

# The Complete Guide to App Localization



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You have just developed a successful mobile app in your home country.

Even though it's a national chart-topper, if you are not making efforts to adapt your app or game to other countries, chances are that you are missing out on potential target markets as well as restricting your app from appealing to people in different countries.

**Mobile app localization** is thus vital to expand your app globally and reach a larger number of people.

So how do you localize your app or game? Which markets are the most interesting to pursue? What should you consider when localizing your app or game for a specific market?

**AppTweak** has gathered all the information you need to answer these questions, alongside the tips you should know to successfully localize your app or game in any chosen market.



# 1. What is App Localization?

**App localization** is the process of adapting your app's textual and visual elements for all the different languages and cultures that you want to target.



Localization is more than simply translating your app text – it is rather analyzing the cultural differences between markets that might affect search behaviors, mobile preferences, and competitive landscapes around the world.

The process implies an in-depth understanding of the target market's cultural norms, societal attitudes, and unique views on the content of the app or game.

Adapting your app or game to a specific country, culture, and population encompasses four levels:

1

**Minimum Viable Translation:** Translation of app name, subtitle, and short description in the target language with a translation tool.

2

**Keyword Research and Localization of Metadata:** Keyword optimization in target language and professional translation.

3

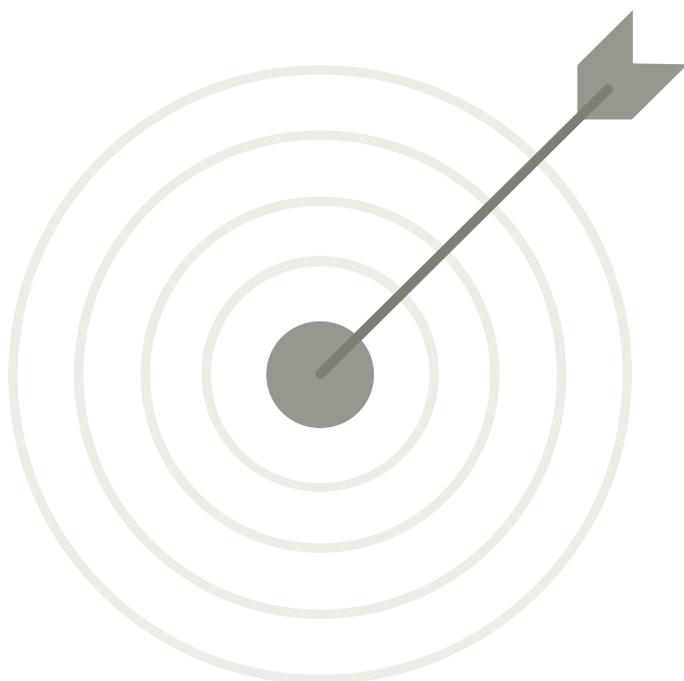
**Culturalization of Creatives:** Text on screenshots / icon / video in the target language and appealing graphics for users.

4

**Culturalization of In-App Content:** In-app text translated to the target language and culturalization of visual content and elements.

Minimum Viable Translation is the most basic level in app store localization process, where you translate the metadata, description, and keywords into the target language of the market you want to enter. It is beneficial to a certain degree in terms of search visibility.

But in order to boost your app visibility in a new market, it is important to conduct keyword research, optimize your app for that specific locale, and adapt your creatives and in-app content specific to the target market.





## 2. Why is Localization Important?

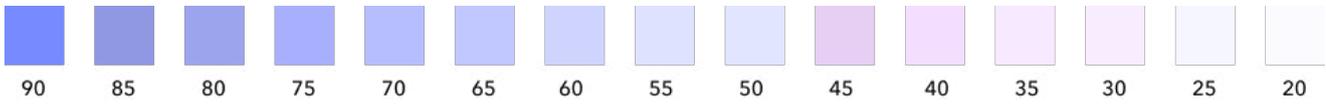
App localization is important to increase the visibility of your app in foreign markets. With localization, you have a greater chance to break into the mobile app markets of those countries that are generally less proficient in English, such as Japan or China.

In fact, 8 of the top 10 markets for iOS downloads and 9 of the top 10 markets for Google Play downloads are non-native English markets. Moreover, although some major countries, such as France, Germany, and Italy, are highly proficient in English, most users (about 65%) still prefer to read content in their native language and search the app stores using local keywords.

Having a localized app store presence can also help you improve your chances of being featured on international app stores, break cultural and linguistic barriers, succeed in new markets, and increase conversion.

From the following two examples, we can see localization's high impact potential. Yet, many apps have not implemented it as an ASO strategy. After conducting an analysis of the top 20 apps in various categories and across multiple markets in the App Store, we found that only around 50% of apps have localized their subtitles, while a little over 80% localized their long descriptions.

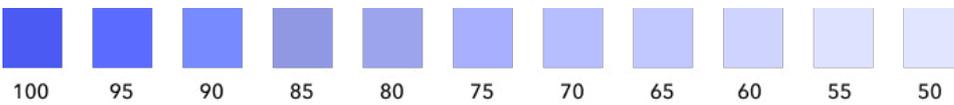




### Localized Subtitle

Category	France	Germany	Spain	Italy	Brazil	Japan	Korea	Mexico	Portugal	Russia	Average per Category
Education	70%	70%	35%	65%	55%	70%	65%	55%	55%	50%	59%
Entertainment	60%	45%	20%	35%	25%	90%	45%	20%	30%	75%	45%
Food & Drink	50%	55%	30%	40%	40%	55%	40%	40%	25%	90%	47%
Health & Fitness	80%	70%	40%	55%	55%	75%	85%	65%	40%	65%	63%
Music	55%	50%	65%	70%	60%	90%	60%	55%	45%	80%	63%
News	65%	55%	50%	30%	30%	90%	40%	60%	30%	65%	52%
Shopping	45%	60%	50%	60%	45%	75%	75%	50%	30%	80%	57%
Social Networking	60%	45%	35%	45%	25%	75%	55%	40%	50%	70%	50%
Travel	60%	50%	50%	65%	60%	65%	75%	70%	45%	70%	61%
Game Action	45%	40%	20%	45%	45%	70%	60%	25%	30%	45%	43%
Game Casual	40%	35%	30%	40%	25%	75%	50%	25%	30%	25%	38%
Game Puzzle	55%	50%	60%	60%	50%	75%	75%	40%	60%	50%	58%
Game Role Playing	35%	50%	35%	45%	55%	60%	75%	55%	35%	50%	50%
Games	20%	30%	35%	40%	30%	65%	65%	20%	35%	50%	39%
Average per Country	53%	50%	40%	50%	43%	74%	62%	44%	39%	62%	52%

Table showing the percentage of apps in the top 20 that have localized their subtitle in the App Store per category and country. Source: AppTweak, December 2020



### Localized Long Description

Category	France	Germany	Spain	Italy	Brazil	Japan	Korea	Mexico	Portugal	Russia	Average per Category
Education	100%	90%	100%	90%	85%	100%	100%	95%	75%	85%	92%
Entertainment	90%	80%	85%	90%	80%	100%	90%	80%	75%	80%	85%
Food & Drink	100%	100%	100%	95%	100%	100%	95%	100%	85%	100%	98%
Health & Fitness	100%	95%	85%	85%	80%	100%	100%	90%	70%	90%	90%
Music	90%	95%	85%	95%	90%	90%	95%	75%	75%	95%	89%
News	95%	95%	80%	90%	65%	95%	65%	70%	90%	90%	84%
Shopping	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%	100%	100%	100%	85%	100%	98%
Social Networking	95%	75%	75%	75%	65%	100%	90%	75%	85%	95%	83%
Travel	95%	100%	100%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%	100%	99%
Game Action	75%	70%	80%	65%	75%	95%	80%	65%	70%	85%	76%
Game Casual	65%	65%	55%	60%	55%	85%	75%	65%	60%	65%	65%
Game Puzzle	70%	65%	70%	70%	55%	85%	80%	50%	70%	70%	69%
Game Role Playing	75%	80%	80%	70%	75%	100%	100%	90%	70%	75%	82%
Games	55%	50%	70%	60%	55%	85%	85%	60%	65%	65%	65%
Average per Country	86%	83%	83%	81%	77%	95%	90%	80%	76%	85%	84%

Table showing the percentage of apps in the top 20 that have localized their long description in the App Store per category and country. Source: AppTweak, December 2020



# 3.How to Decide Which Languages to Localize Your App or Game In

Today, the **App Store** is available in **39 locales** and **Google Play** in **77 locales**. “Locales” are the languages (represented as a two-character code in lower-case) matched to a country (represented as a two-character code in upper-case).

