

## Localization of media-rich interactive ads

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### **Abstract**

At a time when media convergence has become a reality online advertising agencies are more and more often confronted with problems that used to affect the TV-based advertising agencies. With the spreading of streaming video, podcasts and interactive video technologies, all of a sudden websites and online ads are full of life, but this requires the rethinking of the text-centric localization processes, to move the focus to the audio/visual elements, that introduce an additional parameter to be considered during the localization process: media synchronization in time.

The typical fordistic localization process where the text is translated first and then it is fed in the various media is not suitable for this type of products. Multidimensional translation has to be combined with interactive design and media localization techniques, to provide effective multilingual communication, able to stand the quality of traditional audiovisual products. And it is precisely the issue of changing localization processes within the media-rich and online advertising industry that the authors try to tackle by sharing their day to day experiences and acquired knowledge to work out a model for designing the most appropriate process for the localization of international campaigns and online content in the age of media convergence.

The paper gives a brief overview of how the online communication is localized, illustrating the most common processes used in the industry. The authors move on to explain how the media-rich contents is changing the face of localization in terms of resources, skills and processes needed to be integrated in the workflow, to address the ever-increasing use of interaction, subtitling, video, dubbing and voiceovers.

A theoretical framework is proposed, where media-rich scenes are divided into 5 main components (audio, video, graphics, static and dynamic on screen text , interactive items), which are then weighted by relating them with 4 main types of constraint (space, time, cultural functional).

Once 3 additional parameters (time, cost, and amounts) are introduced, it is possible to define the driving localization components, that are those components that shape the localization process. Examples of the application of this model are provided.

The aim of this work is to provide a useful theoretical framework to communication designers, localization managers, local marketing managers, and more generally to the people involved in the production and localization of global communication products.

### **Introduction**

In a global communication world, industrialization is a must. An appropriate understanding of the production and localization processes is the key to give the consumer an exciting, consistent and interactive experience, while containing costs for the advertiser.

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A theoretical framework is proposed, where media-rich scenes are divided into 5 main components (audio, video, graphics, static and dynamic on screen text , interactive items), which are then weighted by relating them with 4 main types of constraint (space, time, cultural functional). Once 3 additional parameters (time, cost, and amounts) are introduced, it is possible to define the driving localization components, that are those components that shape the localization process.

### **Multimedia scenes: a combination of 5 text-containing components and 4 constraints**

In principle all multimedia scenes are built with 5 multimedia components which can contain text:

1. Audio: the spoken text
2. Video: subtitles and other overlaid graphic text
3. Raster graphics: the static text contained in the pictures and screen shots
4. Software - on screen text: the text dynamically displayed by the content presentation system
5. Software - interactive elements: the text contained into the elements that are devoted to interacting with the multimedia product, i.e. buttons, menus, dialogues, input fields.

Except for the audio component, all the others form the visual scene on screen.

The localization of each component requires a separate *production line*, and specific *quality controls* (QA) defined according to the type of constraints affecting each component.

When localizing each component, the text must be translated taking into account **4 types of constraints**

1. Space constraints
2. Time constraints
3. Cultural constraints
4. Functional constraints

The importance of each constraint varies from product to product, according to the combination of components in each scene, and causes the role (weight) of each component to change in the design of the production method.

The table below outlines the influence of each constraint on the translation of the text contained in each component.

#### **1) Space constraints**

Space constraint influence on translation of:				
Audio	Video	Graphics	On screen text (software)	Interface elements (software)
Usually not influenced by this constraint.	Subtitles: very space-constrained (typical: 36 chars on max 3 lines). Graphics: very limited. May need insertion between source lines. This is often a critical component.	Static visual elements always have a limited amount of space for displaying.	Dynamic text may be displayed in boxes that allow for expansion or scroll, this influences the strength of the constraint.	Short sets of specific words can become much longer or shorter when translated, and consistency is a must. This is often a critical component:

**2) Time constraints**

Time constraints influence on translation of:				
Audio	Video	Graphics	On screen text (software)	Interface elements (software)
Sound is usually synchronized with the action on screen: translation should account for total length of presentation and intermediate cue points as well	Amount of text displayed depends on the amount of time available for displaying it	Influenced if the audio or video text refers explicitly to the content of the graphics	Influenced if the audio or video text refers explicitly to the content of the on screen text	These are usually not influenced.

