



What comes next?

10 experts analyze the future of AI, language and localisation





CONTENTS

- 3** **The future of machine translation** by Guylaine Tritton
- 10** **Humans and machines, not humans vs. machines** by Isabelle Weiss
- 17** **Does AI pose a threat to copywriting?** by Paul Mangell
- 25** **How audiovisual is going multilingual** by Aimee Gallagher
- 32** **What next for the multilingual gaming industry** by Dan Martindale
- 38** **Creativity and localization** by David Standley
- 45** **Integration as standard: the evolution of LQA and FQA** by Paul Mangell
- 52** **Getting personal: how localized eCommerce will evolve** by William Schwartz
- 59** **Always connect: the future of internationalization** by Jonathan Chan
- 66** **More markets, more channels: how will enterprise localization keep pace?** by Paul Mangell

The future of machine translation

Four predictions on the future of machine translation from Alpha's Solutions Architect, **Guylaine Tritton**



In this chapter, discover:

- Where big tech is taking neural machine translation (NMT) next
- Whether the role of the human translator is in imminent danger
- Why measuring the quality of machine translation matters so much
- How translation technology platforms are moving beyond the “source-to-target-language” model



Guylaine Tritton, Solutions Architect, Alpha CRC

Guylaine began her career as a Localization Engineer in 1998 and joined Alpha CRC in 2002 as a Senior Project Manager. Guylaine has held the positions of Head of Project Management and Operations Manager at Alpha CRC.

As a Solutions Architect, Guylaine's role is to work as a consultant to strategic accounts. She is also part of Alpha CRC's onboarding team and advises on best practices, workflows and technology.

*There are more than **7,000** languages in the world, **4,000** of which are written. Yet only **100** or so can be translated by automated tools such as Google Translate.*

source: bbc.com

Introduction

Bring any group of language/localization professionals together and sooner or later (usually sooner) the subject turns to the hot topic of machine translation.

Some predict the imminent demise of the human translator as the ongoing range, accuracy and speed of neural machine translation (NMT) developed by tech giants such as Google, Apple and Amazon continues to gather pace.

Others argue that machine translation, despite obvious advances, will never fully keep pace with the complexities of translating the diversity of human languages

As Alpha's Solutions Architect with more than two decades of experience in translation technology, **Guylaine Tritton** is ideally placed to provide a nuanced view on what the next five years may bring. Here are her four predictions for the future of machine translation.

- **Prediction #1:** *With the Internet of Things, neural machine translation (NMT) will play an even bigger part in our daily lives.*
- **Prediction #2:** *But NMT is not about to make the human translator extinct; the role of the translator will, however, continue to evolve.*
- **Prediction #3:** *Translation tools will make it easier to track the quality of NMT – and know where human input is required.*
- **Prediction #4:** *We're moving from a translation-based approach to a language-based approach – and technology platforms will evolve accordingly.*

Prediction #1

With the Internet of Things, neural machine translation (NMT) will play an even bigger part in our daily lives.

“The Internet of Things, powered by voice recognition and NMT, is going to make talking to our gadgets, apps and appliances an even more integral part of daily life for users in more and more languages.”

Neural machine translation (NMT) has already been a game changer in the translation industry; it’s been well documented how it has dramatically improved the quality of machine translation. And it’s now freely available to global audiences via apps such as Google Translate. You don’t have to be a big business to experience the benefits of NMT.

With continued heavy investment from tech giants such as Google, Amazon and Microsoft, the quality of NMT will continue to develop year on year, particularly because they have such huge data sets of language to work with. Because it’s based on machine learning, the more content NMT engines process, the better the quality of their translations.

Of course, many of us already interact with NMT on a daily basis— when we ask a digital assistant to check the weather forecast for us, for example, or use a chatbot to interact with a website.

This trend is only going to increase. Expect to see an ever-greater number of voice-enabled smart devices working across an ever-broader range of languages. The Internet of Things, powered by voice recognition and NMT, is going to make talking to our gadgets, apps and appliances an even more integral part of daily life for users in more and more languages.

Prediction #2

But NMT is not about to make the human translator extinct; the role of the translator will, however, continue to evolve.

“It is too early to say that the translator is becoming extinct. Their role has already changed and will continue to change, but language specialists will always be required.”

It is too early to say that the translator is becoming extinct. Their role has already changed and will continue to change, but language specialists will always be required.

For “bulk” translation, where quality, tone and accuracy are not always the most important features, you’ll see a market that is even more dominated by NMT with AI-driven post-editing.

But, at the other end of the spectrum, you’ll continue to see translators develop as subject-matter experts (SMEs) or brand experts in a more evolved sense. So rather than translators who are only experts in one domain, we will see translators, or transcreators, working in closer collaboration with writers and businesses to emulate the original message in slogans and campaigns as closely as possible.

It’s also important to understand that improvements in the quality of machine translation can also present their own problems. For example, because the grammar and flow of machine-translated content may be high, it can be hard to discern whether something has been missed out or the meaning has been significantly altered. Even with developments in NMT, post-editing of machine translation by human editors will continue to be vital in ensuring quality in many types of projects.

Prediction #3

Translation tools will make it easier to track the quality of NMT – and know where human input is required.

“Technology platforms won’t just be about delivering content at scale, but also content that is more directly personalized to individual customers and markets.”

While NMT plug-ins are integrated into many industry-standard translation platforms, at the moment not many provide much insight into the quality of the machine-translated output. But this is already changing and will continue to do so.

Some NMT providers now push confidence scores about the quality of the machine translation output back into the translation environment. If the score is 95%, the translator knows that they won’t need to spend much time post-editing the segment. If the score is 75%, they know they will need to spend a little longer. But they still do not know which part of the segment they need to focus on.

MT will have taken a huge leap when translators are no longer able to differentiate a fuzzy match (a source segment that is similar to a segment that has been translated before, which benefits from a scored translation memory suggestion as well as an indication of which parts of the suggestion need to be edited) from an MT segment (in which no hints are provided). The translator will be given an accurate quality score and will know which parts of the segment they need to concentrate on when post-editing.

Prediction #4

We're moving from a translation-based approach to a language-based approach – and technology platforms will evolve accordingly.

150
billion

*Average number of words
translated by Google
Translate per day*

source: Venturebeat

Although traditional translation management systems are not going to disappear any time soon, there will continue to be a paradigm shift in the way we use technology in the language industry driven by globalization, digitalization and personalization across multiple markets and channels.

Perhaps we need to broaden our scope and think in terms of language rather than translation or even transcreation.

Of course, there are many content management systems or digital asset management systems on the market for managing brand communications across multiple markets. But I have not come across many platforms that make it possible to create content in several languages within the same project.

The approach to language and content is becoming much more market-specific and of course customer-specific too. So we are no longer talking about source and target languages here, but of several source languages, each following specific brand guidelines.

In October 2020, Adobe entered into a strategic collaboration with Skyword which is aimed at powering "intelligent content experiences for the world's leading brands". We're going to see more of these kind of collaborations based on the quality of content and its relevance to specific audiences. Platforms won't just be about delivering content at scale, but also content that is more directly personalized to individual customers and markets.

“What we want is a machine that can learn from experience... [and the] ...possibility of letting the machine alter its own instructions provides the mechanism for this.”

Alan Turing, London, 1947

Size of machine
translation market

**US\$650
million**

2020

**US\$3
billion**

2027 (predicted)

Source: Global Market Insights

Further reading: ↓

- [Multilingual NLP challenges in 2021](#) - Alpha
- [The big translation technology debate](#) – Alpha
- [Seven Machine Translation Trends in 2020](#) – Maxim Khalilov, Taus
- [The Great AI Awakening](#) – New York Times Magazine

What do you think?

We're really interested to hear your thoughts on the future of machine translation and how it will impact the language industry.

If you have any comments on the predictions made here or ideas you'd like to share, please email Guylaine at gtriton@alphacrc.com.

Humans *and* machines, not humans vs. machines

Four predictions on the future of human translation from Alpha's founder, **Isabelle Weiss**



In this chapter, discover:

- The alternative terms emerging to describe the role of “translator”
- Whether the language industry will need only specialist linguists in the future
- Why AI won't threaten the role of adaptable linguists
- The kinds of source texts machines will always struggle to translate



Isabelle Weiss, Founder, Alpha CRC

Isabelle, from Zug in Switzerland, has 50 years of professional experience translating/reviewing/post-editing from English and French into German (DE_DE and DE_CH) and from DE and FR into EN (amounting to some 30 million translated words). She was chief examiner and chief moderator for the Institute of Linguists' DipTrans for a number of years.