We use the term “locale” rather than language to differentiate dialects of the same language. US English appears as “en-US”, while British English appears as “en-UK.”

App Store : 39 Localizations 		
Arabic	French	Polish
Catalan	French (Canada)	Portuguese (Brazil)
Chinese (Simplified)	German	Portuguese (Portugal)
Chinese (Traditional)	Greek	Romanian
Croatian	Hebrew	Russian
Czech	Hindi	Slovak
Danish	Hungarian	Spanish (Mexico)
Dutch	Indonesian	Spanish (Spain)
English (Australia)	Italian	Swedish
English (Canada)	Japanese	Thai
English (U.K.)	Korean	Turkish
English (U.S.)	Malay	Ukrainian
Finnish	Norwegian	Vietnamese

## Google Play : 77 Localizations



Afrikaans - af	Filipino - fil	Mongolian - mn-MN
Amharic - am	Finnish - fi-FI	Nepali - ne-NP
Arabic - ar	French - fr-FR	Norwegian - no-NO
Armenian - hy-AM	French (Canada) - fr-CA	Persian - fa
Azerbaijani - az-AZ	Galician - gl-ES	Polish - pl-PL
Bangla - bn-BD	Georgian - ka-G	Portuguese (Brazil) - pt-BR
Basque - eu-ES	German - de-DE	Portuguese (Portugal) - pt-PT
Belarusian - be	Greek - el-GR	Romanian - ro
Bulgarian - bg	Hebrew - iw-IL	Romansh - rm
Burmese - my-MM	Hindi - hi-IN	Russian - ru-RU
Catalan - ca	Hungarian - hu-HU	Serbian - sr
Chinese (Hong Kong) - zh-HK	Icelandic - is-IS	Sinhala - si-LK
Chinese (Simplified) - zh-CN	Indonesian - id	Slovak - sk
Chinese (Traditional) - zh-TW	Italian - it-IT	Slovenian - sl
Croatian - hr	Japanese - ja-JP	Spanish (Latin America) - es-419
Czech - cs-CZ	Kannada - kn-IN	Spanish (Spain) - es-ES
Danish - da-DK	Khmer - km-KH	Spanish (United States) - es-US
Dutch - nl-NL	Korean (South Korea) - ko-KR	Swahili - sw
English - en-AU	Kyrgyz - ky-KG	Swedish - sv-SE
English - en-IN	Lao - lo-LA	Tamil - ta-IN
English - en-SG	Latvian - lv	Telugu - te-IN
English - en-ZA	Lithuanian - lt	Thai - th
English (Canada) - en-CA	Macedonian - mk-MK	Turkish - tr-TR
English (United Kingdom) - en-GB	Malay - ms	Ukrainian - uk
English (United States) - en-US	Malayalam - ml-IN	Vietnamese - vi
Estonian - et	Marathi - mr-IN	Zulu - zu

So, how should you pick the language (or set of languages) that will be the most impactful and beneficial for your app or game? While making this decision, it is good to keep in mind the total addressable market size, monetization capabilities, app genre, and available internal resources.

- **Localize for languages used by your customers:** The most effective element is to know the languages that your app or game is already popular in. Have a look at where your app is currently gaining traction despite not being localized yet.

By looking at data from your app analytics, you can determine how many new or active users your app has per language and country, as well as determine the markets from where your app gets the most downloads or ratings and reviews.

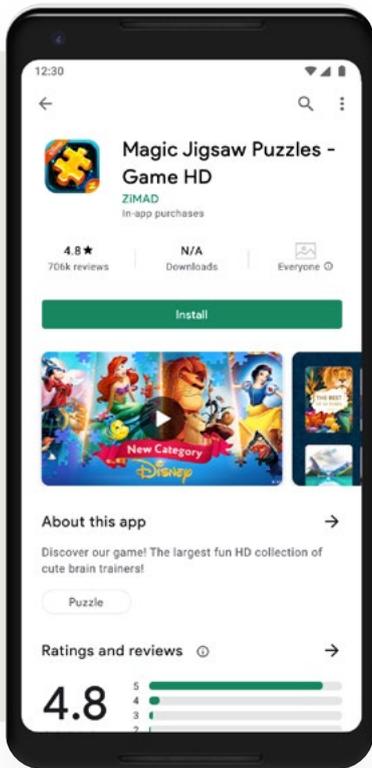
For instance, if your app gains a consistent and considerable number

of downloads in Germany, this would suggest that localizing in German would attract even more users, even if German is not necessarily the most widely spoken language in the world. Knowing where your potential users are located can give you an idea of where to localize your app first.

- **Determine the markets that your competitors are localized for:** Learn from your competitors and find out which markets they have been able to conquer successfully. This exercise can help you understand which markets are familiar with your product or gameplay.



For example, you have developed a new jigsaw puzzle game. To prioritize which countries to localize first, you should research the top-performing jigsaw puzzle games and analyze the country where these games are most popular or have shown the most growth. In this case, it would make sense for you to prioritize localizing your game in Brazil and Russia first.



Country	Total Downloads ?
Pakistan	95205
India	88836
Brazil	78774
Russian Federation	61401
United States	57917
Colombia	56355
Argentina	40468
Mexico	38794
Peru	38297
Egypt	31206

Total download estimates for Magic Jigsaw Puzzle on Google Play in September 2021. AppTweak's Analytics feature provides download and revenue estimates for any app in any country. Source: [app.apptweak.com](http://app.apptweak.com)

• **Localize in markets with the highest revenue market share:** You can also gather some external data and consider revenue per market and market growth rate. The markets with the highest download shares do not always generate the highest revenue. Sometimes, it might be tempting to translate your app into a language just because its market is huge.

However, this may not necessarily be the right approach to take.

If a market is big but you feel that the population would not necessarily pay for your app, it would not be worth localizing your app into that market or language.

In this example, it is interesting to analyze revenue market share in the Games Puzzle category to further prioritize which countries to localize your jigsaw puzzle game into. Based on this information, it would make sense to localize your game in Japan, Germany, and South Korea.

