

Guide to translating a website created with WordPress

1. THE BASICS

WordPress is a content management system, or CMS, intended to create all kinds of website. By default, WordPress is not multilingual, but this functionality can be added through translation plugins (see point 4), with a multi-site WordPress setup (group of websites that share the same WordPress account) or by using a theme that incorporates a multilingual translation system (the least common option).

2. IDENTIFYING TRANSLATABLE ELEMENTS

It is important to remember that the translatable elements are stored in different locations and in various formats. The perfect analogy is a chest of drawers, with different kinds of clothes in each drawer.

So, we can differentiate between:

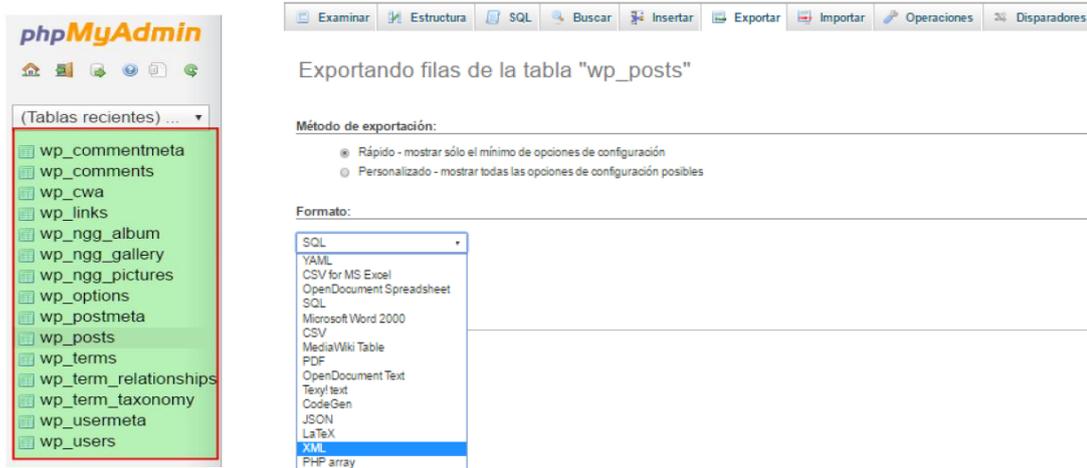
- The translation of the programme itself – WordPress (it should already have a translation)
- The theme or template, which gives your website its visual finish
- Plugins or modules that add new functionalities
- The page content itself (text, images, videos, etc.)

3. EXPORTING CONTENT TO BE TRANSLATED

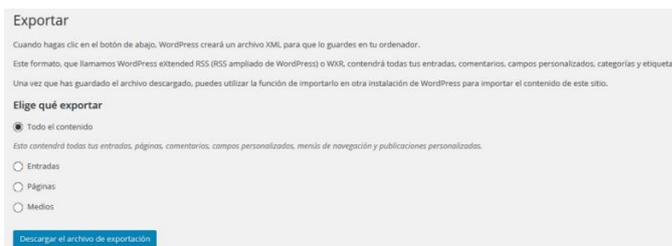
3.1. Database content

The database (MySQL or MariaDB) is made up of tables that store the various content. The tables that contain information that could be translatable are **wp_terms** (categories, tags, etc.), **wp_term_taxonomy** (category descriptions, tags) and **wp_posts** (posts).

To carry out this export, you need to access the server where the database is located and use the tool phpMyAdmin. Within this tool, select the table to be exported and click on the "Export" button. Then, select the XML format.

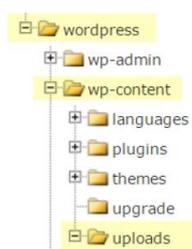


The content export can be done in another way. This is an option provided by WordPress in case you want to make a backup copy of your website. The result will be an XML file with all the site information (but less defined and exhaustive than with the preferred method). Simply click on the administration panel > Export.



