

What is ngbible.com?

Ngbible.com is a space on the internet for writing **in your own language about** your language and about the **Bible** in your language. More and more people in Nigeria, and Nigerians outside the country have computers and mobile phones that connect to the internet. Some people have used Facebook and other websites to promote the use of their language, but often people write about their language and people in English or Hausa or another foreign language. NGbible makes it as **easy as possible** to write in your own language so that people can read it easily on their computers and mobile phones. It's free to use and is a great way for you to help develop your language in this modern age. You can use it to help people in your area and elites who are scattered across Nigeria and the world learn how to read your language. You can also share your work on the translation of the Bible. And because we know about the special letters used in many Nigerian languages, we work hard to make sure they display correctly on anyone's computer.

How did NGbible start?

Some Bible translators from northern Nigeria asked how they could build a website to develop their language and encourage people to use it and to get interested in their Bible translation work. We started a small site and discovered some of the challenges that minority language authors can face when trying to use websites designed for Westerners on fast internet connections. At the same time we noticed that it is hard for minority language authors to publish and distribute anything because of the costs of printing and the uncertainty of covering those costs. So very few Bible translators had a meaningful way of developing their creative writing skills and use of their language outside the actual Bible translation. Many more projects expressed an interest in bringing their languages into the internet age, and NGbible.com was born.

Who can use NGbible? How can I start?

[Show the email they write, and the response I send.]

Every language in Nigeria can have its own space on the site. You need to have an email address and some way of connecting to the internet yourself, even if that is going to an internet shop.

If you're involved in a language development and Bible translation project, email us at info@ngbible.com. Tell us you want to open a site, tell us the **language** name you want to use, what the site **title** should be in your language and tell us what other **organisations** you have been working with in your translation project – perhaps NBTT, The Seed Company, PABTEN, Lutheran Bible Translators or others.

We will open your section of the site and **email** you back a username and password. Keep these stored safely somewhere; they give you access to the site to add and change information there. You can change the password later if you like.

The email will also give you your **login address**. This is where you go to 'log in' to or 'access' your site to change it. Click on the address, enter your username and password, then you will enter the **administration** dashboard. The number of details might make you afraid at first but you mainly need to focus on just two areas: **posts** and **pages**.

What should I do first?

The most **important** thing for your site is to write a friendly welcome message in your language (and perhaps a shorter explanation in English or Hausa too) for the front page. You might explain the purpose of the website and tell people what you plan to publish there.

The **second** thing you should do is to write an explanation of who you are, and give some way of people contacting you if they are interested in finding out more about your work.

You need to type these messages using the correct alphabet for your language – with all the special vowels or consonants and tone marks that you normally use. If you are planning to use an internet shop, their computers might not have an easy way of typing your language, so it might be best to write your messages on your own computer, save them on a flash drive and then carry them to the internet shop like that. Then you can simply copy and paste what you have written. We do want to find better ways of helping you to write in your alphabet, so please tell us any suggestions you have and what you found difficult.

Adding first content

When you are ready to add your welcome message to the site, you 'Log in' to the site as we mentioned before. See on the left side there is a list beginning with 'Dashboard'. Look for the 'Posts' section and click 'New Post'. This will open a new page. Type the title in the wide box at the top. Then click on the large box and type your message. When you have finished, click on the blue button 'Publish' on the right side, and immediately what you have written is published on the internet site!

So, that was our welcome message. For the other 'about' or 'contact' page we do something similar. The difference this time is that we will write a 'page'. (I will explain the difference between a post and a page in a moment.) Look on the left side of the screen and find the 'Pages' section. Click 'New Page' in that section. Then complete the title and the main text area, just as you did before. Finally click 'Publish'.

Now, each time when you clicked 'Publish' it added your information to the website. If you want to **change** something that you have added, click on the 'Posts' or 'Pages' section, on the left. This will show you a list of all the 'Posts' or 'Pages' on your site. A 'Page' is a more permanent place to write something than a 'Post'. You can organise Pages into major sections, with 'child' pages underneath. We suggest that you use 'Posts' for news and announcements, and 'Pages' for anything bigger, like stories or guides to reading your language.

In the list of pages and posts, when you move the mouse pointer over each page, you see different things you can do, including to trash (that means to remove) the post or page completely. But to open a post or page so that you can change it, just click on its title. This will open the page exactly like when you wrote it and you can change anything you want. This time, when you want to keep the changes you have made, the 'Publish' button has changed name to 'Update'.

Removing 'standard' post/page

[Post/Page list: Trash]

Every new site starts with one standard post and one standard page. These are just instructions to you, so you must remove those pages as soon as possible because otherwise everyone will see them and they are written in English not your language. So, go into the list of Pages (click the word **Pages** on the left of the screen), find the standard messages written in English and click 'Trash'. Then go into the list of **Posts** and click 'Trash' beside the English message.

More than just text

[Post editor: Insert]

You can write a lot more than just text, though you need to be a little more experienced with computers to do this. You can add pictures, sound recordings, even videos. You can include books that people can print out too. When you are writing a post or page, look for the buttons marked

‘Insert’ above the box. Click the first to add a picture from your computer. You choose the picture from your computer, then it will move to NGbible and when it is ready, it will ask you for the title of the picture. You can also say the size you want (I recommend ‘medium’) and whether you want the picture to be on the left, right or middle of the page. Finally click ‘Insert into Post’ and you will see your picture has been added.

You can add a sound recording – maybe a recording of a chapter of the Bible – in just the same way, but it won’t ask you for the size or position. The sound recording must be an MP3 file.

You can add a PDF or Word Document in the same way. Those are great for printing, but not so easy to read on a mobile phone.

Interactivity & comments

[Post editor: Discussion]

One very exciting thing you can do is to let readers make their own comments, whether on news articles or on other resources you put on the site. Every post or page has a ‘Discussion’ section. Here you can choose whether you want to enable comments. When someone writes a comment, the site administrator must approve it before it will appear on the public site. This is because sometimes people might write advertising their own sites, or saying things which are not good for building good relationships on the community. Most of the time though comments are a great way to encourage people to get excited and involved.

Ideas: What can you put on the site?

[Content]

Use NGbible to practice your creative writing. Remember that by practicing writing you get more experience as a writer and give your community more reasons to practice reading your language. You could write:

- traditional stories, cultural information
- everyday news
- information about the Bible translation project
- some trial versions of the Bible – as a recording and as text
- and many other things.

Other things you can change

[Settings]

You are in control of your site and responsible for all the content. Apart from the posts and pages, you can change many other things about your site:

- the title and subtitle
- the picture that appears at the top of the site
- information that appears on the right

You can even create more ‘users’ and allow other people to write things without giving them complete control of the site.

Finally

Finally, remember the main content of your NGbible site should be in **your** language. (There are many sites in English and quite a few in Hausa but this is for YOUR language.) Remember that the purpose is to give you an easy and powerful way of publishing in your language, which should encourage you to write more and more in your own language so that you become a more experienced writer. It also gives your language a higher status and gives other people who speak your language a good reason to learn to read it, even before you print the whole Bible.

You might ask how much this costs. It costs almost nothing. It is **free** to open and use an account on NGbible.com so all you have to pay for is your internet connection, whether you go to an internet shop or use the internet on your phone or computer. And that cost is not very high.

Perhaps you can choose someone in the committee or in your community who is knowledgeable about computers to take responsibility for publishing things on your site. And then everyone else can write stories, books explaining how to read your language, or news, and ask the 'publisher' to put them on your NGbible.com site.

Remember, to find out more and to see what other language communities have done, go to the website **www.ngbible.com**.