- 7. Include contextual comments for translators so they can clearly understand strings for translation
- 8. Create a reference list of variable uses with content examples
- 9. Prepare a list of words that should not be translated (such as product names and function calls)
- 10. Understand international punctuation differences (like a necessary space before a colon in French)
- 11. Select translators who specialize in localizing software
- 12. Send your raw software resource files to your localization partner instead of manually copying strings into a spreadsheet or another format
- 13. Offer product training to translators before localization begins to improve translation quality
- 14. Provide a live software environment that translators can use for reference
- 15. Encourage translators to ask questions when they do not understand terminology or context
- 16. Instruct translators to use platform-specific operating system terms
- 17. Require translators to create an initial translation of a glossary of core product terms and ask internal colleagues, distributors, or customers to review it
- 18. Linguistically test the localized versions of the application thoroughly
- 19. Functionally test the localized versions of the application
- 20. Use localized operating systems and browsers for all testing
- 21. Enter locale-specific text, numbers, and dates during testing
- 22. Translate customized install strings only and rely on the installer for the majority of localization
- 23. Translate the software user interface before help and documentation so terms are consistent
- 24. Use help context links that are not linguistic and do not require translation
- 25. Save sample data used to create screen captures so it can be reused for the localized versions
- 26. Build translation memory to facilitate updates, reducing cost and time while ensuring consistency