



International, Digital & *Multilingual:*

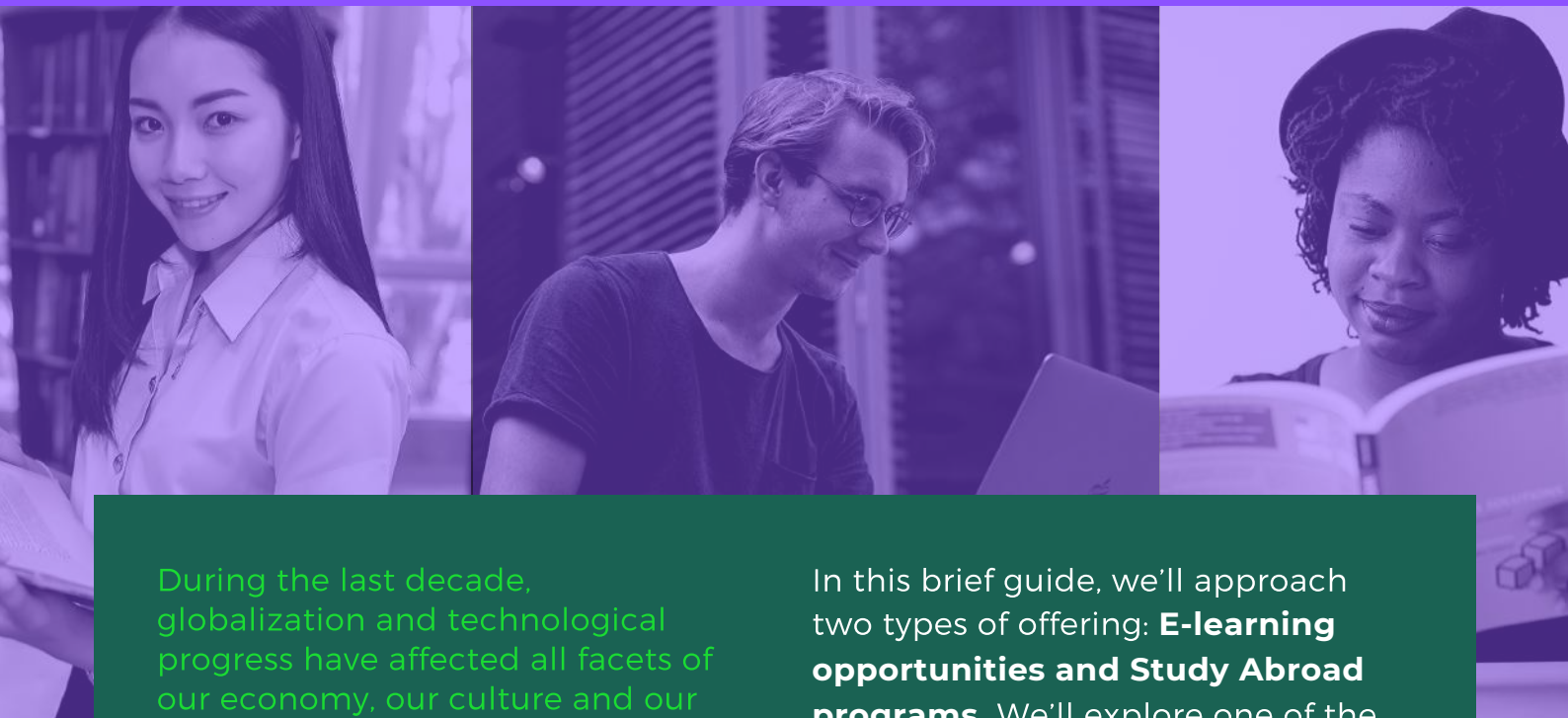
The Present & Future of Education.



August 2019 for Day Translations, Inc.

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INTRODUCTION



During the last decade, globalization and technological progress have affected all facets of our economy, our culture and our personal lives.

While remote education, student exchange and study abroad offerings aren't new, this context of closer intercultural bonds between nations and ever-increasing digitalization has given these programs -and the businesses behind them- a new shape, new challenges and a world of opportunities.

In this brief guide, we'll approach two types of offering: **E-learning opportunities and Study Abroad programs**. We'll explore one of the greatest benefits that the internet offers to education businesses: The ability to gather an international student body without facing the costs of conventional, physical international expansion. And, we'll provide some data-based advice on how businesses and institutions embarking in such initiatives can find their place in this increasingly competitive international market.



