

*Website Localization towards the
Norwegian Market
An Analysis of American Firms' Websites*

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This Master's Thesis is carried out as a part of the education at the University of Agder and is therefore approved as a part of this education. However, this does not imply that the University answers for the methods that are used or the conclusions that are drawn.

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This Master's thesis is written as part of Morten Byklum's Master's degree in Information Systems and Frantz Johan Agerbo's Master's degree in International Management. The Master's thesis is a mandatory requirement and equals 30 credits.

Both of us have the same part-time job at the University, and after being colleagues for several years, a growing thought emerged: how about we combine our education and write a thesis together. We first had to get permission from the faculty. After some discussion, the faculty decided to give us the green light and we then worked more thoroughly on selecting a topic before gaining final approval.

Based on earlier courses we knew that Rotem Shneor had conducted work in both the fields of Information Systems and International Management, and we contacted him in November to see if he had any ideas and if he was interested in being our supervisor. After some discussions and a couple of meetings, we eventually ended up with the topic of website localization.

In February, the department of Information Systems decided that to ensure that the thesis would meet the requirements for a thesis in Information Systems they wanted to provide us with Tero Päivärinta as a co-supervisor.

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It has been interesting and rewarding writing the thesis together. Not only have we benefitted from our different educational backgrounds, we have also continuously discussed problems as they emerged, making progress more effective.

The topic of website localization was at first blurry, and the initial stage was to find relevant literature. But, as time passed and we delved deeper into the material, we reached a better understanding of the topic and found it to be very interesting.

Kristiansand, May 2011

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Abstract

This study is the first involving international firms and the localization of firms' websites for a Norwegian audience.

In order to give the reader a better understanding of the topic, we first conducted a literature review where we identified five key themes related to website localization: *standardization versus localization*, *localization website design characteristics*, *website localization measurement* and *cultural depictions in websites*.

The research method used in this thesis is a quantitative analysis of data collected via the content analysis of websites. By building on a proven framework developed by Singh and Matsuo (2004), we obtained data that could be compared with data from similar research performed in other cultures.

The first part of the research aimed to answer the question “*do international firms adapt their webpages to the Norwegian market?*” The result of the research indicated that there is a wide range between firms that localize their websites and those that do not. We found that 50 out of the 155 international firms analyzed have localized or highly localized websites.

Our second research question aimed to answer *how well* the companies having websites that in part one were classified as localized actually localize their websites. We found that there are mostly no significant differences between the items depicted on Norwegian and US sites, which shows no clear indication of a general localization effort being made. Significant differences may exist in some items, but not at an overall cultural dimension level.

The explanation for the 50 websites classified as localized in the first part of the research question is thus most probably related to the similarities between the US and Norwegian cultures.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background and motivation

Global e-commerce continues to increase with global online revenues anticipated to reach \$680 billion in 2011 (J.P.Morgan, 2011). The continuing growth in online markets gives businesses a wide range of possible revenue opportunities. While earlier one had to have a large company with significant financial resources to become a global player, the World Wide Web now gives international companies an incredible range of possibilities when trying to reach global consumers. The continuing improvement of the World Wide Web gives customers unprecedented access to product information, making it possible to make informed purchase decisions. For companies this means an increased pressure on profit margins, because the low entry barriers allow many more competitors to emerge (Singh & Pereira, 2005).

There has been a lot of research on how different marketing efforts affect people's buying behavior, and companies are getting increasingly better at it. However, the area of website localization is still at an early stage and most companies are not focusing on it in a sufficient manner.

Surveys covering the topic of localization have recently become more common. For instance, Wurtz (2005) analyzed McDonald's' websites around the world by using Hall's (1976) high-/low-context dimensions. Singh and Baack (2004) performed a cross-cultural comparison of US and Mexican websites. Singh has also looked at several other countries including Germany, Brazil, Taiwan, China and India (Singh et al., 2006a; Singh et al., 2006b).

Cyr and Trevor-Smith (2004) looked into Germany, Japan and the United States, while Lee et al. (2007) looked at cultural differences between Korean and American websites. Other European countries that have been examined include Poland and the Czech Republic (Okazaki & Skapa 2008) and Italy, India, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland (Singh et al., 2004).

This research describes the similarities and differences between cultures, as depicted in website localization. To the best knowledge of the authors, no surveys or content analyses have been performed on the localization of websites meant for a Norwegian audience. We find this surprising, since Norway has many qualities that would make the country interesting for such research. Norway has, for instance, a very high level of e-readiness, ranked sixth globally by the Economist Intelligence Unit. Another characteristic of the Norwegian market is its market size. As a rather small market, many foreign companies may be less interested in having a physical presence in the country, and this along with being a rich market should make e-commerce even more interesting.

1.2 Research question

The main purpose of this thesis is to look into whether international firms localize their webpages for the Norwegian audience and, if they do, how well do they do it.

1.3 Thesis structure

This thesis has the following structure. In chapter 2, we present a literature review, which we believe covers a broad spectrum of the topic. In chapter 3, we outline the research method. In chapter 4, we present our findings and discuss them in chapter 5. In chapter 6, we address the limitations and further research, before we wrap up the thesis with a conclusion in chapter 7.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Finding relevant literature

Writing a literature review on an unfamiliar topic involves some challenges. Fink (2010) stated that having a precisely stated research question has the benefit that one has some keywords that can be applied into online search engines. By using the following keywords “website localization”, “e-commerce”, “website + culture”, “website internationalization” and various forms of these including Boolean logic and applying them into the search engines ProQuest, Ebsco-Host, Google, Google Scholar and the Ask search engine available at the Agder University library webpage, we received a long list of potential articles. It is important to include several databases to uncover as much material on the topic as possible (ibid).

This search revealed about 100 potential articles, including several that had been provided by our supervisor. Some of the articles were discarded after reading the abstracts, while others had to be read to assess their relevance. Pre-Internet articles were not found using the keyword search. These articles appeared to be of relevance when we read the articles found in our initial search.

Webster and Watson (2002) argued that one should create an overview of the literature by discussing the concepts that are identified based on the literature search. They also stated that the key concepts should be grouped before any discussion. Based on our search and review of the literature we identified five concepts (Table 1):

1. Standardization versus localization
2. Localization
3. Website design characteristics
4. Website localization measurement
5. Culture

Table 1: Literature review list

Articles	Concepts				
	1	2	3	4	5
Agrawal (1995)	x				
Ahn et al. (2010)	x				
Collins (2002)	x				
Cyr and Trevor-Smith (2004)		x	x		x
Domzal & Kernan (1993)	x				
Douglas & Wind (1987)	x				
Elinder (1962)	x				
Evans and Wurster (1997)	x				
Fatt (1967)	x				
Fink (2000)	x	x			
Gibb and Matthaikakis (2007)		x	x	x	
Hermans and Shanahan (2002)	x	x			x
Kotha (2004)		x			
Kotha et al. (2004)				x	
Kotler (1993)	x				
Kralisch and Berendt (2004)					x
Laroche (1999)	x				
Lee et al. (2007)		x			x
Levitt (1983)	x				
Liao et al. (2009)		x			x
Lim et al. (2004)		x			x
Luna et al. (2002)		x			x
Lynch and Beck (2001)		x			x
Mooij (2005)					x
Okazaki and Skapa (2008)	x				
Papavassiliou (1997)	x				
Quelch (1985)	x				
Sackmary and Scalia (1999)		x			x
Samiee (2003)	x				
Shannon (2000)		x			
Simon (2000)		x			x
Singh et al. (2003)		x			x
Singh et al. (2004)		x			x
Singh et al. (2010)		x			
Singh and Boughton (2005)				x	
Singh et al. (2006a)		x			x
Singh et al. (2006b)		x			x

Singh and Matsuo (2004)	x	x			x
Singh et al. (2005a)		x			x
Singh and Pereira (2005)	x	x	x	x	x
Singh et al. (2009)		x	x	x	x
Singh et al. (2005b)		x			x
Tixier (2005)	x	x		x	x
Tsikriktsis (2002)					x
Wurtz (2005)					x
Yamin and Sinkovics (2006)	x				
Yang and Kang (2002)					x

2.2 Standardization versus localization

As mentioned earlier, global online revenues continue to increase, giving businesses a wide range of possible revenue opportunities. However, this also presents a great challenge, namely what is the best way to target and attract international consumers to a website. And perhaps more importantly, how does one maintain strong relationships with these consumers (Singh et al., 2010)?

This increase in revenues and the continuing emergence “of global conglomerates, media, and advertising agencies, the rise of Pacific-Rim nations as world-class competitors, the opening of the Iron Curtain, and the European crescendo since 1992 have made it imprudent, if not impossible, to ignore the debate over the use of standardized versus localized advertising approaches” (Domzal & Kernan, 1993, p.1).

There are pros and cons for both sides. The key advantages of the standardization approach include cost-efficiency, convenience, greater brand identification across countries and ease of management (Laroche, 1999; Levitt, 1983; Papavassiliou, 1997; Samiee, 2003). Going for a localized approach could, however, result in a better customer relationship along with a potential increase in sales. For many firms this choice can be a hard one to make.

Those skeptical towards website localization believe that the IT capabilities and competences of firms such as conducting business online or operating websites can easily be replicated by

other firms (Evans & Wurster, 1997; Yamin & Sinkovics, 2006). In addition, the school of standardization argues that since there is a convergence of media activity, cultures, art and living conditions, advertising can and should standardize (Elinder, 1962; Fatt, 1967). Levitt (1983) argued that marketing standardization was a necessity to ensure a global corporation success. He meant that the world was becoming a common marketplace and that people all over the world are alike when it comes to love, hate, fear, envy and joy among other things. He used McDonald's, Pepsi-Cola and Coca-Cola as examples of companies that are both globally standardized and highly successful.

The research on this topic has been extensive but inconclusive so far. Studies performed by Yang and Kang (2002), Sackmary and Scalia (1999) and Hermans and Shanahan (2002) indicated that consumer perception were not affected by cultural factors.

The opposite view to standardization is localization. Many practitioners and academicians have advocated the localization approach (Agrawal, 1995), and many of them have criticized the standardization approach for being overly product-oriented. As Douglas and Wind (1987) described: "Standardization implies a product orientation, and a product driven strategy, rather than a strategy grounded in the systematic analysis of customer behavior and response patterns and market characteristics" (p.19).

Kotler (1993) stated that the success of McDonald's, Pepsi-Cola and Coca-Cola is related to the fact that they do not offer the same product everywhere and, therefore, that their success is based on variation. Quelch (1985) claimed that even if products meet all the criteria for standardization, it does not necessarily mean that they can be advertised in the same way everywhere.

Tsikriktsis (2002), Simon (2000), Luna et al. (2002) and Fink (2000) all stated that there is a difference in the cross-cultural perception of website content and that localization should be the communication strategy.

Singh et al. (2004) carried out a study with the aim to look at five different countries and provide empirical evidence for whether or not foreign consumers prefer local web content and localized messages or standardized web content. They found that culturally adapting a website

results in a better perception of the site and that consumers show higher purchase intentions and favorable attitudes towards websites that have been localized compared with websites that are standardized.

Ahn et al. (2010) showed that online consumer-generated brand communities are not culturally neutral, and Liao, Proctor and Salvendy (2009) showed that customers in various cultures have different cultural preferences when shopping online.

2.3 Website localization

In order to understand the purpose and ideas behind website localization some definitions of the topic is needed.

“The process of developing customized global websites is termed *website globalization*, which in turn includes two complementary processes: *website internationalization* and *website localization*. In technical terms, *website internationalization* is the process through which back-end technologies are used to create modular, extendable, and accessible, global website templates that support front-end customization, and *website localization* is the process of the front-end customization, whereby websites are adapted to meet the needs of specific international target markets” (Singh & Pereira, 2005, p. 7).