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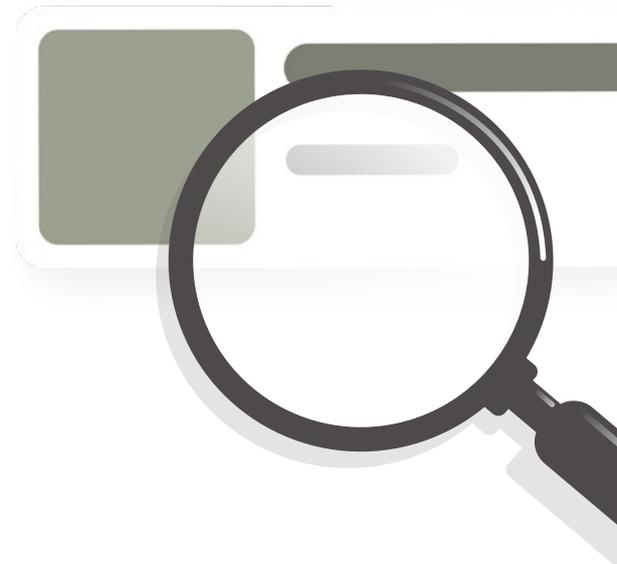
Country	Total Downloads	Download share	YoY growth	Total Revenue	Revenue Share	YoY Growth
All countries	323M	100%	▼-9.9%	USD 140M	100%	▲10%
United States	25.7M	7.9%	▼-20%	USD 79.4M	57%	▲11%
Japan	3.73M	1.2%	▼-14%	USD 13.5M	9.7%	▲10%
Germany	5.95M	1.8%	▼-7.6%	USD 8.38M	6%	▲6.1%
Korea, Republic Of	4.08M	1.3%	▼-22%	USD 5.09M	3.6%	▲12%
Canada	2.23M	0.69%	▼-14%	USD 4.4M	3.1%	▲15%
Australia	1.43M	0.44%	▼-22%	USD 3.01M	2.1%	▲1%
France	4.96M	1.5%	▼-23%	USD 2.44M	1.7%	▲9.2%
Russian Federation	17.2M	5.3%	▼-15%	USD 2.33M	1.7%	▼-4.4%
Taiwan	1.25M	0.39%	▼-23%	USD 1.48M	1.1%	▼-11%
Italy	5.08M	1.6%	▼-1.9%	USD 1.41M	1%	▼-3.2%

Total download and revenue estimates for the Games Puzzle Category on Google Play in September 2021. AppTweak's Market Intelligence provides download and revenue estimates for all app and game categories across major countries. Source: [app.apptweak.com](http://app.apptweak.com)

# 4. How to Create an Effective App Localization Strategy

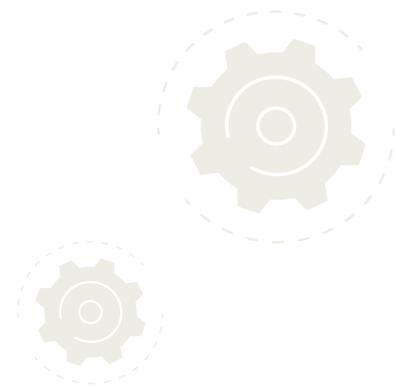
In order to build an effective app localization strategy for both keyword and creative optimization, let us look at some key factors:

- **An in-depth analysis of the trends and cultural differences of the target country** ensures that your visuals and text convey the intended message. Localizing your app or game well will help it resonate with the target users and drive downloads and positive reviews. On the other hand, a poorly localized app or game can have the opposite effect. As a result, thorough research is extremely important.
- **Research can help you produce the right app visuals** that are localized to the specific country you are targeting. This is important as there are so many elements to consider, such as codes, color nuances, type of fonts, different spellings of a word, and tone of voice.
- **As for keywords, it is very important to choose the most appropriate ones to the market you are targeting** because a keyword can be very popular in one country but not so much in another. Also, in many languages, the same word can be expressed in different ways (formal vs. informal) and even using completely different spellings. For example, in Japanese, “puzzle” can be “パズル” (formal) or “ぱずる” (informal). Hence, knowing which version of the word to use and where is extremely important.



# 4.1. How to Conduct Keyword Research and Craft Metadata in a Foreign Language

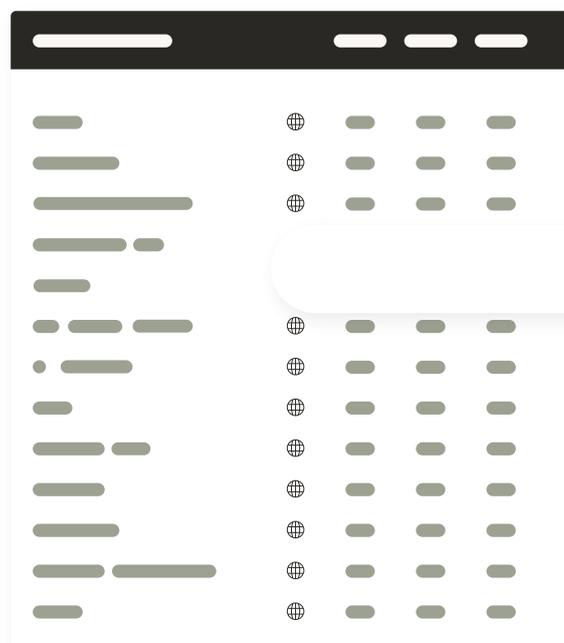
To boost your app visibility in a new market, it is important to conduct keyword research and optimize your app for that specific locale.



## 1. Create a Semantic Dictionary

The semantic dictionary, a bulk list of keywords (about 100–200 per app/country/language), should include the most relevant terms for your app – terms that are directly or indirectly linked to your app’s genre and purpose. Your semantic dictionary should, therefore, include any potential search queries that would lead to your app.

You could start by building a semantic dictionary in your mother tongue and translating it into the target language. However, you would find more relevant and high-volume keywords if you built a keyword list from scratch in the local language.



While compiling your semantic dictionary, you'll find it nearly impossible to create a relevant list of keywords without speaking the language. AppTweak has several keyword suggestion tools that can help with this research:

- **Top Search Terms:** A list of 50 keywords that are estimated to drive most traffic to any app.

- **Search Ads Recommendations:** Enter any word into this tool and get a list of related Search Ads keywords for any app.

- **Opportunity Keywords Identifier:** Find the keywords that you are not currently ranking on, but your competitors do!

- **Top Growth Keywords:** Discover keywords with the largest growth and loss in search popularity over time for any country

Чудо Пазлы - Игры Головоломки

1. пазлы (en) puzzles	14. puzzel games (en) puzzle games	27. коллекция пазлов (en) collection of puzzles	40. пазлы для взрослых гол... (en) jigsaw puzzles for adults
2. puzzle games (en) puzzle games	15. magic jigsaw puzzles (en) magic jigsaw puzzles	28. rompecabezas mágicos (en) magic puzzles	41. puzzl (en) puzzl
3. jigsaw puzzle (en) jigsaw puzzle	16. puzzle store (en) puzzle store	29. пазл картинка сотнями (en) puzzle picture of hundred:	42. красивые игры пазлы (en) beautiful puzzle games
4. чудо пазлы (en) miracle puzzles	17. rompecabezas épicos (en) epic puzzles	30. игры головоломки пазлы (en) jigsaw puzzle games	43. pazl (en) pazl
5. игры чудо пазлы (en) puzzle games miracle	18. пазлы головоломки для... (en) jigsaw puzzles for adults	31. собирать пазлы (en) collect puzzles	44. игра пазлы для взрослых (en) puzzle game for adults
6. пазлы для взрослых (en) puzzles for adults	19. бесплатно пазлы (en) free puzzles	32. тапать пазлы (en) tap jigsaw puzzles	45. пазл для взрослых (en) puzzle for adults
7. чудо пазлы онлайн (en) miracle jigsaw puzzles onl	20. puzzle (en) puzzle	33. пазлы пазлы (en) jigsaw puzzles	46. головоломки пазлы (en) jigsaw puzzles
8. паззлы (en) jigsaw puzzles	21. пазлы бесплатно (en) puzzles for free	34. пазлы игры скачать (en) puzzle games download	47. пазлы для взрослых без... (en) puzzles for adults without
9. пазл (en) puzzled	22. игры пазлы фото голов... (en) puzzle games photo puzzl	35. игра взрослые пазлы (en) adult puzzle game	48. jigsaw puzzles (en) jigsaw puzzles
10. пазл (en) Puzzle	23. конфетки чудо пазлы (en) candy miracle puzzles	36. игры пазлы бесплатно (en) puzzle games for free	49. пазлы для врослыпазлы... (en) adult puzzles

AppTweak's Top Search Terms feature shows Magic Jigsaw Puzzle's most popular keywords. In one click, you can add these keywords to your keyword list (semantic dictionary) to analyze keyword volume and other KPIs.

