Global Content Strategy

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Translators without Borders is the world’s largest community of humanitarian translators.
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5,013,542
Translated words donated so far!
What We Will Cover Today

- Compare two global websites
- Common problems associated with globalizing content
- Successful approaches to globalizing content
- Global content strategy best practices
Symptoms of an Unsuccessful Global Strategy
Symptoms of an Unsuccessful Global Strategy

- Symptom #1: Can’t find the global site entrance
- Symptom #2: Perplexing inconsistencies
- Symptom #3: Difficult navigation
- Symptom #4: Inconsistent branding
Our Laggard

- Muji is a specialty retailing company from Japan
- www.muji.com
- Known for its minimalist aesthetic
- Sell direct off their website and through a network of 20+ stores
- We like their products a lot
Symptom #1: Can’t Find the Global Entrance

www.muji.com

*Product fitness 80* reflects MUJI’s willingness to educate ourselves by reviewing our own "adequacy" (fitness) now, and is our message to the world.
Symptom #1: Can’t Find the Global Entrance

If I click on the circles:

There is an old Japanese saying that goes "Eat in measure and defy the doctor." It simply means eating moderately or stopping eating before you feel totally stuffed is good for your health; just good old common sense when you think about it. The deeper meaning of the proverb lets us know the key to a healthy life is to eat an adequate or limited amount, and hints that by exercising a little self-restraint, if we reduce our measure from 100% to say 80%, rather than a joyless exercise in excessive self-control, we will create a joyful, balanced and healthy life.

Many people in Japan have taken the Great East Japan Earthquake on 11 March 2011 as a wake-up call. The aftermath of the earthquake only served to underline the awareness of truly appreciating the many wonderful things we take for granted in our daily lives. Increasing concern about our excessive consumption of goods and materials, as well as an over emphasis in the media on encouraging...
Symptom #1: Can’t Find the Global Entrance

Uh oh.
Symptom #1: Can’t Find the Global Entrance

Finally found it. But...
Symptom #2: Perplexing Inconsistencies

www.muji.co.uk
Symptom #2: Perplexing Inconsistencies

Silicon Ice Ball Maker

100% Silicone. Perfect selection to add style to any occasion. Natural non-stick material: easy removal for the ice cubes.
Symptom #2: Perplexing Inconsistencies

Nav bar for U.S. site is down another level:
Symptom #2: Perplexing Inconsistencies

U.S.  
- Stationery
- Art and Craft
- Gift and Memory

U.K.  
- Pens & Pencils
- Craft & Toys
- Electronics
Symptom #3: Impossible Navigation

Let’s try to find the site for Italy:
Symptom #3: Impossible Navigation

Not here again.
Symptom #3: Impossible Navigation

Ah ha!

Europe
- U.K.
- France
- Ireland
- Sweden
- Italy
- Norway
- Germany
- Spain
- Turkey

Asia
- Japan
- Hong Kong
- Singapore
- Korea
- Taiwan
- China
- Thailand
- Indonesia

North America
- U.S.A.
- Store Locator

Wednesday, October 31, 12
Symptom #3: Impossible Navigation

Wait, this isn’t Italian?
Symptom #3: Impossible Navigation

Oh, all the way down there at the bottom:
Symptom #3: Impossible Navigation

Finally, Italian. Translation of EU site.
Symptom #4: Inconsistent Branding

Common branding elements of Muji:
Symptom #4: Inconsistent Branding

Wait! What happened here?
Recap: Common Problems in Global Content Strategy

- Difficulty finding the site I need
- Inconsistencies from site to site
- Cumbersome navigation
- Inconsistent branding
What Makes for Success?
What Makes for Success?

- Success #1: Easy and obvious entry point
- Success #2: Consistent branding
- Success #3: Culturally significant branding
- Success #4: Country-specific imagery
- Success #5: Culturally sensitive layout
Our Leader

- Lush is a specialty cosmetics company from the United Kingdom
- www.lush.com
- Known for its handmade soaps, lotions, shower gels, shampoo, and so on
- They have 830 stores in 50 countries, in addition to online shopping
- We like their products a lot, too
Success #1: Easy and Obvious Entry Point

www.lush.com
Success #2: Branding Begins on First Page (and continues throughout)
Success #2: Branding Continues
Success #3: Culturally Significant Branding

- Different seasonality dictates different product mix
- Aussie pride

www.lush.com.au
Success #4: Inclusion of Country-Specific Imagery

www.lushjapan.com
Success #4: Inclusion of Country-Specific Imagery

- Distinctively Japanese branding element
Success #5: Culturally Sensitive Layout

Japanese grid is prototypically Japanese:
Success #5: Culturally Sensitive Layout

Contrast with US grid
Recap: Successful Global Content Strategy Elements

- Simple to find the site I need
- Corporate branding consistent on all sites
- Regional changes to product mix and branding
- Images designed for particular countries
- Layout sensitive to cultural norms
Best Practices

Our goal is to get every laggard to morph into a leader
Best Practice #1: Have a Plan

- Yes. Sounds obvious.
- No. Most companies don’t.
Best Practice #2: Locate Your Global Content

- Who is creating content for global?
  - At HQ?
  - Regionally?
- Anyone single-sourcing?
- Where is all of this content and who is responsible for it?
Best Practice #3: KISS Your Source Content

- Keep it short and simple
- Writing for translation | global English | simple English | international English best practices
- 8 Simple Steps to Make Your Content Global-Ready Now!
  - Send me an email and I’ll send you a copy
  - vals@contentrules.com
KISS Elements

1. Reduce sentence length and complexity
2. Reduce overall word count
3. Decrease word variability
4. Increase use of identical sentences
5. Use correct grammar
6. Eliminate word usage errors (idioms, jargon)
Best Practice #4: Use the Best Method: Translation, Localization, and Transcreation

- Know the differences
  - Process
  - Function
  - Cost
  - Best places to use each

- Determine which content falls under which method
## Methods of Handling Global Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Localization</th>
<th>Transcreation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>The content stays the same</td>
<td>The meaning stays the same</td>
<td>Different content developed to meet business objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literal word-for-word translation of everything</td>
<td>Translate the meaning of the words in a way that is culturally appropriate</td>
<td>Developed in local language; English may be used as part of the brand vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Images</strong></td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>Change to fit local expectations / product needs</td>
<td>Change to fit local expectations / product needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Layout</strong></td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>Minimize changes</td>
<td>Change to fit local expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brand Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>No change</td>
<td>Enhance and expand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>