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Top 10 Tips for Chinese Website Design

**A short guide
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Chinese Website Design by STAR Translation Services

With 44 global offices STAR provides technical translation services to clients around the world. As an ISO 9001 and EN 15038 certified company we can help you deliver the quality language documents, brochures, websites and services you require for your international business.

Top 10 Tips for Chinese Website Design

#1: Support UTF-8

UTF-8 enable your website. When choosing a website design system or content management system make sure it can display UTF-8 enabled fonts.

You can set this up in most systems in the HTML metatags as you can see in the following snippet from our own website.

```
<title>Translation Services, STAR Dublin, ISO9001, EN15038 Certified Translators</title>  
<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=utf-8"/>
```

“UTF-8” is a character encoding system that will support virtually every character set in the world including European, Asian and Middle Eastern languages.

It’s the international standard for multilingual websites.

#2: Use Chinese Fonts

For the most part if you’re website is enabled correctly with UTF-8 and correct language settings then the users web browser will display your site in the correct web font. Most modern web browsers will detect the character and language settings from a web page.

So bottom line is you don’t have to specify fonts. However if you prefer to choose fonts and be specific then we recommend the following: **SimSun** is probably the most common font and the one we would recommend as the default font for Chinese.





The most popular simplified Chinese web fonts are:

Windows Fonts	Mac Fonts
黑体 : SimHei	冬青黑体: Hiragino Sans GB [SNOW LEOPARD]
宋体 : SimSun	华文细黑 : STHeiti Light [STXihei]
新宋体 : NSimSun	华文黑体 : STHeiti
仿宋 : FangSong	华文楷体 : STKaiti
楷体 : KaiTi	华文宋体 : STSong
仿宋_GB2312 : FangSong_GB2312	华文仿宋 : STFangsong
楷体_GB2312 : KaiTi_GB2312	
微软雅黑体 : Microsoft YaHei [Windows 7]	

#3: CSS: Declare English Fonts Before Chinese Fonts

When defining the fonts in your CSS it's a good idea to declare your English fonts before your Chinese fonts.

If your website has English text on it (product names, numbers etc) the browser will select the primary font first to display these in. Often English text in Chinese fonts look a bit grainy.

By declaring your English fonts first, browsers will display your English text first in English fonts and then the remaining text in the Chinese font. So your website will look better.

#4: SEO: Set the target country

If you're into Geo-targeting it's a good idea to ensure you set the target country for the site in the HTML meta tags.

In this example this site is saying it is in US English for the US Market.

```
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml" xml:lang="en-US" lang="en-US">
```

This one targets Chinese in China.

```
<html xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml" xml:lang="zh-CN" lang="zh-CN">
```





#5: CSS: Font Tips

When you are listing your required fonts in the CSS font line, it's a good idea to use Chinese characters and also spell out the font name in English.

So for example use...

font-family: Tahoma, Arial, "Microsoft Yahei", "微软雅黑", STXihei, "华文细黑", sans-serif;

It is also useful to put quotes around the Chinese font declarations.

#6: CSS: Microsoft doesn't rule the world

Remember to include Mac and PC fonts. Mac users will be using Safari so make sure you include their fonts in the definitions as well.

It's always a good idea to test your website on a Mac and PC, and with different browsers. We check with Chrome, Safari, FireFox and Internet Explorer on PC and Safari on Mac for example.

#7: CSS: Keep it simple

There is a trend on sites now to use custom fonts such as GoogleFonts and @font-face. However for Chinese for now we'd recommend to keep away from this. Chinese fonts are particularly large. Typically they may contain 3000 base glyphs so font sizes can be enormous. If you're sensitive to site speed (which impacts SEO) then keep your fonts simple.



#8: SEO: Register on Chinese Search Engines



Google may be the largest search engine on the planet but it's not the only one and certainly not the largest in China. Baidu.Com is the largest search engine in China. So when you have finished your website make sure your agency submits it to global engines. There are other Chinese engines such as sogou.com and youdao.com.