56,920

Number of translators and interpreters employed in the US in 2020

Source: Statista

Introduction

In our globalized world, the translated word has never been in such demand with an ever-greater volume of content required across an ever-more diverse range of languages. But, with the increased quality and availability of machine translation year on year, what role is there for the human translator in today's connected world?

Alpha's founder **Isabelle Weiss** makes her predictions on how the role of the human translator will evolve and why it still has a crucial part to play in ensuring the written word has maximum impact for all types of audiences.

- **Prediction #1:** *The evolution of "translators" into "linguists" and "language experts" will continue.*
- **Prediction #2:** *The language industry will need both generalist and specialist linguists.*
- **Prediction #3:** *AI and machine translation won't threaten the careers of agile, motivated linguists.*
- **Prediction #4:** *Human expertise and insight will remain crucial to the language industry.*



Prediction #1

The evolution of “translators” into “linguists” and “language experts” will continue.

“A translator is no longer ‘just’ taking a source text and converting it into an equivalent target. Instead, there are many new tasks and responsibilities. The word ‘linguist’ is more fluid, more of a generic term, in that respect.”

When you type “translator” into Google you get a multitude of hits for electronic translators: online, in the cloud, on your mobile. Much of the time, therefore, the term is connected to a device, a software, a robot, rather than a human.

The term “translator” as a profession or a vocation has become somewhat devalued, and that is one reason why we at Alpha were looking for alternatives – such as language expert, language specialist, linguistic consultant, etc.

Another reason has to do with the widening scope of activities that “translators” are actually involved in. It is no longer “just” taking a source text and converting it into an equivalent target. Instead, there are many new tasks and responsibilities. The word “linguist” is more fluid, more of a generic term, in that respect.

These days, a linguist might be translating for half the day, reviewing somebody else’s output for two hours, and spending time post-editing machine output or testing an app on various devices. They could be thinking up slogans for a marketing campaign or researching whether particular images would be acceptable in their locale. All perfectly respectable tasks, but not what one would automatically connect with translation.

The change from “translator” to “linguist” or “language specialist” is intended to capture this more varied set of skills and responsibilities and to open up a more agile and versatile approach.

At the same time, it is intended to bring the translators out of the shadows somewhat, out of their inward-looking, anonymous existence, exposing them more to direct contact with clients and more interaction with the world.

Prediction #2

The language industry will need both generalist and specialist linguists.

US\$46.21
billion

*Estimated value of the
translation services market
by 2027*

Source: Verified Market Research

There has been some talk that the future for linguists will be about specialising in certain subject matter areas and that the days of the “generalist” linguist are numbered.

In fact, both specialists and generalists will continue to be needed. More than being defined as a specialist or a generalist, what’s most important are the qualities of agility and curiosity, and the good sense to know when to ask questions (and, likewise, when to just get on with it).

Three of the most valuable assets (apart from excellent language skills) for linguists are curiosity, common sense and empathy.

Curiosity helps to get into new fields and absorb useful bits and pieces quickly. Common sense is great for spotting obvious errors and contradictions. And it also helps to insert those wonderful “connectors” between sentences that guide the reader and highlight the thread of the argument (as opposed to translating rigidly, sentence by sentence, with no logic).

Empathy is needed firstly to understand what the author of a text wants to convey, and secondly to put yourself in the shoes of the audience. These three attributes are what a machine lacks.

Let’s also be clear: it is very rare to find true subject-matter specialists who are translators. If someone has studied for seven years to become a vet, they are not going to earn their living as a translator, are they? Similarly, if you’re an investment wizard, why would you want to go into translation?

Translators have always had to be “chameleons”. They can change their coat quickly as and when needed, get into a new subject area, read up about it, learn the vocabulary. That’s supposed to be part of their mental equipment.

Prediction #3

AI and machine translation won't threaten the careers of agile, motivated linguists.

“More than being defined as a specialist or a generalist translator, what’s most important are the qualities of agility and curiosity, and the good sense to know when to ask questions.”

While NMT plug-ins are integrated into many industry-standard translation platforms, at the moment I don't think AI and machine translation are a threat to good linguists.

However, they are perhaps a threat to those who chose the profession for the wrong reasons, because they couldn't think of anything else to do, or who stumbled into it by accident. Or indeed those who were initially motivated and competent, but over time lost their interest and their verve and are simply carrying on in a lacklustre sort of way. These people might find it hard and frustrating to “battle against the machine”.

Those who really love their profession and want to stick with it, as long as they are agile, will continue to be in demand and find work, inasmuch as there will always be a subset of clients who do care about quality and the human touch, which is needed in expressive texts that provide more than plain information.

So if you have “what it takes” – the three attributes of curiosity, common sense and empathy – plus the versatility to get to grips with evolving technologies and get involved with linguistic and cultural tasks that go beyond translation, you can survive.

It is also worth remembering that the advance of AI does not focus on translation. There are many other professions that are being targeted: solicitors, shop assistants, even doctors, or film actors, and artists even (example: computers designing clothes, creating poetry, etc).

Prediction #4

Human expertise and insight will remain crucial to the language industry.

“Machines still lack many of the qualities that are required to ensure a translation is ‘just right’, with the appropriate tone and style. This is particularly true of anything that needs to appeal to the emotional side of people, win them over, hold their attention.”

As already mentioned in the previous prediction, machines still lack many of the qualities that are required to ensure a translation is “just right”, with the appropriate tone and style. This is particularly true of anything that needs to appeal to people’s emotions and win them over or hold their attention, etc, rather than simply conveying bland, straightforward information.

But the need for human translators goes beyond their translation skills. It also involves decision-making, consultancy and research. (And this takes us back to the first topic, and why “language experts” or “language specialists are more suitable titles in the 21st century”.)

Don’t forget that the MT engines need to be trained. Right at this moment, the famous Alexa and Siri are trying to learn new languages – minority languages like Irish or Swiss German. So hundreds of people are training them, while others are constantly improving machine output by correcting auto-generated sentences.

Another area where I see an ongoing (even increasing) need for human linguistic activity is the emergence of poorly written source materials. These rely heavily on the ingenuity and the good will of the human translator.

By contrast, the machine will simply take what is thrown at it; it does not have the understanding to question the material or go beyond what is written on the page. So badly written source is one guarantor for the continued need for human translators/transcreators/geniuses – however we may describe them in the future.

(continued)

Prediction #4 (continued)

Human expertise and insight will remain crucial to the language industry.

“Translation is not a matter of words only: it is a matter of making intelligible a whole culture.”

Anthony Burgess

The reasons for badly written source materials are manifold: often lack of time by the authors, but mostly authors who are writing in their second or third language rather than their mother tongue. It also includes people who are asked to produce presentations or white papers without having had practice or instruction on how to formulate them in a clear, concise manner. This can leave a lot to the translator’s imagination and imposes an extra workload on them.

Badly written source materials (sadly) won’t disappear. So the need for skilled linguists to make sense of them won’t vanish either.

Further reading: ↓

- [50 years in translation – blog by Isabelle Weiss](#)
- [Translation factories – today and back in the 19th century – blog by Isabelle Weiss](#)
- [Human translators are still on top – for now – Technology Review](#)
- [The languages that defy auto-translate - BBC](#)

What do you think?

We’d love to hear what you think about the future of human translation and how it will evolve within the language industry.

If you have any comments on the predictions made here or ideas you’d like to share, please email Isabelle at [**iweiss@alphacrc.com**](mailto:iweiss@alphacrc.com).

Does AI pose a threat to creative copywriting?

4 predictions for the future of marketing and creative content, by **Paul Mangell**



In this chapter, discover:

- How AI content engines are evolving to respond to large-scale content requirements
- What advantages the human copywriter still has over AI content engines
- How online writing tools can help ensure brand consistency
- How copywriters add value to the content creation process



Paul Mangell, CMO

Paul is currently Alpha CRC's CMO and enjoys working with a wide range of colleagues and collaborators globally. Having lived in several countries, and travelled to quite a few more, he really has seen language at work in the everyday. Culture and language, he says, "define much of our human experience, and working in languages and cultures daily is of more or less never-ending interest".

59%

Of web users would avoid buying from a company which makes obvious spelling or grammar errors

Source: Real Business

Introduction

As with almost every other human endeavour, AI and machine learning are likely to have an increasingly disruptive impact on the fields of creative content and copywriting in the years to come.

But will our blogs be written by bots? Can technology displace the copywriter from their role in bringing brands to life for audiences around the world?

