

The Complete Guide to Translation Services



Translation services are in huge demand. The industry is projected to reach \$9.72 billion in growth between 2020 and 2024.

This growth is the result of adapting to the needs of customers around the world. It's no longer enough to push a document through an automated online translation service and call it a day. You need to make sure the entire customer experience is translated to engage users worldwide. Everything from your marketing website to product documentation and in-platform notifications. Every touchpoint counts.

Why Localization Matters

Localization is the process of adapting a product and consumer experience into one that looks and feels local to the end user. It's inclusive of language but extends to design, graphics, photography and so much more. And because so many products are inherently global by design in today's digital world, businesses in all sectors realize how important every little thing is to make their brand easy to work with and culturally significant.

Hi

Bonjour

Hola

Sawatdi

Guten Tag

Konnichiwa





Companies have to feel local

Global businesses can't just set up shop in a new market and expect results. They have to build trust with buyers, and the first step to doing that is speaking their language. This basic concept is incredibly important to revisit often because it is so critical to success, and sometimes unintentionally overlooked by the business.

Who needs translation services?

It wasn't that long ago that the only businesses that needed translators were global and multi-lingual companies. These were the companies with enough of a presence in different regions in the world to justify the need for multi-lingual content.

But that's no longer the case. There's a huge need for localization at companies both big and small. We've hit the point where any company doing business on the internet has the potential to be a global company. Language translation is essential across the customer journey. Machine translation will not cut it for the vast majority of content, which is why human translation is in such high demand.

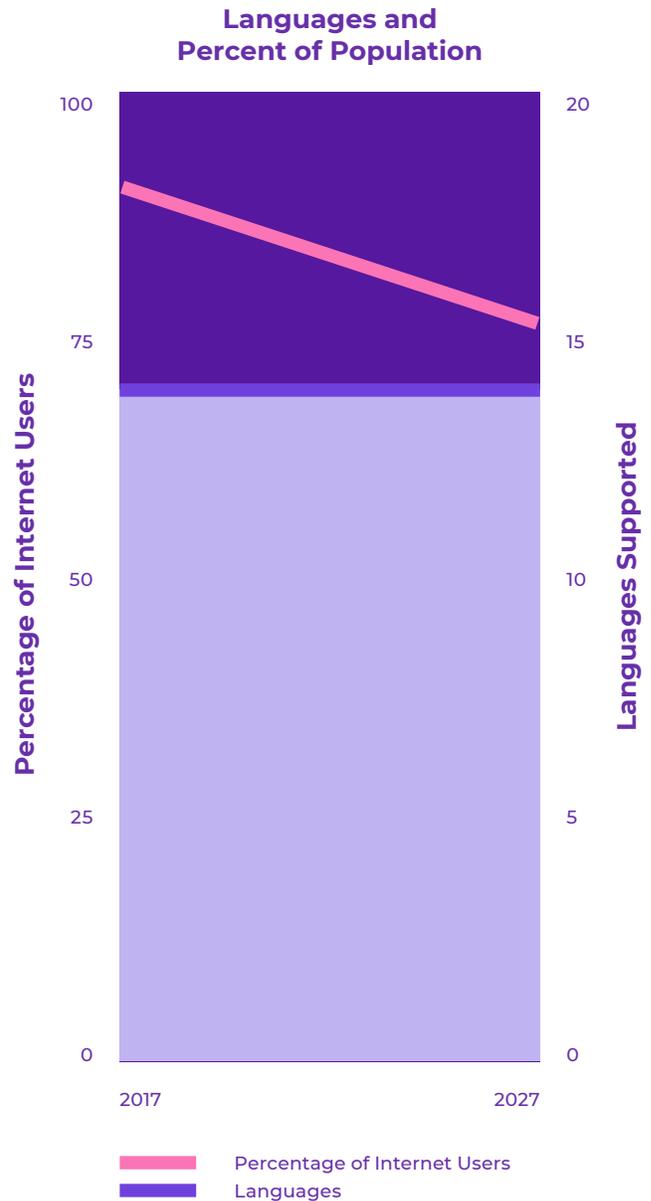
To reach more people, it's essential to support more languages. When given the choice between similar products, 75% of the population will choose whichever one provides them with information in their native language.