Localization is a process where you try to adapt a product or service to a culture. This includes language, local color sensitivities, geographic examples, currency, time zones, product or service names and gender roles (Cyr & Trevor-Smith, 2004).

When localizing a webpage and user interface, the aim is to create a technological platform that is linguistically and culturally neutral while, at the same time, making it possible to launch global e-commerce initiatives that incorporate local content and functionality (Shannon, 2000).

Studies have shown that webpages that are localized have a positive effect on customer preferences and their purchase intentions (Singh & Baack, 2004). Tixier (2005) also argued that localizing webpages can result in a 200% increase in e-sales.

Kralisch and Berendt (2004) discovered that the amount of information needed is affected by culture and that the same can be said for an individual's perception of time and space. This is of great importance when you localize a webpage. Some cultures might have a greater need for information, making it crucial that product information is detailed and encompassing. Feeling comfortable when browsing online without having to process too much information is what many online shoppers want. Luna et al. (2002) showed that people exposed to culturally localized websites have to spend less cognitive efforts on processing the content.

Furthermore, Kotha (2004) showed that a critical factor to website competitiveness is the buyers' online experiences. This gives a company incentives to create various "relationship services", which in the same study was conceived as "a mechanism to create a bond with online customers and engender buyer trust" (Kotha et al., 2004 p.113) This is an example of website localization, because the relationship services are created to make the website more culturally sensitive and specific to the target market (Lynch & Beck, 2001).

It has also been argued that people need to have a feeling of engagement with vendors, even if it is online. As a consequence, firms that have the ability to localize and adapt their websites to the target culture will have a competitive global advantage (Lynch & Beck, 2001).

2.4 Website design characteristics

As mentioned earlier, several items on a webpage can be used to localize a website including language, local color sensitivities, geographic examples, currency, time zones, product or service names and gender roles (Cyr & Trevor-Smith, 2004). Below is a list of potential items that can be used when localizing, as outlined by Gibb and Matthaiakis (2007). Some examples on the differences between cultures are also provided.

Currency: one should try to convert prices to the most relevant currency. This may involve some sort of automatic changes based on exchange rates. One side effect of such a conversion is that one may lose the psychological aspect of having, for instance, €9.99, which may be converted into \$14.39.

Characters: an example could be the use of punctuation. For example, in Greek the symbol “;” is equal to a question mark “?” used in most other countries.

Measures: this item involves a lot of changes if you go from, for instance, the US market to the Norwegian market. Clothes sizes, height, weight and so on are measures that often need to be changed.

Examples: examples that work well in one culture might not have the same impact in another. For example cars, in Germany one could use BMW, while in Italy one could use Alfa Romeo; Manchester United in England, but Barcelona in Spain. In addition, something as common as traffic lights can differ. In Japan, they are red, yellow and blue.

Colors: these also have different meanings and they should be reviewed to match the appropriate context. For instance, the color *red* is in the West looked upon as a *danger*, while in China it can be used when describing *joyfulness*.

Layout: some cultures scan a screen from right to left, for example Hebrew speakers.

Images: the items or people depicted should be familiar and relevant to the culture. Examples include landmarks, architecture, celebrities and so forth.

Language: should be either available for the user to select or translated to match the target country in the first place. Translation software can support translation from one language to another; however, human interaction is needed in most cases because direct translation might change the meaning of the content (Collins, 2002).

Icons: are also different in various countries. For instance, mailboxes, house styles or waste bins look different in different countries.

Date order: Most countries write the date as DD/MM/YY; however, in the USA it is written as YY/MM/DD. In addition, the use of am/pm or 24-hour conventions needs to be addressed.

2.5 Website localization measurement

Singh and Boughton (2005) researched the classification of websites. Their study divided websites into five different categories using a website scale from 1 to 5, which reflects the level of website globalization:

1. Standardized websites
2. Proactive websites
3. Global websites
4. Localized websites
5. Highly localized websites

Standardized websites: companies that use this strategy have the same web content and do not change the language for international users. These websites have not adapted their sites in terms of internationalization or localization.

Proactive websites: companies under this category also have standardized websites. However, there are some differences between a standardized and a proactive website. Proactive websites have contact information including address, contact phone number and email address.

Global websites: websites in this category have contact information and some basic country-level information such as activities and operation in a country. Web content is in the local language or in English.

Localized websites: websites in this category have some level of localization such as time, date, zip code and number formats. These pages usually have multiple language options; however, some pages are translated by software. Information about the international presence of a company in this category is not displayed on the homepage. Finding the country-specific website usually takes some searching.

Highly Localized Websites: a website in this group has an extremely developed country-specific website for many different countries. Such websites have a country-specific URL such as .de for Germany, .uk for United Kingdom and .no for Norway. The localized website

is listed notably on the homepage of the company. It should be easy to find and navigate. The main difference between this category and localized websites is that these companies have made more effort to localize their websites, and it is easier to navigate on their websites. Their websites also display a prominent international web presence.

Using the classification of websites above, Singh and Boughton (2005) analyzed 598 company websites. Some results from their analysis are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Frequency Count (Singh & Boughton, 2005)

<i>Scale</i>	<i>U.S.</i>		<i>Europe</i>		<i>Asia-Pacific</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Standardized	23	7.5	22	13.4	25	19.7	69	11.7
Proactive	88	28.7	39	23.8	49	38.6	176	29.4
Global	46	15.0	34	20.7	17	13.4	97	16.2
Localized	62	20.2	31	18.9	17	13.4	110	18.4
Highly Localized	88	28.7	38	23.2	19	15.0	145	24.2

The United States has 28.7% highly localized websites compared with Europe’s 23.2%. Asia-Pacific has the least highly localized websites with 19%. Regarding standardized websites, the United States has 7.5%, Europe 13.4% and Asia-Pacific 19.7%. From a Norwegian perspective, Singh and Boughton only analyzed one webpage in Norway and found that it was standardized.

Singh et al. (2009) provided a framework for analyzing web localization. This research directly targeted the US Hispanic online market. Figure 1 shows how the websites were analyzed using 14 variables. This localization framework includes four main categories: content localization, cultural customization, local gateway and translation quality. The full framework including constructs and variables, definitions and measurements used are shown in Figure 1. The study concluded with that although companies localized in terms of language, they did not localize the site in the form of navigation, graphics, colors and other cultural content.

Construct/Variable	Definition and Measurement
Number of English Pages	Number of English-language Web pages on each Web site
Number of Spanish Pages	Number of Spanish-language Web pages on each Web site
Content Localization	
Percentage of Spanish-Translated Web Pages	Ratio of Spanish Web pages divided by English Web pages
Content Depth	Extent of the content made available to Hispanic online users in terms of contact information, product information, services, company information, shipping, and handling (1 = basic store and contact information; 5 = all sections from English pages are translated and have all information needed for Hispanic customers)
Content Synchronization	Currency of the Spanish site content relative to the source—English site content (1 = content is out of sync with English content; 5 = most Spanish content is in sync with the English content)
Navigation	Extent to which the Web site has an adequate site map, hyperlinks, forward and backward buttons, directories, FAQs, and online search help on the Hispanic portion of the Web site (1 = very poor navigation attributes; 5 = very good navigation attributes)
Web-Site Service and Support	Extent to which the Hispanic online customer support is equivalent to that offered on the English Web pages (1 = no online support for Hispanic web pages; 5 = Web-site support that is better than what is provided on the English Web pages)
Cultural Customization	
Web-Page Structure	Overall design and feel of the Web site (1 = standardized based on the English portion of the Web site; 5 = unique based on Hispanic cultural foundations)
Graphics	Presence of pictures related to Hispanic culture, family, and occasions and the use of cultural symbols (1 = standardized features based on the English portion of the Web site; 5 = unique characteristics that reflect Hispanic cultural norms)
Colors	Degree to which the Web site uses bright or vibrant colors, aesthetics, and flag colors that reflect Hispanic cultural influences (1 = standardized colors based on the English portion of the Web site; 5 = unique colors that reflect Hispanic cultural norms)
Promotion of Products and Services	Degree to which there are unique products/services promoted to the Hispanic audience (1 = standardized products/services based on the English portion of the Web site; 5 = unique products/services that reflect Hispanic interests)
Local Gateway	
Hispanic Gateway Visibility	Visibility of the link to the Hispanic content pages from the company's English home page (1 = no link on home page; 2 = bottom third of the page; 3 = middle third of the page; 4 = near upper right corner; 5 = upper right corner of the page)
Hispanic URL Usability	Whether the U.S. Spanish-language URL is easily distinguishable from other Spanish URLs—i.e., the extent to which it is clear that the Spanish link is for U.S. residents rather than Spanish speakers outside the United States (1 = relevant URLs not fully supported, "Spanish" is used to indicate content, Spanish content may be confused with Spanish content for U.S. residents; 5 = relevant URLs are fully supported, "Spanish" is not used at all, there is no possibility of confusing U.S. Spanish content with non-U.S. Spanish content)
Translation Quality	
Translation Quality	Quality of translation into Spanish in terms of appropriate word use, conceptual equivalence, idiomatic equivalence, and vocabulary equivalence (1 = very poor quality; 5 = very good quality)

Figure 1: Localization framework (Singh et al., 2010)

Singh and Matsuo (2004) created a three-step framework for measuring cultural adaption on the web. The first step was to review different cultural typologies. The next step was to review research to identify operationalizations for measuring website cultural adaption. Lastly, they finalized their framework using Hofstede's (1980) and Hall's (1976) cultural dimensions. The framework includes five unique values:

- Individualism-Collectivism
- Power Distance
- Uncertainty Avoidance
- Masculinity-Femininity
- Low-High Context

Furthermore, they generated various website features for these values in the cultural framework. They created a list of major interactive or multimedia features commonly present on websites such as clubs, newsletters, FAQs, security policies, privacy policies, free stuff, downloads, graphics, hyperlinks and more (Table 3).

Table 3: Localization measurement framework by Singh and Matsuo (2004)

<u>Collectivism</u>	<u>Description</u>
<i>Community relations</i>	Presence or absence of community policy, giving back to community, social responsibility policy.
<i>Clubs or chatrooms</i>	Presence or absence of members' clubs, product-based clubs, chats with company employees, chats with interest groups, message boards, discussion groups and live talks.
<i>Newsletters</i>	Online subscriptions, magazines and newsletters.
<i>Family theme</i>	Pictures of family, pictures of the teams of employees, mention of employee teams, emphasis on team and collective work, responsibility in vision statement or elsewhere on the website, emphasis on customers as a family.
<i>Symbols and pictures of national identity</i>	Flags, pictures of historic monuments, pictures reflecting the uniqueness of the country, country-specific symbols in the form of icons, indexes.
<i>Loyalty programs</i>	Frequent miles programs, customer loyalty programs, company credit cards for local country, special membership programs.
<i>Links to local websites</i>	Links to country locations, related country-specific companies, other local websites from a particular country.
<u>Uncertainty avoidance</u>	
<i>Customer service</i>	FAQs, customer service option, customer help, customer service e-mails.
<i>Guided navigation</i>	Site maps, well-displayed links, links in the forms of pictures or buttons, forward, backward, up and down navigation buttons.
<i>Tradition theme</i>	Emphasis on the history and ties of a particular company to a nation, emphasis on respect, veneration of elderly and the culture, phrases such as "most respected company", "keeping the tradition alive", "for generations", "company legacy", etc.
<i>Local stores</i>	Mention of contact information for local offices, dealers and shops.
<i>Local terminology</i>	Use of country-specific metaphors, names of festivals, puns, a general local touch in the vocabulary of the webpage rather than just a mere translation.
<i>Free trials or downloads</i>	Free stuff, free downloads, free screensavers, free product trials, free coupons to try the products or services, free memberships, free service information.
<i>Toll-free numbers</i>	To call at any time.

