



WHITE PAPER

E-Commerce in a Global Environment:

Maximizing Revenue with Web Localization and Technology Solutions





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GLOBAL E-COMMERCE: OVERVIEW

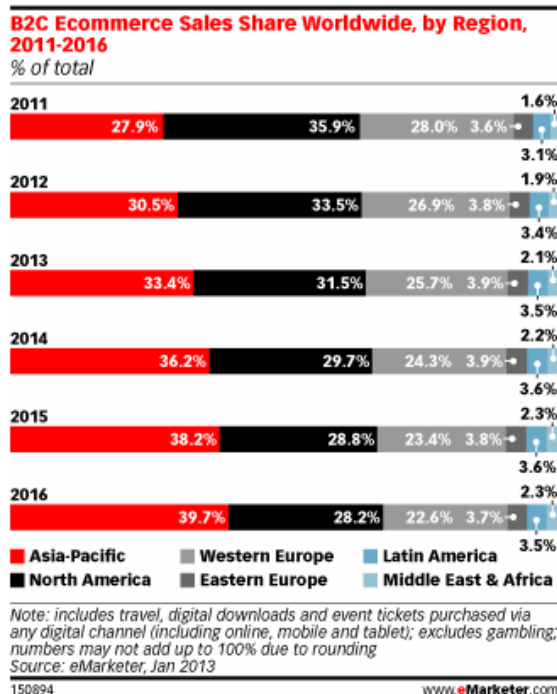
Global e-commerce sales topped \$1 trillion for the first time in 2012. Estimates for 2013 indicate a projected growth in online sales of 18.3%, or \$1.3 trillion in worldwide annual revenue¹. The regional market share of global e-commerce will also continue to change dramatically in the coming years, with the Asia-Pacific market overtaking North America as the highest e-commerce sales region in the world.

Failure to address these emerging foreign markets in their native languages will leave domestic online retailers with English-only websites at a significant disadvantage to competitors with multilingual websites.

Translating web content is a daunting task for any retailer. This is particularly true when taking into consideration that content additions and updates often occur on a daily basis. And the level of complexity increases as the desired number of supported languages grows. Fortunately, Language Service Providers (LSPs) offer a wide range of technology solutions that simplify the translation and web localization process. This technology aids in the production of high quality translations with increased speed and efficiency, while at the same time lowering costs. Moreover, through the automation of change-detection, new and updated content can be translated into multiple languages with minimal retailer involvement.

Some LSPs offer additional services, including Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) strategies. These services significantly improve web traffic and help maximize Return on Investment (ROI).

Timing is also an important factor in a retailer's ability to ensure the greatest possible ROI. Entering newly emerging markets early offers a powerful advantage over competitors. Establishing brand loyalty and in-country partnerships becomes increasingly more difficult the longer retailers wait to enter a market.



¹ <http://www.emarketer.com/Article/E-commerce-Sales-Topped-1-Trillion-First-Time-2012/1009649>



E-COMMERCE IN EMERGING MARKETS ABROAD

Online retailers can no longer afford to rely solely on the English-speaking market. E-commerce has significantly outpaced brick-and-mortar retail growth and global markets are now easier to reach. While logistical access to customers abroad is made easier by web technology, revenue growth prospects are significantly diminished by failing to cater to the local languages of the target country or region.

The ability and willingness of non-English-speaking consumers to locate, much less buy, US products online is profoundly affected by the presence or absence of local linguistic and cultural web content. The vast majority of global Internet retail customers do not speak English. According to a recent report prepared for the US Department of Commerce, 73% of online shoppers are non-English speakers². In Europe, Forrester Research reports, “42% of online users say they never shop online in any language other than their own.”³ Failure to capitalize on the demands of these consumers simply by not engaging them in their own language leaves a lot of money on the table.

The most highly populated global markets are growing at a faster pace than corresponding US markets. In the Asia-Pacific region, the e-commerce market is projected to grow at a 33.0% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) from 2010 to 2015. Within this high-growth region, China stands out from the crowd with unparalleled growth rates of online sales. E-commerce in China is forecasted to grow at a 94.2% compound annual rate during this same time period, with their 237.8 million online buyers eclipsing the number of online customers in the United States by 90 million⁴. Online retail sales in China were estimated to be \$75 billion in 2012 (up 145% from 2011) and are expected to cross the \$400 billion milestone by 2016⁵.