In this fourth chapter, CMO **Paul Mangell** makes some bold predictions about this rapidly evolving field.

- **Prediction #1:** *The rise of AI-generated creative content won't make the (versatile) copywriter redundant.*
- **Prediction #2:** *AI-content generation will continue to expand in "industrial-scale" copywriting.*
- **Prediction #3:** *Creative content will increasingly make use of sophisticated online writing tools.*
- **Prediction #4:** *Content creators/copywriters will need to demonstrate "added value".*

Prediction #1

The rise of AI-generated creative content won't make the (versatile) copywriter redundant

“Copywriters will still be in demand by brands who want to connect with their audiences to recreate the cadences and rhythms of spoken language – particularly in the ever-evolving idioms and slang of youth culture.”

AI-produced professional writing is already here. Among other news outlets, *The Washington Post* is reported to use AI to write some of its basic news stories.

Stories about how AI-powered computers have written a Harry-Potter style adventure or a Kerouac-inspired road trip story pop up with regularity these days. Leaving aside an assessment of these artistic endeavours for the moment, does this mean AI is slowly but surely going to take over the role of the copywriter in delivering creative content to global brands at greater speed and for a fraction of the cost?

The short answer is no, for the same reasons that humans are still crucial to the translation process as discussed earlier in this series by Isabelle Weiss.

Understanding context, having a sense of empathy with your audience (and expressing it through the written word), applying both curiosity and common sense to a project, and “reading between the lines” to interpret a brief are all qualities that an AI-content creation “engine” is highly unlikely to match in the near future.

Can an AI-powered engine produce a grammatically correct paragraph on a subject using a suitable range of vocabulary in – let’s say – an informal tone of voice? Absolutely.

But can it interpret a client brief and get inside the minds of a target audience to create content that engages through humour, cultural references or the connection of seemingly disparate ideas? Absolutely not.

Copywriters may need to adapt their skills for the future, but good ones will always be in demand.

Prediction #2

AI-content generation will continue to expand in “industrial-scale” copywriting.

“Where AI-powered copywriting will play an increasingly important role is in creating large-scale content based on big-data analysis which can be easily adapted for different target audiences.”

Many companies are already using AI to create and manipulate content. For example, with the advent of big data and highly personalized digital channels, AI-driven content creation engines can generate millions of highly targeted ads which modify the same core format and key messages.

Where AI-powered copywriting will play an increasingly important role is in creating large-scale content based on big-data analysis which can be easily adapted for different target audiences.

So, for example, there will be a growth of services such as those offered by Phrasee. This company uses AI to generate highly effective subject lines based on the analysis of large pools of user behaviour data.

Prediction #3

Creative content will increasingly make use of sophisticated online writing tools

“Technology will increasingly play a role in making the creative process more consistent and ‘on brand’ through online writing tools.”

As discussed above, AI content engines aren't about to take over the role of the copywriter for most aspects of content creation.

But technology will increasingly play a role in making the creative process more consistent and “on brand” through online writing tools. (NB: here we need to distinguish between “online writing tools”, which help improve the quality of written content, and “content authoring tools”, which are geared towards helping educators create lesson materials or learning content).

Many content creators already make use of online writing tools such as Hemingway Editor and Grammarly, which go beyond catching glaring errors and provide advice on issues such as style and readability.

With the ability to analyze large bodies of different styles of content, online writing tools powered by machine learning will increasingly be able to assess content on its adherence to a particular tone of voice. Writing tools such as SEO Writing Assistant already analyse the consistency of tone of voice on a sliding scale from casual to formal.

Expect this type of tone-of-voice assessment to become ever more sophisticated, with engines trained in assessing content according to highly nuanced brand-specific tones of voice. Your online writing tool could advise if your content is sufficiently “considerate yet bold”, “friendly and down-to-earth” or “strong and assertive”, for example.

At the moment, the majority of development in this area is being carried out for writing tools in English. But we'll also start to see tools able to deliver the same type of analysis in a growing number of other languages – obviously, the most widely used ones (such as Spanish or Chinese) will come first.

Prediction #4

Content creators/copywriters will need to demonstrate “added value”.

Our first three predictions have outlined how technology will have a growing influence on the way we create content, but certainly won't dispel the need for human writing expertise. The question is, as mentioned in our first prediction, how will copywriters (and other content creators) need to adapt to this changing environment?

The simple answer to this is that they will need to demonstrate the “added value” and insight that machines can't yet provide (and may never do, depending on whom you talk to).

So, while a machine might find it relatively easy to mimic the formal structures of language required for technical manuals or financial updates, for example, copywriters will still be in demand by brands who want to connect with their audiences to recreate the cadences and rhythms of spoken language – particularly in the ever-evolving idioms and slang of youth culture.

It's also worth bearing in mind the acronym EAT, which stands for expertise, authoritativeness and trustworthiness; this is at the core of the guidelines by which Google assesses the value of content (and, as a result, its ranking).

Clearly, Google has a highly sophisticated set of algorithms with which to evaluate EAT, including backlinks to authoritative sites, the use of keywords, the amount of time users spend on particular pages and the amount of shares it generates.

However, we will continue to rely on humans to develop ideas, strategies and tactics for content that demonstrates the values of EAT.

(continued)

Prediction #4 (continued)

Content creators/copywriters will need to demonstrate “added value”.

45%

Approximate percentage of internet users age 16-64 who use social media to conduct brand research

Source: Smartblogger

There are an increasing number of technology tools which can help us with this. For example, BuzzSumo helps content authors with research by creating a summary of the most-shared material on a particular keyword topic. InLinks, meanwhile, constructs a knowledge graph of competitor content to help you create effective new content or optimize existing pages.

But while such SEO content creation tools will become progressively more sophisticated, they will still require humans to use their own insights and deliver upon them. The most engaging content often relies on original research, insightful analysis or providing a point of view that moves beyond reliable-yet-predictable conclusions into new areas of interconnected meanings.

Although technology will increasingly play its part, it's the humans who will continue to provide the added value that can't (yet) be gleaned from even the most sophisticated machine.

49%

of consumers make an impulse purchase after receiving a personalized recommendation from a brand.

Source: GlobalNewsWire

Further reading: ↓

- [Why artificial intelligence is being used to write adverts](https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-56888888) – [bbc.co.uk](https://www.bbc.com)
- [AI and the future of copywriting](https://clearb2b.com) – [clearb2b](https://clearb2b.com)

What do you think?

We'd like to get your insight on the future of creative content and the ways in which technology will play a part in this sector.

If you have any comments on the predictions made here or ideas you'd like to share, please email Paul at pmangell@alphacrc.com.

How audiovisual content is going multilingual

4 predictions for the future of multilingual audiovisual content by **Aimee Gallagher**



In this chapter, discover:

- Why AI will help to power the exponential growth of the Internet of Things
- Why human linguists will still remain essential to high-quality localized audiovisual content
- Why diversity of accents is increasingly important to audiovisual content
- Why crowd-sourced translation will increase for audiovisual content



Aimee Gallagher, Marketing Specialist, Alpha CRC

Aimee began at Alpha CRC in October 2020 as an LQA tester for Games, and now works full-time as a marketing and language specialist. Having trained in translation and interpreting, she has a great passion for the industry, and thrives working in a culturally diverse environment.

64%

of customers buy a product or service after watching branded social videos.

Source: TubularInsights

Introduction

It's sometimes easy to forget how much localized audiovisual (AV) content we're already consuming. Take the following agenda for a night's entertainment as just a small reminder.

Before leaving work, you check how to make your favourite YouTube chef's signature dish. You're at the supermarket and you ask Siri how many grams of pasta you'll need to cook for your five guests tonight. You get in the car and ask the satnav to tell you how to beat the traffic on the way home.

While you're cooking up a feast, you liaise with Alexa to curate a suitable playlist for the evening ahead (no tunes from that workout list please!). And finally, when the dishwasher is loaded, you switch on Netflix to enjoy your favourite foreign-language series – dubbed or subtitled expertly into your own native tongue.

As the volume of AV content we consume on a daily basis increases, so does the number of languages it needs to be localized for. But what does that mean for the future of multilingual AV content?

Alpha's marketing specialist **Aimee Gallagher** shares her predictions for the future of localisation in multilingual AV.

