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HOW TO AVOID MARKETING TRANSLATION MISTAKES AND BLUNDERS

If you translate for an international company it is important to avoid marketing translation mistakes. Too often a company spends many resources on the creation of a perfect product and it is very important to translate marketing materials into a different language without mistakes and blunders. Small translation mistakes can be acceptable in casual talk, but are considered huge blunders in marketing materials. This paper contains some recommendations and instructions which translators should follow in their work.

First, never rely on automatic translations like Google Translate. Google Translate and other automatic translation software are a good start when you don't know the foreign language at all, but you should use a professional translation service for professional marketing and advertising materials.

Second, translators should be experts both in language and the country's culture. Common phrases and sayings that sound good in English could be completely meaningless or have negative connotations elsewhere.

Third, don't translate literally, especially slogans. Besides, don't use literal word for word translation. Try to set the marketing tone and mood in the marketing materials.

Next, be especially careful when translating company names, product names & marketing slogans. Make sure they don't have negative connotations or double meanings in other languages. Minor translation mistakes or translation blunders in your primary branding can kill sales in that country.

Don't assume all countries that speak the same language are the same. Each country has its own culture and style. Consider writing marketing materials differently for each country your company is selling to. Remember that the products it is selling could be viewed differently by different cultures.

Examine your English documentation from the perspective of an international reader, and eliminate regional colloquialisms and other informal vocabulary that may not translate well. For example, some countries or trading zones have specific requirements regarding measurements. Electricity outputs vary around the world. The most common are 110V and 220V. Similarly, video formats are often country-specific, and most DVDs are artificially restricted to play only in a few countries.