



Take Your Website To The World!

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If your business has a website you are now capable of reaching an audience worldwide. Many businesses whose trade was strictly local just a few years ago have been pleasantly surprised to find new markets in other parts of the country and even in other parts of the world. But this will only happen if your website reflects some global marketing thinking.

If a UK website wants to sell to Australian customers it should at least have a facility for converting prices into Australian dollars – that's the first thing an Australian prospect will want to know. But they might also want an idea of delivery cost and time as well. And if an Australian website wants to sell to Americans, references to 'mobiles' (cell phones) and 'sticky tape' (adhesive tape) won't have much meaning to a target audience where those terms aren't commonly used.

Content in other languages

When the target audience uses a different language as well the difficulties can multiply geometrically. A half-hearted effort can be very frustrating for non-English speakers, such as when the home page contains information in their language but the following pages are exclusively in the original English.

Translation is the obvious answer, but there's nothing worse for a business than to have its website content translated so poorly that it becomes laughable to other cultures. Even an 'accurate' translation can fail to communicate the *feeling* of the original message. Getting expert advice on the language you use on your web pages is an essential part of creating a truly global website.

It's also essential that cultural references made in the text will be understood. For example, if you say an object is 'shaped like a football' you're communicating an image of a different shape to different people because 'football' is played with different shaped balls in different countries.

Keep branding relevant and consistent

Most marketers are aware of the importance of branding but they often overlook the need to ensure that the desired branding experience is received by every visitor to the website. A company or a product may have entirely different brand positions from one country to another, and this has to be reflected in the experience the visitor receives. Everything from the illustrations to the text content must be created to be appropriate to the specific market.

Visuals must be appropriate

Graphics are always a challenge for global marketers. Showing a product in use on a tropical beach may not be the best way to present it to audiences in northern Europe. Racial or ethnic stereotypes should be avoided at all cost, and care needs to be taken with illustrations of product labels and even signage shown in the background.

Culture specific issues also need to be carefully considered when planning visual content. Certain colours can have undesirable connotations in some markets, and showing people in particular situations can be acceptable to some cultures and offensive to others.

Provide all the information people need to make buying from you easy

Prices are always a challenging area due to fluctuations in currency values and other considerations such as the costs of shipping and insurance. Because international shipping to some areas can involve extensive delay you might consider offering an express delivery option that will get the order to the customer much faster than if conventional means of shipping are used. Be sure to state an approximate delivery time for each country in which you're marketing.

Globally thinking websites take geography into account and make it easy for anyone anywhere to know exactly how much something will cost to acquire and how soon they can expect it to reach them. The search function will also need to take multiple languages into account, and to relate to the language of the visitor's country. This can be done easily enough even in a relatively unsophisticated website by letting the user nominate the language they wish to search in when entering details for the search.

Make it easy for people to contact you

Contact options also need to be specific for each country, even if you're offering them a free call. Never assume that people in other countries will know how to telephone your country from theirs; be sure to include country codes and area codes that relate to the visitor's location.



Want to find out more? Looking to market your products and services overseas?

Call today on 01743 249992, or
Email: outsourcing@cb-solutions.co.uk

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