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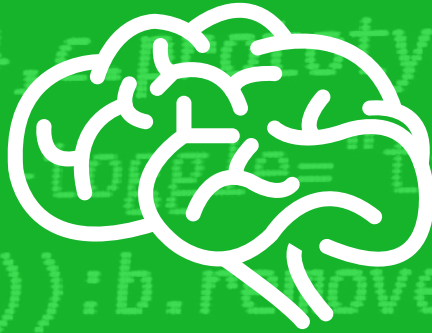
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E-LEARNING

E-LEARNING: AN INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

In 2018, the E-Learning Market was valued at around USD 190 billion, and it's expected to continue to grow at a CAGR of **7%** from 2019 to 2025.

190 BILLION



7% GROWTH

In recent years, online education has grown steadily at an international level. We can attribute it to the global adoption of the internet, and the fast-paced evolution of our technology and of our culture.

It's harder than ever for students and for professionals to keep up with the latest there's to know about their discipline. So e-learning becomes the

***FASTEST, EASIEST, MOST DYNAMIC AND
COST-EFFECTIVE***

way to receive extra training – or to acquire the core skills they need to embark in their desired professional journey.

According to “Online Education: Worldwide Status, Challenges, Trends, and Implications”, a study by Palvia et al published in a 2018 issue of the Journal of Global Information Technology Management:

“...The growth of online enrollments in the U.S. has increased for the 14th consecutive year irrespective of an expanding or shrinking economy and rising or declining overall college enrollments. At the same time, the number of students exclusively taking face-to-face classes on a brick and mortar campus has been dropping (...) In 2016, there were over 6 million students in the U.S. who enrolled in at least one online course (...) and **the proportion of students enrolled in at least one online course has risen to over 30%...**”

In the United States, remote education is rising as a substitute for regular college education.

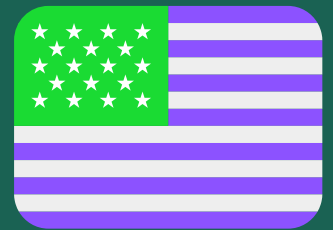
This can be attributed to the **high and increasing cost of higher education in the United States** as well as to the adoption of a pace of life that leaves those already in the workforce with little time to continue their education in a conventional way.



E-learning was integrated into educational programs in the United States as early as 1998, with initiatives such as New York University's NYU Online. NYU Online, like many others, failed. These programs were soon replaced by hybrid programs, combining online educational exchanges (video lessons, chat rooms) and in-person classes.



One could state that almost all educational programs in Major Universities are hybrid programs, since, nowadays, integrating digital communication channels and platforms is a rather standard way to enhance the educational experience.



Australia was also a rather early adopter of online education programs, with pioneering ventures like Open Universities Australia, a partnership of leading educational institutions, established in the early 2000s. The greatest challenge Australia has is the lack of uniformity in bandwidth connectivity across the nation. To bridge this gap, the synchronization of online and offline content should be refined.

India, on the other hand, is relatively new in the game, but it's fully embracing a future of refined platforms with intelligently designed user experiences, a gamified learning process, peer-to-peer learning and online mapping. According to the aforementioned study, *"the online education system in India currently stands at US \$247 million with an average of 1.6 million users; it is expected to grow to US \$1.96 billion with around 9.6 million users by 2021"*.



Many factors contribute to this favorable landscape. Some of them are:



Outstanding growth in internet and smartphone penetration



Favorable government policies, as well as government-run e-learning initiatives



Growing demand from professionals (both working and job-seeking) as well as from advanced students

The thriving e-learning sector in India can be interpreted as the absolute opposite to the e-learning sector in the MENA region.

In the Middle East and North Africa, internet penetration is rather low, online learning is viewed with distrust, and online educational programs by praised foreign institutions are rarely available in Arabic.

Regardless, some e-learning projects by universities partnering up with governments are very slowly gaining traction. But there's still much to be done. This is also the case for South Africa and Ghana, with the sector progressing in spite of regulatory difficulties. But this shouldn't be interpreted as an unchanging state of affairs, wherever there is an underserved demographic or a technology that hasn't been seized to its full potential, there's a chance for growth.

E-LEARNING: ASSESSING EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES

Conduct a thorough analysis of potential targets for expansion.



