



## Why Translate?

In the most general sense, it can be in any situation where you want to communicate a single message or build a relationship with people who do not have English as a first language, for example customers, suppliers, members, regulators and audience. Or you might just want to understand what something means.

So in that situation the main options are:

- Do nothing – i.e. make it a policy to only use UK English in your business.
- Use a free automated service such as Google translate which may be the best option to instantly understand the meaning of any text. However you probably wouldn't want to use the translation for anything else and there are confidentiality issues.
- Find a freelance translator and work with them directly. Could be good for cost and control, but means you need to find the right person.
- Use a translation agency which come in different types and sizes but all essentially with the same business model of project managers assigning work to freelancers or in-house staff and doing any formatting, checking, file conversion etc. before sending the finished product to the customer. For the extra cost you should get continuity, consistency and quality across a range of languages. You may also benefit from specialist software and extra services such as DTP, subtitling and voiceovers.

How far you go, and how much you spend, then depends how important it is for you to get the right message and meaning across in all languages. If it's already taken a lot of time and effort to get the design and English text right, it could be relatively little extra expense to get the best translation to communicate your message and brand in as many languages as you choose.

There may be situations where you simply have to have texts translated as a condition of trading in a particular territory and ideally that should be included in the plan from the start. By definition this would have to be done properly.

Examples of the most common documents translated into or out of English are:

- **Legal:** contracts, witness statements, ID documents, tax documents,
- **Correspondence:** emails, letters, presentations
- **Websites:** whole websites, blogs and articles, product descriptions
- **Marketing:** slogans, advertising, packaging, displays, press releases
- **Technical:** product manuals, data sheets, reports, catalogues

In some cases a completely automated process may be the only way to get it done quickly enough. Technical texts will usually benefit from being software-assisted to ensure consistency. Specialist texts may need a genuinely specialist translator in that field. And there's still a place for freestyle creative human translation in marketing and literary material.

So if it's relevant, good luck finding out more about the options for you and learning more about the translation industry.



**Surrey  
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