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# The Professional Shopify Store Localization Guide

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# 1. Localization Explained

Once a retailer has an online presence, it should, in theory, be able to reach a global audience. But there are still plenty of hurdles, starting with language barriers and cultural differences. Localization is the process of removing those barriers to reach local markets.

Now more than ever, consumers want to feel important and understood when they buy online. Consumers will ignore marketing messages that don't seem to address their specific needs and preferences.

Localization addresses this issue, enabling businesses to market to local audiences in ways that resonate with them. This means adapting your Shopify store to target new demographics. The localization process happens on several different levels:

### Language

For eCommerce, you'll want to provide your audience with the option to view your site in their native language. This can be done using a combination of both human and machine translation. Using AI can significantly speed up the website localization process and reduce the cost.

### Visual

It's important for your site to be visually appealing in any language. For example when a language is read from top to bottom (certain Asian languages) or from right to left (for example, Arabic) instead of left to right, it will affect your store's design. Images and colors should also be adjusted to match local landscapes and preferences.

### SEO

How people search for items depends on how they use them, or even what they call them, and that can change between markets. Using local keywords is essential to be discovered by new customers on search engines.

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### Cultural

Ensure that your store's content, product naming, and brand terms contain no offensive words or phrases, and adjust important content to hold local relevance for the target market. This part of the process might also include recommendations for local promotions according to regional holidays and festivals.

### Payment

Consider providing multiple currency options for your audience to choose from, including their local currency to get more sales. When it comes to payment options, it is important to take into account that not all payment systems operate everywhere, and even if they do, popularity varies.

### Legal

Different countries have different legal requirements for eCommerce, including terms on what you can sell, how payments are processed, and what you can do with customer data.

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# Why localization is essential to growing your Shopify store

**1**

### Sell more by reaching customers in their own language

The most basic step of eCommerce localization is offering your website in the local language. Overall, when a website is comfortable to visit, it will attract more traffic. Data from a DMA survey shows that **localization drives sales.**

## 72%

**Of consumers prefer to browse websites in their native language**
and are more likely to buy a product that has info in that language

## +30%

**Increase in revenue**
when consumers browse an eCommerce site in their own language

**2**

### Scale your business and go global

Once you've achieved your original business goals at home, you probably want to keep growing, but you don't want to lose the brand reputation that made you a success in the first place. Localization lets you reach consumers across the globe while preserving the atmosphere of a local company.

**3**

### Get ahead of the competition, both global and local

When you scale your business, you won't just be up against other global vendors. You'll also be competing with local businesses. By blending in to stand out, your business will have an edge, as it has both a global presence together with a local, familiar feel.

**4**

**Take advantage of revenue opportunities every day and year-round**

Each geographic region has its specific holidays and special occasions. For example, Eid al-Adha is a great time for promotions in the UAE for example, as it is common to exchange gifts and wear new clothing on this holiday. The Chinese New Year is a common time for consumers in China and other Asian countries to buy gifts and spend money on renovating their homes. This means that marketing needs to be targeted according to the local calendar. By running a promotion at the right time, you can drive more sales and grow your brand.

**5**

**Avoid customer churn by streamlining the checkout process**

This hilarious clip from the BBC will probably feel familiar enough to make you cringe. It illustrates an important point about eCommerce: there are an average of 15 fields in a checkout flow, leading to high levels of customer frustration and an average abandonment rate of almost 70%.

When you localize your site, you should integrate local payment systems, making the whole process stress-free. Not only will your customer see the purchase through, but they will be much more likely to return to the site and recommend it to friends.

