



## Q1 2025: Did you know? The Hidden Costs of "Free" Translation

### The Risks of "Free" Translation

In today's digital age, free and low-cost translation services are readily available. While these options might seem attractive for your budget, they can lead to unexpected and costly consequences. But when are these services appropriate, and when could they put your business at risk?

Consider this real-world scenario: A company's shipment became trapped in customs due to poorly translated documentation. What started as a "free" translation spiraled into a cascade of expenses and complications:

- Delay of the shipment
- Storage fees at customs facilities
- Rush fees for professional retranslation
- Delivery rescheduling costs
- Potential discounts to appease dissatisfied customers
- Damage existing business relationships
- Loss of customer trust and goodwill
- Potential breach of contract penalties for missed deadlines
- Risk of losing time-sensitive shipments
- Damage to professional reputation
- Long-term risks
- Potential liability if poor translations lead to injuries or accidents
- Legal exposure from regulatory non-compliance
- Potential loss of new business opportunities from damaged relationships
- Increased scrutiny from customs officials on future shipments

### When to Choose Professional Translation

Free services might suffice for basic, non-critical communications. However, when your content involves:

- Legal or regulatory requirements
- Health and safety information
- Technical specifications
- Customer-facing materials
- Business-critical documents



The wise choice is to partner with a qualified Language Service Company (LSC) that specializes in your industry. Their subject-matter expertise and quality assurance processes protect your business from costly mistakes.

Remember: You get what you pay for. The question isn't how much you'll save with free translation; it's whether you can afford the hidden costs of getting it wrong.