

Corporate content that locals wish we would stop producing

**Not all content is global.
Be on the lookout for
references that don't travel.**

US companies can be so oblivious to their audiences abroad that by now locals just shrug it off as normal. (Wipe that smirk off your face, UK. You do it too). Recognizing US-only content is a good first step toward making employee communications more relevant.

Sports analogies

Hit it out of the park, a home run, punting on something, the goal line. Sports are on our mind so much by now that our audiences are resigned to it.

National Something Day

It's got national in the name. It's meaningless beyond US borders (and that includes Canada). Instead, track international days promoted by the UN.



Holiday themes

It should go without saying that the Fourth of July, Memorial Day, Labor Day, and Veterans' Day are celebrated only in the US. Unfortunately, I have to say it.

Shout outs

Common idioms make our tone warmer, but keeping up with current expressions is a struggle for non-natives.

General culture and lifestyle

Watch out for references that seem everyday. Not everyone has a lawn to mow, Starbucks is global but not universal, offices abroad do not buzz with Girl Scout cookie sales, United Way fundraisers, or NCAA bracket pools. You get the idea.

Military recognition

It's an important social issue in the US. But not every country has the same relationship with the US military. If your company is working with veterans or active troops, that's something to be celebrated. But it's a local story.

American content is enthusiastic and often high quality. But if pressed, locals will tell you that it's 'very American'. Let's do better.

Create separate versions of content in simplified English. Let local communicators insert their own cultural references.

You save on translations, get a more accurate final product, and increase your chances of more global readership.