

1. TRANSLATION IS ESSENTIAL TO THE DIGITAL PRODUCT EXPERIENCE

Having a global product growth strategy in place is essential for companies to achieve economies of scale. Localizing your digital content isn't just a good idea – it's the only way to stay ahead in an ever increasing global market.

Any company can gain a competitive advantage from localization, but companies with huge content sets will see the largest benefits. This is especially true in manufacturing, where complex products and components are backed by thousands of pages of product information, technical documentation, customer service manuals, etc.

Product content serves a number of users:

- **Shoppers** look for pre-sale information (product specs, engineering drawings, models, etc.) that helps them decide if a specific product is what they need.
- **Designers** look at multiple products that are used together or integrated to create a system of some sort.
- **Buyers** need to know pricing, availability, shipping time, etc.
- **Installers** need information on how to install, deploy, or configure the product after it was purchased but before it can be used.
- **End users** need information on how to use the product to get their work done.
- **Owners** need information about how to upgrade the product, buy accessories or consumables, or get warranty service.
- **Service Technicians** need information about how to maintain, troubleshoot, or repair the product after it was purchased, and get replacement parts.

Unfortunately, the reality is that many manufacturers are not getting the most out of their digital content. Product catalogs are primarily built for shoppers and buyers, and without a PIM or CMS, are difficult and time-consuming to maintain. At best, manufacturers insert links to downloadable PDFs to support the other users. When trying to reach global audiences, translating becomes a nightmare.

So what's the solution?

To deliver a successful global product experience, transform your digital content into powerful tools by delivering targeted, locally-relevant information to all types of global users. After all, customers are far more likely to work with a company that speaks their native language.

Develop a comprehensive digital transformation strategy. Author and store your content in a central repository (preferably in a structured XML standard, like DITA) where it can be easily managed, updated and reused to serve all your users, whether they're shopping, buying, installing, fixing, upgrading or disposing of your product. You can do way better than PDF's to support installers, end users and technicians – deliver this content in apps and interactive formats that help people do their jobs better.

One of the greatest benefits of a central repository is the speed and quality in which you can manage translation. It's as simple as sending files over to your translation vendor. By translating content to fit the target market, companies can leverage assets like geo-specific personas, style guides, and linguistic conventions to successfully reach and retain global customers.