**6**

**Get found by localizing your Search Engine Optimization efforts**

SEO (Search Engine Optimization) has grown in importance over the last decade as the amount of information available online has grown. By knowing exactly what your customers are looking for, you can ensure that you appear high in the search results.
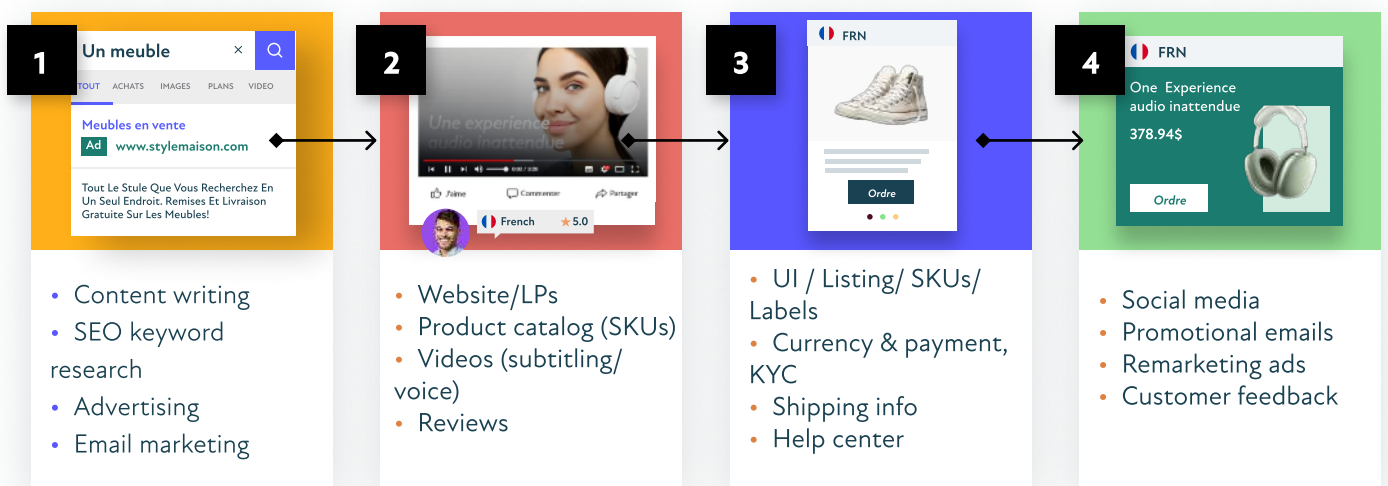
But what works in one place might not work in another. Slang words, local phrases, local brands, and cultural trends all form part of SEO success, so optimizing for the local market is essential. Data shows that 40% of consumers source their online purchase using a search engine – more than any other method.

# 2. Localizing the entire customer journey

Now that you understand the importance of localization, you can move on to implementation. At BLEND, we use our 4x4P strategy to break down the stages of the customer experience. Using these categories ensures that the localization process covers every step of the customer journey:

**1** **Pre-visit:** Any materials that the customer sees before they visit the website. This includes marketing, ads, and search engine results.

**2** **Pre-purchase:** The user experience of the website, including item selection. This includes the website itself, product descriptions, pricing localization, and graphics or videos.

**3** **Purchase:** The user experience of the purchasing process, from the beginning of checkout to delivery. This includes payment method and currency, KYC requirements, and shipping systems.

**4** **Post-purchase:** Any materials used for follow-up and retargeting. This includes social media and customer reviews, remarketing, and targeted emails.

**1**
- Content writing
- SEO keyword research
- Advertising
- Email marketing

**2**
- Website/LPs
- Product catalog (SKUs)
- Videos (subtitling/ voice)
- Reviews

**3**
- UI / Listing/ SKUs/ Labels
- Currency & payment, KYC
- Shipping info
- Help center

**4**
- Social media
- Promotional emails
- Remarketing ads
- Customer feedback

These four categories include all the elements of your site and customer communications that will need to be localized. For each element, you'll have to localize language, graphics, cultural references, and technical details, as we discussed earlier in the "Localization explained" section.

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If you're working with a limited budget, consider prioritizing the parts of the customer journey where you see the most churning. If you find that you're getting traffic from potential customers in Germany, for example, but see that German users aren't getting past the first page they visit, then you will likely prioritize localizing the pre-purchase and purchase steps. Later on, you can localize the pre-visit and post-purchase steps for a full-proof funnel that attracts and retains international consumers.

# 3. Key Shopify store elements to localize

## Pictures, Videos, and Graphics

It's important to check whether any of your website's images might be considered offensive in your target markets. Localization is all about embracing the tastes and preferences of the market you are targeting. By adjusting the color palette, tweaking the style of your graphics, or showing local faces and familiar architecture, you can make your site more appealing and relevant to local consumers.

## Branding

Consistent messaging across your site globally will give your customers the sense of being part of a community, which helps them identify more strongly with your brand. Depending on your existing brand, this may involve very little extra work, or you may be building from the ground up. For example, as our team in China has pointed out, different countries relate differently to the concept of branding itself.

## Product descriptions

Translating product descriptions on Shopify can be done easily when you install the BLEND Store Translation app on your Shopify store. To learn more, skip to the "How to start localizing your Shopify store" section.