<u>Power distance</u>	
<i>Company hierarchy information</i>	Information about the ranks of company personnel, information about organizational charts, information about country managers.
<i>Pictures of CEOs</i>	Pictures of executives, important people in the industry or celebrities.
<i>Quality assurance and awards</i>	Mention of awards won, mention of quality assurance information, quality certification by international and local agencies.
<i>Vision statement</i>	Statement by the CEO or company head about the vision of the company.
<i>Pride of ownership appeal</i>	Websites depict satisfied customers, fashion statement for the use of the product, the use of reference groups to portray pride.
<i>Proper titles</i>	Titles of the important people in the company, titles of the people in the contact information, titles of people on the organizational charts.
<u>Masculinity</u>	
<i>Quizzes and games</i>	Games, quizzes, fun stuff to do on the website, tips and tricks, recipes, other fun information.
<i>Realism theme</i>	Less fantasy and imagery on the website, to-the-point information
<i>Product effectiveness</i>	Durability information, quality information, product attribute information, product robustness information
<i>Clear gender roles</i>	Separate pages for men and women, depiction of women in nurturance roles, depiction of women in positions of telephone operators, models, wives and mothers; depiction of men as macho, strong and in positions of power
<u>High-context culture</u>	
<i>Politeness and indirectness</i>	Greetings from the company, images and pictures reflecting politeness, flowery language, use of indirect expressions such as “perhaps”, “probably” and “somewhat”, overall humbleness in company philosophy and corporate information.
<i>Soft-sell approach</i>	Use of affective and subjective impressions of the intangible aspects of a product or service, high usage of entertainment themes to promote the product.
<i>Aesthetics</i>	Attention to aesthetic details, liberal use of colors, bold colors, emphasis on images and context, use of love and harmony appeal.
<u>Low-context culture</u>	
<i>Hard-sell approach</i>	Discounts, promotions, emphasis on product advantages using explicit comparisons.
<i>Use of superlatives</i>	Use of superlative words and sentences such as “we are the number one”, “the top company”, “the leader” and “world’s largest”.
<i>Rank or prestige of the company</i>	Features such as company rank in the industry, listing in Forbes or Fortune, numbers showing the growth and importance of the company.
<i>Terms and condition of purchase</i>	Product return policy, warranty, other conditions associated with the purchase.

This framework has been tested several times in different contexts. Singh and Baack (2004) compared US and Mexican websites, Singh and Matsuo (2004) performed a content analysis study of US and Japanese websites and Singh et al. (2005b) compared China, India, Japan and the US.

2.6 Culture

There are several definitions of culture. Hofstede (2001) stated that “culture is the collective programming of the mind; it manifests itself not only in values but in more superficial ways: in symbols, heroes and rituals” (p. 1). The Concise Oxford Dictionary also provides us with two definitions: “The arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded...” and “The customs, ideas, and social behavior of a particular people or group”.

Kluckhohn (1951) stated that:

“Culture consist in patterned ways of thinking, feeling and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consist of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values” (p. 86).

Schein (2004) defined culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that are developed or discovered by a group as it learns to cope with its problems related to external adaption and internal integration. These assumptions worked well enough earlier (i.e. they are valid) and will thus be passed onto new members as the right way to view, feel and handle those problems.

Hofstede (2001) also held that while “values are invisible until they become evident in behavior”, culture is also visible: “Visible manifestations of culture include rituals, heroes and symbols alongside values” (p. 10). Hofstede described these ideas in his famous onion diagram (Figure 2), which indicates that *values* are believed to be the deepest manifestation of culture, followed by *heroes* and *rituals* while *symbols* are the most superficial.

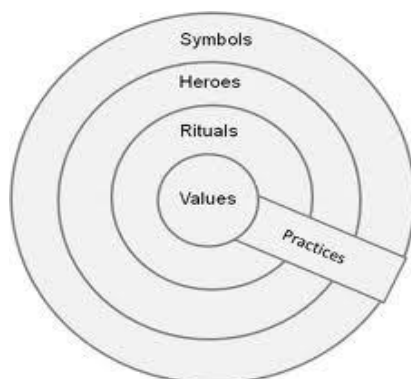


Figure 2: Onion diagram - Hofstede (2001, p. 11)

2.7 Hofstede's cultural dimensions

To examine differences in cultural values and how they affect the localization of websites the work by Hofstede (1980) and Hall's (1976) high-/low-context cultures are often cited.

Although widely accepted, there are some criticisms of Hofstede's cultural dimensions.

Holden (2002) stated that the world has changed a lot since Hofstede gathered his data.

Holden also compared Hofstede's way of cataloguing culture to the periodic tables of chemistry and described the overwhelming acceptance of the cultural dimensions as

"intellectually numbing" (p. 34).

McSweeney (2002) also argued that the dimensions rely on an unprovable assumption that within each nation there is a uniform national culture. She also questioned if a questionnaire could be used to identify dimensions of a national culture. In addition, the concept of 'national culture' has been criticized. Myers and Tan (2002) believed this concept to be too simplistic.

One could argue that rigid categorizations of different cultures might be outdated. Hofstede (2001) himself admitted that culture can change, but that it takes a very long time. He further argued that his dimensions remain valid because over 200 external comparative studies have supported his indexes. Wurtz (2005) also argued that several studies have indicated that modern communication patterns are the same as the cultural dimensions provided decades ago.

Hofstede's model of culture includes four cultural perspectives: individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, power distance and masculinity/femininity. In 2001, a fifth perspective called *long-term orientation* was added, but this perspective has rarely been used in subsequent research and it remains controversial among scholars (Fang, 2003). The framework developed by Singh et al. (2005a) also only makes use of the four main dimensions.

In the following section, we describe the cultural dimensions and explain how Hofstede ranked a selection of different cultures. A full overview of how Hofstede ranked each culture can be found in the appendix (Table 21).

2.7.1 Individualism/collectivism

“Individualism stands for a society in which the ties between individuals are loose: Everyone is expected to look after him/herself and her/his immediate family only. Collectivism stands of a society in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 223).

Individualism emphasizes one's views, needs and goals over other individuals. Collectivism, by contrast, focuses on the views, needs and goals of an entire 'group' rather than those of oneself. Traditionally, individualism is more common in Western cultures, while collectivism have been long valued in Eastern cultures (Hofstede, 2001).

Unsurprisingly, the US is ranked top with 91, followed by Australia 90, Great Britain 89 and Canada with 80. Norway is also rated as a culture with a high degree of individualism with 69. At the other end of the scale, we find Latin American countries such as Costa Rica 15, Colombia 13, Panama 11 and Ecuador 8 (Hofstede, 2001).

In the context of website localization, Singh et al. (2005a) believed that examples of items that fit well with collectivism are *family themes*, where you have pictures of family or teams with an emphasis on teamwork, and *loyalty programs*, where you could have company credit cards, customer loyalty programs or special membership programs. For individualism images, depicting self-reliance or achievement can be one way of localizing. Other is to focus on *product uniqueness*, where you point out unique selling points and product differentiation features (Hofstede, 2001).

2.7.2 Uncertainty avoidance

This dimension can be defined as “the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 161). Countries with a high score in uncertainty avoidance try to stay out of risky situations and value security, while individuals with weak uncertainty avoidance are less afraid of risky situations (Mooij, 2005).

Individuals that live in cultures that are characterized by high uncertainty avoidance also tend to prefer clear rules and directions (Singh et al., 2005b).

Norway has a low uncertainty avoidance score of 50 compared with Greece 112, Spain 86 and France 86. At the lower end of the scale, we find Hong Kong 29, Denmark 23 and Singapore 8 (Hofstede, 2001).

In terms of website localization, Singh et al. (2005a) believed that a culture with a high degree of uncertainty avoidance appreciates a website with well-displayed links, site maps and forward, backward, up and down navigation buttons. Other features include a customer service option and customer help in the form of a phone number or e-mail address. Other features include the use of country-specific metaphors and a general local touch in the vocabulary on the site. A traditional theme with an emphasis on history and phrases such as “most respected company” and “keeping the tradition alive” can be another way of localizing (Singh et al., 2005a).

2.7.3 Power distance

This dimension is defined as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 98). In cultures with a high power distance, the less powerful members of organizations and institutions accept and expect power to be distributed unequally (Hofstede, 2001).

Norway has a very low power distance of 31 alongside Denmark 18, Israel 13 and Austria 11. The countries with the largest power distance are Malaysia 104 followed by a long list of Latin American countries including Guatemala and Panama 95 and Mexico 81. In countries with a high power distance, one could focus on pictures of executives or celebrities. A *vision statement* by the leader of the company along with an organizational chart could also be something people in such a country would appreciate (Singh et al., 2005a).

2.7.4 Masculinity/femininity

“Masculinity stands for a society in which social gender roles are clearly distinct: Men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. Femininity stands for a society in which social gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life” (Hofstede, 2001, p. 297).

According to Hofstede (1980), cultures with a high degree of masculinity value ambition, success, assertiveness and performance. By contrast, a culture characterized as feminine believes in caring for others and quality of life. According to Hofstede, Japan is by far the most masculine country in the world. With a score of 95, it is ahead of countries such as Austria 79, Italy 70 and Germany 66. Feminine countries are dominated by the Scandinavian countries with Denmark 16, Norway 8 and Sweden 6 (Hofstede, 2001). The web features Singh et al. (2005a) identified for the masculinity perspective include the use of games, quizzes and other fun stuff on the website. The use of to-the-point information and a general realism in the theme are also preferable. Other features include information about the quality, durability and attributes of a product along with separate pages for men and women depicted in traditional roles.

2.8 High-/low-context cultures

Hall (1976) divided countries into *high- and low-context cultures*. In low-context cultures, things are verbally explained, whereas in a high-context country many things are left unsaid, and one expects that the meaning is understood implicitly. According to Hall (1976), Norway is a low-context country along with the Scandinavian countries, the United States, Great Britain, Germany and Australia. High-context countries include France, Italy, Spain, China, Japan and the Latin American countries.

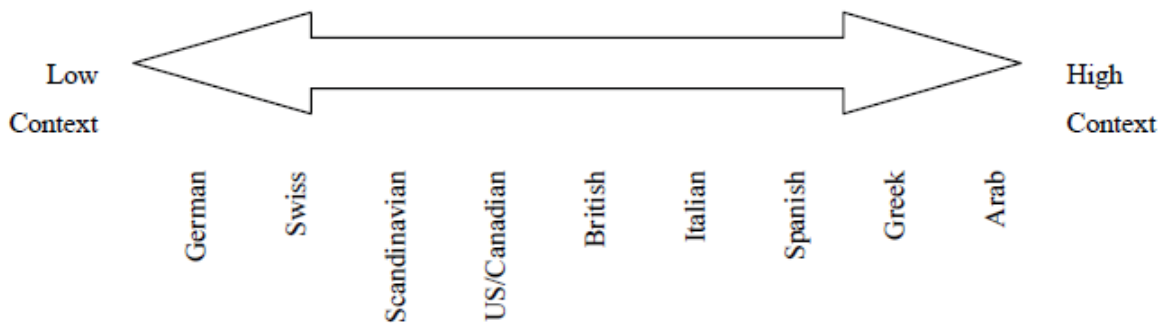


Figure 3: High- and Low-Context Cultures (Griffin & Pustay, 2007)

People living in a high-context culture appreciate greetings from the company, pictures that focus on politeness and a language consisting of indirect words such as “perhaps”, “probably” and “somewhat” along with a liberal use of colors and an attention to aesthetic detail (Singh et al., 2005a). On a website localized for a low-context culture, items that could be used include discounts, promotions or product comparisons along with rankings of the company among others and the use of superlatives such as “the top company” and “the world’s largest”.

