

YOUR COMPLETE FOOD MENU TRANSLATION TOOLKIT

WORD360



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INTRODUCTION

Whether you're taking your restaurant brand global or simply creating a more inclusive menu, translation and localisation are key.

72.4% of consumers are more likely to buy products with information in their own language, and **56.2%** said that having the information in their own language was even more important than price.

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So, whether it's appealing to new consumers overseas or trying to pull in some extra customers on their holidays, effective translation and localisation is your key to success.

In this toolkit, we'll cover everything you need to consider when translating your food menu, including naming your food for different cultures, localising the design of your menu, translating safety and allergen information, the dangers and pitfalls of free translations, and finally picking the perfect language service provider for you.



NAME YOUR FOOD

There are two facets to naming your dishes for your localised menus: firstly, the original name of your dish may not translate well into other languages because, for example, of a lack of equivalent words, and secondly, just because your dish sounds appetising in your culture doesn't mean it will in others.

It's important, as with any process of localisation, to understand not just the language but also the culture into which you'll be selling your food.

At this stage, it could be worthwhile spending some time researching the competition and gauging what kind of dishes they serve and how they describe them. You may even find at this point that certain dishes that are your star sellers at home won't be well received by your overseas consumers.

A perfect example of why this is important is to consider some classics of British cooking, and the odd names given to them. Can you imagine trying to explain a dish named Bubble and Squeak or Spotted Dick to someone outside of the UK?

Here, a specialised language services partner with in-country linguists will be the perfect go-to once you've decided exactly what it is you want to achieve.



PICK YOUR DESIGN

In most Western cultures, the colour white tends to indicate clarity and purity. However, in some Eastern cultures, white represents death and bad luck.

While a drastically simplified example, this contrast of cultural perceptions highlights the significance of your next consideration: design.

Taking your menu to new consumers may mean a menu redesign, perhaps with new colour schemes and imagery. Once again, a strong starting point here is to research what other restaurants with your kind of cuisine are offering in your target culture and language.

Arguably one of the strongest examples, both in design localisation and menu adjustments, is McDonald's. One of the key distinctions it's possible to make between the way that McDonald's presents itself around the world is their website presence, and whether it's selling to a low or high context culture.

High context cultures, such as Japan, China, and Turkey rely on lots of imagery and colour in order to communicate in their content, menus or otherwise.

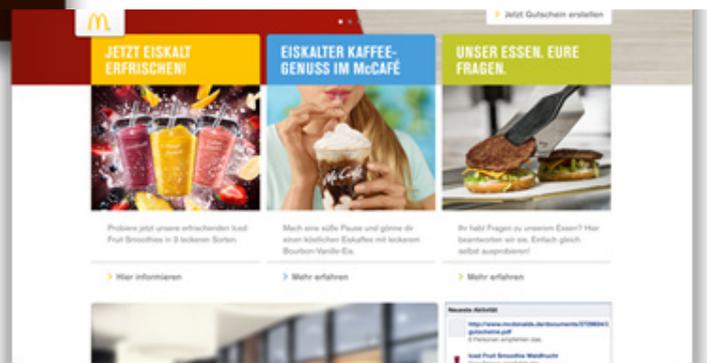


Left:

McDonald's Japanese website (high context)

Below:

McDonald's German website (low context)



By contrast, low context cultures, such as Germany, Britain, and Scandinavia, rely more heavily on text, with clear statements and calls to actions.

McDonald's has achieved such monumental global success as a restaurant because, in part, of its appreciation of cultural differences, and how their brand is perceived around the world.

Additionally, different languages take varying amounts of space to convey the same information. For example, a short sentence in English could become quite space-consuming when translated into Arabic.

It may be necessary, therefore, to adjust your design to compensate for more space hungry languages.

Employing the services of a localisation partner with design capabilities will help you achieve a much higher standard at this stage.

AVOID FREE TRANSLATIONS

'Deep fried baby' anyone? The internet is riddled with examples of menu translations gone awry, such as this one from a Swiss menu that was supposed to be describing a fried chicken dish.

Examples like this are almost universally the result of the use of a free translation tool by people who've not taken the time to either conduct the above steps or consult translation professionals.

Many free translation tools are great for simple conversational translations, but they're not suited to the higher grade of translation and localisation needed when translating something as important and highly customer-facing as a menu.

Besides becoming the focus of a mocking tweet or featuring in one of the many 'translation fail' blogs, poor menu translations could cost you, literally. Would you want to order the 'fried baby'? No, and neither will your customers.



PROTECT YOUR CUSTOMERS

This is when, more than at any other stage, translation quality and accuracy is imperative.

The stakes are higher than simply becoming the butt of a joke with an erroneous translation. If a customer doesn't understand your translated allergen warning, for example, they could potentially be subject to serious harm, or at the very least a distinctly uncomfortable experience they're unlikely to thank you for.

Making sure you find translation partner who understands food industry translation and blends computer aided translation tools with expert human translators for the highest standards of accuracy is vital at this stage in particular.

PICK YOUR PERFECT LANGUAGE PROVIDER

Your ideal language service provider should ideally be able to provide assistance with all the above considerations, so picking the right one for you is key.

When selecting your menu translation and localisation partner, it's important to ask the following questions: **to be designed as a checklist**



Do they know your industry? Or will you have to explain specific terms to them?



Do they employ expert human translators as well as computer aided translation?



Are they an Association of Translation Companies (ATC) member?



Where, geographically, is your translation data stored?



Are they ISO 9001 accredited? (ensures standards across the board)



Are they ISO 17100 accredited? (ensures translations quality)



Are they ISO 27001 accredited? (ensures data protection)



Are their translations conducted via a secure database?



Do they offer accessible customer service?



Have they performed menu localisation services before?



Can they meet your deadlines?



Can they offer a turnkey solution? Or will you need to find additional services?



THE WORD360 SOLUTION

Word360 has been providing expert language services in the UK and abroad for 30 years, working with a large number of highly specialised industries to help key players advance their prospects, recognising language as a tool, not a barrier.

Through our experience, we have developed sector-specific tools and service packages to enable our restaurant clients to enter new markets with everything they need to ensure they can maximise their international ambitions, ranging from menu and website translations and localisations to staff training documents.

We utilise our various industry expertise to imbue our linguists with all the tools they need to understand the specific terminology and context that make for leading-quality menu and restaurant collateral translations through continuous development programmes. We are ISO 9001, 27001, and 17100 accredited and boast a multi award-winning customer service team.

We manage our translations with the use of in-house technology and native data centres, to ensure compliance with data law no matter where in the world you're operating. Furthermore, we employ expert linguists with proven sector knowledge and our teams are subject to NDAs, for complete data privacy.

To learn more about your menu localisation and translation process, [contact Word360 today](#).

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Celebrating 30 years in business, Word360 is the Midlands' leading translations and interpreting agency, working with major global clients to help remove language barriers where it matters most. Operational in over 55 countries through a network of more than 9,800 specialised linguists, they enable global conversations and provide award-winning support across multiple industries and sectors.