

Global UX: Localization Prep Checklist

Designing digital products that work across cultures

1. Strategy & Market Clarity

Before design begins:

- Have we identified our **primary and secondary markets**?
- Do we understand **user behavior differences** across regions?
- Are we designing for:
 - Localization-first (specific market)
 - Universal-first (global scalability)
- Do we have **regional personas** or just generic users?

 *If your users behave differently, your UX should too.*


2. Content & Language Readiness

- All UI text is **clear and neutral (no slang or idioms)**
- Microcopy avoids culturally specific phrases
(e.g., “*crush your goals*”, “*hit it out of the park*”)
- Content is written for **translation flexibility**
- We’ve planned for **text expansion (30–50%)**
- Tone is consistent across languages (not just translated literally)

 *Translation is mechanical. Tone is emotional.*

3. Design System Flexibility

- Components allow for **variable text lengths**
- Buttons and CTAs scale without breaking layout
- Layout supports **right-to-left (RTL)** if needed
- Icons are tested for **cross-cultural understanding**
- Visual hierarchy works with **dense and minimal content**

 *Rigid design breaks globally. Flexible design scales.*

4. Visual & Cultural Sensitivity

- Imagery reflects **diverse audiences**
- Colors are reviewed for **cultural meaning**
(e.g., *red = luck vs warning*)
- Avoid culturally specific humor or symbolism
- Product visuals feel **relatable across regions**

 *Familiarity builds trust faster than aesthetics.*


5. Accessibility & Technology Context

- Product works on **low-bandwidth connections**
- Optimized for **older devices and OS versions**
- Font sizes are readable across languages/scripts
- Forms support **local formats** (phone, address, names)

 *Global design includes infrastructure realities.*

6. Testing & Validation

- Conducted **usability testing in target regions**
- Validated icon and navigation understanding
- Checked tone and messaging with **native users**
- Gathered feedback beyond translation accuracy

 *What works in one market may confuse another.*

7. Localization Workflow Setup

- Content is **externalized (not hard-coded)**
- Translation workflow/tool selected
(e.g., *Lokalise, Phrase, manual process*)
- Version control exists for multiple languages
- Design + dev teams aligned on localization process

💡 *Localization is not a one-time task—it's a system.*

8. Final Decision Check

Before launch, ask:

- Does this experience feel **native or adapted**?
 - Are we forcing a global design—or respecting local behavior?
 - Is there a plan to **evolve by region over time**?
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**Designing for a global audience is not about making everything the same.
It's about making everyone feel considered.**