- **Prediction #1:** *AI and machine translation will help to meet the huge growing demand for localized AV content.*
- **Prediction #2:** *High-quality language experts will still be essential to deliver expertly localized multilingual AV content.*
- **Prediction #3:** *The diversification of accents in multilingual audio content will become increasingly important.*
- **Prediction #4:** *Crowd-sourced translation of multilingual AV content will increase.*



Prediction #1

AI and machine translation will help to meet the huge growing demand for localized AV content.

“AI-powered machine translation and speech recognition platforms are already powering the live subtitles we see on user-generated streaming channels such as YouTube or on rolling news coverage.”

Clearly, much of the developed world already lives in a hyper-connected world of Internet-of-Things (IoT) devices, search engines and AV content which is increasingly personalized according to our preferences, habits, locations and everyday experiences.

The result is that the demand for localized AV content is expanding exponentially in response to the rapidly rising demand for smart devices, live translated content and high-quality streamed content.

Of course, AI-powered machine translation and speech recognition platforms are already powering the live subtitles we see on user-generated streaming channels such as YouTube or on rolling news coverage. Expect this to increase in levels of speed, accuracy and the range of languages covered, making more content more accessible to more people at a greater level of quality.

Prediction #2

High-quality language experts will still be essential to deliver expertly localized multilingual AV content.

“DeepMind is working on a project for large-scale multilingual audio dubbing to make educational materials available for a wider audience, using lip sync technology as well as machine translation.”

Source: Slator

We might forgive Alexa if it occasionally misinterprets our musical tastes or if the subtitles for your favourite sports commentators are a little clunky from time to time. Live interpretation and/or translation “on the fly” is almost impossible to get 100% right all the time.

But when we come to the brands and content we value most, we want our linguistic experience to match our expectations of quality associated with them.

As we’ve discussed across this series of predictions, machine translation is not yet fully equipped to produce consistently high standards for translating many of the more subtle linguistic features particularly in more creative texts, such as idiomatic language, wordplay, cultural references and humour.

So, even while machine translation can deliver increasingly accurate translations in a wider variety of languages than ever before, brands and producers of creative content will still rely on language experts to deliver the highest quality of AV experience for local audiences.

Prediction #3

The diversification of accents in multilingual audio content will become increasingly important.

“An increasing diversity of voice talents using a variety of accents helps to reflect values of diversity and authenticity in branded content.”

As both the volume and variety of localized audio continues to increase, we are going to see a rise in the demand for a variety of accents and dialects used to create or recreate content for local audiences.

This continues a trend in which standardized pronunciation – the Queen’s English, as they call it in the UK – is no longer the “go-to” accent for voiced audio content. So, for UK audiences for example, we will continue to see an increasing diversity of voice talent with accents from across the nation which helps to reflect values of diversity and authenticity in branded content

In many other markets, expect to see this trend for a more diverse use of accents and dialects continue in multilingual AV content.

Prediction #4

Crowd-sourced translation of multilingual AV content will increase.

“From streaming platforms to the ever-expanding proliferation of user-generated channels, we expect the exponential increase in AV content to continue.”

From streaming platforms to the ever-expanding proliferation of user-generated channels, we expect the exponential increase in AV content to continue. Of course, with this ever-expanding volume of content, not everything can be professionally localized – even with the aid of machine translation and automated processes.

That’s why, in the games sector for example, we’ve already witnessed a steady rise in the number of titles which are unofficially translated by fans for users, often in more minority languages. This is a trend we can expect to see more of across all types of multilingual AV content.

And, as in any kind of creative endeavour, when the demands of meeting commercial expectations are removed, new innovations often arise.

Of course, we don’t know what these are yet, but where language, technology and creativity combine, it’s always interesting to see what happens next.

In 2020, UK viewers spent an average of nearly

6 hours per day

watching audiovisual content.

Source: Statista

Further reading: ↓

- [The ultimate guide to voice-over localization](#) – Alpha CRC
- [Five key trends for localizing audiovisual content in 2021](#) – Alpha CRC
- [How to localize audiovisual content in 10 steps](#) – Alpha CRC
- [4 major advances in audiovisual technology in 2021](#) – High Fidelity
- [Content trends: preferences emerge along generational lines](#) - HubSpot

What do you think?

It's always interesting to get new insights, so we'd love your feedback or comments on what you think is the future for multilingual audiovisual content.

If you'd like to share any ideas with the team, please email Aimee at [**agallagher@alphacrc.com**](mailto:agallagher@alphacrc.com).

What next for the multilingual gaming industry?

4 predictions for the future of multilingual gaming by **Dan Martindale**



In this chapter, discover:

- How mobile gaming is bringing a wider variety of gamers to the table
- The impact cybersecurity threats are having on the industry
- Where new emerging markets are growing in the industry
- Why games localization is becoming an increasingly competitive market



Dan Martindale

Dan Martindale is the Business Development Manager for Alpha Games. He's responsible for developing and building strategic relationships and partnerships with publishers and developers around the world. Dan has been at Alpha for two years having previously been a QA Manager and game developer and designer for over eight years.

\$1.6 billion

Predicted revenue for cloud-gaming in 2021 – more than double the total in 2020.

Source: Newzoo

Introduction

Online, on consoles or on mobile devices, more than 2.5 billion people worldwide regularly play games of every genre and format. And in a global industry that is forecast to be worth more than \$250 billion by 2025, providing high-quality localized content for different markets is crucial to the success of many of the world's biggest and best-loved titles.

To get an insight into how the multilingual gaming industry will develop and what it means for games localization and the providers of these services, **Dan Martindale** makes four predictions for how the sector will evolve over the next few years.

- **Prediction #1:** *The continued rise of mobile gaming will attract an increasingly wider demographic to the industry.*
- **Prediction #2:** *More games development will be concentrated in house to combat the increased threat of cybersecurity threats.*
- **Prediction #3:** *Localization will remain a key part of the development process and release plans for any major title and studio.*
- **Prediction #4:** *Competition in the games localization services market is set to intensify yet further.*



Prediction #1

The continued rise of mobile gaming will attract an increasingly wider demographic to the industry.

“The current top titles in the world are trending towards a more ‘pick-up-and-go’ style design, as opposed to the ‘grind-for-skill’ legacy design.”

Mobile gaming has come a long way in the last five years with developers focusing more on hyper-casual games and “drop-and-shop” style titles which are bringing in a wider demographic of people to the games industry.

With more people in the world having a smartphone than a PC/console, the market-scope for mobile gaming is significantly larger. The current top titles in the world are trending towards a more “pick-up-and-go” style design, as opposed to the “grind-for-skill” legacy design. That means more and more people feel comfortable picking up a game and playing wherever they are, and picking up from where they left off without feeling “behind the curve”.

I don’t think phones will deviate from their current design to accommodate games more than they currently do as these have never proven successful in the past (for example, the Nokia N-Gage, PSP). Rather, phone manufacturers will continue to innovate their software and screen clarity to allow games to make use of their design.

Prediction #2

More games development will be concentrated in house to combat the increased threat of cybersecurity threats.

“Games companies will be more inclined to consolidate their work behind firewalls they trust. Remote working allows too many uncontrolled vectors for attack that are outside the scope of a company’s reach to protect.”

I strongly suspect that a large amount of games development will continue to take place in house, with less and less being remotely (with the exception of localization and linguistic quality assurance).

Internet security is under more scrutiny than ever before, with almost weekly news articles detailing high-profile companies around the world covering every industry sector being both targets and victims of sophisticated cybersecurity attacks and ransomware.

This means games companies will be more inclined to consolidate their work behind firewalls they trust. Remote working allows too many uncontrolled vectors for attack that are outside the scope of a company’s reach to protect. The race for the next big title on the current trending genre is too tight for studios to allow any risk to their IPs.

Prediction #3

Localization will remain a key part of the development process and release plans for any major title and large studio.

>30%

*of the world's population
play some kind of video
game*

Source: Forbes

Increasingly, developers are marketing their titles to a bigger range of emerging markets for the sector, as devices like mobiles are becoming more accessible, and easier to incorporate into daily life for many people. Countries like Vietnam, Thailand, Brazil and India are already dominating top titles like PUBG and Wild Rift. This growth in newer, emerging markets will only continue.

Prediction #4

Competition in the games localization services market is set to intensify yet further.

“China, Japan and South Korea are the first, third and fourth largest gaming markets worldwide respectively.”

Source: Newzoo

Games localization has become significantly more competitive in the last five years than it ever has before, with a number of key acquisitions in the industry taking place recently.

The competitive nature of this space is set to grow more and more with localization service providers innovating to accommodate the growing demand for games.

Those that want to compete in this sector will need to demonstrate an array of services that can be scaled up at speed. They also need to be competitive on price and agile in adapting to the fast pace of content development for projects with ever-shorter turnarounds.