3 Method

3.1 Context

Norway is ranked sixth in the world on e-readiness (EIU & IBM, 2010), which makes it a country well suited for a survey that aims to provide empirical evidence on whether foreign firms localize their websites for relevant foreign markets’ audiences. Norway has an area of 385,179 square kilometers and a population of about 4.9 million people (Britannica, 2010); therefore, it is a small market compared with other largely populated countries. However, being a rich country Norway has a consumer base where almost everyone is able to buy the products international companies provide, making it a big potential market for businesses that focus on e-commerce.

According to DIBS (2008), online retail sales in Norway were estimated to be 29.5 billion NOK in 2008, and an average Norwegian spends 5745 NOK each month. Forrester (2009) stated that online sales in Norway will increase 15% from 2008 to 2014.

The number of people in Norway using the Internet to buy various services online is one of the highest in the world. Nearly 50% have used the Internet in the past year to book a trip or a hotel (Figure 4). Although the percentage is highest for the age group from 25–54, people older than 55 also represent an important market segment.

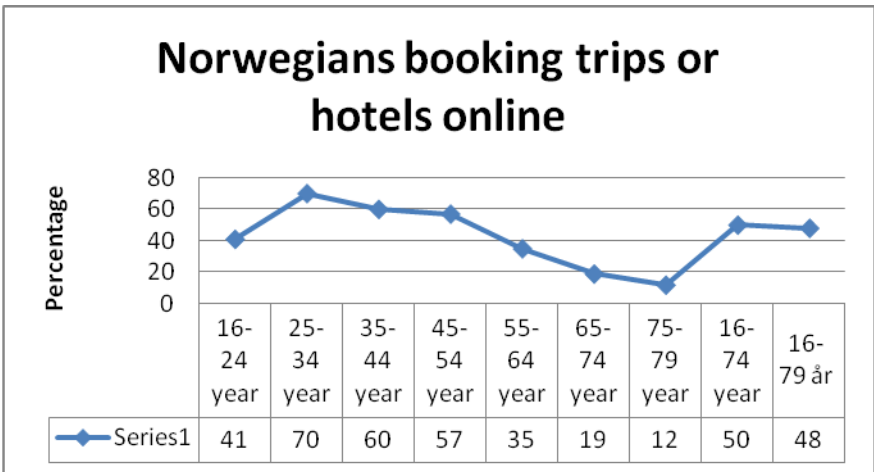


Figure 4: Statistical data showing online purchases (SSB, 2010)

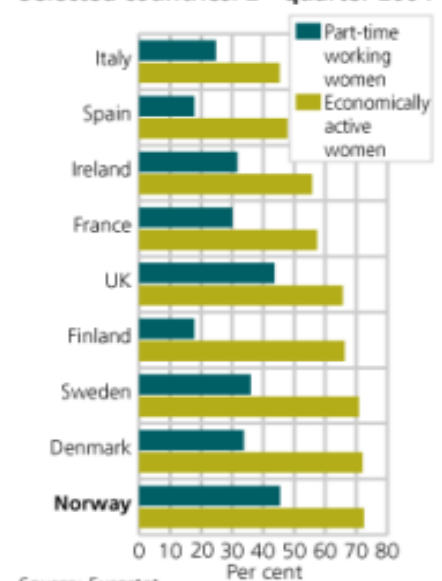
When looking at Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions, Norway has some interesting ratings. In particular, the low masculinity rating of only 8 places Norway near the bottom of the countries analyzed. Being a feminine country, Norway has a smaller gap between women's and men's caring values than those in most other countries. For instance, nobody raises an eyebrow when seeing fathers with strollers in the streets, which is not a common sight in most Asian countries.

Another aspect of Norwegian culture is the egalitarian values and equality between genders.

Norway is considered to be a country where egalitarian values have had greater success than elsewhere (Maagerø & Simonsen, 2008, p. 13). Norway has responded early to trends that focus on factors such as integration, codetermination and equality when it comes to financial aspects.

As Figure 5 shows, Norway has a high degree of women participating in the labor force. The figure also shows that although many women participate in the workforce, 43% work part-time. The past decade has spurred a discussion on the differences in salaries between women and men. This has resulted in a bigger focus on raising the salaries for women to make the salaries for men and women more even.

Economically active and part-time working women 15-64 years. Selected countries. 2nd quarter 2004



Source: Eurostat.

Figure 5: Female labor participation (SSB, 2006)

In the dimension called uncertainty avoidance, Norway is given a score of 50 (Hofstede, 2001). This means that Norwegians are unafraid of taking risks; however, one may still claim that the risks are fairly calculated. It also implies that Norwegians like having rules in their daily lives as long as they allow for individual freedom and self-realization.

According to Hofstede's analysis Norway has a low power distance. Several factors could explain this. One is that Norway is sparsely populated, making it nearly impossible for rich farmers to get poor people to work on their fields. This has resulted in a history where there has not been a conservative upper class (Maagerø & Simonsen, 2008), and people are not used to having big gaps between classes and authorities.

Examples of this low power distance are the fact that you can send an email to the Prime Minister and the common practice of involving employees when decisions that affect the company are being made. Many Norwegian business leaders acknowledge the working unions and allow them to take part in processes, making the workforce accept changes easier since they feel more involved.

Norwegians like to be portrayed as a nation that has a great social system and where everyone takes care of each other. "An elaborate and generous social security system was introduced after World War II ... The aim of the welfare state has been to fight what was considered the five main evils in society: poverty, illness, unemployment, ignorance and bad housing conditions" (Maagerø & Simonsen, 2008, p. 17).

Although Norway has an extensive welfare system, Hofstede's (2001) research indicated that it scores high on individualism with a rating of 69. The reason for this is that although family is important in Norwegian culture, one does not tend to expand these close ties to the extended family, as in collective cultures such as in Latin America.

Since Norway is considered to be a low-context country, Norwegians tend to simplify things and explain them by using words or verbalization. This can be illustrated by the fact that Norwegians favor simplicity when browsing websites. Several Norwegian websites have a fairly simple design, no excessive content and clear communication (Singh & Pereira, 2005). An example is provided below, showing the Norwegian company Snøgg, which provides companies with first aid equipment.

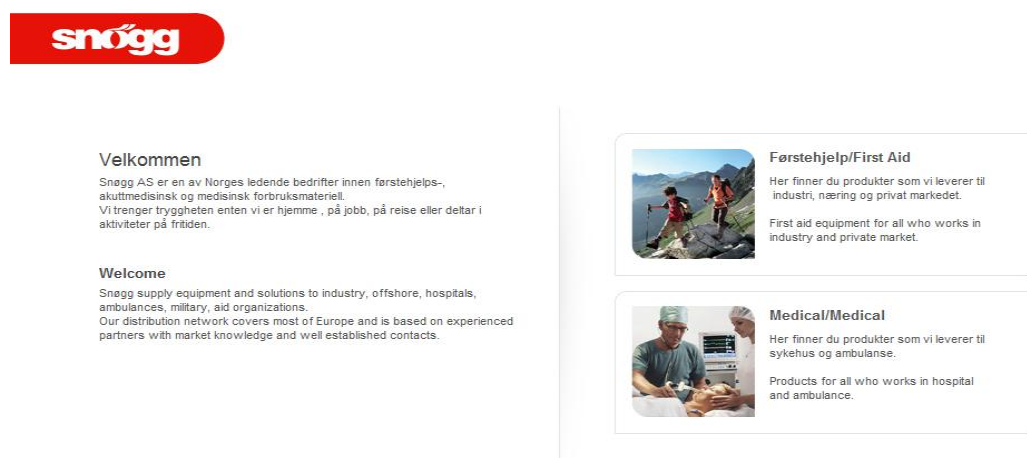


Figure 6: Example of website simplicity – www.snogg.no

To analyze localization efforts towards the Norwegian market, we decided to focus on firms originating from one of Norway's important trade partners: the US. In 2009, Norway imported 6.2% of its total goods from the US and exported 4.8% of its total exports there (SSB, 2011). In the next chapter, we assess the differences between the two countries.

3.2 Comparison between Norway and the United States

To gain an overview of the differences between the two countries we compared them based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Figure 7 lists the actual scores the countries received on each dimension.

Figure 7 shows that the most prominent differences between the countries are evident with respect to the *masculinity* and *individualism* dimensions. A smaller difference is also evident with respect to *power distance*. Finally, with respect to the dimension of *uncertainty avoidance* Norway and the US seem to exhibit only a marginal difference.

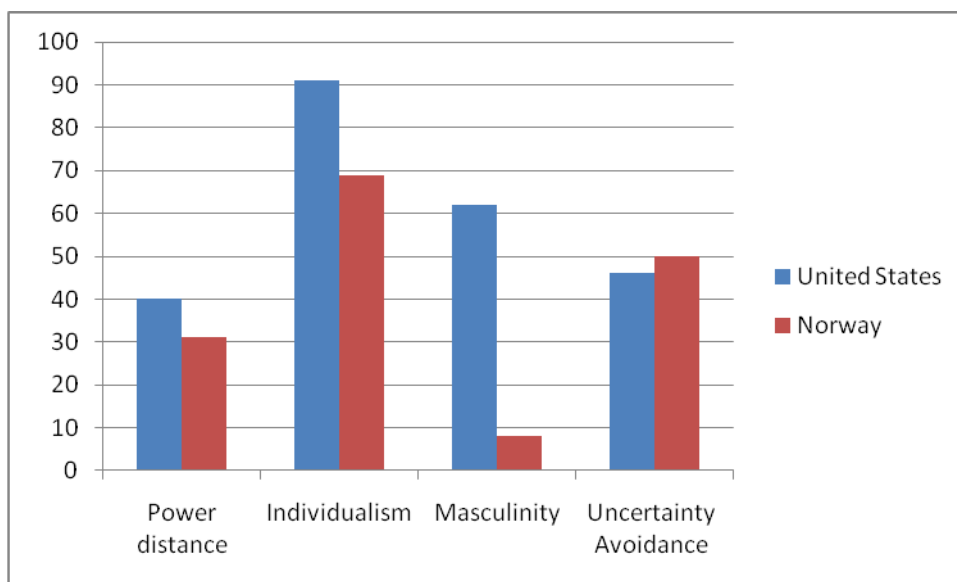


Figure 7: Comparing the US and Norway using Hofstede's cultural dimensions

3.3 Hypothesis

Based on these differences between the Norwegian and US culture, we propose six hypotheses. Hypotheses 1–4 are based on Hofstede's (2001) dimensions and hypotheses 5 and 6 are based on Hall (1976).

Individualism-collectivism:

H1. *Local Norwegian websites depict higher levels of collectivism-oriented features than do local US websites.*

Uncertainty avoidance:

H2. *Local Norwegian websites depict higher levels of uncertainty-reducing features than do local US websites.*

Power distance:

H3. *Local US websites depict higher levels of power distance-oriented features than do local Norwegian websites.*

Masculinity:

H4. *Local US websites show higher levels of masculinity-oriented features than do local Norwegian websites*

High context:

H5. *Local Norwegian websites show higher levels of low-context-oriented features than do local US websites.*

Low context:

H6. *Local Norwegian websites show lower levels of high-context-oriented features than do local US websites.*

3.4 Research design

As described earlier, we divided our research question into two parts. The first part is devoted to finding out if international firms localize their websites for Norwegian audiences. To perform the research we use the framework developed by Singh and Boughton (2005) as described in the literature review. This framework is based on the localization features displayed on firms' websites, which are then used to rank the company website using five levels of website globalization: standardized websites, proactive websites, global websites, localized websites and highly localized websites.

The aim of the second part of the research question is to look into *how well* these international firms localize their websites. Based on the results from the first research question we continue with the international firms that received a rating of *localized* or *highly localized*. To perform this research we use the cultural value framework developed by Singh and Matsuo (2004), as described in the literature review.