Apart from the language, it is important to tailor the product descriptions to the local market. This starts with the product name. In some cases, these need to be transliterated, sometimes translated, and sometimes they will need a new name altogether. Measurements may also need to be adjusted: for example kilos to pounds, or changing clothing sizes to fit the local sizing guides.

It can also be worth reconsidering the content itself, considering how different audiences use products differently. For example, in some places, weddings are fancy, formal occasions, whereas in other cultures the focus is more on religious rituals and guests usually wear traditional costumes. If you're selling a sparkly cocktail dress, you may want to change the way you sell the product in each market. This is particularly important when it comes to SEO.

## SEO

If people don't know about you, they need to be able to discover you, and poor search engine optimization will reduce your visibility. The more you've targeted your SEO efforts, the stronger your optimization. Simply translating your keywords ignores that fact.

SEO is not about using the same word, but about using the right word. To go back to an earlier example: in one country, "blue bridesmaids dress" may be a very popular search term, but if you optimize for that term in a place where bridesmaids aren't part of the wedding tradition, nobody will find your product.

You'll also need to keep in mind that each search engine uses its own ranking algorithm. In the United States, Google is the most popular search engine, but in China, your customers are probably using Baidu, and in South Korea, the highest-ranking search engine is Naver. By optimizing for the right search engine, you make it much more likely that your customers will connect.

## Pricing

Your business needs to be profitable, but there are many factors involved in pricing. Some countries or regions calculate taxes as a part of the item price, and some calculate the total of all taxes before checkout. If you want to offer reduced or free shipping, this also needs to be considered before pricing items.

There are also cultural differences to consider. Some places value bargain hunting, and sales will be higher on competitively priced items; other cultures are suspicious of anything cheaply priced, and their preference is for more expensive items which are considered high quality.

Again, the way customers use your services may also be different. For example, one BLEND client discovered that their target audience in their new market had much smaller budgets than their existing customers. To stay relevant, they had to offer smaller product packages that their new customers could afford.

## Currency and payment

Customers are far more likely to make a purchase when prices are in the local currency, therefore offering a variety of currencies is crucial.

A high percentage of cart abandonment occurs because checkout takes too long, so it is crucial to offer local payment options which allow for a one-click checkout. Digital wallets are the preferred method of payment in many countries, but there are other local favorites, such as iDeal in The Netherlands, Twint in Switzerland, and AliPay in China .
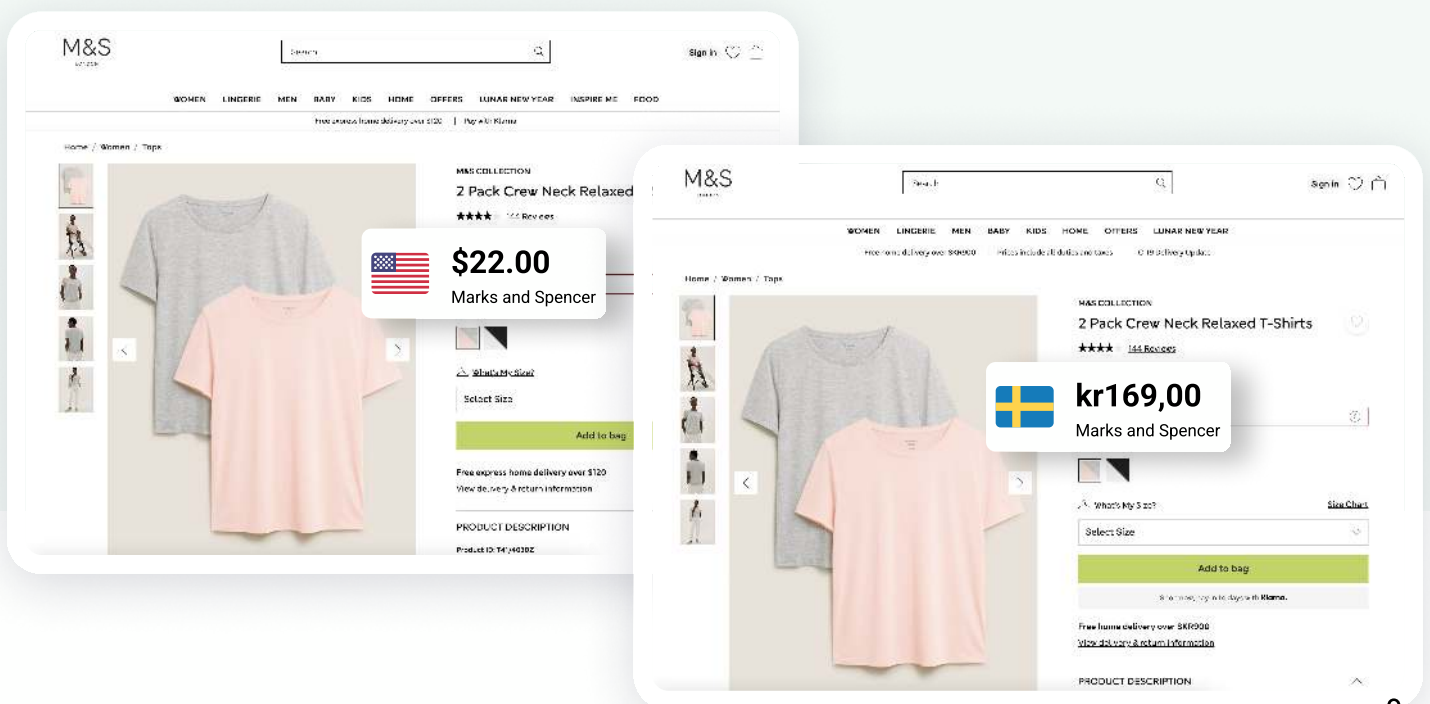
## Marketing