**AppTweak also translates any keyword** in a foreign language into English. This means that when you are doing your keyword research in a language you are not familiar with, you can translate our suggestions **to English in just a click!** This will help you know exactly which keywords make the most sense to add to your analysis.

## 2. Prioritize Your Keywords



Once you have built your semantic dictionary you need to sort through your keyword list and select a handful of keywords to target in your metadata. Keep the following tips in mind when selecting your top priority keywords:

- Choose keywords that are most relevant to your app and describe your app's main features or functionality
- Choose keywords with a medium or high volume
- Choose keywords with low to medium competition

Selecting keywords with high volume and low competition is easy with AppTweak's keyword metrics – Volume, Difficulty, and Chance.

• **Volume:** An indicator of how popular a keyword is in terms of searches. The metric varies between 5 and 100. The closer the volume is to 100, the more frequent that users search for this keyword.

• **Difficulty:** An indicator that represents how much competition exists for a specific keyword. When a

keyword has a high difficulty score, it implies that many powerful apps rank for that keyword.

• **Chance:** An indicator that estimates how likely a certain app is to rank in the top 10 for a keyword, given the app's current authority in the store.

Keywords	Vol.	Diff.	Chance	Rank	Installs	Inst. %	Display
★ пазлы (en) puzzles	54	37	86	1	1,567	30.03%	Live Search ✕
★ пазлы для взро... (en) puzzles for adults	43	26	92	2	399	16.83%	Live Search ✕
★ пазл (en) Puzzle	37	46	80	2	406	23.04%	Live Search ✕
★ мозайка (en) mosaic	31	1	99	40	2	0.18%	Live Search ✕
★ чудо пазлы (en) wonder puzzles	22	33	88	1	328	54.67%	Live Search ✕
★ пазлы бесплатно (en) puzzles for free	16	23	93	2	23	6.01%	Live Search ✕

### 3. Hire a Native Speaker



To make sure your message is accurately conveyed, we recommend hiring a native speaker to write your metadata. It is important to provide the translator with your list of target keywords, so that they can include those specific terms in the metadata suggestions.

To get the most out of your translator, it is essential to extend the necessary information about your app or game to the linguist. The more information you provide, the greater understanding the translator will have of your app or game.

This, in turn, will increase the quality of your localized metadata and allow your app to further resonate with your target users.

### 4. Monitor, Iterate, Update, and Repeat

When you have launched your new app update with your localized keywords, wait about 4 to 6 weeks before tracking the results.

It is crucial to regularly update your app to stay acquainted with the latest algorithm changes and effectively outrank your competitors.

Both the App Store and Google Play are fast-evolving ecosystems in which trends and rankings change constantly.



## 4.2. How to Optimize Your Creatives for App Localization

Localization involves working on your app's content itself, namely creatives and in-app content. This is called “culturalization”.

Here are some cardinal elements to keep in mind when localizing your app store page:



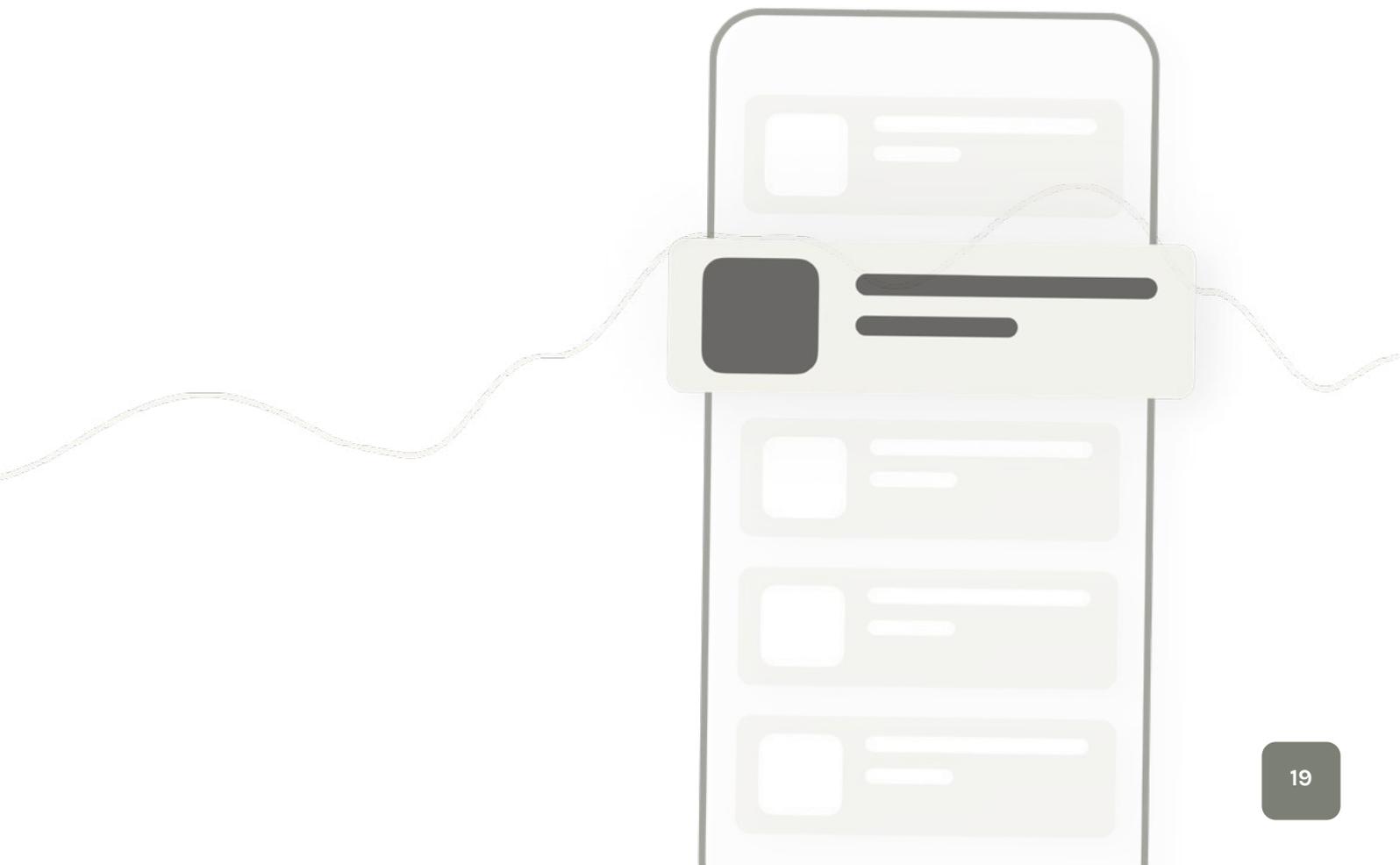
- **Avoid offensive topics and language.** A topic that might be acceptable in one culture could be offensive in another.
- **Use the correct references and formats** in your graphics and text. A few important elements to keep in mind are units of measurement (e.g. miles vs. kilometers), currencies (e.g. commas vs. periods for prices – in Europe, they would write \$2,99 instead of \$2.99), and dates (MM/DD/YYYY in the US vs. DD/MM/YYYY in Europe).
- When adding captions to screenshots, **use a font that provides full support** for the target language and not one that doesn't support the whole alphabet or all the characters (especially for non-Latin languages).
- **Use local locations/places** and models in the screenshots to make the app feel like it was made for local users.
- **Use locally understood cultural references.** Some colors and numbers have positive connotations in some countries, whereas in others they may have negative ones. For example, in China, the color red is associated with luck and prosperity and is used by many apps.
- **Optimize your listing** to highlight the features that resonate most with local users (including the order of screenshots); users in different markets tend to have a preference for a certain feature of your app over others.