B2C Ecommerce Sales in Asia-Pacific, by Country, 2011-2017

billions

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
China*	\$56.69	\$110.04	\$181.62	\$274.57	\$358.59	\$439.72	\$520.37
Japan	\$112.90	\$127.82	\$118.59	\$127.06	\$135.54	\$143.13	\$150.28
Australia	\$22.86	\$25.26	\$26.77	\$28.31	\$29.76	\$31.24	\$32.56
South Korea	\$16.34	\$17.32	\$18.52	\$20.24	\$21.92	\$23.71	\$25.44
India**	\$8.68	\$12.12	\$16.32	\$20.74	\$25.65	\$30.31	\$35.35
Indonesia	\$0.56	\$1.04	\$1.79	\$2.60	\$3.56	\$4.49	\$5.48
Other	\$19.84	\$22.30	\$25.14	\$28.16	\$31.53	\$34.99	\$38.55

Asia-Pacific **\$237.86** **\$315.91** **\$388.75** **\$501.68** **\$606.54** **\$707.60** **\$808.03**

*Note: includes travel, digital downloads and event tickets purchased via any digital channel (including online, mobile and tablet); excludes gambling; numbers may not add up to total due to rounding; *includes sales from businesses that occur over C2C platforms; excludes Hong Kong; **digital travel sales represent roughly 80% of B2C ecommerce sales*
Source: eMarketer, June 2013

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www.eMarketer.com

² Globalizing E-commerce: What US Retailers Need to Know About Entering Foreign Markets (eMarketer: February 2012), p. 16.

³ Market Overview: Language Service Providers 2013. (Forrester Research: June 20, 2013), p. 2.

⁴ Ibid. 2, p. 1.

⁵ China E-commerce: A Developing Market Begins to Boom (eMarketer: November 2012), p. 2.



B2C Ecommerce Sales in Latin America, by Country, 2011-2017

billions

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Brazil	\$13.92	\$16.95	\$19.74	\$23.51	\$25.52	\$27.28	\$28.92
Mexico	\$4.18	\$6.16	\$7.98	\$9.88	\$11.40	\$12.92	\$14.25
Argentina	\$2.57	\$3.36	\$3.86	\$4.79	\$5.65	\$6.33	\$6.96
Other	\$7.66	\$11.19	\$14.40	\$17.77	\$20.46	\$23.07	\$25.33

Latin America \$28.33 \$37.66 \$45.98 \$55.95 \$63.03 \$69.60 \$75.46

Note: includes travel, digital downloads and event tickets purchased via any digital channel (including online, mobile and tablet); excludes gambling; numbers may not add up to total due to rounding

Source: eMarketer, June 2013

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www.eMarketer.com

Latin American markets are showing similarly impressive increases in online sales, and research indicates that these growth trends will continue in the coming years. Already the largest market in the region, Brazil is projected to further raise its online revenue from \$17.0 billion in 2012 to \$27.3 billion in 2016⁶.

Even in more mature markets, such as those in

Western Europe, digital sales are increasing at a rate that far exceeds that of total sales. A 2012 survey recorded that, on average, "online retail sales [in all European markets] were set to rise by more than 16% in these countries, while offline retail sales inched up by a mere 0.7%."⁷

Certainly, some retailers have been able to tap into foreign markets via cross-border trading (CBT) using their existing US/English language websites; however, economic data and market research indicate that this business model places them at a significant disadvantage from competitors with multilingual websites as well as local companies reaching out to customers in their native language.

B2C Ecommerce Sales in Western Europe, by Country, 2011-2017

billions

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
UK	\$76.75	\$87.25	\$99.19	\$111.30	\$122.68	\$132.79	\$142.42
Germany	\$38.08	\$47.00	\$53.00	\$58.00	\$62.00	\$66.00	\$70.00
France	\$29.68	\$33.33	\$36.99	\$40.35	\$43.57	\$46.88	\$50.20
Spain	\$15.64	\$18.57	\$21.57	\$24.54	\$27.46	\$30.21	\$32.63
Italy	\$12.88	\$16.16	\$19.80	\$23.81	\$27.80	\$31.25	\$35.00
Netherlands	\$7.01	\$7.99	\$8.98	\$9.89	\$10.78	\$11.50	\$12.15
Sweden	\$5.32	\$6.30	\$7.32	\$8.29	\$9.14	\$9.96	\$10.80
Norway	\$4.97	\$5.82	\$6.71	\$7.60	\$8.40	\$9.02	\$9.60
Denmark	\$5.16	\$5.90	\$6.63	\$7.33	\$7.98	\$8.50	\$9.00
Finland	\$3.29	\$3.82	\$4.38	\$4.87	\$5.31	\$5.69	\$6.05
Other	\$19.50	\$23.45	\$26.89	\$30.14	\$33.19	\$36.15	\$39.04