Marketing and advertising culture varies between cultures. In some places, a polished ad may be important, while in others, consumers only trust other consumers. The differences are particularly clear when it comes to influencers or celebrity spokespeople: do locals trust social media influencers? Are athletes the local heroes? Or is an author or movie star more influential?

## Social media

The stronger local presence your brand has, the more sales you make, and social media content is one of the strongest tools for developing brand awareness. Your local social media presence allows you to establish a relationship with your customers, giving them a voice and increasing their trust in you. A solid understanding of native social media is essential here.

You might think that as the most popular social media platform worldwide, Facebook is a safe bet, but it may not reach your target audience if they are on the younger side, in which case you may need to focus your resources on TikTok or Instagram. Location matters too – in China, Weibo is a popular social media platform.

## Customer support

When a customer hits an obstacle, getting help quickly and efficiently can transform a negative moment into a positive experience. This is key to building an ongoing relationship with repeat customers. Besides helping them complete their purchase, customer support in the user's native language makes them feel recognized.

When a customer has a problem, their first stop is usually the knowledge base or FAQs, so these need to be localized. For more complex problems, customers turn to interactive customer support. Hiring a separate support team for every market is a huge investment and isn't always realistic. However, there are plenty of great alternative options out there, including multilingual email support. BLEND's Multilingual Helpdesk for Zendesk allows you to integrate your customer support with cost-effective translation so that customers everywhere feel taken care of.
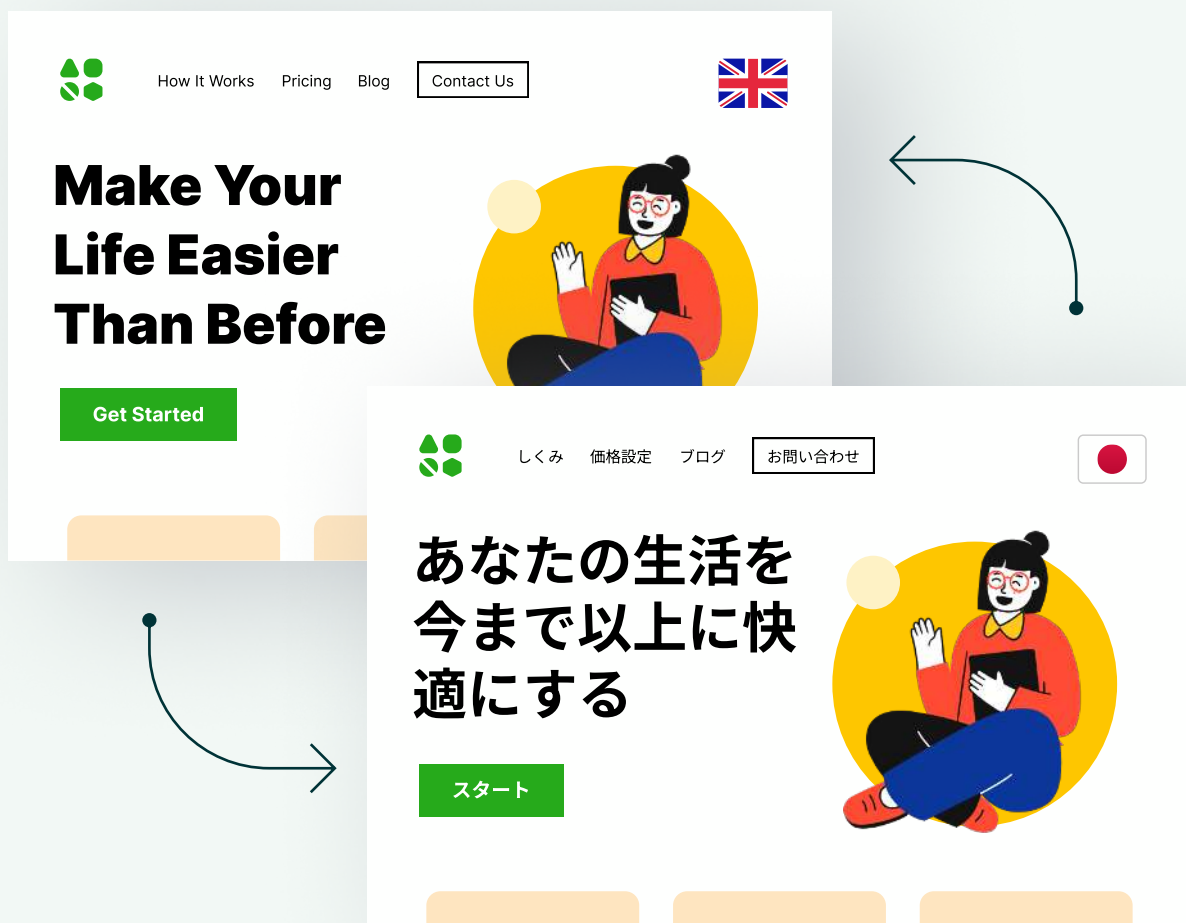
## Mobile optimization

[A staggering 73% of online retail sales](#) are made using a mobile device, so responsive design should be a top priority when creating any eCommerce website. This is also true when it comes to localization: lengthy translations are out, optimized versions are in.

## Legal and custom requirements

Personal import regulations and restrictions vary from one market to another, as well as tax and duty rates and thresholds and how these fees should be collected and remitted. Accurate product classification is also crucial to avoid delays at customs.

How It Works    Pricing    Blog    Contact Us

# Make Your Life Easier Than Before

Get Started

しくみ    価格設定    ブログ    お問い合わせ

# あなたの生活を今まで以上に快適にする

スタート

# 4. Must-have tools + tech for professional store localization

## Translation Platforms

A translation platform takes care of the translation process for you. BLEND's platform provides you with professional human translators, the best in translation technology, and one place to communicate with translators and track your projects.

This streamlines the entire process, so you don't have to spend time and resources searching for trusted translators and investing in advanced AI translation technology. Translation platforms are a great tool for translating marketing collateral including images, emails, videos, ads and more. To translate on BLEND's platform, just upload your files, select your languages and any relevant expertise you'd like your translators to have, and we'll take care of the rest. You can communicate directly with translators on our platform to provide special instructions and feedback, plus track your project's progress.