# 5. An In-Depth Analysis of App Localization for Different Markets

We researched some popular and the biggest markets in the mobile app industry - Japan, Korea, China, France, and Brazil.

These markets have unique audiences, cultures, and mobile landscapes that make them very challenging to break into.

As a result, research is even more important to allow your app or game to succeed in these countries.





# 5.1. Japan

Japan is the go-to market for apps and games that are looking to expand worldwide. Let us look at some of the important elements for the Japanese market:



## 1. Mobile Landscape

In March 2021, Android recorded a market share of 57.4 percent among smartphone operating systems in Japan, while iOS held a market share of 42.4 percent. So it makes sense to make your app or game available for both Android and iOS in Japan.

## 2. Language

Japanese is a very concise language; its grammar does not require spaces between characters, and words consist of sometimes only one or two characters.

This means that for the same amount of characters, you can fit in more Japanese words than you could for English words.

The Japanese language consists of three distinct alphabets - Hiragana, Katakana, and Kanji. Hiragana and Katakana use syllabic characters that represent distinct sounds, while Kanji uses more traditional characters that might symbolize abstract concepts, ideas, or something else.

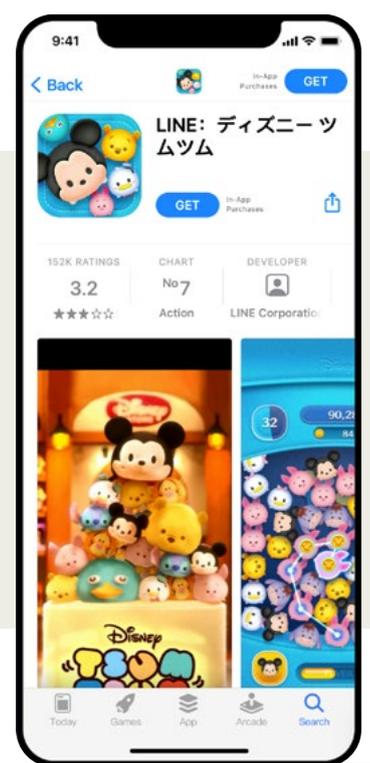
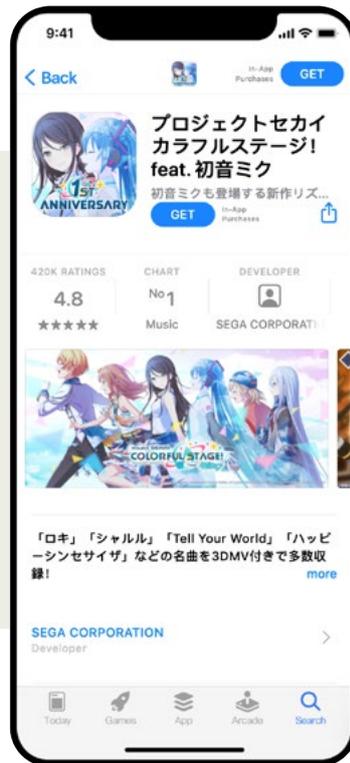
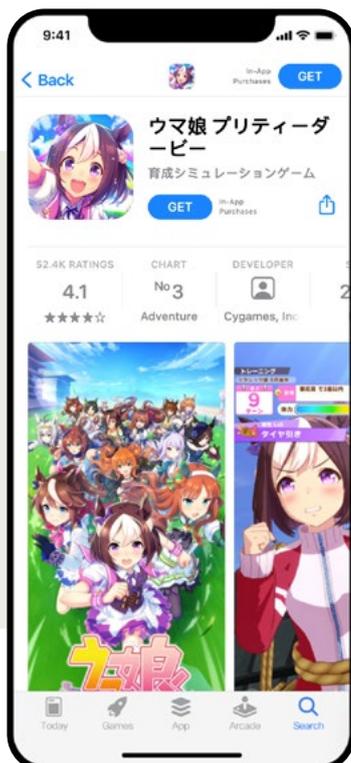
### 3. Metadata

It is advisable to put a space between each keyword for the title/subtitle, as in English, to lower the risk of rejection due to keyword stuffing. For the keyword field, it is important to separate each keyword by a comma to maximize exposure.

### 4. Creatives

When it comes to creative assets, including icons, screenshots, and videos, Japanese have a preference for what is called the “Japanese look” for games – **manga** and **anime** styles. Having anime elements or Asian models on your creatives make them more appealing to the Japanese users.

Another important element is **kawaii**, meaning “cuteness”, which plays a big role in Japanese culture and makes cute mascots or visual elements very appealing. In Japan, icons are usually used to mark **special occasions, milestones, and big updates** using overlaid text on top of the design. The text is bolder, more aggressive, and more colorful than in the West. Mixing colors and textures is also an important part of Japanese culture.

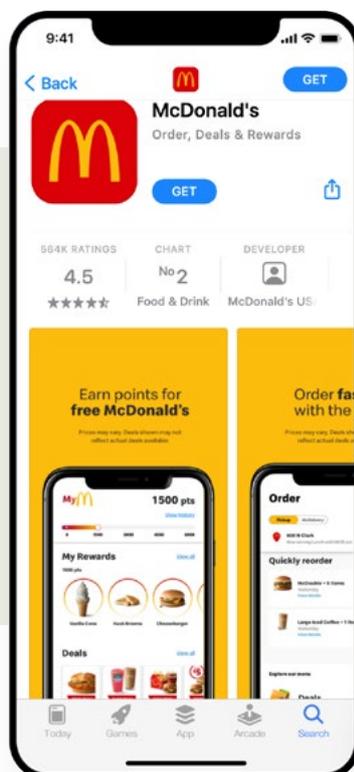


Screenshots of Japanese games portraying “anime” and “kawaii” preferences.

# Localization Examples



McDonald's and Minion Rush in the Japanese App Store vs the US App Store



## 5.2. China

China has conquered one of the highest positions in the app market, hence localizing your app or game in Chinese should be a top priority.

### 1. Mobile Landscape

While the App Store is present and operational in China, Google Play is blocked. However, the number of Android users (78.83% of total market share) is much greater than iOS (20.47% of total market share), as over 200 local alternative Android app stores are available for Chinese users.

Each of these stores has its own distinctive features and tools for content promotion on its platform, so in order to localize your Android app for China, you will have to negotiate with each store individually.

Despite there being more Android users than iOS users, it is still profitable for app developers to be present on the App Store, as iOS users have a much stronger spending power than Android users.