Western Europe \$218.27 \$255.59 \$291.47 \$326.13 \$358.31 \$387.94 \$416.89

Note: includes travel, digital downloads and event tickets purchased via any digital channel (including online, mobile and tablet); excludes gambling; numbers may not add up to total due to rounding

Source: eMarketer, June 2013

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www.eMarketer.com

⁶ Brazil E-commerce: Sports, Travel and Cheap Retail Maintain the Market's Momentum (eMarketer: March 2013), p. 3.

⁷ Western Europe B2C E-commerce: Solid Growth continues as Mobile Gains Ground. (eMarketer: February, 2013), p. 5.



NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING DOMESTIC MARKETS

In the US alone, the Hispanic market is growing very rapidly. According to the 2010 Census, of the 308.7 million people residing in the United States on April 1 of 2010, 50.5 million (or roughly 16 percent) were of Hispanic origin⁸. The Census also indicated that an estimated 44.7% of the Spanish speaking population in the US spoke English less than “very well.” This same census found that of 9.3 million Asian-Pacific language speakers, 47.9% spoke English less than “very well.” In the 18-64 age range, these numbers rise to 49.7% and 48.2%, respectively⁹. Thus, roughly half of the US Hispanic and Asian populations feel more comfortable in languages other than English. This represents a significant portion of the US population who would feel more comfortable buying online in a language other than English.

As the Hispanic population is on the increase, so too is their purchasing power. According to the AHAA, total US Hispanic buying power will grow from \$1.2 trillion in 2012 to \$1.5 trillion in 2015¹⁰. Hispanics today command a significant amount of the nation’s disposable income and purchasing power. Whether the domestic Hispanic and Asian-Pacific markets are targeted directly or incidentally (through foreign Spanish/Asian speaking markets), research indicates that the results of a multilingual site will increase a retailer’s ROI.

TRANSLATION OPTIONS

When it comes to translating web content, retailers have three options to choose from (although it is not uncommon for online retailers to use some combination of these): Computer-Aided Human Translation, Machine Translation, and Crowdsourcing.

Human Translation

If the end goal of a retailer is a truly localized website, there is no comparable alternative to human translation in terms of quality or cultural awareness at the local level. Purely human translation, however, has become antiquated. Computer-Aided Translation (CAT) tools make the translation process more efficient and accurate, while at the same time decreasing costs and turnaround time.

Professional translators have an intimate knowledge of the complexities, nuances, idioms, and ambiguities of both the source language and the target language. Computer-aided human translation requires a larger long-term investment, but it has significant advantages over pure machine translation. It also carries far less liability than other methods of translation.

There are two types of computer-aided human translation used in professional translations: Translation Memory (TM) Tools and Machine Translation with Post-Editing.

Translation Memory - TM Tools

TM tools (also known as computer-aided translation, or CAT, tools) are software products that aid translators, editors, and proofreaders in quickly turning around projects and help ensure the

⁸ <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-04.pdf>

⁹ http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_10_1YR_S1601&prodType=table

¹⁰ <http://ahaa.org/default.asp?contentID=161#2>



highest quality translation. They partly automate the translation, localization, and quality assurance processes, and streamline the overall workflow.

Translation memory tools achieve higher rates of efficiency by comparing words, sentences, phrases, or other segments of language with established translations. TM lowers costs by ensuring that repetitive language is not re-translated. In addition, time-to-market is greatly improved because the text-extraction and translation processes become largely automated. Most importantly, TM tools enable increased consistency across all media and types of communication.

TM tools do not provide instantaneous or machine translation, although they do help to automate elements of the translation process, which saves time, cuts costs, and allows for the highest level of quality and consistency in final deliverables.

Machine Translation with Post-Editing

With this solution, a machine generated translation is completed for the source text. A professional human translator then edits the computer-generated content to ensure the quality is sufficient and free of objective errors, and that it is suitable to be published on the website. The costs fall somewhere in between pure machine translation and human translation using TM tools, but the “cleaning up process” of post machine translation does not offer the same level of linguistic sophistication and cultural sensitivity as human translation with TM. The editorial process seeks mainly to avoid awkward or embarrassing phrases and correct grammatical errors.