**3) Cultural constraints**

Cultural constraints influence on translation of:				
Audio	Video	Graphics	On screen text (software)	Interface elements (software)
Influenced in terms of: - speaker's pace - actor's gender - text (may need rewriting) - accents	Subtitles are influenced in terms of: - subtitling style - text (may need rewriting)	Influenced in terms of: - content layout - screen shoots (for products that contain references to screen action) - fonts - text (may need rewriting)	Influenced in terms of - content layout (may need resize and re-position) - text (may need rewriting)	Influenced if software functions vary from locale to locale

**4) Functional constraints**

Functional constraint influence on translation of:				
Audio text	Video text	Graphics text	On screen text (software)	Interface elements (software)
Influenced only if the text references functional elements	The text appearing in a video is very limited (typical values 36 chars on max 3 lines).  In case the video text coincides with part of the on screen text, the on screen text length is affected by the video text	Influenced if the on screen text refers explicitly to the content of the graphics	Influenced if the text refers to the functions of the software	Influenced in terms of text that needs rewriting to account for the localized functions of the software

Figure 1 describes in a simplified way, the production lines for localizing each component. The influence of the constraints on each component is also displayed.

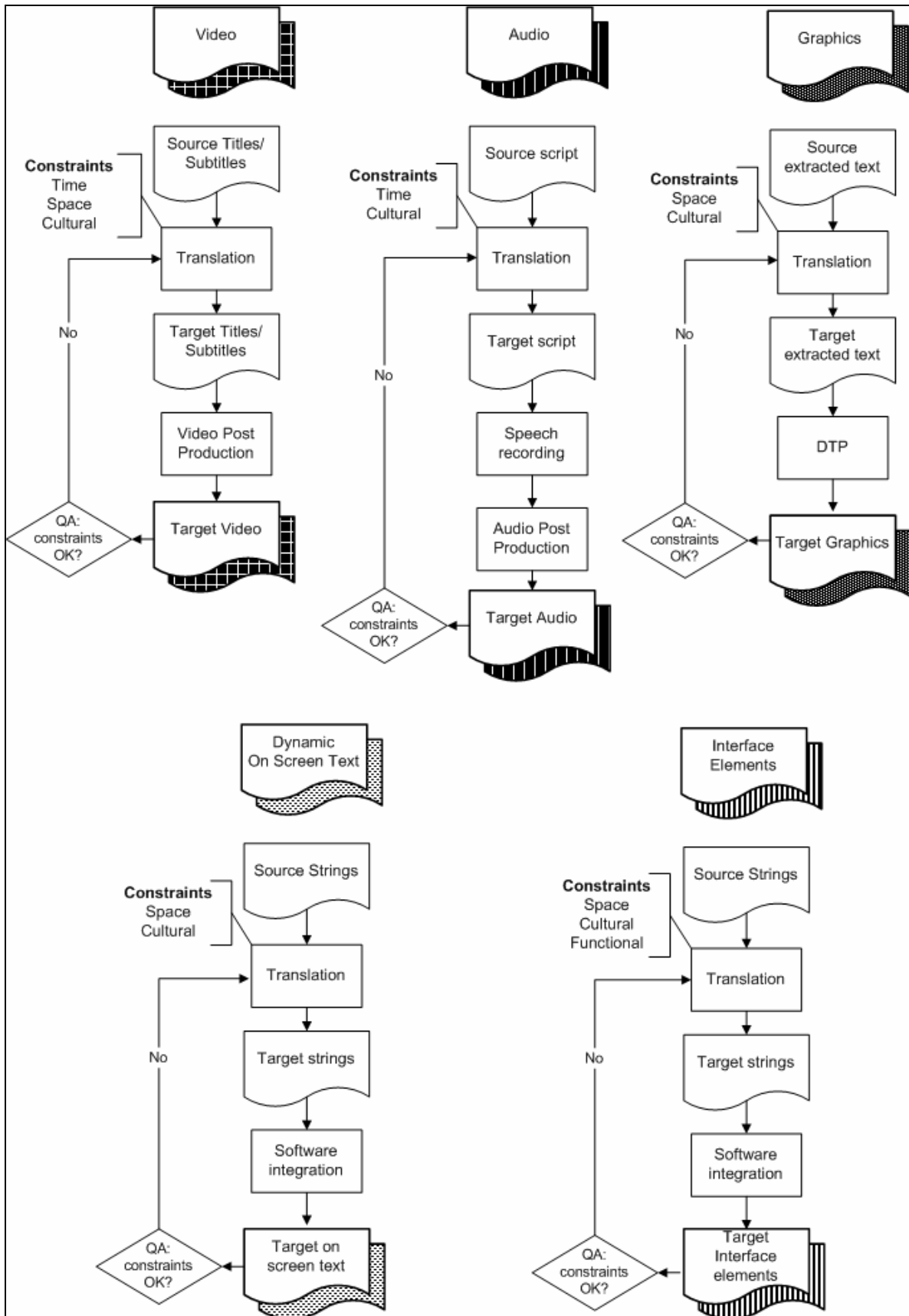


Figure 1: components, production lines and constraints

