### 2. Language

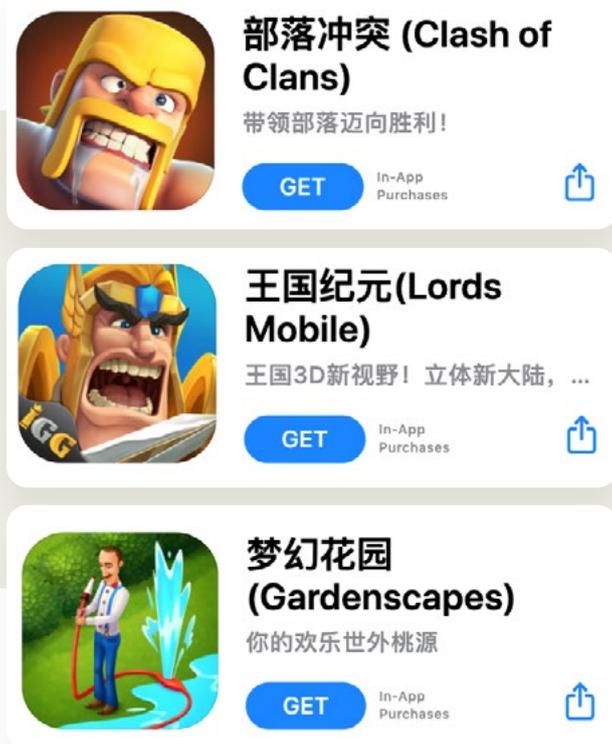
Chinese is a very concise language that generally does not require much space. Therefore, words in Chinese consist of much fewer characters than in English.

Furthermore, there are two different types of Chinese languages available to choose from on both app stores: Simplified Chinese (zh-CN) (used mostly in Mainland China, Singapore, and Malaysia) and Traditional Chinese Taiwan (zh-TW) (used in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Macau).

### 3. Metadata

It is **advised to translate your title** when you enter the Chinese market. However, it is important to exercise caution here, as literal translations of your title can be confusing (they don't sound like the original English name). **Phonetic translations**, on the other hand, **don't always resonate with your brand image**, as they might have a different meaning or negative connotation.

Other apps and games choose to rename their app or game and **choose a title that highlights the core gameplay and features** appealing to the target user. In practice, we often see that **games carefully translate their game title and include the English brand name** between brackets.



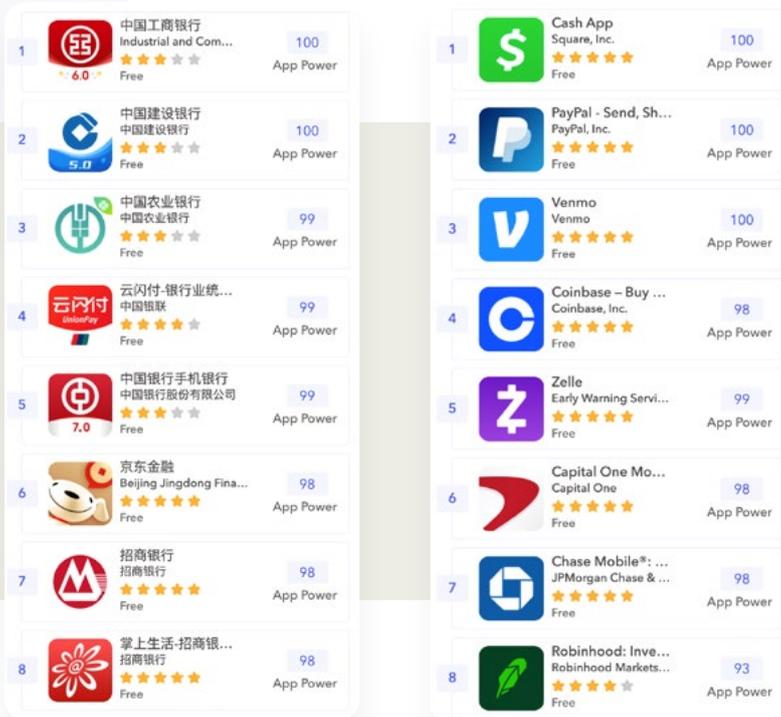
Examples of international games' app titles. Clash of Clans translates as "tribal conflict", Gardenscapes translates as "garden of dreams", and Lords Mobile translates as "kingdom era".

For games in particular, we recommend **keeping the title under 5 Chinese characters**. This practice makes the title easier to pronounce and remember, which then positively impacts downloads.

## 4. Creatives

Chinese customers tend to **prefer bright and busy creatives** and would rather have text/keywords to align with their cultural elements and beliefs. Users here favor colorful images, especially for games.

In China, red signifies joy and welfare and is often used as a background color, while white represents death and should be avoided. Your visuals should include **easy-to-understand text/subtitles and links** that show users all the relevant features and functions (5 or 6 screenshots).



Example of the top ranking apps in the Finance category in the App Store in China vs the United States. In China, red represents welfare and is often used by banking and finance apps.

## Localization Examples

McDonald's and Fishdom in the Chinese App Store vs the US App Store.



## 5.3. South Korea

South Korea has emerged as one of the world's biggest app markets, generating a revenue of \$72 million in 2020. This means that localizing your app or game in Korean is a must to succeed in this market.

### 1. Mobile Landscape

Contrary to Western markets, the South Korean mobile market is dominated by Android (80% of total users). Thus, Android app stores other than the Google Play Store stand out, with the One Store being particularly prominent.

Still, iOS represents quite a significant portion of Korean users, so it remains preferable to make your app or game available for both Android and iOS in South Korea.

### 2. Language

The Korean alphabet in South Korea is called Hangeul. One Hangeul character generally takes the equivalent space of two English characters, but it counts as one character.

So, in cases where the translation doesn't fit, adjusting the font size is not always the best thing to do because it can make the words difficult to read.

For Hangeul, the best fonts are then Dodum and Nanum due to their high readability, but other fonts can be used too as long as it provides full support for Korean characters.

### 3. Metadata

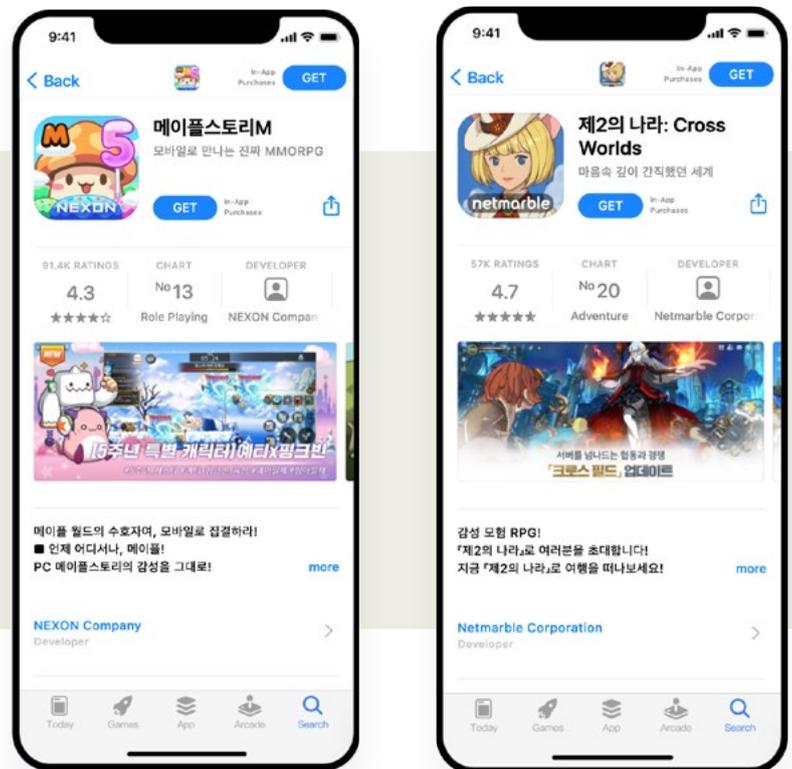
Top apps and games on the app stores have their **title either solely in Korean or in both Korean and English**, separated either by a dash, a space, or with the other version in parentheses..