3.5 Data collection

Our method of collecting data is a content analysis of the websites of 155 international firms. Content analysis is, according to Kassirjian (1977), a widely used tool for conducting quantitative analyses of communication content. It is also regarded to be a reputable, systematic and objective method.

“Content analysis is a phase of information-processing in which communications content is transformed through objective and systematic application of categorization rules, into data that can be summarized and compared” (Holsti et al., 1969).

Content analysis has been used extensively in different fields including consumer behavior, international marketing and advertising and marketing research to understand the behavior and characteristics of a target market (Singh & Matsuo, 2004). For example, Rafaeli (1997) and Ju-Pak (1999) used content analysis to better understand communication on the web.

Content analysis is regarded as a good way to analyze the norms of behavior, values and other elements of communication in a culture. The framework developed by Singh and Matsuo (2004) makes use of content analysis, and we can also use it to systematically analyze the cultural values depicted on the websites of the international firms selected. The degree of the depiction of each cultural value is first evaluated separately by two coders (the authors) fluent in English and Norwegian. The coding sheet consists of six cultural dimensions and 31 cultural coding categories (Table 3).

The first part of the research question was rather straightforward. By applying each website a number from 1 to 5, we ascertained a transcript from SPSS showing the frequency of each of the categories. For the second part of the research question, we used a Likert scale from 1 to 5 on the 31 cultural items on the 50 websites. Each rater went through the websites individually and ranked each cultural dimension. The average time spent on each site was 35 minutes. The two raters then went through the material and discussed each record. Based on this discussion, a final score for each dimension for each site was agreed. The data were then compared using SPSS 17.0 to check reliability.

3.6 Data source

The sample for this study is based on the members of the American Chamber of Commerce in Norway, which consists of over 200 members (Amcham, 2011), and the members of the Norwegian–American Chamber of Commerce, which has 330 members (Naccusa, 2011). The combined list was then modified by removing all duplicates and non-American companies. This resulted in a sample size of 155 international companies. A complete list of these companies can be found in the appendix (Table 14). The unit of analysis for both parts of the research question is the entire number of webpages on each website.

3.7 Data analysis

We used descriptive statistics to gather the standard deviation and mean values from each of the cultural items and compared them with the US websites and the mean values obtained from previous research.

Singh and Matsuo (2004) conducted a similar study on the differences between US and Japanese websites. In another investigation, Singh et al. (2005b) compared Chinese, Indian, Japanese and US websites. According to this analysis, the local US websites differed by no more than 0.08 on any dimension compared with previous research. We therefore conclude that the mean values used here are representative.

To use the mean values obtained in two different experiments you need to check the statistical significance by conducting an independent t-test (Field, 2009). The t-test has the following formula (Field, 2009, p. 336):

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{s_{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}}$$

where

$$s_{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2} = \sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}}$$

where

\bar{X}_1 = mean of sample 1

\bar{X}_2 = mean of sample 2

n_1 = number of subjects in sample 1

n_2 = number of subjects in sample 2

s_1^2 = variance of sample 1

s_2^2 = variance of sample 2

The result from this t-test can be found in the discussion, where we present it as an integrated part alongside the mean values from each dimension. When comparing these websites the following framework will be used on both the overall cultural dimensions and individual items. However, we will not discuss items separately; the framework will be used to identify the items where localization was evident and the items where no localization was found.

Figure 8 shows that localization occurs when we have significant difference in the right direction. The significant difference is based on the t-test results showing whether average scores for each item depicted is significantly different between US and Norwegian websites. The direction can be either in the expected direction or in the unexpected direction. An unexpected direction implies ‘bad’ localization, whereas an expected direction implies ‘good’ localization. To assess the level of localization we take into account the cultural distance between the US and Norwegian cultures. These are estimates based on Figure 7. The extent of localization will be based on subjective assessments, which are based on interpretation of the statistical data.

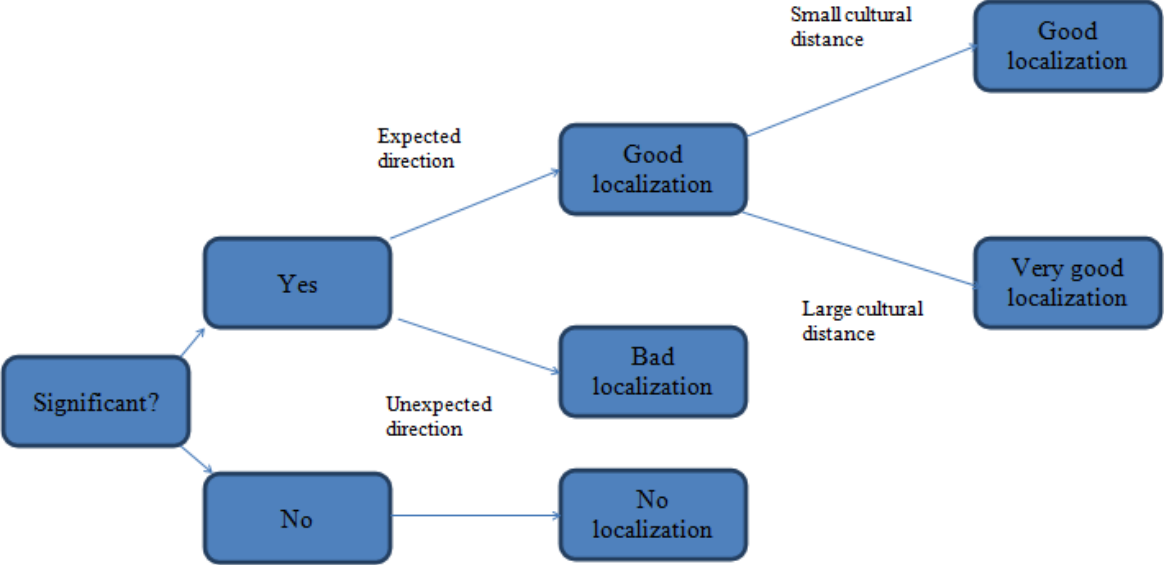


Figure 8: Framework for analyzing the data

3.8 Quality

To ensure the quality of research the concepts of *validity* and *reliability* are often used. These two concepts indicate whether the results from the research are reliable and of good quality.

3.8.1 Validity

Validity can also be referred to as *accuracy*. This means that the research measures the values it is supposed to (Hair & Money, 2007). In our thesis, this means that the data gathered can actually be used to solve our research problem.

Weber (1990) stated that validity in content analysis is easier explained if one makes two distinctions. The first one is to make a distinction between validity as a similarity between two sets of things. “For example concepts, variables, methods and data – and validity as generalizability of results, references, and theory.” A second distinction, more specific to content analysis, is between the validity of the classification scheme, or variables derived from it, and the validity of the interpretation relating content variables to their causes or consequences” (p. 18).

Shapiro & Markoff, 1997 stated that a content analysis is only valid and meaningful as long as the results can be related to other measures. We have taken both of these viewpoints into consideration by using a renowned and established framework. Since this framework has been used on multiple occasions and published in reliable publications we believe that the validity of our results is of good quality.

3.8.2 Reliability

A lack of resources prevented us using outsiders to do the coding work for us. This can have an effect when measuring the concepts, since both of the authors have the same background and knowledge of the topic under investigation. Our views and perception when analyzing might, therefore, be more similar than if two trained outsiders had performed the analysis.

Neuendorf (2002) stated that "given that a goal of content analysis is to identify and record relatively objective (or at least inter-subjective) characteristics of messages, reliability is paramount. Without the establishment of reliability, content analysis measures are useless" (p. 141).

There are several ways of measuring reliability. One common method is to measure the percentage of agreement between raters. This is a simple method where you simply add up the number of cases that were coded the same way by the two raters and then divide by the total number of cases. The problem with this approach is that it does not take into account the fact that the raters are supposed to agree with each other a certain percentage of the time based on pure chance (Cohen, 1960). One way of dealing with this shortcoming is to calculate reliability by using Cohen's Kappa, which has a different approach. this represents 1 as cases where the coding is perfectly reliable and goes to 0 when there is no agreement other than that expected by chance (Haney et al., 1998) Kappa is computed as:

$$\kappa = \frac{P_A - P_c}{1 - P_c}$$

where:

P_A = proportion of units on which the raters agree; and

P_c = the proportion of units for which agreement is expected by chance.

The inter-coder reliability for the first analysis where we investigated *if* international firms localized resulted in a Kappa of 0.80, which, according to Landis (1977), is considered to be substantial agreement. For the content analysis looking into *how well* the international firms localized we received an inter-coder Kappa of 0.76, which is also considered to be substantial agreement (Landis, 1977).

Another measurement of reliability is Cronbach's Alpha, which can be used to measure internal consistency (Table 4).

Table 4: Cronbach's Alphas for the six cultural dimensions

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>
Collectivism	0.54
Uncertainty avoidance	0.63
Power distance	0.82
Masculinity	0.12
High-context culture	0.21
Low-context culture	0.57

Cronbach's Alphas are ideally above 0.6; however, measurements below that do not necessarily mean that the research should be discarded (Hair & Money, 2007). Nunally (1978) stated that Alpha values down to 0.50 are adequate for exploratory studies.

In our case, the two dimensions of masculinity and high-context culture have very low alpha values. We will thus drop these two dimensions from the analysis. These low values might be explained by the relatively small sample size, the weakness of the instrument itself or an indication of no equivalent meanings in the Norwegian context. The framework was developed in the US, so there might be a difference in how people from different cultures perceive the same items. However, according to Field (2009), one needs a large data set to say anything about the robustness of the instrument. We did not pursue further factor analysis for two reasons:

1. The framework has been tested extensively; and
2. Our data only included 50 observations, and the recommended sample size for a factor analysis is 10 times as many units as variables (Nunally, 1978; Field, 2009), which in our case means that we would have to have at least 300 observations.

4 Findings

In this chapter, we present our findings from the content analysis. We have separated the findings into two sections to present each part of the research question separately.

4.1 Research question part 1

Table 5: Findings to research question part 1

<i>Scale</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Standardized	62	40.0
Proactive	18	11.6
Global	25	16.1
Localized	26	16.8
Highly localized	24	15.5
Total	155	100

Overall, 50 websites (32.3%) were regarded as localized or highly localized. On a 1–5 Likert scale, the mean score was 2.56.

When comparing our results with previous research, we found that the level of localization was lower. Singh and Boughton (2005) performed a study on US, European and Asian websites and found that 18.4% of them were *localized* and that 24.2% were *highly localized*, resulting in 42.6% being localized. Furthermore, 48.9% of the US websites were localized. This tells us that Norway has a low priority even for those companies that are members of the American Chamber of Commerce and the Norwegian–American Chamber of Commerce. Being members of organizations such as these, which aims to improve the ties between Norwegian and US companies, one would think that these companies should be among those that are the most interested in doing business in Norway.

4.2 Research question part 2

4.2.1 Collectivism

Table 6: Findings on collectivism

	Norwegian websites	N=50
<i>Collectivism:</i>	Mean	S.D.
Community relations	3.00	1.70
Clubs or chatrooms	2.24	1.49
Newsletters	3.12	1.35
Family theme	2.24	1.00
Symbols	1.36	0.75
Loyalty programs	2.02	1.35
Links to local websites	2.64	1.63

Table 6 shows that *community*, *newsletters* and *links to local websites* pull websites towards collectivism. The lack of a family theme, loyalty programs and national symbols could indicate that a localization effort has been made since Norway is an individualistic culture.