Less than a third of the nearly 4 billion people who use the internet are native English speakers living in English speaking countries. Not only that, but there are also a growing number of languages representing a growing number of new economies coming online all the time.

According to [CSA Research](#), in 2017 it took 14 languages to reach 90% of internet users. By 2027, those 14 languages will only represent 76%. To keep reaching more and more people, you need to offer more languages. For context, it took 52 languages in 2017 to reach 99% of internet users.

That might seem like a lot of ground to cover to reach an additional 9% of the internet, but when given the choice between similar products, [75% of the population](#) will choose whichever one provides them with information in their native language, it's worth the effort. When you add to that the fact that 40% of businesses don't use localization, it becomes clear that using translation services immediately sets you apart from the competition.

CSA Research



“ It was a very interesting ‘Aha!’ moment when I realized that even in English we can have multiple locales. For example, where I grew up, in India, the vegetable ‘brinjal’ is called ‘aubergine’ in Europe, and in the U.S. we refer to it as ‘eggplant’. Guess what? It’s the same exact English, but the variants could really differ depending on the region that you are referring to the object. ”

Iti Sahai

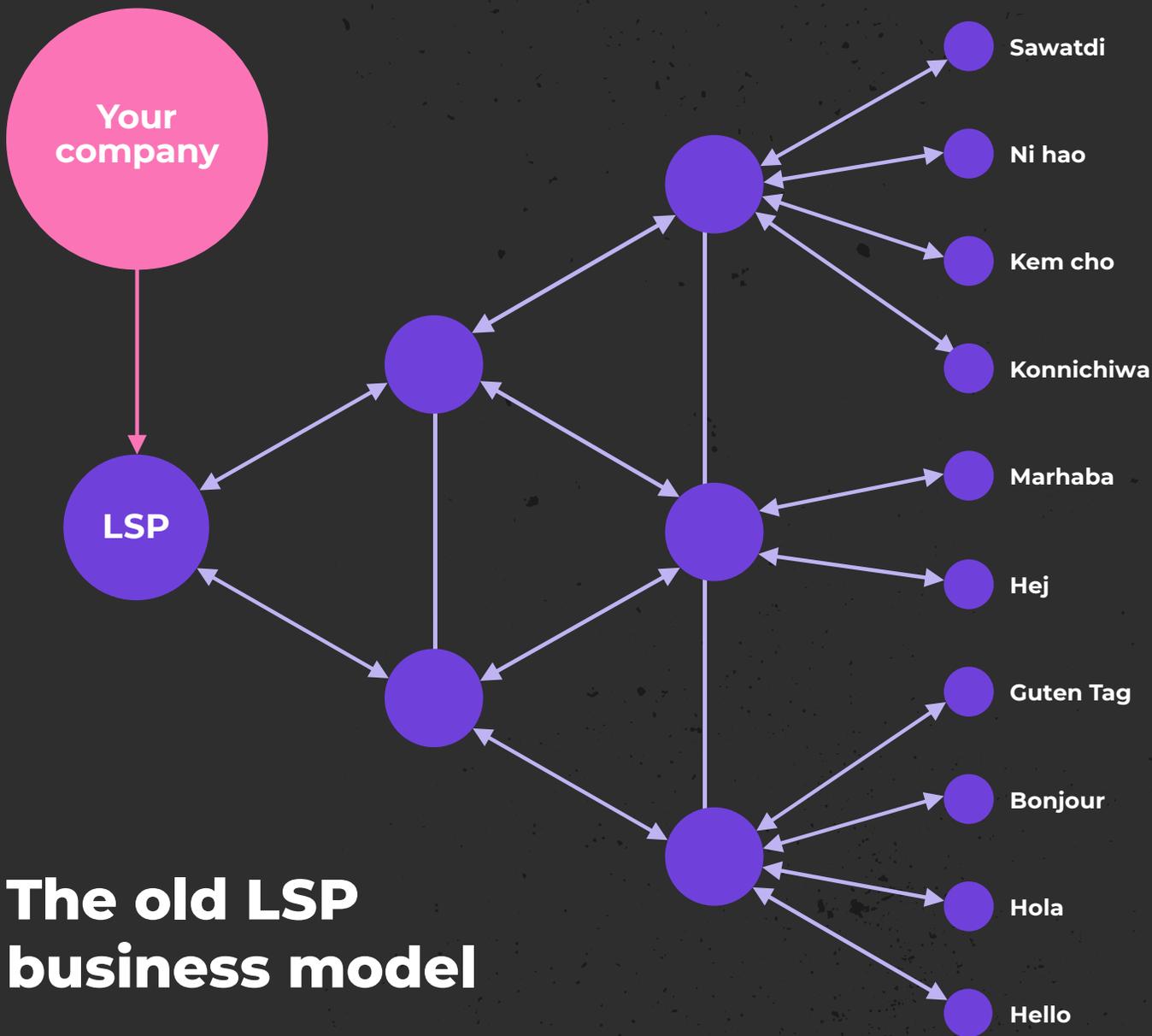
Leader of Localization and
Globalization, Procore Technologies



