

IN-DEPTH GUIDE

SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE

Francisation of your website: the technical guide

What the OQLF actually looks at on a website, typical technical corrections, and how to structure a bilingual site that meets your obligations.



GXN

Senior expertise · Digital governance

Quebec First

Quebec business context

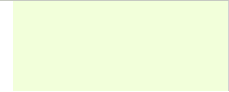
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Updated



SECURITY AND COMPLIANCE

Francisation of your website: the technical guide



TL;DR

The answer in one minute

The francization of a website affects several concrete elements. The default language when a Quebec visitor arrives, the real equivalence between the French and English versions, interface elements such as buttons and error messages, automatic emails sent by the site, and downloadable documents. The most common error is not in the visible pages, but in everything that is sent automatically in the background and that no one ever rereads.

01 · BACKGROUND GUIDE

What this means in concrete terms, beyond the main pages

Many companies think they have solved francization by translating their main pages. This is a good start, but it often leaves out elements that are just as visible to a visitor. The default language of the site, which should not open in English for a Quebec visitor without manipulation on their part. The equivalence of the versions, that is to say that the French version must be as complete and up to date as the English, not a partial translation which dates back several years. Interface elements, menus, buttons, error messages, confirmation texts. Transactional emails, order confirmations, password resets, automatic notifications. Downloadable documents, catalogs, forms, technical sheets.

02 · BACKGROUND GUIDE

The most frequent and most revealing oversight

What I notice most often when analyzing a site for francization is not the pages themselves. It's all stuff that gets sent automatically without anyone ever thinking about it. An order confirmation that has remained in English since the initial installation of the system several years ago. A password reset message that was never translated. However, these elements are seen by your customers as often as your main pages, if not more often for some.

01	What this means in concrete terms, beyond the main pages
02	The most frequent and most revealing oversight
03	Proper multilingualism serves two objectives at once
04	What is up to your advisor, and what is technical execution

GUIDE READING GRID		
Angle	Dimension to examine	Use in the decision
01	What this means in concrete terms, beyond the main pages	Setting the Context
02	The most frequent and most revealing oversight	Identify dependencies
03	Proper multilingualism serves two objectives at once	Compare options
04	What is up to your advisor, and what is technical execution	Preparing for the next step

Proper multilingualism serves two objectives at once

A technically misstructured multilingual site undermines both compliance and SEO. Well structured, it serves both objectives at the same time, making it a particularly profitable project. A clear architecture, where each language version has its own separate addresses. Reported technical correspondence between versions, so that search engines understand the relationship between them. A language detection that never imprisons the visitor in a version he has not chosen. French content treated as a full version, not as a superimposed machine translation after the fact.

INTERACTIVE TOOL

Set your decision

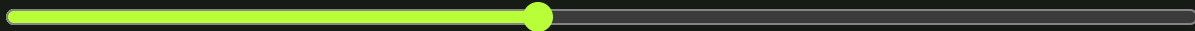
Select the dimensions that describe your situation. The result is to organize the next conversation, not to replace an analysis.

WHAT CONCERNS YOU NOW

- 01 **What this means in concrete terms, beyond the main pages**
- 02 **The most frequent and most revealing oversight**
- 03 **Proper multilingualism serves two objectives at once**
- 04 **What is up to your advisor, and what is technical execution**

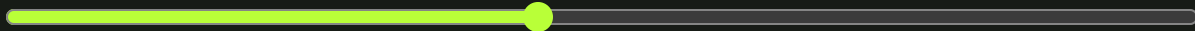
Urgent decision

5



Current control level

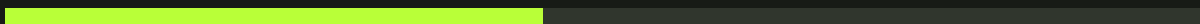
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RECOMMENDED ANALYSIS

Several dimensions must be treated together

Avoid an isolated decision. Map out the dependencies and agree on an intervention order.



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What is up to your advisor, and what is technical execution

Your legal advisor or francization consultant determines the specific requirements that apply to your business depending on your situation. The technical execution is responsible for making these requirements real in the operation of the site, through the default language, version equivalence, interface elements, automatic emails and documents.

05 · BACKGROUND GUIDE

What I see on the ground

The most common scenario I encounter. A francization process is underway at the company level, with a consultant or advisor who has established the applicable requirements. But no one thought of the technical aspect of the website as a project in its own right, or it was lightly entrusted to a supplier who only processed the main visible pages, leaving everything else in English.

When this guide does not apply

If your site is already entirely in French, without any English version, without automatic bilingual emails and without downloadable documents in another language, this guide is probably less direct to you. The technical complexity of this guide focuses on sites operating in both languages.

GXN offers technical implementation and operational support. Legal interpretation must come from qualified legal counsel.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Frequently asked questions

01 **It is necessary to translate absolutely all the content of the site.**

The question generally concerns equivalence and the priority given to French, more than the very existence of an English version. The precise requirements applicable to your business are up to your advisor.

02 **Can English remain present on our site?**

03 **Work with our francization consultant already in place.**

04 **Translate the content yourself.**

EDITORIAL METHOD

In-depth guide prepared by GXN based on real business situations. Recommendations remain independent of brands and suppliers.

OFFICIAL SOURCES

References to be checked according to your situation

These references support the external rules and frameworks cited in this guide. They are not a substitute for legal or professional advice tailored to your organization.

Office québécois de la langue française

Francisation of businesses [↗](#)

Office québécois de la langue française

Social media, websites and advertising documents [↗](#)



ABOUT THE PUBLISHER

GXN

Senior expertise directly accessible, supported by specialists when the project requires it.

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NEXT STEP

Send us your site address. We will identify where French is lacking, including in places that no one thinks to check.

No call required. No sales sequence.