4.2.2 Uncertainty avoidance

Table 7: Findings on uncertainty avoidance

	Norwegian websites	N=50
<i>Uncertainty avoidance:</i>	Mean	S.D.
Customer service	3.66	1.00
Guided navigation	3.08	0.83
Tradition theme	2.18	1.02
Local stores	3.34	1.27
Local terminology	3.72	1.07
Free trials or downloads	2.22	1.47
Toll-free numbers	2.92	0.97

We can see that it is the use of customer service, guided navigation and the use of local terminology that gives high scores in uncertainty avoidance. While the downplay of traditional theme and free trials indicates that a localization effort has been made.

4.2.3 Power distance

Table 8: Findings on power distance

	Norwegian websites	N=50
<i><u>Power distance:</u></i>	Mean	S.D.
Company hierarchy info	2.66	1.56
Pictures of CEO's	2.20	1.56
Quality assurance	2.74	1.10
Vision statement	2.68	1.50
Pride of ownership appeal	2.08	1.01
Proper titles	2.56	1.55

As mentioned earlier, Norway has a very low power distance. The results from the power distance dimension are thus consistent, since all the category items fall into the interval 2–3. It is the items *pictures of CEOs* and *pride of ownership appeal* that point towards a localization effort while the other items give no real indication on a localization effort.

4.2.4 Low context

Table 9: Findings on low context

	Norwegian websites	N=50
<i><u>Low context:</u></i>	Mean	S.D.
Hard-sell approach	2.32	1.06
Use of superlatives	2.82	0.77
Rank	2.10	1.09
Terms and condition	3.10	1.42

In order to represent some sort of localization effort, the websites should have received higher scores. The only item that receives a score above 3 is the *terms and condition*, but this is not high enough to say anything for sure about the localization effort at this stage.

5 Discussion

In order to discuss each dimension more thoroughly we will be using the framework we developed and presented in the method chapter.

We have also included the results from previous research by Singh and Matsuo (2004), along with the standard deviation, T and P values and the standard error.

We will present and discuss each dimension separately.

5.1 Collectivism

Table 10: Comprehensive data on collectivism

	Norwegian websites	N=50	US websites	N=48					
<i>Collectivism:</i>	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	T-value	P-value	SE	Stat sign?	Localization?
Community relations	3.00	1.70	3.81	0.7	3.0609	0.0029	0.265	Yes	Bad
Clubs or chatrooms	2.24	1.49	1.69	0.88	2.2133	0.0292	0.249	Yes	Good
Newsletters	3.12	1.35	3.04	0.99	0.3334	0.7396	0.240	No	No
Family theme	2.24	1.00	1.63	0.73	3.4372	0.0009	0.177	Yes	Good
Symbols	1.36	0.75	1.71	0.85	2.2163	0.033	0.162	Yes	Bad
Loyalty programs	2.02	1.35	2.29	0.97	1.1330	0.2601	0.238	No	No
Links to local websites	2.64	1.63	2.65	0.91	0.0373	0.9703	0.268	No	No
Total dimension	2.37	0.70	2.44	0.45	0.5862	0.5591	0.119	No	No

When looking at the data from the *collectivism* dimension and the comparison between Norwegian and US websites we have an overall result indicating that there is no localization effort being made. However, looking into the individual items we find good localization in terms of *family theme* and *chatrooms*. Apparently, bad attempts at localization are found in *community* and *symbols*. There are no evidence of localization effort in terms of *newsletters*, *loyalty* and *links*.

Looking at the standard deviation, we can see that we have measurements that are very broad compared with the results obtained in the previous research on the US websites. This indicates that some companies might do a very good job at localizing their websites, while others not so.

Another explanation lies in the US being more focused on performance rather than relations. We can see this in how some of these items have been treated. The concern for performance over communities is evident in a lack of links to local sites and in the lower levels of *newsletters* and *loyalty programs*. Thus, H1 is rejected.

5.2 Uncertainty avoidance

Table 11: Comprehensive data on uncertainty avoidance

	Norwegian websites	N=50	US websites	N=48					
<i>Uncertainty avoidance:</i>	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	T-value	P-value	SE	Stat sign?	Localization?
Customer service	3.66	1.00	4.29	0.54	3.8576	0.0002	0.163	Yes	Bad
Guided navigation	3.08	0.83	3.88	0.65	5.2976	0.0001	0.151	Yes	Bad
Tradition theme	2.18	1.02	2.33	0.88	0.7781	0.4384	0.193	No	No
Local stores	3.34	1.27	3.65	0.60	1.5345	0.1282	0.202	No	No
Local terminology	3.72	1.07	1.88	0.82	9.9526	0.0001	0.193	Yes	Very good
Free trials or downloads	2.22	1.47	3.07	0.79	3.5443	0.0006	0.240	Yes	Bad
Toll-free numbers	2.92	0.97	4.12	0.79	6.6991	0.0001	0.179	Yes	Bad
Total dimension	3.02	0.62	3.2	0.32	4.0482	<0.0001	0.100	Yes	Bad

In the dimension *uncertainty avoidance*, we have an overall statistically significant difference. However, it is in the wrong direction since Norway is ranked as a culture more concerned with uncertainty avoidance than is the US. This indicates that a bad localization effort has been made. The small difference between the two cultures in this dimension causes conflicts.

It is also hard to predict a localization effort because the mean values obtained in the research on the US websites are rather high for a culture with a low degree of uncertainty avoidance.

One explanation for this is the issue of trust in societies, with a special relevance in the context of trust in e-commerce. Norway, being a high-trust society, compared with the US being a medium-trust society (Delhey & Newton, 2005), could provide an alternative explanation for the results. If we consider this issue, most items would then be regarded as if they have been localized in a good way.

It is also hard to point out measures companies could take to improve their localization efforts. Having a lower score on items such as *customer service*, *local terminology* and *local stores* is easily obtained, but it would not make a webpage more localized. The reason for this is that most people no matter what culture they are from appreciate where to find the nearest store and that the language used reflects the local society. Thus, H2 is rejected.

5.3 Power distance

Table 12: Comprehensive data on power distance

	Norwegian websites	N=50	US websites	N=48					
<u>Power distance:</u>	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	T-value	P-value	SE	Stat sign?	Localization?
Company hierarchy	2.66	1.56	2.31	0.95	1.3347	0.1851	0,262	No	No
Pictures of CEOs	2.20	1.56	2.38	1.10	0	1	5732	No	No
Quality assurance	2.74	1.10	2.46	0.85	0	1	5853	No	No
Vision statement	2.68	1.50	2.63	0.89	0.1996	0.8422	0,25	No	No
Pride of ownership appeal	2.08	1.01	2.65	0.73	3.1907	0.0019	0,179	Yes	Good
Proper titles	2.56	1.55	1.92	0.78	2.6554	0.0119	0,249	Yes	Bad
Total dimension	2.49	1.02	2.36	0.55	0.7807	0.4369	0,167	No	No

The overall result for this dimension is one of no statistically significant difference; therefore, we have no evidence of a localization effort. Furthermore, the *power distance* dimension contained mostly statistically insignificant mean values. The only item with a good localization effort was the *pride of ownership appeal*. The reason for this is the statistically significant mean value, a small difference in power distance between the US and Norway and that the direction of the difference is in the “right” way. For the item *proper titles*, we have a higher mean value, which although statistically significant is an item in the “wrong” direction.

Once more, we might argue that we have some very high standard deviation values, which could indicate that some companies might localize very well and others not so. An item that could be well localized is *quality assurance*, which might also fit under the uncertainty avoidance dimension. However, as mentioned before, we did not perform a factor analysis preventing us from reaching any conclusion on matters such as this. Thus, H3 is rejected.

5.4 Low context

Table 13: Comprehensive data - low context

	Norwegian websites	N=50	US websites	N=48					
<u>Low context:</u>	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	T-value	P-value	SE	Stat sign?	Localization?
Hard-sell approach	2.32	1.06	3.29	0.80	5.4561	0.0001	0.178	Yes	Bad
Use of superlatives	2.82	0.77	3.35	0.64	3.6976	0.0004	0.143	Yes	Bad
Rank	2.10	1.09	3.19	0.70	5.8634	0.0001	0.186	Yes	Bad
Terms and condition	3.10	1.42	2.69	0.95	1.6729	0.0976	0.245	No	No
Total dimension	2.59	0.73	3.13	0.60	3.9914	<0.0001	0.135	Yes	Bad

Again, all items that are statistically significant have a difference in mean values in the “wrong” direction. The reason for this is that Norway is ranked by Hall (1976) as a slightly lower context country than the US, meaning that the mean values should be higher than the

US values. If we assume that they actually did a good job at localizing, this would challenge Hall's qualitative ranking.

Since this is a dimension where the Norwegian and US cultures are relatively similar, it is hard to analyze the small nuances between the cultures. Here, all items have a higher mean value for the Norwegian websites, which indicates that there might be some underlying reasons. For instance, although Norwegians may be a slightly lower context culture than is the US, this does not necessarily mean that one needs to have bargains screaming SALE on each website to be localized.

Another explanation is that Norway is a sensitive country when it comes to self-praise; this might be related to 'janteloven' where members of society are not encouraged to stick out as exceptionally successful or better than others are. This could help explain the effect on *use of superlatives* and *rank*. Another explanation for the *rank* item is the egalitarian society Norway is regarded to be. Having small differences between the classes of society might be reflected in the score this item received.

We also believe that items such as *use of superlatives*, *hard-sell* and *rank* could have been relevant under the masculinity/femininity dimension. If so, this would actually fit with our hypothesis for this dimension. However, H6 is rejected.

To summarize, none of our hypotheses were confirmed. Although we presented mean values that suggest that websites are localized towards the Norwegian market, this was related to chance rather than to a localization effort. This also suggests that most webpages were mere translations of American sites that only added local contact information when presenting the site as a Norwegian website.

6 Limitations and further research

Our research in this thesis has several limitations. First, our study consisted of 155 companies and only 50 of these were localized. A larger sample might provide more consistent Cronbach's Alpha values, which would better indicate that our results were reliable. A larger sample would also have provided us with the possibility to do more validity testing such as factor analysis, which measures convergent and divergent validity. However, we believe we used the most relevant firms engaged in bi-national trade associations and, therefore, represented the American exporters most interested in the Norwegian market.

Second, we only conducted an analysis on Norwegian websites. Statistics from Singh and Matsuo (2004) were then used to compare Norwegian and US websites. These numbers were also used to answer our hypotheses. Therefore, a more extensive study including using a larger sample and analyzing both Norwegian and American websites might have provided more accurate data.

Third, the majority of our observations are business-to-business (B2B) companies. A sample consisting of more business-to-customer (B2C) companies might have been more suited to the framework, which has mostly been used on webpages belonging to B2C companies. Our sample consisted of 29 B2B companies and 21 B2C companies. The sample we used included companies from different industries and was diverse. A study within a certain industry could be an option for further research.

Fourth, time was also a limitation for this study; the US data used in this study was collected in 2004 and a lot of things have changed during these years. A comparative data collection in the US in 2011 may reveal different average scores.

7 Conclusion

This study represents the first research involving international firms and the localization of their websites for the Norwegian audience. By building on two proven frameworks we obtained data that can be compared with data from similar research performed in other cultures.

The first part of the research question aimed to answer the question “*do international firms adapt their webpages to the Norwegian market?*” The result of the research indicated that there is a wide range between firms that localize their websites and those that do not. We found that only 50 out of the 155 international firms analyzed have localized or highly localized websites.

Our second research question aimed to answer *how well* the companies having websites that in part one was classified as localized actually localize their websites. We found that there are mostly no significant differences between the items depicted on Norwegian and US sites, which shows no clear indication of a general localization effort being made. Significant differences may exist in some items, but not at an overall cultural dimension level.

The explanation for the 50 websites classified as localized in the first part of the research question is thus most probably related to the similarities between the US and Norwegian cultures.