Due to moderate proficiency in English and affinity with the US market, foreign entities often choose to not translate their title (e.g. Instagram, Netflix, Minecraft, etc). However, the subtitle and the long description need to be localized in Korean because natives typically prefer searching for apps and games in their own language.

### 4. Creatives

When it comes to creative assets, Korean **customers tend to prefer complex designs**. An important element for this audience is **aegyo** – the use of cute, babyish voices and facial expressions. They have an affinity for high-quality, in-game graphics and are drawn by images that display a large number of characters.

Some colors such as **white, green/blue, and yellow have positive connotations**, whereas others like **black and red have negative ones**. As a result, it is crucial to select the right colors for your creatives.

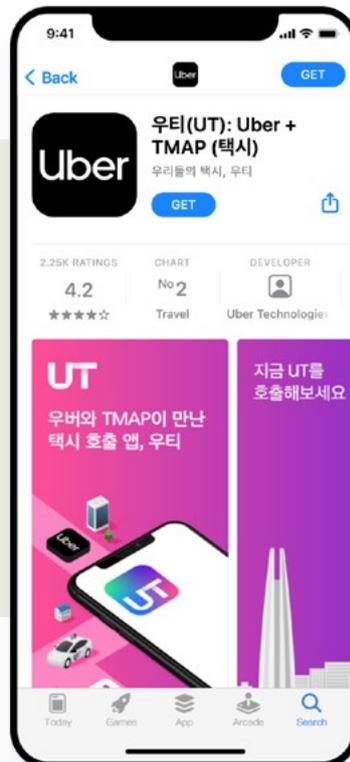
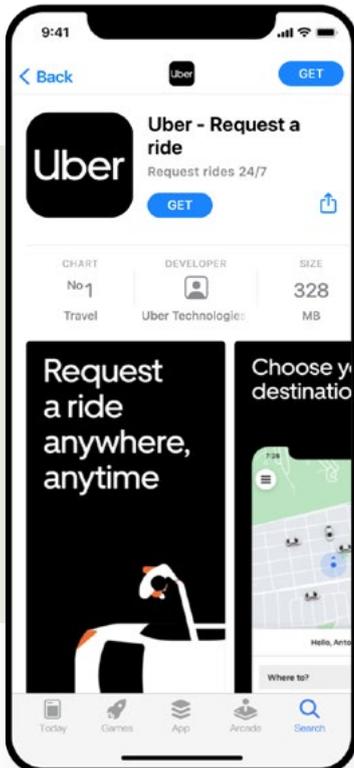
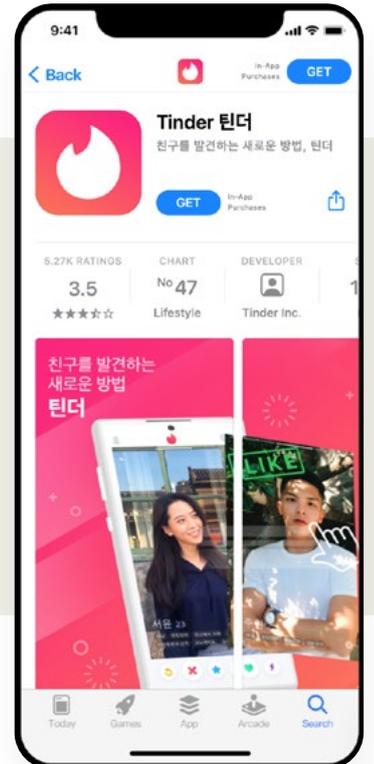
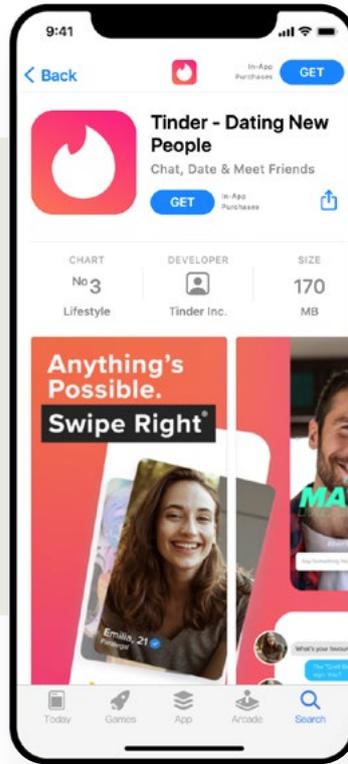


Examples of popular creative trends in South Korea

# Localization Examples



Tinder and Uber in the South Korean App Store vs the US App Store.



## 5.4. France

Besides France, Canada is also a primary market where you can target French-speaking audiences on the app stores. French is among the most popular languages supported by the App Store other than English. Let's take a look at how you can adapt your app or game to this language.

### 1. Language

Although French speakers are proficient in English, they generally prefer to use their native language over English when browsing the app stores or searching for an app. French keywords usually have higher search popularity in France compared to their English counterparts.

Still, the French language is borrowing an increasing amount of words from English. Anglicisms are very common, and a lot of English words have already made their way into casual French conversations.

## 2. Metadata



Foreign apps or games generally **do not translate their brand name**, but do translate generic keywords that are targeted in their titles and subtitles to increase their visibility in the store. The French language uses up more space, so you may not be able to target as many keywords in your main metadata fields in French as in other languages.

French has many accents and other special characters, but mobile keyboards don't make it easy to type these accents. When performing keyword research, it might appear that a particular keyword has low search volume (e.g. hôtel), but the

same keyword without accent has a higher search volume (e.g. hotel).

Therefore, for the visible metadata, we recommend using the correct spelling; but in the iOS keyword field, you can add "hotel" instead of "hôtel" to maximize visibility.

Often French plural words grammatically differ from singular words (e.g. animal vs. animaux). Apple does not always rank an app on both versions. We recommend researching carefully and including both versions in your metadata if needed.



Examples of creative trends in France

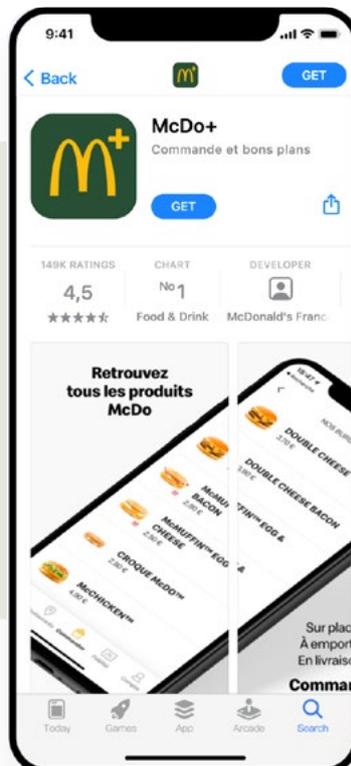
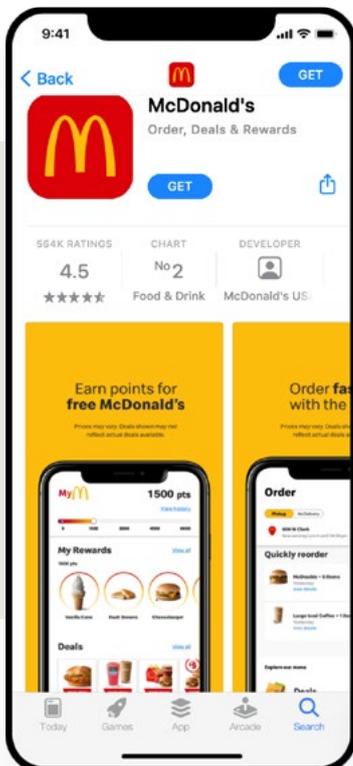
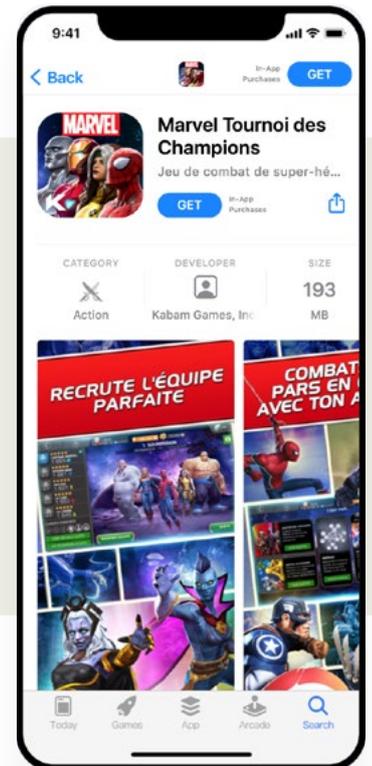
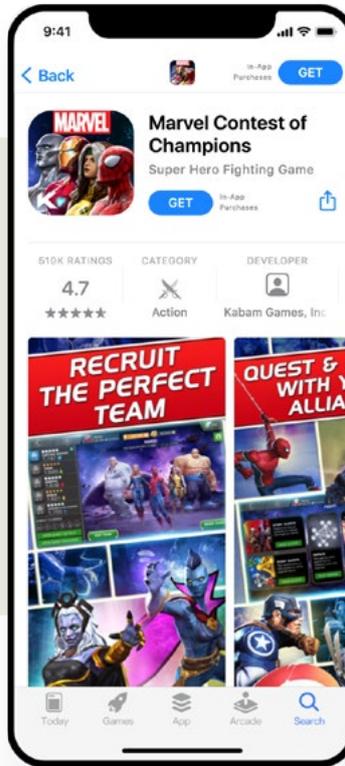
## 3. Creatives

