Web Accessibility Compliance in Localisation: The Missing Link for an Optimal End User Experience

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Abstract

In an increasingly competitive business landscape, the ever-evolving localisation industry is now striving for differentiation. One of the strategies adopted, particularly by the largest multinationals, has been to expand their service coverage beyond traditional localisation and the provision of translation technology to satisfy new digital market needs. Concretely, we have observed a considerable increase in the number of companies showcasing knowledge and know-how in Digital Marketing and User Experience Design, always with a clear goal: enhancing the final end user experience when interacting with multilingual web content. But are we really ensuring an optimal experience for all? If the localisation industry is looking to consolidate this strengthened service portfolio, awareness of key human-computer interaction aspects and best practices, including web accessibility standards, could be crucial for success. Drawing upon the data collected through a series of interviews with representatives of six world-leading multinational companies from the localisation industry and one of their clients, this paper will report on [...]
Web Accessibility Compliance in Localisation

The Missing Link for an Optimal End User Experience

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Localisation’s landscape today

- Ever-evolving industry
  - Technological progress
  - Increasing language coverage
  - New client demands
  - Strengthened service portfolio

- LSPs now see themselves as “Solutions companies”
One of the many examples

What services does Adapt Worldwide provide?

Digital Marketing, Transcreation, Design and Build and Strategy Consulting

Adapt Worldwide, a Welocalize multilingual digital marketing agency, thrives by helping global brands achieve results. We help expand markets and stretch boundaries. Our unique blend of digital media and multilingual marketing expertise, backed by Welocalize’s language services, enables us to do things differently.

Within our service offerings, our capabilities are robust and include

- Transcreation
- Copywriting
- Production
- Search Engine Optimization
- Conversion Rate Optimization
- Social Media
- Pay per Click
- Content Marketing
- Biddable Media
- App Store Optimization
- Web
- Digital Design
- SEO Consultancy
- Search Engine Marketing

One of the many examples

- Secure Testing Labs in Jinan, China and Portland, Oregon
- Testing capabilities: Functional, Linguistic + Usability Testing
- Quality management: Linguistic Review + Language Quality Assurance (LQA)
- 300 in-country testing partners and experts
- 24/7 global coverage
- 42 locales + native speakers
- Testing platforms for mobile devices, browsers, virtual, desktops + servers
- Full client engagement for seamless adaptation
- Resource matching to content type
- Planning, configuration and verification test environments

Clients utilize Welocalize's complete testing services in every time zone because of our proven scalability to meet tight deadlines. Our solutions range from functional user interface (UI) testing on complex software to application testing, including SaaS and cloud-based solutions.
The aim of localisation should be that people from a specified locale can use the product without any difficulty in their own language.

Ensuring linguistic & cultural adequacy

Removing functionality-related obstacles

Same language
Same cultural conventions
Not necessarily same physical and sensory abilities

Sandrini (2008)
What about web accessibility?

“All users (especially those with disabilities) can perceive, understand, navigate, interact with and contribute to the web”

Dpt. Social Services, Australian Government
Web Accessibility

Visit w3.org/WAI/perspectives for tips and information

Web Accessibility Perspectives
“Essential for some, useful for all”
**Goal:** Investigate the attitudes and actions of the localisation industry regarding the implementation of WA best practices during the multilingual web production chain.

**Low level of awareness**
- 10 out of 15 interviewees had not heard about WCAG 2.0

**Low level of accountability for MWA**
- Knowledge, time, budget constraints

**MWA seen as client’s responsibility, but support should be given as partners, advisors**
Why should they adopt accessibility?

Factors

Business Case for Web Accessibility

Social

Technical

Financial

Legal & Policy

Social factors

- **Estimating** how many people are affected by Web accessibility is difficult.

- **Overlap** with the needs of older people, people with low literacy or not fluent in the language, people with low bandwidth connections or using older technologies, new and infrequent users and users of mobile devices.

- WA is a primary aspect of **corporate social responsibility** (CSR).
Financial factors

- Increases potential use by more people, expands potential market share
- Increases findability with search engine optimization (SEO)
- Increases potential use in more situations
- Increases usability: website users achieve their goals effectively, efficiently, and satisfactorily
- Increases positive image (as a result of CSR)
Financial factors

Direct cost savings

- Decreases potential for high legal expenses
- Decreases cost of alternative format materials
- Decreases cost of localisation
- Decreases the amount of server capacity needed and saves on additional server costs when accessibility reduces server load
Technical factors

- **Reduce time and effort** needed to change presentation
- **Facilitate efficient debugging**
- **Reduce the size** of each page served
- **Facilitate interaction** with different input devices
- Allow users and user agents to **request content in a way that suits their capabilities** by using markup for structure and CSS for presentation
Some governments have laws that specifically require that certain types of websites are accessible.

The web is indirectly covered under broader anti-discrimination legislation, information and communications technology (ICT) policy, or other laws or policies.

One should understand the risks for non-compliance.
Challenges and needs

**Challenges**
- Client’s budget
- Clients’ maturity
- Not accessible source
- Clients’ technology dependency

**Needs**
- Technology support (authoring, evaluation)
- Training for a higher level of awareness among all actors involved in l10n workflows
- Accessibility-dedicated team
Thank you
References