When it comes to translating product descriptions, website pages, and other Shopify store content, it is best to use integrations via a translation platform. Integrations let you translate your website without moving between two platforms, making the process faster and easier.
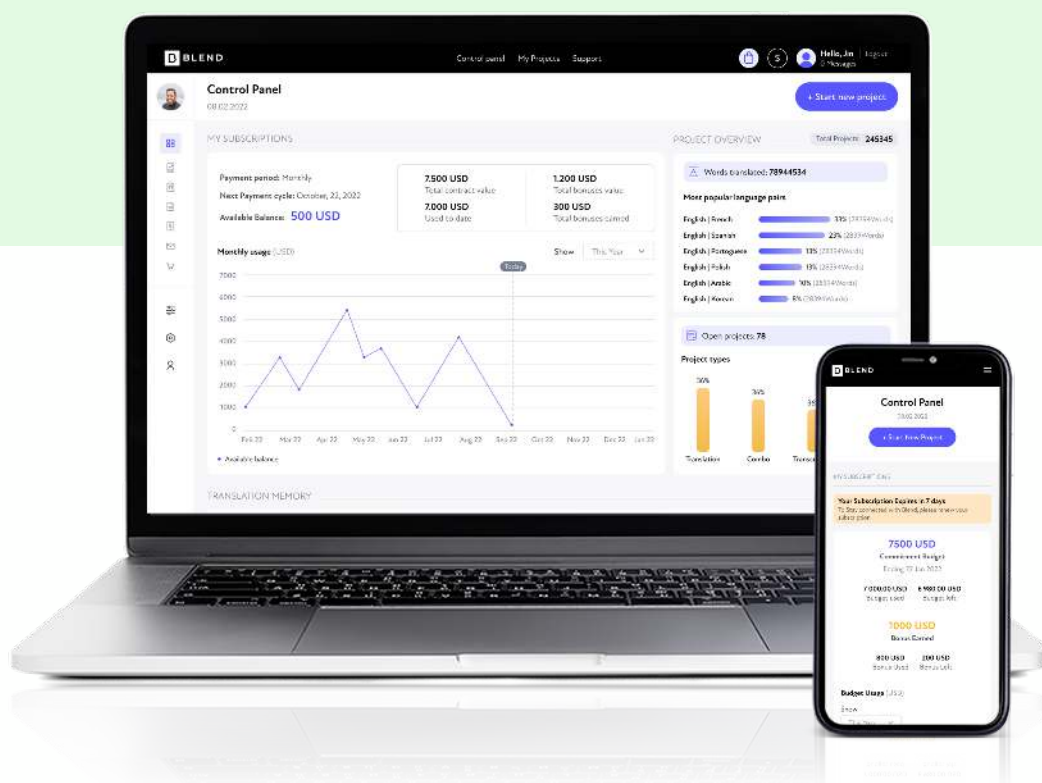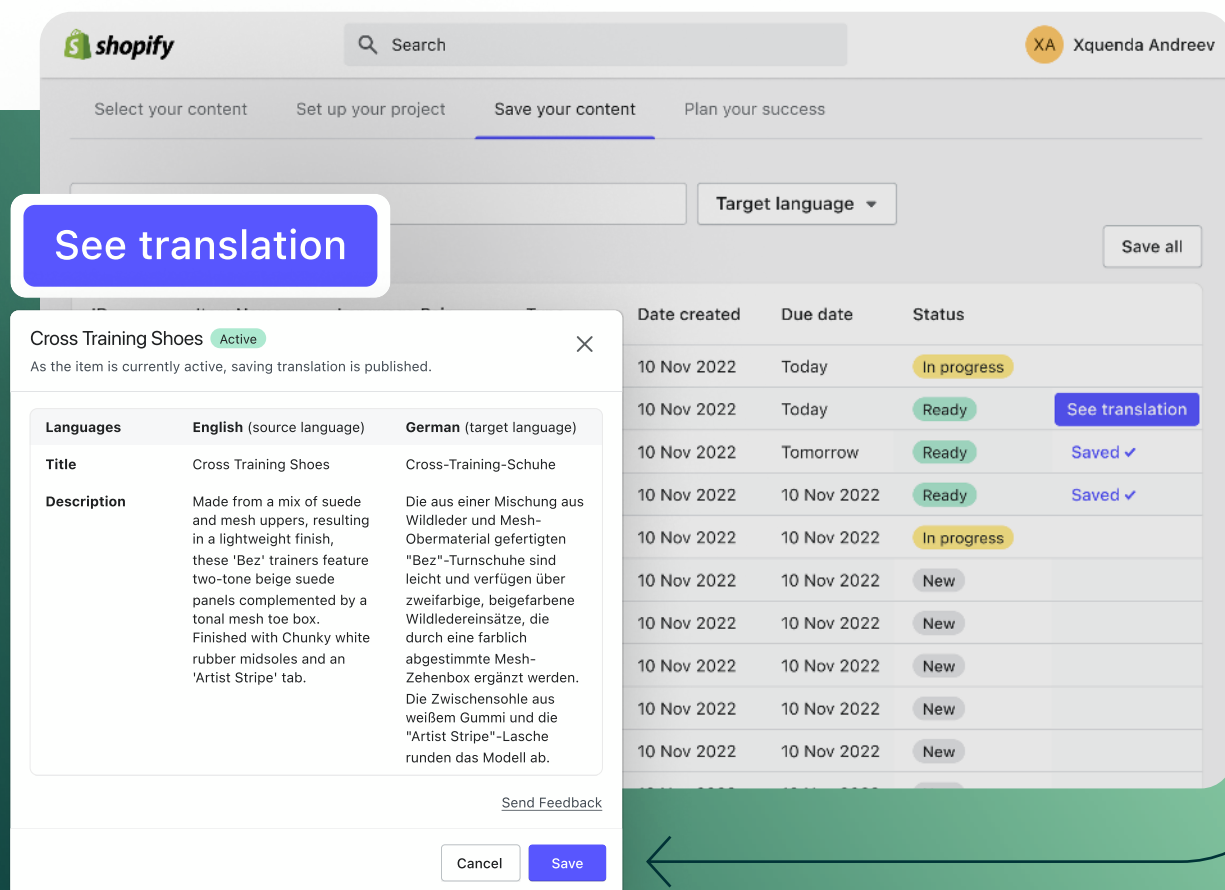
## Integrations