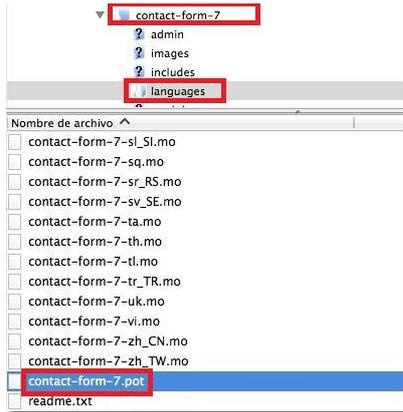
3.2. Images and multimedia files

Images and other multimedia content are in the wp-content\uploads folder.



3.3. Themes and modules

Themes and modules can be translated via a POT or PO file. To get this file, go to: wp-content\plugins or wp-content\themes. Here, look for the plugin or theme folder and go into the "languages" folder. Then, select the POT file. The files will always be in this order: name-of-resource-language code_COUNTRY CODE.po/mo. Let's look at an example, with the Contact Form 7 plugin.



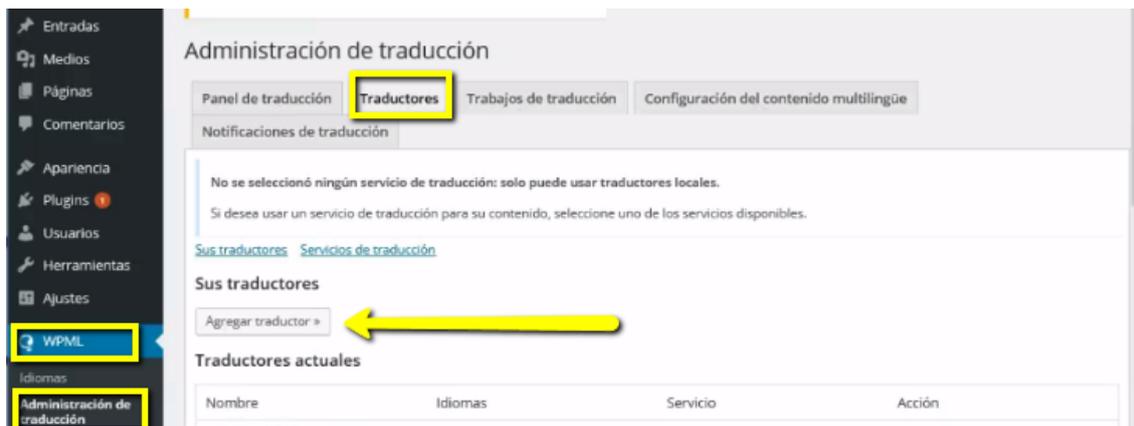
Below is a table that summarises how to export the various kinds of content:

Type of content to translate	Where is it?	Type of file	Exporting content to translate	Importing translations	Person responsible for export and import
Website content	Database tables	XML	Automatic (phpMyAdmin/WordPress)	Automatic (phpMyAdmin/WordPress)	Client
Modules	Wp-content\plugins\plugin name\languages	POT/PO	Manual	Manual	Client
Themes	Wp-content\themes\plugin name\languages	POT/PO	Manual	Manual	Client
Image and banner text	Wp-content\uploads	Various	Manual	Manual	Client
WordPress software	Wp-content\languages	POT/PO	Manual	Manual	Client