Further reading: ↓

- [Game, set and localize: when fans do the work for you](#) – Alpha CRC
- [Rainbow warriors: the \(slow\) emergence of LGBT+ characters in the gaming industry](#) – Alpha CRC
- [The perfect fit: how brands can leverage consumer insights and partnerships to reach gamers](#) – newzoo

What do you think?

It's always interesting to get new insights, so we'd love your feedback or comments on what you think is the future for multilingual audiovisual content.

If you'd like to share any ideas with the team, please email Dan at dmartindale@alphacrc.com.

Creativity and localization

Four predictions on the future of localized creative strategies by **David Standley**



In this chapter, discover:

- How great storytelling and design remain crucial to creating emotional connections
- Why the power of hyper-personalization relies on localized content strategies
- How technology is empowered by human creative talent (rather than replacing it)
- How new models for creative localization are replacing the “hub-and-spoke” paradigm



David Standley, Head of Content and Creative, Alpha CRC

As recently appointed, Head of Content and Creative, David has been tasked with the challenge of building the creative division of Alpha CRC. His career spans over nearly thirty years in the creative industry. He specializes in the challenge of making the customers' path to purchase more compelling, engaging and emotional. His passion lies at the intersection of tech, data, strategy, insights and the creativity that pushes behaviour change by shifting customers' perspectives.

75%

want to buy products in their native language

Source: Shopify

Introduction

Digital transformation has exponentially increased the number of touchpoints in which brands interact with consumers. This has come hand in hand with the ability to create data-rich consumer profiles through which to predict behaviour and personalize content based on a huge array of metrics.

But, does hyper-personalization guarantee the responsive connection that drives behavioural change and ensures the all-important call-to-action hits home?

In this series of predictions on creative localization, Alpha's Head of Content & Creative argues that the power of personalization absolutely relies on human creativity to establish the emotional bonds that underpin consumer choices. And, for maximum engagement, content strategies need to place localization at the very centre of creative process rather than as an optional "add-on".

- **Prediction# 1** – *Creativity and experience are the only points of meaningful differentiation in brands. Technology alone will not remove all the barriers to a great customer experience.*
- **Prediction# 2** – *Global brands will need to balance economies of scale with greater empathy and intimacy with the customer: welcome to hyper-personalization.*
- **Prediction# 3** – *Human, all too human. It's swings and roundabouts but creativity that leverages emotion remains consistently unchallenged in its power to attract.*
- **Prediction# 4** – *Creative media localization will continue to grow in importance rather than a simple reliance on centrally created global campaigns.*

Prediction #1

Creativity and experience are the only points of meaningful differentiation in brands.

“We must never underestimate the power of creativity to curate unique deeply emotional experiences.”

At the heart of every successful marketing and communications campaign should be a very clear strategy on how to remove unwanted friction and excessive noise from the customer experience (CX). This is not something new: we're all customers and we've all moaned about some aspect of a poor customer experience.

How many times have you visited a website and have repeatedly entered your email address? How many times have you received irrelevant and poorly targeted ads? Only recently has technology been successfully adapted to overcome certain frictions in CX, but it's creativity that enables the CXs to have meaning.

As brands are no longer built through advertising, but through experiences, technology is only the first step to making a customer experience less fragmented, less disconnected and more personal.

Yes, we need technology to optimize creativity with data and we need AI and automation to drive new engagement opportunities and growth at a global scale; but we must never underestimate the power of creativity to curate unique deeply emotional experiences. How personal we can make personalisation will now largely depend on how we tackle the last barrier to a great international CX – relevant and localized creative solutions.

Personalization works well when it's total. You'd never personalize a gift knowing only half a person's name. In fact, mining not-so-relevant data that may not balance regional perspectives is to a degree worthless. It begs the question that maybe injecting local mindsets into the creative process should start at the beginning of a marketing campaign's journey and not as an afterthought.

Prediction #2

Global brands will need to balance economies of scale with greater empathy and intimacy with the customer.

“As most brands aspire to reaching beyond their domestic market, it’s logical and cost effective to have localization at the core of the creative processes that support the brand and customer experience.”

After the initial frenzy of global reach powered by internet’s accessibility, proximity and relevance are the next logical steps to take in addressing the customer experience. It’s not all one directional. There are swings and roundabouts with marginal gains.

Global operational scale has often meant sacrificing customer intimacy, which is why brands are now beginning to tailor their marketing to individual locations and neighbourhoods, thus capitalizing on popular “near-me” searches. However logical the next step is, brands will find it difficult to strike a balance between economies of scale and being able to connect with local communities. Without taking into account the entire buyer persona (including age, language, goals) and the local zeitgeist that forms their backdrop, the brand and customer experience may never reach its full global potential.

As a layer of personalization, effective localization does pay dividends. But the creative processes many marketing and advertising agencies currently adopt, rely heavily on the translation model – idea first, then execute in one country and translate into five languages. The “writing your name on a coffee cup” type of CX initiative seems to be a global hit but there’ll be some areas where it inevitably backfires – take an Indian lady in the US who received her coffee with “Hippo” written on it (anecdotal, yes, but when magnified it becomes a threat).

In the next few years, marketing teams and agencies will remodel themselves to engage creatively at a granular local level. Some will benefit from multicultural and multilingual creative teams, others will develop creative huddles that provide easy access to local creative expertise; either way the strategies for a successful international customer experience will have built-in creative localization at their core.

Prediction #3

The diversification of accents in multilingual audio content will become increasingly important.

“Technology can expedite its delivery and data can optimize our targeting but only great storytelling, rich metaphors and insights into the emotional brain, will make us click and consume content.”

Back in 1994, Wired magazine published the world’s first banner ads. At that time, these ads had a click-through rate of 44%. Almost half of the people who saw them, clicked them. Fast forward to the present day and Google’s ad network estimates an average click-through rate of 0.46%. Our attention is waning and engagement is decreasing.

If attention is really our scarcest resource as many claim, then distraction is its nemesis. Ads and content that jump out and touch your soul, inspire you to act, need deep emotional connections. Fear-of-missing-out is often leveraged in “tribal” social media to almost force engagement. It’s an irrational type of fear but many emotions are. Immersive content still works but there’s an art in how its produced. Technology can expedite its delivery and data can optimize our targeting but only great storytelling, rich metaphors and insights into the emotional brain, will make us click and consume content.

With 27 defined emotions, it’s easy to understand that they can be expressed in an infinite number of ways. Rationalizing too much with data will lead to campaign content that may not appeal enough to the irrational mind. Excessive information in campaigns will drive conclusions and analysis, but it won’t trigger engagement.

Like most cyclical trends – local to global to local again – we must understand that with an oversaturation of content creators, there’s only one way forward. Trained, experienced copywriters, and seasoned creative directors and designers don’t come cheaply but the premium is worth paying if you want to disrupt the current trend of disengagement.

Prediction #4

It's swings and roundabouts but creativity that leverages emotion remains consistently unchallenged in its power to attract.

“The strategies for a successful international customer experience will have built-in creative localization at their core.”

As a logical next step, Alpha's newly founded creative division has been set up to create effective localization communications, where localization objectives are included in campaign strategies from the very beginning.

When it comes to expanding brands internationally, nine out of ten times the translated campaigns don't perform as well as the ones that were created for the original market. We've put creative media localization on the back burner for too long and our reliance on simple translations goes against the common-sense idea that relevant marketing content needs to be personalized right down to the exact place and context of a targeted audience.

Marketing teams and agencies will, in the immediate future, need to adjust their models if they want to make impressions outside of their domestic market. But, how?

- They'll need to create tools to understand the local landscape and show local audiences that the branded content they're marketing is relevant to the language, cultural identity and other various nuances that make that locale unique and special.
- They'll run split tests on an individual market to measure how much those extra costs and effort in effective creative localization are ultimately worth it.
- They'll need to leverage their partner network, initiating creative hubs with foreign affiliates and sharing ideation methodologies to encourage more local creative input.

(continued)

Prediction #4 (continued)

It's swings and roundabouts but creativity that leverages emotion remains consistently unchallenged in its power to attract.

"Removing friction is still fundamentally key to everything you do, but it's now more important to leverage new technologies and to build more creative experiences to differentiate yourselves in the market."

Alex Hamilton, head of innovation at Isobar

- They'll build teams of multilingual writers and adopt a multicultural perspective to hiring new talent.
- They'll use local marketing automation (LMA) systems to reduce the complexities of delivering content to a myriad of markets.

If they don't, they'll be prone to making unforgivable cringe-worthy mistakes... remember Pepsi's slogan "Pepsi Brings You Back to Life"? It was debuted in China as "Pepsi Brings You Back from the Grave". The global future demands a local perspective.

Further reading:

- **Ad creative localization: how local must you go?** – Medium
- **Americanized or localized: A qualitative study on Chinese advertising practitioners' perceptions of creativity and strategy in the digital age** – Sage Journals

What do you think?

It's always interesting to get new insights, so we'd love your feedback or comments on what you think is the future for multilingual audiovisual content.

If you'd like to share any ideas with the team, please email David at dstandley@alphacrc.com.

Integration as standard: the evolution of LQA and FQA

4 predictions for the future of LQA and FQA by **Paul Mangell**



In this chapter, discover:

- How automation will influence QA processes
- What AI and machine learning will bring to the development of FQA and LQA tools
- Why LQA will increasingly be able to measure impact and effectiveness
- Why the QA process is moving from iterative to the integrated models



Paul Mangell, CMO

Paul is currently Alpha CRC's CMO and enjoys working with a wide range of colleagues and collaborators globally. Having lived in several countries, and travelled to quite a few more, he really has seen language at work in the everyday. Culture and language, he says, "define much of our human experience, and working in languages and cultures daily is of more or less never-ending interest"

<25%

Of users return after the first day of using an app

Source: braze.com

Introduction

Quality assurance (QA) processes play an intrinsic role in enabling business to develop products and services that are market ready and deliver levels of experience that keep customers coming back.

In the language sector, linguistic quality assurance (LQA) and functional quality assurance (FQA) have developed as key elements in the total localization service offering.

But as with every other sector explored in this eBook, technology – in particular AI and machine learning – is having a disruptive impact on how these services are evolving. **Paul Mangell**, Alpha's CMO, explores some of the key trends.

- **Prediction #1:** *There will be a deeper integration between CAT and QA tools.*
- **Prediction #2:** *Automation will play an increasingly important role in LQA and FQA processes.*
- **Prediction #3:** *AI and machine learning will continue to influence the development of QA.*
- **Prediction #4:** *The scope of LQA will extend to include measures such as impact, engagement and effectiveness.*



Prediction #1

There will be a deeper integration between CAT and QA tools.

95%

The average amount of new users an app loses after 90 days

Source: andrewchen.com

The QA process can move up a step in the translation process. Why have QA only in post-translation when you can also have it in translation? This shift is possible by using API-enabled applications – which are in fact already standard practice for the majority of online computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools.

Prediction #2

Automation will play an increasingly important role in LQA and FQA processes.

“In a QA tool which has been pre-configured with granular settings it would be possible to ‘pre-correct’ certain errors in the translation before a human reviewer even starts working on the text.”

One of the main keys to progress is automation. Looking further ahead, there are also some other exciting ideas which could bring about truly innovative changes to the QA process. The first one is the idea of automated corrections.

Much in the same way that a text can be pre-translated in a CAT tool when a translation memory or a machine translation system is available, in a QA tool which has been pre-configured with granular settings it would be possible to “pre-correct” certain errors in the translation before a human reviewer even starts working on the text.

With a deeper integration scenario in a CAT tool, an error could be corrected in a live QA environment the moment a translator makes that error.

Prediction #3

AI and machine learning will continue to influence the development of QA.

“Imagine a QA tool that collects all the corrections a reviewer has made and all the false positives the reviewer has ignored and then it processes all that information and learns from it.”

This kind of advanced automation in LQA described in the prediction above could be taken even a step further, if we consider the principles of machine learning. Access to big data in the form of bilingual corpora which have been checked and confirmed by human reviewers makes the potential of this approach even more likely.

For example, imagine a QA tool that collects all the corrections a reviewer has made and all the false positives the reviewer has ignored and then it processes all that information and learns from it. Every new text processed and analyzed by machine learning algorithms make the tool more accurate in what it should and should not consider to be an error. The possibilities to create highly agile QA engines are very exciting.

Prediction #4

Human expertise and insight will remain crucial to the language industry.

“LQA processes will increasingly be able to measure criteria typically thought of as belonging to marketing departments, including scores for impact, engagement, effectiveness and cultural relevance.”

Traditionally, LQA has tended to reflexively measure the intrinsic qualities of translated text, such as adherence to source, errors and omissions, and spelling and punctuation.

Increasingly, we'll see that by (automatically) analyzing large volumes of customer usage and feedback data, LQA processes will be able to measure criteria typically thought of as belonging to marketing departments. This includes scores for impact, engagement, effectiveness and cultural relevance.

With the integration of the kind of technologies increasingly used in writing assistants, LQA can also measure the more fluid parameters such as tone, register and style.

When you add these kinds of functionality to the LQA process, what you'll see is a process that is much more integrated into the content creation model and builds in its own performance-enhancing measures. This will be very different to the current dominant model in which LQA takes place “post-creation/translation” as a series of iterative steps.

“Quality is not an act, it is a habit.”

Aristotle

Further reading:

- **Defining the LQA workflow and how to optimize it** – Alpha CRC
- **Creating an ideal QA process** – Alpha CRC
- **World Quality Report 20-21** - Capgemini

What do you think?

We'd love to hear what you think about the future of human translation and how it will evolve within the language industry.

If you have any comments on the predictions made here or ideas you'd like to share, please email Isabelle at [**pmangell@alphacrc.com**](mailto:pmangell@alphacrc.com).

Getting personal: how localized eCommerce will evolve

Four predictions on the future of eCommerce localization by **William Schwartz**



In this chapter, discover:

- Why highly personalized and localized content will shape the future of eCommerce
- How localization will play an important role in building customer trust and loyalty
- How the spread of mCommerce will be driven by augmented and virtual reality platforms
- The role localization will play in shaping this hybrid AR/VR mCommerce landscape



William Schwartz, Director Business North America, Alpha CRC

William has over 30 years of international business management experience in software, technology, supply chain, sales, and operations. William's expertise is in business management, development, strategic supply chain, account management, international operations and manufacturing. He has extensive experience in building, directing and leading high performance international strategic and tactical teams.

US\$6.388 trillion

Predicted value of retail eCommerce sales worldwide in 2024

Source: shopify.co.uk

Introduction

As eCommerce strategies evolve to incorporate emerging technologies and changing consumer behaviours, more and more global markets require agile multilingual solutions that create added value in highly competitive sectors. With mCommerce increasingly enabled by augmented and virtual reality platforms, localization will play an ever more important role in delivering personalized customer experiences.

- **Prediction #1:** *Personalized localization will be central to converging eCommerce technology trends.*
- **Prediction #2:** *Personalized localization will determine customer trust and loyalty in the new eCommerce environment.*
- **Prediction #3:** *Real-time personalized customer experiences will require a model for continuous localization.*
- **Prediction #4:** *The future is about personalized “micro content” – and the role of language/subject-matter experts will evolve accordingly.*



Prediction #1

Personalized localization will be central to eCommerce converging technology trends.

“The future of eCommerce will rely on localized content with extreme personalization and adaptation for the individual within a global ecosystem.”

Technology is always developing rapidly in the eCommerce sector and three key trends will converge over the next five to ten years. First, we will increasingly see currency moving from traditional banking to cryptocurrencies with an instant flow of value.

Secondly, we will witness the continued growth of IoT-enabled smart devices using mixed or augmented reality to interface with our physical world.

And thirdly, via our smart devices, we will increasingly experience personalized localization from brands and providers in our everyday environments. The way we interact with these brands will depend on a huge range of variables, including where we are and what we are doing at the time.

The future of eCommerce will therefore rely on localized content with extreme personalization and adaptation for the individual within a global ecosystem. The whole eCommerce platform will expand into the physical world with virtual and augmented interfaces – and localization is essential to this hybrid digital/real-world experience.

Prediction #2

Personalized localization will determine customer trust and loyalty in the new eCommerce environment.

“The whole eCommerce platform will expand into the physical world with virtual and augmented interfaces – and localization is essential to this hybrid digital/real-world experience.”

If you can pay for a product or a service at any time and in any location, customers need to trust who they are buying from. Because it delivers a better user experience, localization has a crucial role in developing this trust and establishing the brand loyalty that will keep customers coming back.

The key for this localization will be in the transaction itself, sometimes in the background but also up front, in how we communicate to initiate a point of sale. Transactions will increasingly require verbal permission—personalized experiences (who/where/what) and legally compliant processes (how) at each point of sale are integral to developing trust.

