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## **Best Practices White Paper: Taking Your Certification Examination Process to a Global Audience**

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### Introduction

Education, qualification and certification are the goals of most certifying boards working with professionals around the world in all industries. Successful certification should not be dependent on fluency in English; due to our expanding global economy, the majority of potential candidates for your exams may eventually have no fluency in English whatsoever! Localizing your certification exam into key target languages greatly expands your pool of customers and helps increase the number of experts certified in your area of expertise on a global basis.

Translated exams and materials are also welcomed and sought after by an increasing US-based population who speaks English as a second language. This group of certification candidates is increasing domestically in many areas, particularly in healthcare. Making your examinations and supporting course materials available in other languages empowers more people to concentrate on demonstrating their mastery of the subject rather than their grasp of the English language. Translation removes language barriers to professional growth and encourages more people to seek certification.

Some of you may have already recognized the compelling global economic pressures and made the decision to localize your exam content; however, you are not sure how to proceed. What are some best practices to ensure that your content is localized appropriately while still safeguarding the content of your source materials and intellectual property?

The following localization methodology for certification examination projects helps you to save time and money while ensuring that the final product is of the highest possible quality:

### Project Planning Phase

**Planning Strategy:** Your localization vendor helps you plan the rollout of multilingual content. In addition to planning the logistics of the project, your localization vendor should bring the necessary resources to bear on technical issues related to your localization effort.

To reduce a possible breach of confidentiality, we recommend that the team members of your localization vendor sign an agreement that prohibits them from discussing or sharing exam contents with anyone outside of the project team. A further safeguard requires a signature of receipt from each team member during the shipment and distribution of the numerically tracked exam copies. Also require that all exam hard copies used during the translation project be returned, accounted for, and destroyed through a certified process (if applicable).

## Project Start-Up Phase

**Project Kick-Off Meeting:** Assemble your key team members to review the project scope and workflow process, identify critical issues and risk factors that may need to be addressed, define status reporting formats and frequency, and delivery requirements.

## Analysis Phase

**Prepare Source Files for Translation:** Your internal team should prepare all source content for the localization process, including content files and graphics. Providing all course materials and exams in editable format, along with any terminology guides, glossaries, and other reference materials, helps the localization team ensure the content is translated accurately.

**Graphics and Icons – Special Handling:** To prepare your graphics for successful localization, separate graphic localization challenges into two categories: technical and cultural. Technical issues include placing text outside of graphical assets so that the translation process is simpler. Replacing text call outs with numbers and a keyed table below an illustration is one example.

Cultural research can be crucial since some images, such as icons, are interpreted differently around the world. Some graphics may be offensive, others sacred or simply inappropriate for the context, while other images may not convey the intended meaning in a target country. Using national flags for newly created countries considered “disputed territory” is just one example of an unintended miscommunication.

**Prepare/Leverage with Existing Translation Memories:** If you have translated your materials before, your localization vendor can evaluate your previous translations and the associated translation memories (TM) for reuse on subsequent projects. For example, Course 1 and Course 2 may share common text that can be leveraged from one translation iteration to the next. The previous content and associated translations are analyzed against the new content by your localization vendor to determine whether translations can be leveraged. This may reduce the costs for translation and, more importantly, the deployment of a TM strategy ensures consistency throughout your various exams and reduces the time required for the translation process.

**Transmission protocols should be established to safeguard the contents of the exam:** Content should be protected from interception over standard email systems. Files should be transmitted by secure channels (such as electronic encryption or courier service of physical files) at all times. All hard copies of the exams should be numbered and tracked until they have

been returned at project conclusion. Loss of such collateral or contents could invalidate your exam.

### Translation Phase

#### **Create/Provide Translation Instructions and Terminology Glossaries:**

Your team should provide translation instructions and terminology glossaries to the localization vendor. If none exist, your localization vendor can help you to create appropriate terminology lists. We recommend this step as a good glossary helps to ensure consistency of translations of terminology across the content. To accomplish this, the localization vendor's language lead reviews the content and compiles a list of important terms. The language lead may also encounter content which may appear to be ambiguous or written in a way that is confusing, in which case a list of questions are drawn up for the customer to clarify prior to translation starting.

It is highly advisable that bi-lingual glossaries and updates to existing glossaries be reviewed for acceptance by your Subject Matter Expert to help reduce change requests towards the end of the project. Since the glossary may be used for multiple components of the project (such as online eLearning modules, workbooks, videos and audio), we recommend that it be approved *prior* to beginning the translation phase.

**Translate/Edit Phase:** The accurate translation of technical documentation, such as certification exams, demands the efforts of experts with appropriate linguistic and subject-matter knowledge. To preserve the integrity of your content, make sure that the localization vendor only assigns native speakers with applicable subject-matter expertise to your projects. The translation phase should include two separate linguistic steps: the actual translation of the source content into a target language and an editing step that reviews the translation against the source to ensure the translator accurately captured the original meaning.

**In-Country Review:** We recommend that an in-country review by a Subject Matter Expert be scheduled upon completion of the editing phase. Qualified candidates are typically volunteers of the association/institution who have already passed the certification exam and who are native speakers of the target language that they are reviewing. Comments from the Subject Matter Expert are then submitted to the localization vendor for review, with appropriate edits made to the translated exam content.

## Desktop Publishing Phase

**Publish Files:** The localization vendor formats the translated and edited content to match the source layout, including localized graphics.

**Linguistic Quality Assurance Proof:** A final check for adherence to linguistic standards is recommended at this stage. This review should encompass checking for spelling, accents, special characters, hyphenation and adherence to client specifications concerning language.

### **Perform Final Linguistic and Formatting Quality Assurance**

**Verification:** This step ensures that all format and linguistic proofreading revisions have been successfully incorporated, that client specifications have been adhered to, and that client reviewer changes have been incorporated.

## Conclusion

By implementing ENLASO's recommendations, the translation of your certification exams is more likely to be performed professionally and with the same level of care that was used to create your original content. ENLASO has acquired considerable experience localizing certification content and is currently working with a number of certification institutes and entities.

## **ENLASO's Certification Examination Language Solutions**

ENLASO partners with companies like yours to create localized versions of their certification examinations. Delivering quality translations, ENLASO simplifies language processes, reduces project costs, and enables faster time-to-market.

For more information on how ENLASO can assist you with all of your localization and translation requirements, please contact us at 303-516-0857 or visit us at [www.enlaso.com](http://www.enlaso.com).

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