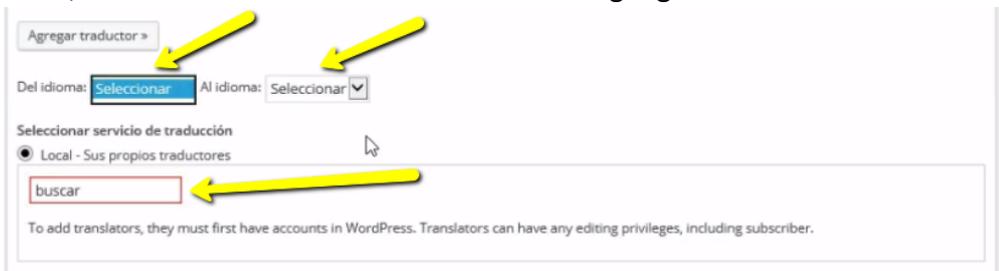
4. USING TRANSLATION PLUGINS

There are various plugins available to enable you to have your content translated. In theory, all of them can define the translation languages, personalise your URL and publish content. From a professional point of view, these tools are generally only useful for translating small updates. Although many businesses use plugins like Polylang or QtranslateX, we are going to focus on the most popular, WPML, as it allows the user to extract content.

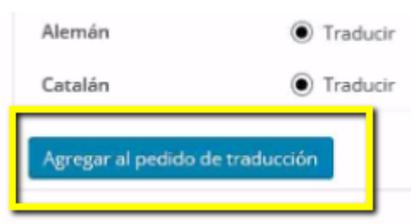
WPML is a paying plugin that turns your WordPress page into a multilingual site and makes it possible to translate your content. To assign a project, first you need to create a WordPress profile (a subscriber profile is more than enough). Then, on the Translators tab of the Translation Management panel of the WPML module, click on "Add translator".



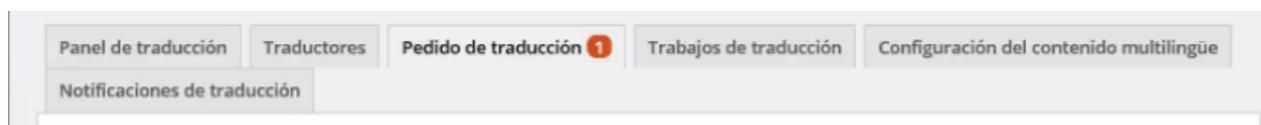
Then, select the translator's languages and search the local users.



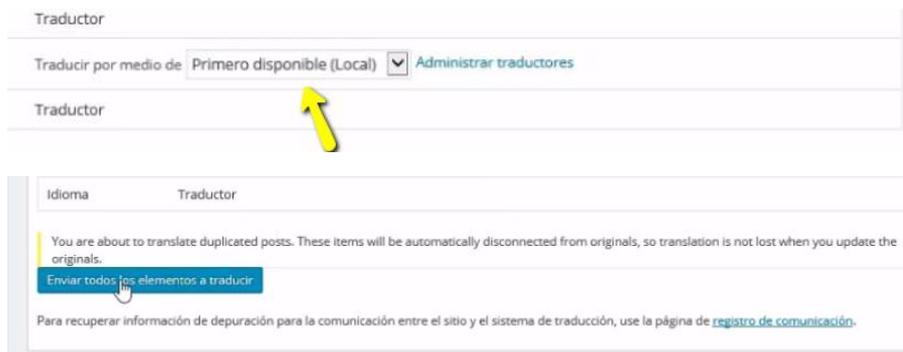
Then, go to Translation Dashboard, where you will see a list of the pages on your website. Select the pages you wish to translate and, in the tab below Translation options, select your translation languages and click on "Add to translation basket".



Then, under the Translation Basket tab, the number of posts pending translation will appear in red.



Under this tab, you can assign the posts to translate marked previously to the translator and click on Send all items for translation. The translator will receive an email with the translatable file, then can translate it and import the translation using their WordPress profile.



5. CLIENT CASE STUDIES

TYPE OF CLIENT	ACTION REQUIRED
Client with small website with WPML module installed with no knowledge of WordPress	Request WordPress login details to configure WPML and work with it.
Client with small website without WPML module installed and with no knowledge of WordPress	Request contact with webmaster to coordinate export.
Client with large website and knowledge of WordPress	Request they they follow the steps above in point 3 to export their chosen content.
Client with large website and no knowledge of WordPress	Request contact with webmaster to coordinate export.