Font and script readiness

A font covers only the characters it was built for. Check every script before translation starts.

What each script needs from a font

Latin extended Polish, Czech, Turkish, Vietnamese	Every accent and special letter, such as ą ł ğ ş ı. Many brand fonts stop at Western Europe.
Cyrillic and Greek Russian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Greek	A separate character set. Check every weight the layout uses.
Right to left Arabic, Hebrew, Farsi, Urdu	A font made for the script, joined letters and a mirrored layout. Usually a separate font.
Indic Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Marathi	A Unicode OpenType font with correct shaping. Legacy fonts look right but produce unreadable text.
Chinese, Japanese, Korean Simplified and Traditional Chinese	A separate font for each market. Simplified and Traditional Chinese are not interchangeable.

Looking right is not enough

For accessible PDFs, the font must also map to real text. Some fonts draw the right shapes but give screen readers nonsense. Found early, that is a font change. Found at delivery, it is a rebuild.

Check it before translation starts

1 List the scripts	Write down every target language and its script group. That number is the number of font decisions to make.
2 Test every weight	Set a real sample sentence in each font and weight the layout uses. Missing characters show as empty boxes or highlighted text.
3 Agree it in writing	Confirm the companion fonts and licences for each language before translation is commissioned.

Who decides what

A companion font for a missing script	The brand team. It is a brand decision, so it is approved before translation starts.
Licences for every script	The font owner. Some licences cover only certain scripts or uses. Check before the font is used.
Replacing a non-Unicode font	Technical necessity. It has to be replaced, and the closest visual match is proposed.

In short

Font problems are cheapest before translation. Once text sits in a layout in the wrong font, every line break, page and export has to be checked again.

Want the fonts checked?

A font check is part of the free first look at your files.

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