The old way isn't agile

The Old Way of Delivering Translation Services is Broken

There's an increased demand for translation to reach users, and the way translation services have been delivered for decades cannot keep up with today's standards. The process is too complex, there are too many people involved, and the cost of delay is too great.



The old LSP business model

The typical language translation agency business model reflects a decades-old practice of LSPs buying one another to offer more services to the client. The result isn't constructive for customers because it adds cost, human process, and ultimately a lack of visibility into who is translating your content.



The Old Way



Unknown Translators



95% Managed by People



Batched Content to Avoid Minimums



Different Agencies by Content Type



Communication by email



Relies on Guesswork



Translates Offline



Reactive

The New Way



Translators You Know



95% Managed by Software and by Exception



No Minimums for Translation Jobs



Different Workflows by Content Type



Communication by Slack



Relies on Data



Translates in the Cloud



Proactive

Skip to page 14 to learn more!



Why the Old Way is Broken

You don't know your translators

Like most things, being able to establish a good relationship with someone often results in better work being done. When you don't know who's doing your translations, you can't form a bond or even discuss the content with them. You just send it off and they send it back.

The problem with this is that those discussions can be a critical aspect of creating better translations of your content. When you're able to include your translator in discussions with your editorial team, including the writer, you're able to create a situation where not only does the translator have a stronger understanding of where the content is coming from, but you

Including your translator in discussions with your editorial team creates a situation where your translator has a strong understanding of where the content is coming from and what you're trying to do with it.

help them understand what you're trying to do with the content. The last thing you want is for a piece of content to lose its power and meaning when translated into another language. Creating a space for both translations and content creators to discuss their work reduces the likelihood of that happening, resulting in stronger content across the board.

It's mostly managed by people

People are great, but too many people can create a situation where communication gets muddled and translations suffer as a result.



Vanina, Argentinian Smartling translator



Nao, Japanese Smartling translator

When you flip this around, having a situation where the translations are largely managed by a computer removes the issues that come with having too many cooks in the kitchen and creates a faster process. The goal isn't to remove people from the process entirely. The goal is to enable people with software that makes their job easier and most cost efficient for project managers.

You batch content to avoid minimums

Agencies have to do manual work because they don't have software. The amount of time it takes for them to project manage five words is the same as 500, so they charge a minimum number of words to make sure they're not losing money on project management. That's why for so long, teams have become accustomed to batching content to avoid a project minimum fee.

The goal isn't to remove people from the process entirely, rather it's to pair them up with an AI to create a powerful translation team.

What you need to keep up with today's demands is the ability to translate content as its produced without concern for waiting until you have enough content to make it cost effective. When project management is largely automated, there's no need to have a project minimum fee, which means you can write, translate, and deploy content on your schedule.

Complicated project management

Working with multiple translation vendors is commonplace — and sometimes a great idea — but it's undeniably more work to manage. When too many people get involved, keeping track of who's doing what gets complicated, and maintaining efficient communication between translators, project managers, developers and other stakeholders becomes a game of never-ending telephone.

