

# Responsive multilingual web portal for B2B online advertising

*With its business spread across several countries, this online advertisement portal is a growing company dedicated to get sellers and buyers of B2B products closer.*

*The portal is targeted towards those geographies where people are not well versed in speaking and understanding English and can communicate only in their native language. The client's portal allows putting up ads in their native languages for such individuals and companies who are seeking to buy and sell B2B products.*

## Situation analysis

Before venturing into the B2B online advertising business, the client worked in sales and had a global travel experience in countries like Iran, Latvia, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey and Sweden through his company.

During many years of travelling experience, he worked with many translators and found that most people could not speak and understand English but only their native language.

If one cannot understand English, how can one advertise? This thought led to the idea of online advertising portal in a preferred native language. The users benefit from advertising in their native languages which was not possible through any other portal.

## Vision

The client desired to build the application targeted towards those who cannot speak and understand English and who wants to advertise in their native languages. The vision was to have a responsive site with the best in class user experience to make the application easy to use among users from different geographies.

After many failed attempts to get a suitable technology partner, client approached e-Zest and assigned this project to our team as we understood the complexity, scope and uniqueness of the application development and the client's vision.

## Solution

The team composed of senior software engineer, UI developer, test engineer and UX engineer analyzed the requirement and came up with an idea of a responsive web application for both desktop and mobile users. We used Bootstrap framework with HTML5, CSS3 and jQuery, to get the best UI for the application.

As the application was also targeted towards users in the Middle East, including 'right to left languages' like Arabic and Persian was highly critical, we used CSS3 for this functionality and integrated it successfully within the application.

The development team in e-Zest decided to go ahead with SEO implementation for the site which was very crucial for site performance and visibility. The team started to build SEO friendly URLs with static and dynamic links with submissions to various search engines like Google, Bing, Yandex and Baidu. In addition the site was given a Social touch with Facebook API for liking and sharing the page.

To make the translation and language detection easy for users, we used Google translation API which is among the most trusted translators online.

The application is developed using LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP) technology stack as it is a open source technology with low cost compared to other technologies. LAMP is proven to be faster, more flexible, and easier than any other alternative.

Bootstrap was chosen for developing a responsive site for its ease of getting started, extensive list of components, JavaScript plugins, good documentation and good base styling for most HTML elements.

## Technology Stack

- LAMP (Linux, Apache, Mysql, PHP)
- Bootstrap for responsive
- jQuery
- Google Translation and Facebook API



## Challenges

Since the application was unique and new to the market, the team faced some challenges during the execution such as:

### **Challenges for multi-browser support**

For solving this problem, our team added patches and a separate CSS for bootstrap to support Internet Explorer 8, 9 and 10.

### **Multilingual search and junk character display on browser**

To solve the multilingual search problem for non-Latin words and issues of special characters, we used UTF-8 as a character set and changed the collation type of table fields in database.

For example: changed the collation type from "latin1\_swedish\_ci" to "utf8\_unicode\_ci" and stored the data as it is in database without utf\_encode and utf\_decode.

## **Support new languages like Arabic and Persian**

To support languages like Arabic and Persian, our team built new CSS for iPad and mobile devices for right to left languages which was successfully integrated within the application.

## **Alignment issues on iPhone, Android and iPad**

CSS was used to make the character alignment for different languages suitable for various devices.

For example: "about us" has 6 characters in English and more than 6 in other languages like in Turkey "Hakkımızda" 10 , in Vietnamese "Thông tin về Chúng Tôi" 15, in Thai "เกี่ยวกับเรา" 9 characters.

## **Benefits**

- The success and response received by the initial launch of the application enabled the client to generate high revenues.
- The success of the app helped the client replicate this B2B model for various other verticals like education and agriculture expanding the business.
- The application currently holds 10,000 ads and still growing making the application widely accepted and trusted among its users.

## **Conclusion**

Today the application is not just the only B2B multilingual advertisement web portal but a widely accepted and successful multilingual advertisement web portal in the market where companies or individuals can put their ads in various languages. The application is currently available with 425 product categories in 39 languages making it a most trusted multilingual advertisement web portal.

e-Zest added value not just with quality work and timely deliverables, but also with flexible and professional approach in handling and executing a B2B multilingual advertisement web portal which is unique, conceptualized for the first time and new to market.

e-Zest not only understood the scope perfectly but took up this project seriously, overcame all the challenges to meet the client's vision.