What are your geographically closer underserved demographics?



What about countries you're closed to in cultural or linguistic terms?

You can go regional or look for underserved students in completely different parts of the world. Regardless, **collect information from reliable sources, such as consultancies, industry journals, media outlets from your target demographic that provide throughout, rigorous market coverage.** And, of course, start networking and discussing with potential allies from your target locale.

Thanks to technology, you won't even have to set foot on your target region to get insider insight. Research relevant potential partners in your target region and reach out to the right people through LinkedIn or via email.



To make a general assessment of your target market and your possible place in it, we recommend using two models: the **PESTEL** model (to analyze the macro) and the **SWOT** model (to assess your company's place in this new setting).

MARKET ANALYSIS



COMPANY ANALYSIS WITHIN THE MARKET



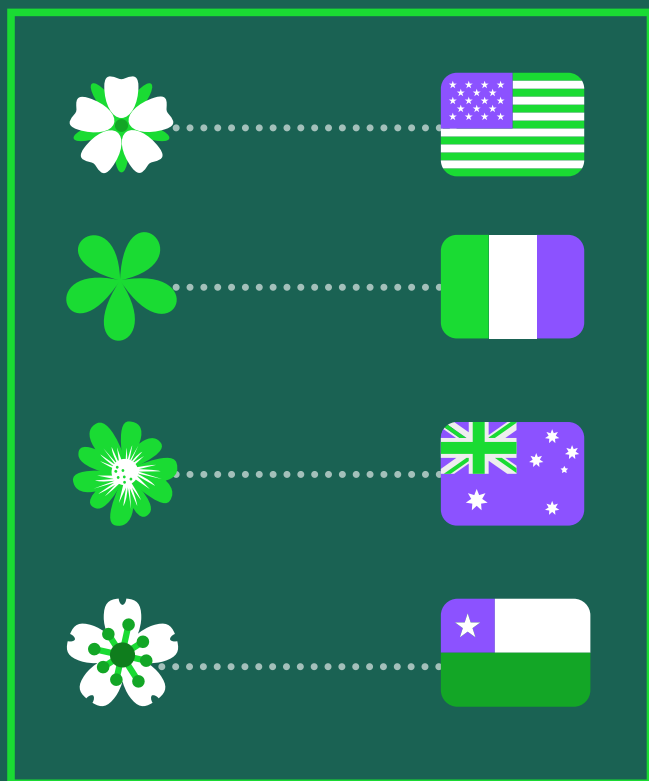
Once you've fully understood your context, and decided that it's favorable, it's time to set actionable short-term, mid-term and long-term goals, among them those related to how your product will need to be adapted to succeed abroad. **And yes, adapting your product will be necessary.**

E-LEARNING:

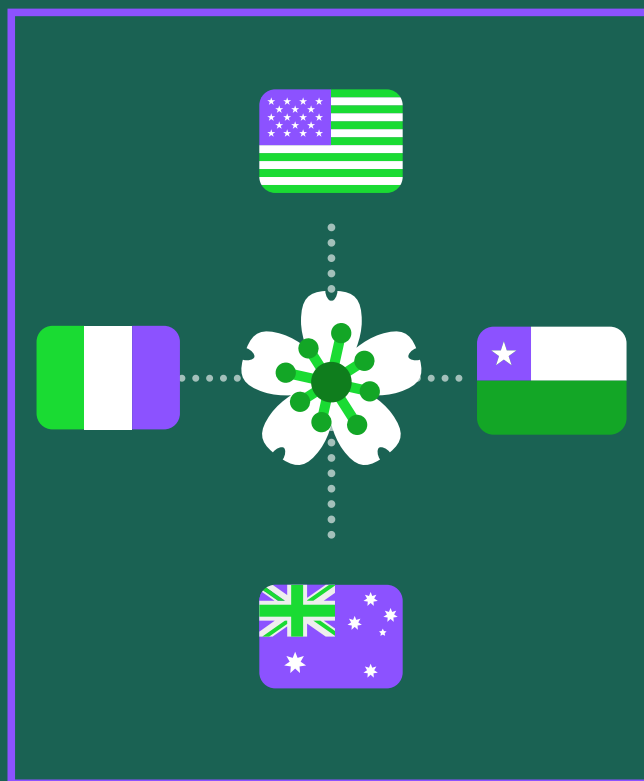
PLATFORM LOCALIZATION VS. PLATFORM INTERNATIONALIZATION

TRANSLATION ISN'T ENOUGH

For a successful expansion, we should translate our platform into the language/s of our target demographic – **But translation isn't enough.** There are many aspects of our interface that should be adapted for our new audience.