App screenshots in France usually use **darker and more straightforward designs**. They use **simple fonts** and **don't include too much information** within the screenshot. Usually, the **first two or three screenshots** transmit the aim of the app before highlighting the features in more detail.

# Localization Examples



McDonald's and Marvel Contest of Champions in the French App Store vs the US App Store.



# 5.5. Brazil

With a revenue of \$2.18 billion in 2020, Brazil has become the 13th largest game market in the world. Localizing your apps and games into Brazilian Portuguese is therefore essential to succeed in this market.

## 1. Mobile Landscape

The Brazilian mobile market is dominated by Android devices, which represent over 83% of all smartphone users. Even though Android represents the highest reach, iOS users typically spend more on in-app purchases.

We thus recommend to make your app available for both Android and iOS, while keeping in mind that Android should be your priority.

## 2. Language

As a wordy language, Brazilian Portuguese generally requires 25–30% more space when translating text from English. This leaves less room for marketers to target general keywords in their metadata.

Unlike English, the Brazilian Portuguese alphabet is made up of many special characters. Hence, it is vital to use a font that provides full support for these characters. Designers in Brazil often use the fonts Helvetica, Baskerville, Times, or Gotham, but whichever font you pick, make sure it supports the full library of Portuguese punctuation and accents.

If characters are not properly implemented in Brazilian Portuguese, the entire meaning of a word can change and cause comprehension gaps in your text.

### 3. Metadata

For the app title, English or foreign brand names are well received and sometimes even perceived as “cool.” Popular international brands such as Instagram, TikTok, Clash of Clans, and Homescapes only keep their original names in their titles in Brazil.

However, in most cases (particularly on Google Play), several descriptive keywords are added after the brand name in the title.

### 4. Creatives

A common practice in Brazil is to **adapt screenshots for specific seasonal events**. However, it is important to keep in mind that Brazil is (for the most part) in the Southern Hemisphere, and so the seasons are different. For example, the weather during Brazilian Christmas is hot and July school vacation falls in the winter instead of summer, unlike in countries in the North Hemisphere.

For apps, an important element to consider when localizing your screenshots for Brazil is to **use models that represent the Brazilian population**. The graphic design app Canva is a good example of an app that adapted the models, background, and content of its screenshot while also adapting the text to Brazilian Portuguese.

Finally, it is critical to **localize the metrics displayed in your screenshots**, including currency, date, or measurements (meters, celsius, kilos, grams, etc.)

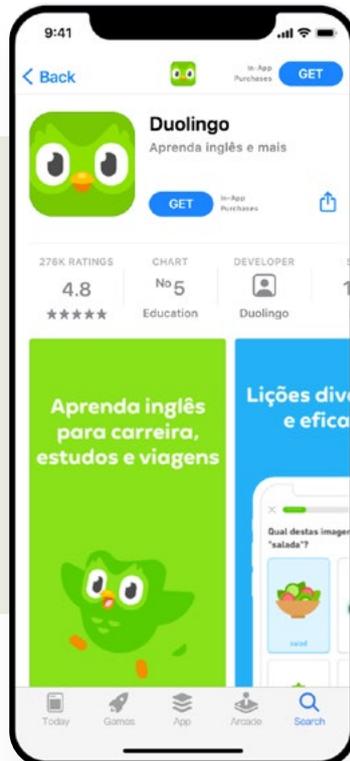
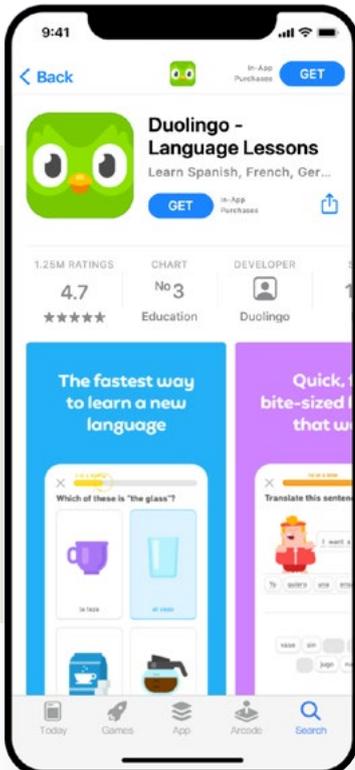
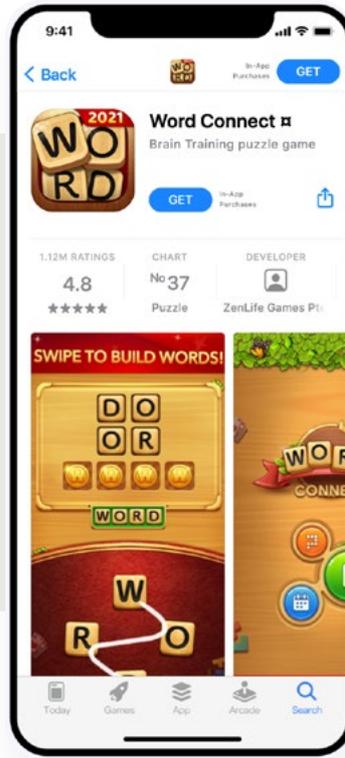


Example of how Canva adjusted their screenshots, showcasing models representing the Brazilian population.

# Localization Examples



Duolingo and Word Connect in the Brazilian App Store vs the US App Store.



# Summing Up

Localization is a complex process that requires different steps and varied approaches. Each geographical market is unique with regard to its mobile landscape, language, cultural norms, ASO trends, visual preferences, colors, and more. However, localizing your app or game – and its app store presence – is crucial when launching your app in new markets. Understanding the market you want to enter and culturalizing your app or game accordingly are the keys to successful localization.

## Ready to start localizing your apps and games?

Start a 7-day free trial on AppTweak to find new keyword opportunities and learn from local competitors' strategies.



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