[BLEND Store Translation](#), our Shopify integration, makes it easy to translate product pages, collections, notifications, menus, and web pages with no development or code changes required. Our platform leverages advanced AI and professional human translators, so you can choose what works best for your content.

Submit, track, and receive translations directly from your Shopify store. This significantly reduces the number of steps needed to get your website's content translated and reuploaded to your site, so you save time and effort on your store's localization.

As you add or edit text on your primary site, you can choose to send it directly for translation. Your translators will work through the translation platform but will be able to see where the text fits in the context of each page on your website, and you'll be able to review and publish the localized text from within Shopify.

If you want to get creative with your localization process and have more advanced knowledge and tools at your disposal, we also offer integration via API to localize other aspects of your business.

## NMTPE and Machine Learning

In the past, the only way to translate material was to use a translator proficient in both the original language and the target language. This is both time-consuming and costly, making it a serious barrier to growth, especially for smaller businesses. But in recent years, a whole world of technology has been developed to make the translation process simpler, quicker, and cheaper.

Today, most automatic translation engines use neural machine translation and some form of machine learning. Neural machine translation combines automatic translation with neural networks to add context to the material so that the finished product is more accurate and readable.

The compromise between machine translation and human translation is NMTPE, or Neural Machine Translation with Post-Editing. This involves using neural machine translation followed by review and editing by a human translator. By combining the best of computer technology with human input for quality assurance, you get a solution that is good, fast, and cost-effective.

To take full advantage of NMTPE, some BLEND clients use a dedicated translation engine. As human editors polish and correct the machine translation, their revisions are fed back into the dedicated engine. The AI then uses the new data to refine the translation the next time, even learning the preferred brand language. Eventually, the machine translation is good enough that you can forgo the human editing altogether for certain content so that each new translation is produced faster and at a lower cost than before.
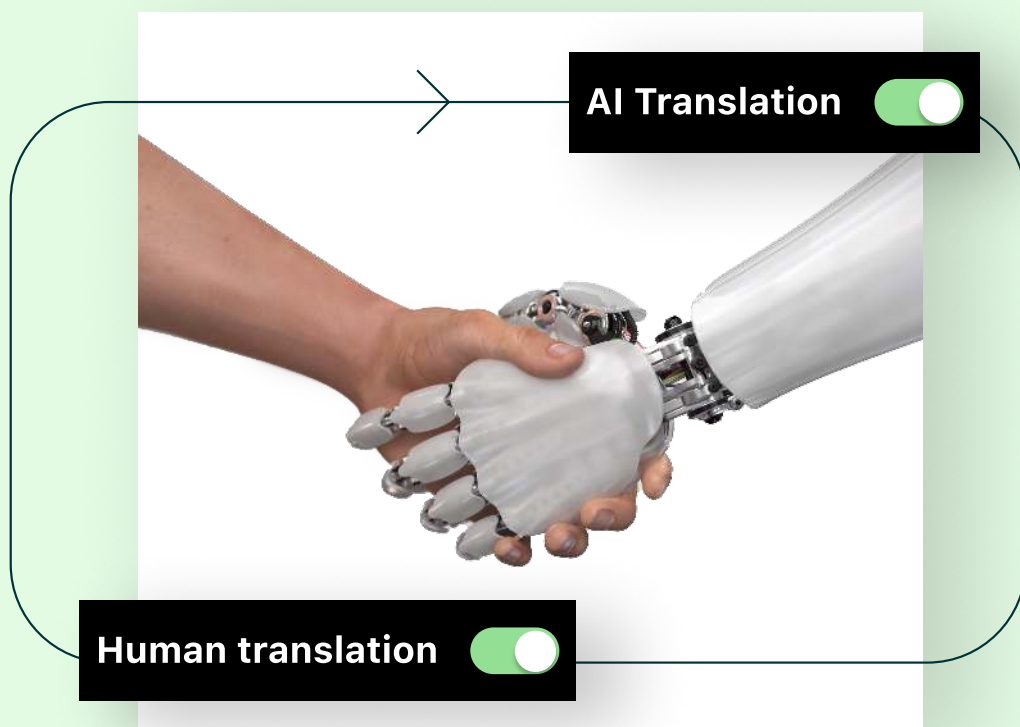
**Continuous localization**