LOCALIZATION



INTERNATIONALIZATION

THESE ASPECTS ARE TAKEN CARE OF THROUGH LOCALIZATION AND INTERNATIONALIZATION.

When we **localize** a product, we make the necessary changes so it blends within the culture of our target demographic, so it's fully assimilated.

When we **internationalize** a product, on the other hand, we make the necessary changes so it can compete at an international scale without being recognized as the product of a specific culture.



Basically, in localization we embrace a certain culture and change according to the standards it sets. And, when we internationalize, we do the opposite: *We remove characteristic cultural cues and change in favor of neutrality.* **Internationalization helps us create a template, a base for the product to be localized while remaining consistent and recognizable.**

SURPASSING THE CHALLENGE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

In a 2016 study, Malaysian scholars Hazwani Nordin and Dalbir Singh proposed a potential methodological approach to surpass some of the main challenges of internationalization.



Two of the main challenges are:

- **A culturally “neutral” interface looks differently depending on who you ask.** Since our culture is to us like water is to fish, web developers often insert elements of their own culture into the “neutral” interface, without noticing it.
- **A lack of common, homogenous standards for international website design**

Considering the complexities, cultural awareness and integral vision that localization and internationalization require, these processes are best left in the hands of professionals. That way, its high costs will become high ROIs.



INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

THE GLOBALIZATION OF EDUCATION

INTERNATIONAL STUDY PROGRAMS

The offer of study abroad programs is rich and diverse, with quality options for students for almost all levels. Some programs are developed by leading academic institutions, to foster international research and knowledge-production.

Other programs, from community as well as academic institutions, have cultural exchange as its main goal. Brief programs designed to immerse students in their second language are also numerous and worth mentioning.



The perks of studying abroad go beyond building an international resume. According to more than 40 years of research, international academic experiences facilitate **international awareness, language learning** and cross-cultural communication, **civic engagement**, enhance **self-confidence**, and ignite **creativity**.

For instance, according to research published in the Journal of Applied Business and Economics in 2017,

“

*“The literature and data indicates that **international study between the US and China is beneficial to both countries.** The economic worth of Chinese students increases, while both the US and China as nations benefit, and there seems to be a **correlation between Chinese students who study abroad in the US and China’s GDP.** In the future, China should promote study abroad for their students and determine measurable outcomes to assess the benefits more objectively. **As the bridge between the China and the USA strengthens the benefit to both countries increases.**”*

”

Web 3.0 gives us a refined, cost-effective toolkit to engage students who might be interested in growing within their field of expertise, immerse in their second-language, or add international experience or credentials to their resume.

Marketing your program at an international scale can be challenging, with every aspect of your strategy raising several questions. In the next section, we’ll touch on some key aspects of international marketing strategy.



EDUCATION MARKETING AT AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE

MULTIPLE CHANNELS, MULTIPLE DATA SOURCES

Once you've decided which markets to target, one of the most important processes you should embark on is that of designing a winning marketing strategy. Two of the main advantages of this stage of digital marketing is that we can count on **several channels to deliver our message** and promote our product, and we can easily **gather and evaluate data**. In consequence, our campaigns can be versatile, informed by data, and easy to optimize.



SOCIAL
MEDIA



INSIGHTS



COMPANY
BLOG



INSIGHTS



EMAIL
CAMPAIGNS



INSIGHTS



PAID
ADVERTISING



INSIGHTS

Make sure you revise your digital marketing strategy periodically, and treat all data as actionable information.

The availability and ease of collecting information isn't exclusive to campaign design and implementation. Collect insights on your new target demographics, the social media platforms they're in, and the publications and influencers they trust. All these are potential marketing channels.

Reaffirm your value proposition, and assess it considering cultural factors. Culture conduces marketing, and you probably don't have to leave your home country to see evidence for it.

CULTURALLY-INFLUENCED RECEPTIVENESS

For instance, a 2015 study by University of Sydney Scholars found that Asian Americans are especially receptive to marketing messages that highlight the disadvantages or costs of not acquiring a product or service. Be aware of cultural preferences and frame your message accordingly.



YOUR CROSS-CULTURAL ALLIES



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