Prediction #3

Real-time personalized customer experiences will require a model for continuous localization.

“We’ll be living in a completely connected digital ecosystem in which brands that offer us highly personalized experiences in real time will have a huge competitive advantage.”

Mobile is already the dominant channel for eCommerce. But our definition of mobile commerce is set to expand, incorporating all smart and interactive devices which will be integrated (via augmented and virtual reality) into everything we see, touch and experience.

We’ll be living in a completely connected digital ecosystem in which brands that offer us highly personalized experiences in real time will have a huge competitive advantage.

Achieving this requires a model for continuous localization in which live data and real-time user feedback will inform how content is adapted very specifically for local audiences.

Prediction #4

The future is about personalized “micro content” – and the role of language/subject-matter experts will evolve accordingly.

“Technology will increasingly play a role in making the creative process more consistent and ‘on brand’ through online writing tools.”

The personalized user experience will require a huge array of “micro content” adapted according to an increasingly wide range of variables. To meet this challenge, it will be imperative for local language and subject-matter experts to “own” their content to ensure a value-added experience for consumers.

As content owners, language and subject-matter experts will need to interact with live data and real-time user feedback instantaneously to ensure the best customer experience. Localization will not be limited to language but also sub-groups interaction and adaptation within each market.

Creating truly localized experiences will become more challenging – but it will also offer huge opportunities to connect with eCommerce consumers on a personal level, build enduring relationships and, of course, drive growth.

45%

Predicted share of eCommerce sales from mobile by 2024

Source: Business Insider

“Market-specific customer care – e-business leaders must understand how customers want to interact with their brand for customer service. Customers’ reliance on different service channels vary by market, and well-localized websites will dedicate resources to channels relative to local preference.”

Lily Varon, digital business strategy analyst

Source: fastspring.com

Further reading:

- **Rise of M-Commerce: Mobile Ecommerce Shopping Stats & Trends in 2021** – Business Insider
- **Startup localization and the eCommerce hosting landscape** – Multilingual

What do you think?

We’d like to get your insight on the future of creative content and the ways in which technology will play a part in this sector.

If you have any comments on the predictions made here or ideas you’d like to share, please email Paul at wschwartz@thisisalpha.com.

Always connect: the future of internationalization

Four predictions on the future of internationalization by Chief Technology Officer, Jonathan Chan



In this chapter, discover:

- Why internationalization matters and how it is evolving
- How voice recognition and the Internet of Things are demanding new approaches to internationalization
- The growing importance of the API for the virtual device
- Why political instability is increasingly being considered an aspect of the internationalization process



Jonathan Chan, Chief Technology Officer, Alpha CRC

Over 25 years in the localization industry, Jonathan has purchased, configured and deployed almost every major localization globalization management system (GMS) on the market. Jonathan joined Alpha CRC in 1994 and, as Chief Technical Officer, he is part of a consultancy team which ensures customers are provided with the correct technology to integrate smoothly with their content management systems.

23%

of online business owners see cultural and linguistic issues as a barrier to global expansion

Source: Statista

Introduction

Globalization – reaching a certain level of market saturation across the world – can be approached in several ways. One of these incorporates internationalization, traditionally understood as adaptation of the product to many locales – often thought of as readying the software for any language; however, a locale is both a language and its territory.

The process of internationalization is changing. It is moving beyond the technical to the conceptual and indeed the predictive as the pace of change increases.

In the eighth part of What comes next?, Alpha's Chief Technology Officer **Jonathan Chan** gives us four predictions for the future of internationalization.

- **Prediction #1:** *As devices get smaller, language will continue to be removed from the UI.*
- **Prediction #2:** *The Internet of Things will continue to drive the shift towards voice recognition.*
- **Prediction #3:** *As we move into the age of the virtual device, the role of the API will become ever more critical.*
- **Prediction #4:** *Political internationalization will play a greater role than linguistic internationalization, as economies become less stable.*

Prediction #1

As devices get smaller, language will continue to be removed from the UI.

“Reducing locale differences extends the product’s reach into smaller markets. Minor languages die out, and cultural diversity is also eroded.”

Global products will continue the drive to homogenized language (e.g. International Spanish), but will also result in the removal of language from UI in favour of icons. These are internationally recognized and take up less screen space (in products where screens are still used). There is already an “internationalization” requirement for emojis and other globally recognizable, inoffensive icons.

Reducing locale differences extends the product’s reach into smaller markets. Minor languages die out, and cultural diversity is also eroded.

Prediction #2

The Internet of Things will continue to drive the shift towards voice recognition.

“The Internet of Things ensures we are interacting with many devices which are too small to employ traditional means of communication. Keyboards are being replaced by touchscreens, which are being replaced by voice control.”

The Internet of Things ensures we are interacting with many devices which are too small to employ traditional means of communication. Keyboards are being replaced by touchscreens, which are being replaced by voice control.

But there will be unforeseen consequences in this process. For example, Simplified Chinese is a written language which is broadly used in many regions, but spoken Mandarin is not as widely understood as this written form. Some Arabic and Cyrillic scripts can be commonly read by people who speak totally different languages – the switch to voice recognition brings with it challenges as text is removed from UI and suddenly the user-base is fragmented into more locales.

Perhaps the problem will be shifted elsewhere. For example, I might choose to have no UI at all, and provide an API which allows the user to purchase the voice recognition driver of the locale from a 3rd-party Cloud provider – at their own expense. The API becomes the software.

However, for reasons of privacy and security, the touchscreen is not about to be superseded by voice activation. Voice activation is not private, therefore touchscreen technology has a long life, although this may soon be complemented by heads-up gesture technology (virtual screens).

Prediction #3

As we move into the age of the virtual device, the role of the API will become ever more critical.

“Corporations must prepare their software so that critical business objects and static entities are externalized and can be quickly changed if the political climate demands.”

The lure of the personal device is almost archetypal. But soon we will expect a household to have multiple shared phablets and perhaps our unique personal device will not resemble the current mobile phone for much longer (some already think it is shaped like a wristwatch – others have no idea what a wristwatch is for).

Soon it may become a virtual device, a private cloud that contains apps as well as personal content – apps which can adapt to many types of physical device we use to connect. We will expect all devices to be complex and to connect and communicate with each other as soon as we bring them in range or step into a new network.

In practical terms for software developers, this means creating an API – a common connective language for every action performed by the product. The product must be its API and function “invisibly” or with any type of UI or communication device that connects to it. REST has been the dominant API for some time now, but as new communication features grow in importance – voice and face recognition, block-chain security – these API will need to be extended. Product designers must allow for their apps to run in several cloud variants.

Prediction #4

Political internationalization will play a greater role than linguistic internationalization, as economies become less stable.

50%

of the countries that appear among the top 10 list for app downloads are non-English speaking

Source: Martech Advisor

In order to do business in economies which are less stable than in the past, internationalization must consider the territorial exigencies of the locale, possibly even more than the linguistic differences.

For example, en-US is English spoken in the United States, while en-GB is spoken in the United Kingdom. En-EU (European Union) still exists in the sense that many Europeans use some English, but with the UK no longer part of the EU, all sorts of changes to tax and trading documentation have rendered many software products unprepared for internationalization.

Corporations must prepare their software so that critical business objects and static entities are externalized and can be quickly changed if the political climate demands. Otherwise, politics may prevent us from entering the territory of certain locales.

Buyers and users must increasingly ask themselves a series of important questions; for example, where is the data I am using stored? I may be sitting at home, but am I actually generating products in real-time in another country? Who owns my connection? Who controls the power supply on which my connection runs? Is that the kind of software I want? Do I have a choice?

Powerful cloud platforms are often located in countries where it is cheap and efficient to run always-on super computers – but it is increasingly evident that we need to understand the safety and security of these locations. This, of course, depends on politics. The EU, the US, China and Russia all have a different concept of where is “safe” to house data.

(continued)

Prediction #4 (continued)

Political internationalization will play a greater role than linguistic internationalization, as economies become less stable.

“Corporations must prepare their software so that critical business objects and static entities are externalized and can be quickly changed if the political climate demands.”

Globalization is moving beyond the traditional model of internationalization: it is no longer about understanding the technical impact of whether software can run in other languages but whether it is suitable for other locale territories.

Internationalization now includes consideration of geopolitical instabilities and the ways to foresee and manage change that provides security and continuity as well as technical functionality.