Largest Chinese Search Engines: Market Share 2012:

Baidu.com	78.6%
Google.cn	15.6%
Sogou.com	3.1%
Soso.com	1.5%
Youdao.com	<1%
Cn.yahoo.com	<1%





#9: You need 2 Chinese websites.

Where is your website targeting?

There are different forms of Chinese depending on the country you are doing business in. So when you ask for a website translation we'll ask – do you need Traditional Chinese or Simplified Chinese. You need 2 Chinese websites to target the entire market.

Spoken versus written language.

We are often asked for "Mandarin Translation" or "Cantonese". However, the official spoken languages in the Republic of China (Taiwan, capital: Taipei) and the People's Republic of China (Mainland China) is referred to as Mandarin Chinese.

The term "Mandarin" however only refers to standard spoken Chinese which is basically the same and mutually understandable in Taiwan and Mainland China. However, there are different scripts used in different areas of Greater China.

How do I choose?

The table below will help you decide which language you require for your translation project.

Country	Spoken language	Written Language
Mainland China	Mandarin	Simplified Chinese
Taiwan	Mandarin	Traditional Chinese
Hong Kong	Cantonese	Traditional Chinese
Singapore	Mandarin	Simplified Chinese

See more at: <http://www.star-ts.com/chinese-language-translation.shtml>





#10: Focus on cultural aspects.

As with all translation and localization it's important to take into consideration certain cultural aspects in your website design. Here are just a few pointers to get you started.

Color: Certain colors have significant impact in some cultures. Red and gold are positive colors in Chinese culture. Red is the color of good luck in Chinese. Gold or yellow tends to mean imperial or wealth. So you can use them to emphasize positive marketing messages or call to action statements.

Internet Speed: Whilst developing your site you should be aware that broadband speeds occasionally in China are not as fast or consistent as they would be in other countries. Thus text is more important for Chinese websites. Graphic heavy websites can impact your visibility in China.

Numbers: Some numbers in Chinese can be seen as lucky or unlucky.

4. Is considered unlucky across the Far East, in the same way as 13 is unlucky in the West. 4 is associated with death. An example of this is if you look at cameras like Nikon and Canon they skip models with the number 4.

666. Whilst this is the number of the devil in Western culture you can often find this displayed in Chinese shops. The number 6 in Chinese sounds like "easy". Repeating it as in 666 means , smooth, easy, simple.

7. Seven is an odd number in Chinese. It can signify death. The seventh month is August which is the month of the 'Hungry Ghosts' and when tomb sweeping take place, so is a time for family reflection. So it is seen as positive and negative.

8. Is a very positive number. The Beijing Olympics start date 8:08 on the 8 of August 2008. 8 sounds like "wealth" but also has similarity to the Buddhist Eightfold path.

Clocks: Never give a clock as a gift in China or use a clock as an image on your website. Clocks symbolize impending death.





Here is a checklist of locale information to review before you post your site. A lot of these items pop up in online forms and cause issues.

1.	National Conventions	
2.	Date format	
3.	Time Format	
4.	Numeric Formats	
5.	Currency Formats	
6.	Telephone Numbers	
7.	List Separators	
8.	Address formats on forms.	
9.	Proper names and titles	
10.	Measurement systems	
11.	Page formats	
12.	Conventions for capitalizations, uppercasing and lowercasing.	
13.	Comparing and sorting	
14.	Paper size, envelope formats and addresses	
15.	Check your sample files, screenshots and images for locale issues. Are all images appropriate?	

Professional Translation:

错误

Cuòwù

Errors

Finally it's worth highlighting the importance of professional translation services. Always have your website translated by a professional agency. Everyone has seen badly translated English documents from other countries. When it comes to marketing or technical translation you need to ensure that your translation is accurate and reflects your brand correctly. Translation of your website should be accurate, should also include all your hidden text in metatags, page titles descriptions etc. Ensure your translation agency understands how to translate all these elements of your website and can help with all the advice in this document.



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