Being able to rely on a single point of contact for all of your translation requirements and languages simplifies the complex. You don't have to track multiple translators across multiple agencies or worry about consolidating multiple invoices at the end of the month. Everything happens in one place, and is managed by a dedicated team who proactively ensure projects are completed quickly and to your standards.

There's no context

Translators require a number of cues (visual, linguistic, and situational) to help them create translations that accurately reflect the intent of your content. Without those cues, translations may not turn out well.

Being able to offer Translation Context helps your translators create high-quality translations that don't miss the intended mark. Having the ability to actually see the results as they will appear to the end user reduces issues that can become critical if not caught early. Take excessive character length, for example. Without visual context, how is a translator to ensure the target content doesn't break the UX without a visual guide.

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It's translated offline by multiple vendors

We know the problems created by using multiple vendors from a project management point of view, but this lack of centralization also creates a different problem when translations are done offline: basic visibility into a project.

There is a lack of data around what the translator is doing, as opposed to having keystrokes logged and progress tracked. There's no visual context at all, something that a computer-assisted translation (CAT) tool can help with. You also lack both translation memory and linguistic assets, as they end up being stored and used locally by individual translators, not in the cloud where they are constantly updated and available to everyone. There's also a lack of security (do you really want your company's newest product marketing content on someone's desktop?), as individual translators take content offline, away from enterprise-level security that keeps confidential information safe.