Many eCommerce sites already use CI/CD (continuous integration/continuous deployment) methodology, which allows for agile development and inventory updates. Adding continuous localization at this level of development creates an efficient ongoing workflow so that your localized websites are updated at the same speed as your original site.

With BLEND's Store Translation app on Shopify, merchants can select autopilot mode for automated, continuous translation of any new website content.

# 5. How to start localizing your Shopify store today: step-by-step

Ready to start localizing your eCommerce site's content? Seamlessly translate your store without leaving the Shopify platform.

**Translate your website on Shopify with BLEND's integration:**

1   Head to the Shopify app store, search for the BLEND app and click "Add app."

2   Register or log in to your BLEND account and input your API keys to connect BLEND to your Shopify store.

3   We'll sync your store and then you'll be ready to translate any page, product description, item name, and more.

4   Once the content is translated, you'll be able to publish it directly onto your Shopify store.

**Grow your global presence with expert localization services**

## End-to-end localization with BLEND

When it comes to localization, eCommerce has its own unique needs. BLEND has been providing translation services especially geared towards global eCommerce websites for over a decade. BLEND's expertise and our wide range of localization services mean that we're with you at every step as you go local.

### Translation Services

BLEND's global team of translators and our unique NMTPE processes offer your eCommerce business the power of machine translation with the personal touch of human translation in 120 languages.

### Localized Content

BLEND works with industry experts around the world to help you bridge cultural gaps and become relevant in your chosen market with content localization.

### Video & Audio Localization

Record new videos using our native language actors or use voice dubbing to repurpose your original media to reach new audiences. Plus, our team can help you with subtitles, post-production, and more.

### API Technology

Automation is the key to streamlining business processes, which is why BLEND uses a range of API integrations. It enables us to work with you as a team, speeding up the deployment of both the initial website and any updates.

### Brand Consistency

As a global company ourselves, we understand the importance of maintaining brand consistency. We work with your style or brand guide and preferred vocabulary and tone to ensure your branding is consistent across your localized site. We can even build you a team of dedicated translators, so you can be sure you're getting the same quality and style in every text.

### Customer Support Tools

We are dedicated to helping you provide the best possible eCommerce experience for your customers, and that means having localized resources even when something goes wrong. In addition to translating and localizing your support center, we can help you build a support team or use the Multilingual Helpdesk for Zendesk to provide cost-effective email support in every language.

## Localized shopping experience with   **GlobalE**

### Deep localization of the entire customer journey
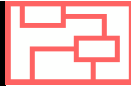
To offer customers a seamless shopping experience that feels like they are buying from a domestic webstore, it's important to localize all aspects of the eCommerce buying journey.

Global-e, Shopify's exclusive cross-border eCommerce third party provider, enables merchants to localize the shopping experience, from browsing to checkout and delivery, through a single integration.

This includes pricing set per market and displayed in the local currency with appropriate rounding, tax and duty calculation and prepayment according to local best-practices, a wide variety of local and alternative payment methods, multiple shipping options at competitive rates, and simple transparent returns.

### Cross-border eCommerce intelligence

Deep localization relies on in-depth and up-to-date market knowledge. Global-e's end-to-end solution provides merchants with best practice guidance and local market know-how, tailored per market and vertical, based on state-of-the-art business intelligence tools and big data generated through handling millions of cross-border transactions annually.

Ongoing support and recommendations tailored to the merchant's business strategy enable merchants to proactively increase international conversion and profitability, by setting the optimal propositions per market.

# Localize your Shopify store today and grow international sales

BLEND offers a full range of localization and translation solutions to help you target untapped markets in more than 120 languages.

Want to learn more? Get in touch with us today.

Don't miss a thing: