

Translution Web – Guidelines for Web Developers

Translution Web can usually be installed with only a few changes to your website.

However websites can sometimes be designed and coded in such a way that implementation of Translution Web requires additional work which could have been avoided if a few simple guidelines had been followed when the website was initially designed.

Where (in Translution's judgement) additional implementation work is excessive, Translution do reserve the right to ask the customer to redesign their website or to make additional charges to implement Translution Web. We will advise you if there are any major issues.

The following list details some guidelines, which if largely followed by developers, should avoid the need for redesign or additional cost.

1. HTML element sizes

HTML elements should allow for text length increase after translation. This is especially important for text field widths, dropdown menu widths, and button text widths. For example, when English text is translated into German, its translation typically requires approximately 25 - 35% more space.

To avoid having to re-design pages prior to implementing Translution Web, developers should assume that the source text will increase by approximately 35%. So allow for this when determining the widths of HTML elements.

2. HTML element positioning

Developers should avoid using absolute positioning for HTML elements wherever possible as this may force translated pages to display text incorrectly, or overlap with other automatically expanded elements.

If absolute positioning cannot be avoided, then test the page by allowing for the 35% text expansion detailed in Guideline 1 above.

3. Text in images and multi-media

Images and multi-media files sometimes contain text. However image and multi-media files with embedded text cannot be automatically translated because the text is seen as pixels rather than as characters.

Therefore wherever possible overlay the text onto the graphic rather than embedding it.

Where graphics with embedded text are unavoidable/ required or where multi-media is used, Translution Web has been designed to use the correct translated image or multi-media when translated pages are displayed. However this does require you first to provide Translution with the translated image or multi-media file.

Please note that the creation of translated graphics and multi-media is not included in Translution's standard pricing. When briefing your graphic designer to provide translated graphics or multi-media, ensure they create a separate layer for the text that can easily be edited. It should then be a case of simply saving the graphic under a different file name with the translated text substituted (and thus translated). Translution can provide you with the translation.

Note that using lots of images with embedded text can increase implementation time and be costly. It is not unusual for translation agencies to charge £30 - £50 per graphic and much more for multi-media, because of the need to use specialist applications (such as Photoshop) operated by designers as well as provide the translations.

4. Properly formatting HTML

Ensure that HTML code is correctly formatted taking special care that all appropriate ending tags are present.

Web browsers often display badly formatted HTML correctly, even when end tags are missing.

However the Translution Web's HTML parsing code is more sensitive and requires correctly formatted HTML to perform accurately.

5. Scripting Code Text

You should also ideally avoid embedding text content (to be displayed to user) within scripting code.

If this is unavoidable then Translution can add special entries to your dictionary to correctly translate the text. However this can add to the costs of implementation and where used excessively, additional charges may be applied.

6. Splitting Text

Wherever possible, avoid splitting up text with additional spaces, tabs and new line markers as this can lead to unpredictable translations.

Tabs may be used for alignment purposes, if absolutely necessary.

However it is very important that spaces are not used. This is because Translution Web dictionaries cannot automatically identify source entries with additional spaces in the text, potentially leading to reductions in translation quality.

Similarly where new line markers are used, this can also confuse the translation engine. Translation engines work by analysing a segment of text (usually a sentence) and then using linguistic rules and dictionaries to translate it. One of the things it does is analyse the part of speech (verb, noun etc) of each word in the segment. If the text is split up by the use of new line markers, the machine translation engine may not have enough information to analyse and translate the sentence correctly.

7. Right To Left Page Alignment

Special consideration should be made when translating into Arabic.

This relates to how graphics are displayed because the alignment of the page changes automatically from left to right to right to left. It should not affect text. However it may affect images comprising of separate smaller images.

Our recommendation when translating into Arabic is to create a single graphic rather than a graphic comprising several separate smaller images. This should then display correctly.