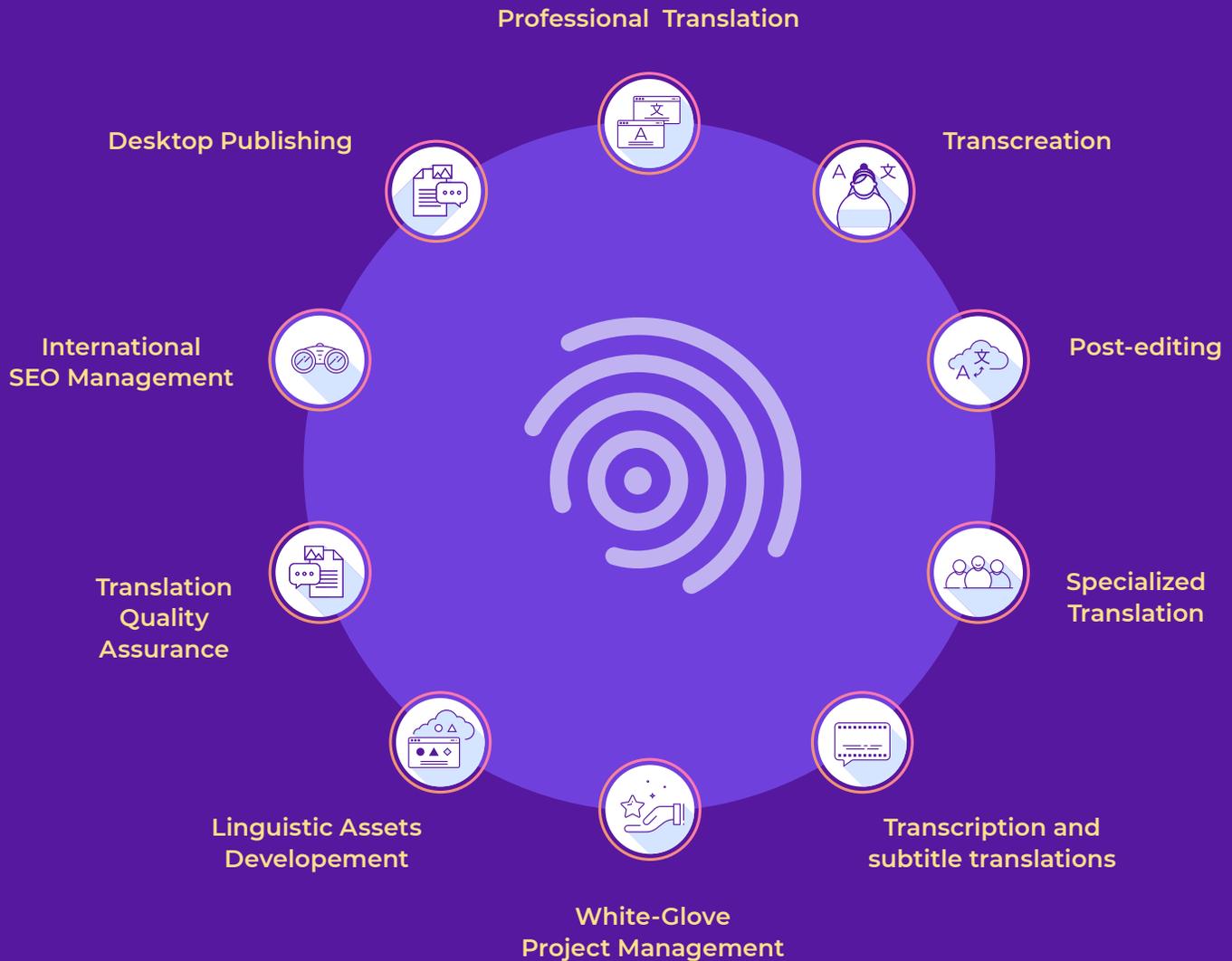


Flavio, Brazilian Smartling translator

What Services Should Your Translation Agency Provide?

Identifying a partner in language translation services is essential. The minimum requirement is obviously that the agency can support the languages that are important to your business, but the wide range of services the provider can offer is also important. The service requirements are going to vary depending on your needs, but your needs are going to change as your business grows and changes. That's why it's important to find a translation agency that can help you grow and adapt to your changing needs.

Smartling offers a comprehensive suite of services for all your translation needs



“ When we were integrating with Smartling and deciding how we were going to set this up, the language services team was a huge component. We have default workflows for the internal team and if anybody was going to be on holiday or off sick, then we’ll message our account manager and switch over the workflows and it’s easy. That is one of the best decisions we’ve made in choosing Smartling because the entire process is built to take on the varying volume of content because we can estimate and forecast how much content there is going to be, but until it actually hits Smartling, then we’re not exactly sure of the word counts and that’s really important. ”

Jordanna Ber

Head of Localization, Rover

Lomu

Jordanna’s dog



The three core services you should be looking for are:



Professional Translation

These should be provided by native language specialists who you actually know and with whom you can communicate on a regular basis.



Transcreation

Unlike translation, where you get words translated into different languages, transcreation focuses more on the underlying idea of your message. You end up with a piece of content that is, effectively, written in the desired language based on a creative brief, similar to how you create a piece of content in your native language.



Post-editing

Post-editing is a mix of human and AI translation. A text is first run through a machine for the initial translation, and then it's edited by a human to make sure that everything is accurate within the context of your experience. This process allows you to create high-quality translations quickly and at a lower total cost.

Beyond that, **white-glove project management** is a service that ensures the customer is well cared for. An agency experienced in translation project management understands it's their responsibility to deliver the results. They should be able to manage the translations to ensure every deadline is met, and that every issue is quickly resolved, as well as create and edit the glossary and style guide, and provide all necessary reports to the customer.

Being able to work with **specialized translators** is also critical, especially in technical industries. Some things that require in-depth knowledge of the ideas and concepts you're working with and even translating those ideas can be a challenge without the know-how.

Subtitle and transcription translation services are increasingly important as video becomes a key medium for all aspects of business. You want your content to be accessible without having to rely on low-quality translations of the content.

If you often need printed materials for marketing or products, you'll need **desktop publishing services**. These can be used to create marketing assets like pamphlets, as well as product packaging that contain the necessary information in the appropriate language.

Working with an agency that provides **international SEO management** helps ensure that you have the visibility you need in global markets. They can track local keywords and provide insight into how to maintain your ranking.

Finally, look for someone who provides both translation quality assurance and linguistic asset development. Being able to thoroughly

check your content on multiple devices can make release cycles faster. And, having a style guide and glossaries that are always up-to-date and optimized is essential when new products or features are being launched on a regular basis.

Additional services and capabilities Smartling offers



White-glove project management



Specialized translators



Subtitle and transcription translation



Desktop publishing services



International SEO management



Translation quality assurance



Linguistic asset development



How to Begin Translating Your Content

The good news is that, even with everything that you need to consider when looking for a translation agency, getting started is easy because we make it easy.