Machine Translation or Automated Translation

Machine translation relies on technologies that automate the translation of content into target languages. This is the most time-efficient and cost-effective method of translation; however, it is also by far the least accurate. Even the most sophisticated automated translation technologies can't take into account the vast syntax and grammatical complexities and semantic nuances of languages and often result in poor translations that produce awkward, incorrect, nonsensical and incoherent output; or, worse still, offensive content. This creates a substantial amount of liability concerns, particularly in highly regulated industries where the stakes for error are high. It also is not well suited for heavily branded or marketing-related content.

Crowdsourced Translation

Crowdsourced translation, as the name implies, relies upon the input of a network of internet users who volunteer to contribute to the translation and editing of content. These are not professional translators, so merchants run obvious risks in choosing this method of translation. This process also incurs the costs associated with recruiting and managing volunteers.



WEBSITE LOCALIZATION

Overview

Localization allows retailers to take advantage of the e-commerce opportunities that lie in wait across global markets. Translation is only one element of the larger concept of localization, although certainly it is the most critical one. Forrester Research defines “localization” as “the process of adapting a website for a country or region through language translation as well as through the addition of market-specific content, features, layout, and design elements¹¹.” When localizing websites, retailers must take into account a wide variety of concerns in addition to translation. These include cultural relevance and sensitivity, local laws and regulations, writing conventions (e.g., date/time format, formatting of numbers, symbols, etc.), currency conversions, weights and measurements, censorship issues, conventional and/or accepted payment methods, and a variety of other factors.

Challenges

While cost and ROI are the number-one concerns online retailers face when determining whether or not to localize their websites, there are a variety of challenges that they must still face once they move beyond the cost-benefit analysis phase and make the decision to enter the global marketplace. Among these are: IT support issues related to global growth, decentralized translation assets, speed of delivery to global markets, translation quality concerns, internal communication gaps, and existing processes that are highly manual and not scalable. Retailers may also face difficulty with regard to the integration of existing CMS assets.

For these reasons and others, merchants often turn to Language Service Providers (LSPs) to complete and manage their website localization. LSPs have developed localization technology solutions that significantly decrease the cost burden, improve efficiency, and resolve logistical concerns. New web content or changes to existing web content can be immediately transferred to various linguists for translation into the corresponding target languages and then published.

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

There are three primary types of localization technology utilized by LSPs: Globalization Management Systems (GMS), Proxy-Based Solutions, and Combined GMS/Proxy Solutions.

Globalization Management Systems (GMS)

Most websites today utilize CMSs, databases, PIM systems, booking/e-commerce platforms or some combination of all three (plus other applications) to deliver content to their end-users. These platforms are ideal solutions for clients who want to have direct integration with those content repositories and manage the process internally. For web retailers who want individualized web content for each local market, an integrated GMS would also be a preferred solution.

¹¹ Market Overview: Language Service Providers 2013. (Forrester Research: June 20, 2013), p. 2.



Globalization Management Systems provide intuitive platforms to streamline every facet of the localization process and are comprised of modular applications that can function independently or as part of an integrated end-to-end solution.

GMS solutions typically require an upfront IT investment, are more complex, and take more time to get to the market. However, with this method, the client has greater visibility and editorial control over the translation process. Files are usually transmitted back and forth with the LSP via an integration with back-end systems (over an API), through a content mediator (for database content) or via a manual upload process.

GMS Benefits:

- Quickly deliver, publish, and synchronize global content
- Manage and maintain translated assets in back-end systems
- Automate manual localization tasks and resource sharing
- Reduce internal IT dependencies
- Track and report all translation activity in real time
- Ensure consistent brand voice across languages
- Scale platform options to meet changing business demands
- Work in a either a single or multi-vendor model and with any combination of internal and external translation teams
- Simplify user training and overall experience with an intuitive and user-friendly interface
- Allow for highly customized in-market experience

Adaptors

An additional benefit of a GMS solution is its ability to integrate with e-commerce and CMS systems, such as:

- Adobe
- Astoria
- Database (Oracle, SQL, MySQL)
- Demandware
- Documentum
- Drupal
- Ektron
- EpiServer
- Fatwire
- Hybris
- Kentico
- Magento
- OpenText
- Sharepoint
- Sitecore
- SVN
- Teamsite
- Tridion

Proxy-Based Solutions

Proxy-based technology has been a staple of the Internet for over 10 years. Conceptually, it is a solution that allows for the retrieval of content from a client server by a separate server (the proxy). That content is then processed against an existing translation memory that has been created for a specific client. So effectively all existing source language content is replaced by its target language equivalent in the presentation layer and is then delivered back to the end client as a fully translated web page. This solution provides a cost-effective and simple solution for



online retailers who wish to localize their web-based content with a minimal amount of IT and project management resources.