The results are surprising since the companies we studied supposedly are interested in doing business in Norway. Assuming that Singh and Matsuo's framework is valid in Norway, our recommendations to managers – for the *collectivism* dimension – would be to increase the use of *symbols*, place more focus on *loyalty programs* and improve services such as *newsletters* and *chatrooms* even more.

For the dimension *uncertainty avoidance*, managers should place more focus on a *traditional theme*, have more *free trials or downloads* and have even more focus on having as good a *guided navigation* as possible.

Looking at the *power distance* dimension, managers should downplay the use of *pictures of CEOs* and the use of *proper titles* along with less presentation of the *company hierarchy*.

For the *low-context* culture dimension, managers should place more focus on a *hard-sell approach*, increase the *use of superlatives* along with a presentation that *ranks* the company in different settings.

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9 Appendix

Table 14: List of observations in part 1 of the research question

Company	URL International	Ranking	Industry
3M	http://www.3m.com	5	Industrial Equipment
A.L. Ross Associates	http://www.alra.us	1	Engineering Services
Abbott	http://www.abbott.com	5	Health
ABC Printing	http://www.abcprint.com	1	Printing
ABD	http://www.cybersure.com	1	Insurance
Accenture	http://www.accenture.com	2	Management Consulting
Adams Express	http://www.adamsexpress.com	1	Logistics
Air Products	http://www.airproducts.com	3	Industrial Equipment
ALCOA	http://www.alcoa.com	4	Chemicals
Allison-Williams	http://www.allisonwilliams.com	1	Accounting/Financial
AMA Capital	http://www.amausa.com	1	Accounting/Financial
American Express Company	http://www.americanexpress.com	5	Accounting/Financial
American Seafoods	http://www.americanseafoods.com	2	Logistics
Amway	http://www.amway.com	5	Health
Anixter	http://www.anixter.com	3	Industrial Equipment
AT&T	http://www.att.com	1	Telecommunications
ATI	http://www.amd.com	1	IT/Computer Equipment
Atlantic Container Line	http://www.adcargo.com	1	Shipping
Avis Rent a Car	http://www.avis.com	5	Automobile/Transport
Baxter	http://www.baxter.com	5	Health
Bay Diesel	http://www.baydiesel.com	1	Engineering/Construction
Bergquist Imports	http://www.bergquistimports.com	1	Logistics
Berlitz Language Services	http://www.berlitz.com	5	Education/Research

Bernick & Lifson	http://www.bernicklifson.com	1	Legal
Best Western	http://www.bestwestern.com	5	Hotel/Restaurant/Conference
Betts, Patterson & Mines	http://www.bpmlaw.com	1	Legal
Blank Rome	http://www.blankrome.com	1	Legal
Norhouse	http://www.norhouse.com	1	Logistics
Bonney-Watson Memorial	http://www.bonneywatson.com	1	Memorial
Borene Law Firm	http://www.borene.com	1	Legal
Briggs & Morgan	http://www.briggs.com	1	Accounting/Financial
Bristol Metals	http://www.brismet.com	1	Engineering/Construction
Bristol-Meyers Squibb	http://www.bms.com	1	Health
Brown Brothers Harriman & Co	http://www.bbh.com	3	Accounting/Financial
Burger King	http://www.bk.com	5	Food/Beverage
Burson-Marsteller	http://www.burson-marsteller.com	5	Advertising/PR
Caruso Pope Smith Edell Picini	http://www.picilocaruso.com	1	Legal
Charles R. Weber	http://www.cweber.com	1	Accounting/Financial
Chartis insurance	http://www.chartisinsurance.com	4	Insurance
Chevron	http://www.chevron.com	1	Energy
Chrysler	http://www.chrysler.com	5	Automobile/Transport
Cisco Systems	http://www.cisco.com	4	IT/Computer Equipment
Citi	http://www.citigroup.com	2	Accounting/Financial
Citrix Systems	http://www.citrix.com	1	IT/Computer Equipment
Clear Channel	http://www.dearchanneloutdoor.com	5	Advertising/PR
Coca Cola	http://www.coca-cola.com	5	Food/Beverage
Coldwell Banker Bain Associates	http://www.cbbain.com	1	Accounting/Financial
Compass Maritime Services	http://www.compassmar.com	1	Shipping

Concierge Masters	http://www.conciergemasters.com	4	Airline/Travel
Conoco Phillips	http://www.conocophillips.com	4	Energy
Contentdata	http://www.contentdata.com	1	IT/Computer Equipment
Continental Airlines	https://www.continental.com	1	Airline/Travel
Csc	http://www.csc.com	4	IT/Computer Equipment
Curtis,Mallet-Prevost, Colt & Mosle	http://www.curtis.com	2	Legal
De Lage Landen	http://www.delagelanden.com	3	Accounting/Financial
DeWitt Stern	http://www.dewittsternimperatore.com	2	Insurance
Diamond S Shipping	http://www.diamondsshipping.com	1	Shipping
Dietze & Associates	http://www.dietze-assoc.com	1	Shipping
DLA Piper	http://www.dlapiper.com	3	Legal
Drew Marine	http://www.drew-marine.com	2	Shipping
Duane Morris	http://www.duanemorris.com	2	Legal
Dunbar Harder	http://www.dunbarharder.com	1	Legal
E Group	http://www.egroupnet.com	1	Management Consulting
Ecolab	http://www.ecolab.com	5	Chemicals
Edina Realty	http://www.edinarealty.com	1	Real Estate
EPJ Consulting	http://www.epjcorp.com	1	Shipping
ExxonMobil	http://www.exxonmobil.com	5	Energy
Facebook	http://www.facebook.com	5	IT/Computer Equipment
Financial Networks	http://www.financialnetwork.com	1	Accounting/Financial
Finisterre	http://www.finisterrecapital.com	3	Accounting/Financial
FMC Technologies	http://www.fmctechnologies.com	1	Energy
Ge Capital Bank	http://www.gecapital.com	4	Accounting/Financial
Ge Healthcare	http://www.gehealthcare.com	4	Health
General Motors	http://www.gm.com	3	Automobile/Transport
Goggle	http://www.google.com	4	IT/Computer Equipment
Gold's Gym	http://www.goldsgym.com	4	Health
Goodway Technologies	http://www.goodway.com	3	Industrial Equipment

Gray Plant Mooty	http://www.gplaw.com	1	Legal
Hanson Baker	http://www.hansonbaker.com	3	Real Estate
Hard Rock Cafe	http://www.hardrock.com	3	Hotel/Restaurant/Conference
Heidmar	http://www.heidmar.com	3	Shipping
Hess	http://www.hess.com	2	Energy
Hess Energy Trading	http://www.hetco.com	2	Management Consulting
Hewlett-Packard	http://www.hp.com	4	IT/Computer Equipment
Hill, Betts & Nash	http://www.hillbetts.com	1	Legal
Holland & Knight	http://www.hklaw.com	3	Legal
Honeywell	http://honeywell.com	4	Engineering/Construction
IBM	http://www.ibm.com	4	IT/Computer Equipment
Intergraph	http://www.intergraph.com	4	IT/Computer Equipment
International Business-Gov. Councillors	http://www.ibgc.com	1	Management Consulting
International Registries	http://www.register-iri.com	3	Shipping
Iron Mountain	http://www.ironmountain.com	4	IT/Computer Equipment
J.P. Morgan	http://www.jpmorgan.com	2	Accounting/Financial
Jones Lang LaSalle	http://www.joneslanglasalle.com	3	Real Estate
Korn/Ferry International	http://www.kornferry.com	2	Employment/HR
KPMG	http://www.kpmg.com	5	Accounting/Financial
Laticrete	http://www.laticrete.com	4	Chemicals
Liberian Intl Ship & Corporate Registry	http://www.liscr.com	3	Shipping
Lilly	http://www.lilly.com	5	Health
Lindquist & Vennum	http://www.lindquist.com	1	Legal
Lockheed Martin	http://www.lockheedmartin.com	3	Defence/Security
Manpower	http://www.manpower.com	5	Employment/HR
Marathon Petroleum	http://www.marathonpetroleum.com	4	Energy
Marsh	http://global.marsh.com	4	Insurance
Mc Donalds	http://www.mcdonalds.com	5	Food/Beverage

McLaughlin & Stern	http://www.mclaughlinstern.com	1	Legal
McLean Asset Management	http://www.mcleanfn.com	1	Management Consulting
Mercer	http://www.mercer.com	4	Insurance
Microsoft	http://microsoft.com	4	IT/Computer Equipment
Minot State University College of Business	http://www.minotstateu.edu	1	Education
Morgan Stanley & Co	http://www.morganstanley.com	3	Accounting/Financial
Motorola	http://www.motorola.com/	1	Telecommunications
MSD	http://www.merck.com	5	Health
Nordberg Capital	http://www.nordbergny.com	2	Accounting/Financial
Nordic American Group	http://www.nordic-american.com	2	Management Consulting
Oracle	http://www.oracle.com	1	IT/Computer Equipment
Parker Hannifin	http://www.parker.com	3	IT/Computer Equipment
PepsiCo	http://www.pepsico.com	2	Food/Beverage
Pfizer	http://www.pfizer.com	5	Health
Phillip Morris	http://www.pmi.com	3	Food/Beverage
Polyform	http://www.polyformus.com	1	
Poten Capital Services	http://www.poten.com	3	Accounting/Financial
Pratt & Whitney	http://www.pw.utc.com	1	Defence/Security
Premiere Global Services	http://www.pgi.com	3	IT/Computer Equipment
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	http://www.pwc.com	4	Accounting/Financial
Prudential Financial	http://www.prudential.com	3	Accounting/Financial
Rabobank	http://www.rabobank.com	3	Accounting/Financial
Radisson Hospitality Worldwide	http://www.radisson.com	4	Hotel/Restaurant/Conference
Raytheon International	http://www.raytheon.com	1	Defence/Security
Recall	http://www.recall.com	4	IT/Computer Equipment
Recorces Global	http://www.resourcesglobal.com	5	Management Consulting

Professionals			
Robert E. Landweer & Co	http://www.relandweer.com	1	Shipping
Sara Lee	http://www.saralee.com	2	Food/Beverage
Sebesta Blomberg	http://www.sebesta.com	1	Engineering/Construction
Seham, Seham, Meltz & Petersen	http://www.ssmplaw.com	1	Legal
Seward & Kissel	http://www.sewkis.com	1	Legal
Shoreline Bank	http://www.gbcib.com	2	Accounting/Financial
Skaarup Shipping	http://www.skaarup.com	2	Shipping
Steril-Koni	http://www.stertil-koni.com	1	
STM	http://www.stmi.com	2	IT/Computer Equipment
Strauss & Malk	http://www.strausmalk.com	1	Legal
TEA	http://www.teainc.org	1	Accounting/Financial
Temco Service Industries	http://www.temcoservices.com	1	
The M&A Group	http://www.themergergroup.com	1	Management Consulting
The Polaris Group	http://thepolarisgroupinc.com	1	Management Consulting
The World Bank	http://www.worldbank.org	3	Accounting/Financial
Thomas Miller	http://www.thomasmiller.com	3	Insurance
Thorbeck Architects	http://www.thorbeck.com	1	Architect
Thumbplay	http://www.thumbplay.com	1	IT/Computer Equipment
US Bank	http://www.usbank.com	1	Accounting/Financial
Universal Pictures	http://www.universalpictures.com	5	Entertainment
UPS	http://www.ups.com	4	Logistics
Verizon	http://www22.verizon.com	1	Telecommunications
Warner Bros	http://www.warnerbros.com	4	Entertainment
Willis	http://www.willis.com	4	Insurance

