

Addressing diverse culture audiences while entering new markets

A case study about how we handled our client's need to enter an Arabic-speaking market and present their product to that new locale in an effective and relevant manner.

Stepping into new markets can be challenging. Commit offers:

- ◆ *Support in profiling the target locale and its special cultural aspects*
- ◆ *Dedicated translation teams composed of local, native speaking linguists*
- ◆ *QA testing before and after production to ensure the localized content is correctly displayed to end users*

The facts

- ◆ **Target locale:**
Arabic-speaking country
- ◆ **Content to be localized:**
E-learning content that is originally intended for US-based audience
- ◆ **Challenges:** The client has no previous experience in developing a product for an Arabic-speaking country

The Challenge

Our client is a US-based e-learning company that develops online courses that are highly interactive, aiming to provide a more effective and active way of learning. These courses are accessible via a cloud-based platform that is user-friendly and intuitive, and accessible from mobile devices.

As part of their business goals, they envisaged entering a market in the Arab world that was previously unexplored and new to them. However, the need to effectively introduce and launch their special e-learning product to an Arabic-speaking locale posed certain challenges:

- Which language flavor to use to best match the tone of voice of the original content and optimally accommodate for any neologisms and puns that are extensively used in the English version?
- What are the special characteristics of the locale of interest that should be taken into account when handling culture-specific concepts?
- What aspects of the Arabic culture should the client be aware of when it comes to graphics, images and general user interface design?
- How well does the client's platform support content that is in a right-to-left language?

Interesting, no? And perhaps such questions can sometimes seem overwhelming when diving into unexplored territories, right?

The Approach

- To support our client in their endeavor, we created a target locale profile for them to use, advising on the following:
 - Demographics of the target locale, such as diversity of nationalities and religions found in the chosen geography, which also contributed in deciding upon the use of Modern Standard Arabic (vs. Classical Arabic) as our target language flavor;
 - Cultural considerations, e.g. how to best choose the graphics, imagery and characters without any of those being conceived as offensive or unfit by the rather conservative receiving culture.
- We also appointed an appropriate team of native Arabic-speaking linguists to translate the content, and through source text analysis we provided them with specific instructions as to how to handle certain US-specific cultural items in order to adequately convey the meaning to the target locale audience and re-create the same effect the English content would have upon the US audience.
- Lastly, we carried out tests both before and after the content was translated, to check the client's platform behavior after importing text in a right-to-left language, and ensured the correct display of the content to the target users.

The Outcome

- The client had an appropriately localized product in hand, ready to be made available in their new market of choice.
- They also acquired more knowledge regarding the targeted geography and audience than they originally had when they decided to set off for expanding into that new market.