Further reading:

- **The 10 essential steps to localizing your ecommerce site** – Alpha CRC
- **Localization: the global pyramid capstone** – Multilingual
- **Challenging internationalization theory** – IMP Group
- **Internationalization in the information age** – Journal of International Business Studies

What do you think?

We're really interested to hear your thoughts on the future of machine translation and how it will impact the language industry.

If you have any comments on the predictions made here or ideas you'd like to share, please email Jonathan at jchan@thisisalpha.com.

More markets, more channels: how will enterprise localization keep pace?

Four predictions on enterprise localization by **Paul Mangell**



In this chapter, discover:

- Why localization is increasingly being incorporated into the product development stage
- How AI can improve the performance of digital platforms
- Why multilingual content creation is taking over from the “hub-and-spoke” model
- Why the connectivity of translation management systems and content management systems is crucial



Paul Mangell, CMO

Paul is currently Alpha CRC's CMO and enjoys working with a wide range of colleagues and collaborators globally. Having lived in several countries, and travelled to quite a few more, he really has seen language at work in the everyday. Culture and language, he says, “define much of our human experience, and working in languages and cultures daily is of more or less never-ending interest”

80%

Of marketing decision-makers in the US, Germany, France and the UK see content localization as crucial when entering new markets

Source: Shutterstock

Introduction

How will global enterprises meet the challenges of localizing at a greater scale and speed than ever before? What new technologies and ways of working will support them in creating “native brand experiences” in global markets?

These are questions many of the world’s biggest brands are asking themselves (and us) right now. So we’d like to share some thoughts on this fascinating topic.

Having worked extensively on localization strategies with some of the world’s biggest global enterprises, Alpha CRC’s CMO **Paul Mangell** makes some informed predictions on the new localization models that will increasingly emerge over the next three to five years and how they’ll support digital transformation and globalisation.

- **Prediction #1:** *Enterprise localization will be increasingly “built-in” at the start of the product lifecycle.*
- **Prediction #2:** *AI and NMT, backed up by strategy and data, will continue to develop and speed up enterprise localization.*
- **Prediction #3:** *Original marketing and brand content will increasingly be created in multiple languages, rather than adapted from a single source.*
- **Prediction #4:** *The limitations of “all-inclusive” enterprise localization platforms will be exposed and connecting the right tools for the right job will increasingly be seen as best practice.*

Prediction #1

Enterprise localization will be increasingly “built-in” at the start of the product lifecycle.

“Enterprises that work to build localization into the product development process will soon realise the benefits of it”

The days of localization as a “bolt-on” that happens after a product has been developed or marketing strategy has been created are likely to be numbered. That’s because the challenge of working on a truly global scale means localization needs to be integrated right from the start of the product lifecycle.

Some global companies – particularly in the IT and software sectors – are already doing this. But many multinationals are not there yet.

Localization models and technologies have evolved as a result of requirements to localize into a greater number of languages at a higher speed across a more diverse range of channels than ever before. The big tech companies, for example, are often localizing into 100+ languages. For them, the old “bolt-on” process simply isn’t feasible any more if they want to achieve speed to market and engage local audiences.

But, for many large enterprises, localization is still a process that comes after a series of initial stages, such as product development or content creation, for example.

This will change. More and more enterprises will begin to integrate the localization process at the beginning of the product lifecycle, in the developmental phase.

Those that work to build localization into the product development process will soon realise the benefits of it, such as greater product fit for specific markets, enhanced brand awareness and loyalty, brand differentiation in saturated markets, greater agility to respond to emerging trends or topical events, and faster speed to market.

(continued)

Prediction #1 (continued)

Enterprise localization will be increasingly “built-in” at the start of the product lifecycle.

50%

Percentage of countries within the top 10 for downloads and revenue that are non-English speaking

Source: App Annie

By integrating the principles of good localization into the processes of R&D, product design, market research and marketing strategy, enterprises are better placed to respond to the growing demand for products and content built on highly specific personal preferences. As such, localization will play an increasingly important role in the next phase of digital transformation.

Prediction #2

AI and NMT, backed up by strategy and data, will continue to develop and speed up enterprise localization.

“AI will help us to evaluate more accurately key performance indicators such as the quality of user experiences, the success of digital platforms or the effectiveness of marketing campaigns in different markets”

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is by far the most disruptive technology in the language industry (as in almost every other sector).

For enterprise localization, it will have a profound impact in two specific areas.

1. AI will increasingly be applied to data collection, management and then used to influence localization decisions in the marketplace.
2. AI and neural machine translation (NMT) will be solidly built into enterprise localization processes where the content is appropriate for NMT.

The best digital experiences in the future will be created from interpreting the data which AI platforms gather, correlate and analyze.

That’s because AI will help us to evaluate more accurately key performance indicators such as the quality of user experiences, the success of digital platforms or the effectiveness of marketing campaigns in different markets.

And the insights it generates will be highly actionable. For example, based on detailed analysis of audience demographics and patterns of user behaviour, it will be able to predict which email subject lines prompt more opens or which types of user interface generate more sales in specific markets.

Building on the power of these insights, companies will be able to better understand their customers to create products, campaigns and content that offer successful user experiences.

Prediction #3

Original marketing and brand content will increasingly be created in multiple languages, rather than adapted from a single source.

“Rather than creating marketing and brand content in a source language, and then translating or transcreating that content into target languages, companies will create multilingual content strategies”

For marketing and brand content, the hub-and-spoke model for creation and dissemination will become increasingly redundant. For global enterprises working across a huge variety of cultures and languages, it no longer makes sense to create marketing campaigns and content at the centre in a single language (usually English), and then send out in translated form to other local markets.

Rather than creating marketing and brand content in a source language, and then translating or transcreating that content into target languages, companies will create multilingual content strategies. These may adapt campaigns for different locales or they may instead create entirely new approaches.

Of course, this disrupts the traditional workflow which often involves an enterprise commissioning a digital marketing agency to create a global campaign which is then rolled out by marketing agencies and localization providers in different regions.

Instead, we'll increasingly see the leading enterprise localization providers move into the marketing and content creation space, offering multilingual content creation as a natural part of the overall service provision.

Prediction #4

The limitations of “all-inclusive” enterprise localization platforms will be exposed and connecting the right tools for the right job will increasingly be seen as best practice.

“Localization services and technology solutions can help simplify the management of multilingual content.”

When it comes to managing communication on a global scale, effective translations of your digital content is the first step to building a successful digital experience.

Localization services and technology solutions can help simplify the management of multilingual content. However, the current crop of enterprise localization platforms often introduce restrictions on content types, processes for best practice and use of other appropriate technology, and do not scale.

Some enterprises turn to global content management systems (CMSs) which include the ability to publish translated material. But many of these lack the connectivity with the translation management systems used by localization providers to provide a robust yet scalable system to deliver quality-assured localized content at speed across multiple markets and channels.

It’s possible that an all-encompassing multilingual content creation and management system will emerge, but given the rapid emergence of new channels and formats (in social media, for example), it’s unlikely that a “one-size-fits-all” approach will work.

Instead, the focus is likely to be on creating specific types of content platforms to meet specific needs which offer greater connectivity between them – and managing this process effectively.

So for example, one focus is likely to be on improving the connectivity between translation management systems and content management systems so that quality standards and brand tone of voice can be consistently implemented over content in multiple languages across multiple regions.

(continued)

Prediction #4 (continued)

The limitations of “all-inclusive” enterprise localization platforms will be exposed and connecting the right tools for the right job will increasingly be seen as best practice.

In this way, multilingual content strategies – including creation, translation and/or adaptation – will be implemented at greater speed and scale without compromising quality.

Further reading:

- **The future of the localization industry** – Multilingual
- **Are long-tail languages the future** – Alpha CRC
- **Why localization could make or break your entry into emerging markets** – Alpha CRC

What do you think?

We're really interested to hear your thoughts on the future of machine translation and how it will impact the language industry.

If you have any comments on the predictions made here or ideas you'd like to share, please email Guylaine at pmangell@alphacrc.com.



The *What comes next?* event 2022

Thank you for taking the time to read the predictions from our experts in this eBook – we hope you've found them stimulating and insightful.

Of course, any discussion of the future should be open to a wide range of ideas – that's why we'd love to hear your thoughts and opinions on what comes next for the language industry.

For this reason, we'll be hosting a hybrid event (in-person and virtual) in 2022 at one of the colleges of the University of Cambridge in 2022 and we'd be thrilled if you could attend – we'll be sending details in due course.

Please email us at globalcommercial@alphacrc.com to express an interest and also to share any feedback or comments relating to the themes shared in this eBook.