Table 15: List of observations in part 2 of the research question

Company	URL Norway	Ranking	Type
3M	http://solutions.3m.no	5	B2B
Abbott	http://www.abbott.no	5	B2B
Alcoa	http://www.alcoa.com/norway/no/info_page/home.asp	4	B2B
American Express Company	http://www.americanexpress.com/norway	5	B2C
Amway	http://www.amway.no	5	B2C
Avis Rent a Car	http://www.avis.no	5	B2C
Baxter	http://www.baxter.no	5	B2B
Berlitz Language Services	http://www.berlitz.no	5	B2C
Best Western	http://www.bestwestern.no	5	B2C
Burger King	http://www.burgerking.no/	5	B2C
Burson-Marsteller	http://burson-marsteller.no/	5	B2B
Chartis insurance	http://www.chartisinsurance.com/no	4	B2C
Chrysler	http://www.chrysler.no	5	B2C
Cisco Systems	http://www.cisco.com/web/NO	4	B2B
Clear Channel	http://www.dearchannel.no	5	B2B
Coca Cola	http://www.coca-cola.no	5	B2C
Concierge Masters	http://www.conciergemasters.no	4	B2C
Conoco Phillips	http://www.conocophillips.no	4	B2B
CSC	http://www.csc.com/no	4	B2B
Ecolab	http://www.ecolab.no	5	B2B
ExxonMobil	http://www.exxonmobil.no	5	B2B
Facebook	http://nb-no.facebook.com	5	B2C
Ge Capital Bank	http://www.gecapitalsolutions.no	4	B2B
Ge Healthcare	http://www.gehealthcare.com/nono	4	B2B
Goggle	http://www.google.no	4	B2C
Gold's Gym	http://www.goldsgym.no	4	B2C
Hewlett-Packard	http://www8.hp.com/no/no/home.html	4	B2C
Honeywell	http://www.honeywell.no	4	B2B
IBM	http://www.ibm.com/no/no	4	B2B

Intergraph	http://www.intergraph.com/global/no	4	B2B
Iron Mountain	http://www.ironmountain.no	4	B2B
KPMG	http://www.kpmg.no	5	B2B
Laticrete	http://www.laticrete.no	4	B2B
Lilly	http://www.lilly.no	5	B2B
Manpower	http://www.manpower.no	5	B2C
Marathon Petroleum	http://www.marathonnorge.no	4	B2B
Marsh	http://www.marsh.no	4	B2B
Mc Donald's	http://www.mcdonalds.no	5	B2C
Mercer	http://www.mercer.no	4	B2B
Microsoft	http://www.microsoft.com/nb/no	4	B2C
MSD	http://www.msd.no/content/corporate	5	B2B
Pfizer	http://www.pfizer.no	5	B2B
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	http://www.pwc.com/no	4	B2B
Radisson Hospitality Worldwide	http://www.radisson.com/home.do	4	B2C
Recall	http://www.recall.com/?LangType=2068	4	B2B
Resources Global Professionals	http://www.resourcesglobal.no	5	B2B
Universal Pictures	http://www.uip.no	5	B2C
UPS	http://www.ups.no	4	B2C
Warner Bros	http://www.warnerbros.com/portal_no	4	B2C
Willis	http://www.willis.com/Sites/Norway	4	B2B

Table 16: Hofstede's cultural dimensions by country

Country	Power distance	Individualism	Masculinity	Uncertainty avoidance
Arab World **	80	38	52	68
Argentina	49	46	56	86
Australia	36	90	61	51
Austria	11	55	79	70
Austria	11	55	79	70
Bangladesh *	80	20	55	60
Belgium	65	75	54	94
Brazil	69	38	49	76
Bulgaria *	70	30	40	85
Canada	39	80	52	48
Chile	63	23	28	86
China *	80	20	66	30
Colombia	67	13	64	80
Costa Rica	35	15	21	86
Czech Republic *	57	58	57	74
Denmark	18	74	16	23
East Africa **	64	27	41	52
Ecuador	78	8	63	67
El Salvador	66	19	40	94
Estonia *	40	60	30	60
Finland	33	63	26	59
France	68	71	43	86
Germany	35	67	66	65
Greece	60	35	57	112
Guatemala	95	6	37	101
Hong Kong	68	25	57	29
Hungary *	46	80	88	82
India	77	48	56	40
Indonesia	78	14	46	48
Iran	58	41	43	59

Ireland	28	70	68	35
Israel	13	54	47	81
Italy	50	76	70	75
Jamaica	45	39	68	13
Japan	54	46	95	92
Luxembourg *	40	60	50	70
Malaysia	104	26	50	36
Malta *	56	59	47	96
Mexico	81	30	69	82
Morocco *	70	46	53	68
Netherlands	38	80	14	53
New Zealand	22	79	58	49
Norway	31	69	8	50
Pakistan	55	14	50	70
Panama	95	11	44	86
Peru	64	16	42	87
Philippines	94	32	64	44
Poland *	68	60	64	93
Portugal	63	27	31	104
Romania *	90	30	42	90
Russia *	93	39	36	95
Singapore	74	20	48	8
Slovakia *	104	52	110	51
South Africa	49	65	63	49
South Korea	60	18	39	85
Spain	57	51	42	86
Surinam *	85	47	37	92
Sweden	31	71	5	29
Switzerland	34	68	70	58
Taiwan	58	17	45	69
Thailand	64	20	34	64
Trinidad *	47	16	58	55

Turkey	66	37	45	85
United Kingdom	35	89	66	35
United States	40	91	62	46
Uruguay	61	36	38	100
Venezuela	81	12	73	76
Vietnam *	70	20	40	30
West Africa	77	20	46	54

* Estimated values

** Regional estimated values

'Arab World': Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates

'East Africa': Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia

'West Africa': Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone

Table 17: Descriptive statistics – Part 1 of the research question, website globalization

Descriptive Statistics										
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
VAR00001	155	4.00	1.00	5.00	2.5613	1.52505	.350	.195	-1.398	.387
Valid N (listwise)	155									

Table 18: Frequency statistics – Part 1 of the research question, website globalization

VAR00001					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	62	40.0	40.0	40.0
	2.00	18	11.6	11.6	51.6
	3.00	25	16.1	16.1	67.7
	4.00	26	16.8	16.8	84.5
	5.00	24	15.5	15.5	100.0
	Total	155	100.0	100.0	

Table 19: Measuring Cohen's Kappa part 1

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement Kappa	.804	.037	18.923	.000
N of Valid Cases	155			

Table 20: Measuring Cohen's Kappa part 2

Symmetric Measures

	Value	Asymp. Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Measure of Agreement Kappa	.755	.013	57.549	.000
N of Valid Cases	1550			

Table 21: Collectivism Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
.540	7			

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Community	13.6200	15.791	.404	.435
Clubs	14.3800	18.281	.286	.495
Newsletter	13.5000	17.031	.476	.414
Family	14.3800	22.567	.062	.564
Symbol	15.2600	23.013	.081	.553
Loyalty	14.6000	21.306	.083	.572
Links	13.9800	15.775	.444	.414

Table 22: Uncertainty avoidance Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
.630	7			

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Customer	17.4600	14.172	.470	.556
Guided	18.0400	15.182	.441	.574
Tradition	18.9400	16.262	.171	.642
Local_store	17.7800	13.155	.428	.562
Local_term	17.4000	13.306	.547	.527
Free	18.9000	14.663	.167	.673
Toll	18.2000	15.469	.305	.604

Table 23: Power distance Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
.820	6			

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Hierarchy	12.2600	23.870	.719	.760
Pictures	12.7200	23.144	.775	.745
Quality	12.1800	31.171	.395	.826
Vision	12.2400	26.758	.529	.805
Ownership	12.8400	32.545	.322	.836
Tittle	12.3600	23.337	.766	.748

Table 24: Masculinity Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics				
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items			
.122	4			

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Game	8.0400	2.733	-.029	.298
Realism	6.6600	3.249	.222	-.102 ^a
Product	6.7200	2.900	.063	.082
Gender	9.0600	4.221	.036	.121

Table 25: High-context culture Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.212	3

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Politeness	5.4200	1.800	.155	.064
Soft_sell	5.3000	1.316	.230	-.186 ^a
Aesthetics	5.5200	2.091	-.026	.441

Table 26: Low-context culture Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.570	4

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Hard_sell	8.0200	5.367	.430	.437
Rank	8.2400	5.492	.373	.481
Superlatives	7.5200	6.744	.311	.538
Term_conditions	7.2400	4.513	.344	.532

Table 27: SPSS descriptive statistics - Collectivism

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Community	50	1.00	5.00	3.0000	1.70234	.052	.337	-1.748	.662
Clubs	50	1.00	5.00	2.2400	1.49229	.760	.337	-.866	.662
Newsletter	50	1.00	5.00	3.1200	1.34983	-.227	.337	-1.033	.662
Family	50	1.00	5.00	2.2400	1.00122	.634	.337	-.022	.662
Symbol	50	1.00	4.00	1.3600	.74942	2.321	.337	5.115	.662
Loyalty	50	1.00	5.00	2.0200	1.34756	1.005	.337	-.286	.662
Links	50	1.00	5.00	2.6400	1.62581	.347	.337	-1.517	.662
Valid N (listwise)	50								

Table 28: SPSS descriptive statistics - Uncertainty avoidance

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Customer	50	1.00	5.00	3.6600	1.00224	-.524	.337	.338	.662
Guided	50	1.00	5.00	3.0800	.82906	.071	.337	.132	.662
Tradition	50	1.00	4.00	2.1800	1.02400	.336	.337	-1.037	.662
Local_store	50	1.00	5.00	3.3400	1.27151	-.184	.337	-.814	.662
Local_term	50	1.00	5.00	3.7200	1.06981	-.656	.337	.030	.662
Free	50	1.00	5.00	2.2200	1.47482	.796	.337	-.871	.662
Toll	50	1.00	5.00	2.9200	.96553	.307	.337	.321	.662
Valid N (listwise)	50								

Table 29: SPSS descriptive statistics - Power distance

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Hierarchy	50	1.00	5.00	2.6600	1.55983	.227	.337	-1.553	.662
Pictures	50	1.00	5.00	2.2000	1.56492	.819	.337	-1.027	.662
Quality	50	1.00	5.00	2.7400	1.10306	-.026	.337	-.374	.662
Vision	50	1.00	5.00	2.6800	1.50428	.425	.337	-1.181	.662
Ownership	50	1.00	5.00	2.0800	1.00691	.834	.337	.292	.662
Title	50	1.00	5.00	2.5600	1.55393	.376	.337	-1.446	.662
Valid N (listwise)	50								

Table 30: SPSS descriptive statistics - Masculinity

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Game	50	1.00	5.00	2.1200	1.37974	.893	.337	-.615	.662
Realism	50	2.00	5.00	3.5000	.78895	.649	.337	-.328	.662
Product	50	1.00	5.00	3.4400	1.16339	-.618	.337	-.401	.662
Gender	50	1.00	4.00	1.1000	.46291	5.529	.337	33.000	.662
Valid N (listwise)	50								

Table 31: SPSS descriptive statistics - High context

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Politeness	50	1.00	4.00	2.7000	.81441	.378	.337	-.961	.662
Soft_sell	50	1.00	5.00	2.8200	.98333	.646	.337	-.515	.662
Aesthetics	50	2.00	5.00	2.6000	.88063	1.270	.337	.548	.662
Valid N (listwise)	50								

Table 32: SPSS descriptive statistics - Low context

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Hard_sell	50	1.00	5.00	2.3200	1.05830	.927	.337	.257	.662
Rank	50	1.00	5.00	2.1000	1.09265	.577	.337	-.582	.662
Superlatives	50	1.00	4.00	2.8200	.77433	.053	.337	-.750	.662
Term_conditions	50	1.00	5.00	3.1000	1.41782	-.183	.337	-1.235	.662
Valid N (listwise)	50								