Getting started with Smartling



Setup new workflows

Smartling will assign linguists to a new account level workflow on your behalf.



Introductory Call with Translators

Hop on a Zoom call with dedicated translators to brief them on your content style.



Continuous Feedback Loop

Manage your translation preference with positive and constructive reviews

It's that simple.

Smartling takes pride in matching our customers with translators who have domain expertise. After an initial conversation with our customers, we assign linguists to your account and set up workflows based on your requirements. The translators know the ins and outs of working with Smartling, so you don't have to learn a whole new system before getting started.

Second, meet with your translators to brief the team on your content style. It also allows

you to start a relationship with some very important people.

Finally, get engaged in a continuous feedback loop so that you can provide positive and constructive feedback to help create the strongest content possible.

It's just that simple. Our white glove project management approach has been fine-tuned to remove the hiccups, so you can get started fast, and focus on other things.



“ Smartling shares the same vision that Butterfly Network has in regards to offering a world-class product and customer service experience. ”

Brandon Fiegoli

Product Manager, Butterfly Network



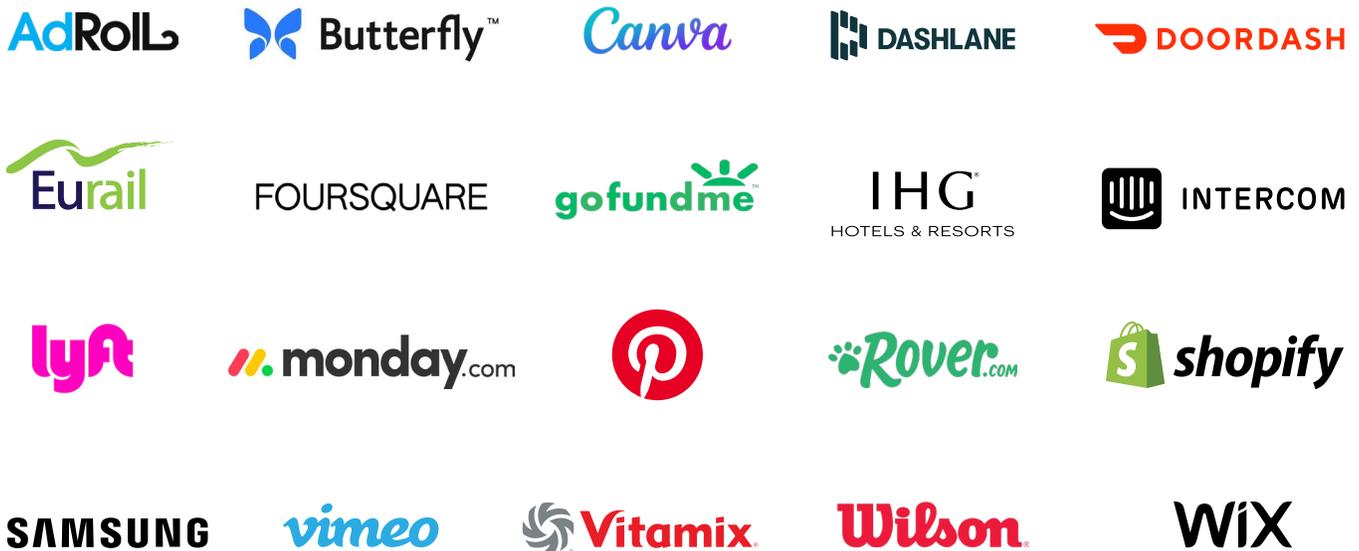
Create words with meaning



About Smartling

Smartling is a language translation company with technology and professional translation services that enable worldwide customers to connect with their users anywhere, today.

It's safe to say that we're obsessed with helping brands succeed on a global scale. Whether it's helping translate website content, documentation, apps, or games, we can help you greet your customers in any language.



Smartling Moves the World with Words.

Come see how our love for language and delivering excellent customer service can help your business compete internationally.

Contact us today.

Learn more at [smartling.com](https://www.smartling.com)



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