The key challenge in localizing a complex, dynamic website is the process of interacting with the actual content on the back-end (CMS, database, e-commerce platform, etc.). Proxy-based technology eliminates the requirement for any back-end system integration on the retailer side. Since this technology works with content that is outputted from the client web server (typically as HTML), the back-end configuration of the client IT architecture is irrelevant. Premier proxy-based solutions are fully compatible with SEO, SEM, e-commerce, and third-party Content Delivery Networks, so regardless of the complexity of the site or the industry vertical, the proxy-based solution can be a great fit to get retailers' websites up and running in multiple languages with a minimal amount of internal effort. This solution is ideal for Internet retailers who want to launch high-quality websites in many languages quickly and cost effectively.

In simplest terms, successful proxy-based translation technology augments the website localization process through three types of automation: the automation of change detection, the routing of content, and publishing. This automated process allows new content to be recognized and sent instantaneously and simultaneously to multiple translators to complete the target language translations, review, and publish them. All multilingual activity - including functional testing of the translated website - is completed with virtually no retailer involvement.

Proxy Advantages:

- **Nothing to Install** - Requires no software integration or installation.
- **Minimal IT Solution** - Eliminates the need to integrate with content management systems, back-end databases, or document management systems.
- **Automated Change Detection** - Automatically detects when content is modified or added and routes it into the proper workflows, eliminating project management burdens associated with keeping website in-sync.
- **Translation Memory** - Ensures that you will never be charged to translate the same phrase twice.
- **Enterprise Security and Reliability** - Ensures content is hosted with best-in-class security and redundancy standards.
- **Rapid Deployment** - Streamlines the entire web localization process, allowing for target language sites to launch quickly.

Combined GMS/Proxy Solutions

A combined GMS/proxy solution offers the best of both worlds by allowing retailers to take advantage of proxy technology for the rapid deployment of web content while sharing a content repository for non-web content supported by GMS technology or for markets that require a more customized and local web experience.

Clients can use proxy solutions as an entry-point to more sophisticated GMS solutions or they may continue to utilize some combination of both technologies. A retailer who wants to launch a translated site as quickly as possible could use a proxy solution as a first step, and then migrate to a more integrated approach if desired. Ideally both systems would share a common translation memory back-end so that work completed with either approach is shared across the enterprise, both online and offline.



The advantages of the combined approach include:

- Lowers cost, while decreasing turnaround time
- Greater brand consistency for both web and non-web content
- Lower support costs
- Eliminates internal IT dependencies
- Retailer can work in either a single or multi-vendor model and with any combination of internal and external translation teams
- Ensure consistent brand voice across languages
- Allows for complete flexibility of site deployment based on local market considerations and/or internal resource availability

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION & SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

In today's search-driven world, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) are integral parts of any successful internet marketing campaign. SEO is the process of taking steps to organically improve your site's ranking in selected keyword searches, thereby increasing the volume of traffic to your website. SEM, a similar, though distinct, field, involves purchasing pay-per-click (PPC) ads, which appear alongside search results for selected keywords.

When retailers decide to localize their websites for international markets, it is vital that the same precise linguistic and cultural knowledge that was applied to their source-language SEO and SEM is carried over to multilingual search. LSPs make this task far more efficient and cost-effective by synthesizing their linguistic, cultural, and technical expertise to provide cutting-edge International Search Engine Optimization (ISEO) and International Search Engine Marketing (ISEM) services that make it easy for retailers' international customers to find their localized website.

Translation Is Not Enough

A range of factors, including the target market profile, customer demographics, and the subject-matter content, influence how internet users select keywords for their searches. As a result, the straight translation of keywords and pay-per-click (PPC) ads is simply not enough.

The first step in optimizing and marketing a localized website is defining and understanding the target market. This goes beyond simply knowing the preferred language in that market. For example, are customers likely to use slang or imperfect words? Will they misspell words when they perform searches for your content? What is the target market's level of linguistic sophistication? These factors vary significantly by country, language, and demographic.

Special attention must also be paid to the structure and design of a multilingual site. In many cases, strategic changes to site structure, source code, URLs, and domain names may be necessary. Furthermore, imagery, colors, and page layout will have different connotations from culture to culture, and may need to be modified to enhance the experience of a retailer's multilingual visitors.



Beyond Google

Aside from general demographic knowledge, it is also important to understand which search engines a retailer's target markets are most likely to use. Not all markets use the same search engines, and not all search engines use the same algorithms. If consumers don't use Google, creating a multilingual PPC ad and purchasing target-language keywords on Google will not drive any significant traffic to that website. Retailers must also account for the length restrictions on meta tags and paid keywords, which can vary from engine to engine.

LSP Services to Assist in ISEO & ISEM

The most successful ISEO and ISEM campaigns are performed by professionals with in-depth knowledge of both the industry and the local target markets. Launching international optimization and marketing campaigns is an overwhelming task for online retailers. However, some LSPs provide a wide range of services to ensure retailers are getting the highest possible ROI. Among these services are: Consulting, Copy Adaptation, Search Engine Validation, and Campaign Management.

Consulting

Some LSPs have search engine experts who work with retailers to create a strategy for their websites by reviewing their current globalization goals and source-language SEO/SEM approach. During this stage, LSPs establish guidelines that drive the rest of the international optimization and marketing strategies, including recommendations for:

- Eliminating site-coding errors
- Ensuring all meta tags complement the site copy
- Link-building
- Adding heading tags to each page
- Developing search engine-friendly URLs and site maps
- Restructuring site directories

Copy Adaptation

During this step, LSPs carefully adapt the retailer's source-language website copy for each target market—a process that goes far beyond simple translation. Professional linguists who are native speakers of the target language as well as experts in the relevant industry can creatively rework the original copy so that it successfully conveys the intended message. Word play, idiomatic expressions, colloquialisms, word choice, humor, and level of formality are among the elements LSPs analyze in this stage.

For multilingual keyword terms, meta descriptions, and PPC ads, LSPs' professional in-market linguists identify two or three appropriate adaptations for each term. Then, in the localized pages, alternative adapted and validated keywords will be seeded strategically within the copy and metadata to enhance natural search rankings.



Search Engine Validation

While copy adaptation captures the nuances of the language, search engine validation helps determine which adapted keywords will yield the greatest success on the relevant search engines. LSPs' in-country resources can research which words and phrases are the most natural and commonly used in a given market. Further keyword research can be conducted to select appropriate, relevant search terms with proven search traffic and high "predict" ratings (the likely ability to compete effectively for high search results placement).

During PPC validation, language experts revise adapted copy to gain better results and to fit within character length limitations, which vary based on search engine and language.

Campaign Management

ISEO is not a one-time activity. A variety of factors outside of retailer's control can bring down their ranking after the site has been optimized, including changes in search engine algorithms or the ISEO efforts of a competitor. While retailers may not be able to directly prevent such changes, they can minimize the risk of a drop in rankings by simply executing regular benchmarking and reworking of their optimized site content.

Additionally, once a retailer's ISEM campaign is initially created and approved, LSPs rigorously track and manage each ad to determine what is working and what is not. Low performers can be cut and replaced, while adapted ads and keywords that are consistently generating traffic are brought to the forefront.

Metrics are obtained on the selected in-language ads and keywords before and after the optimization and adaptation steps are completed, and these metrics are evaluated on an ongoing basis with the election of our managed services. This process allows the retailer to track the results of their ISEO/ISEM efforts and determine the necessary actions to keep their rankings where they should be.

THE COST OF WAITING EXCEEDS THE COST OF LOCALIZING NOW

There is universal agreement that the most effective way to reach global e-commerce markets is through a multilingual web and advertising campaign. LSPs that utilize technology to streamline processes provide retailers with solutions that are cost-effective, require no additional IT capabilities, involve minimal effort on the retailer end, and can help drive new revenue streams quickly. Time-to-market is critically important, particularly in the retail and travel industries. Moreover, localized websites that adopt successful ISEO and ISEM strategies bring customers directly to retailers' websites through in-country native language searches on the major search engines of that location.

US companies risk losing huge revenues by further delaying entry into these markets. Building brand recognition and loyalty is important in any market, but particularly so in international ones. Companies that get in early have a definite strategic advantage in establishing loyal customer bases and building partnerships with in-country companies. As competitors prepare to advance upon these opportunities, there is little time to waste for US retailers that want to be on the forefront of international commerce.