DB

Deutsche Bahn and DeepL: connecting the world

How Deutsche Bahn uses DeepL technology to connect a massive, multilingual workforce

Industry:	**Key Markets:**	**Key Languages:**
Transportation	Europe	English, German, Polish, French, Czech

Key takeaways

Deutsche Bahn, the largest railway operator in Europe, uses DeepL to enable multilingual communication for its 320,000+ employees worldwide.

To ensure all translations use accurate corporate and industry-specific terms, DB leverages DeepL's glossary function. This customizability, alongside top-quality translations and airtight security, is a critical feature for DB.

DB has integrated more than 30,000 glossary entries from its central terminology database with DeepL, allowing DB employees to communicate consistently across the organization.

Deutsche Bahn

Deutsche Bahn's scale is massive. As Germany's national railway company and the largest railway operator and infrastructure owner in Europe, Deutsche Bahn (DB) transported more than 2.5 billion passengers and 200 million tons of rail freight in 2023. It also has over 320,000 employees worldwide operating in a variety of languages with industry-specific jargon, dialects, and idioms.

A generic machine translation engine wouldn't cut it. DB needed to be able to customize.

How DB customizes with glossaries

For global teams like DB, it can be challenging to navigate complex technical terminology, juggle product names, or consistently use company-specific vocabulary. With DeepL's glossary feature, DB achieves the consistency and customizability its business requires. Consistency in communication across languages reduces costs overall by saving teams time and effort on manual editing.

How does such a massive organization manage its glossaries? DB maintains a central "terminology database" with vocabulary that requires specific (sometimes unintuitive) translations to handle industry-specific terms. The database contains nearly 30,000 entries in up to 16 different languages.

The DB Language Management Department manages the terminology database. They update the corresponding glossaries in their DeepL account every few weeks to ensure that all translations are as current as possible.

> **DeepL glossaries are more than just "find and replace" tools.** They use information about word structure and grammar to intelligently adapt translations based on factors like gender, tense, case, and plurals.

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"Along with data protection and data security, the ability to adapt the engine to DB's corporate language via glossaries is a main advantage of DeepL compared to other machine translation systems. [. . .]"

Tom Winter, Data Scientist & Computational Linguist at Deutsche Bahn AG

Glossary best practices

DB has invested a considerable amount of time into maintaining and mastering its glossaries.

The company's main piece of advice to other glossary users? Avoid mistranslations by mapping all unambiguous synonyms to one preferred target term, and only include unambiguous terms.
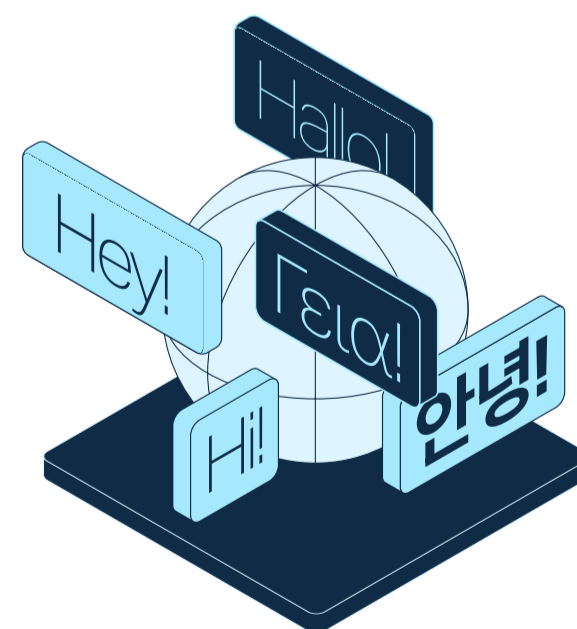
What's next for DB?

DB started using DeepL to enable internal communication in January 2022, and has been heavily investing in it across the DB Group. DeepL Translator (also known inside DB as "DB Corporate Translate") is not only used across departments for text and document translation, but is also available to all employees via the API and browser extensions.

Moving forward, DB is exploring use cases where AI and LLM technology might be able to assist with railway operations, such as communications for border traffic.

See what DeepL can do for your business

Is your team looking for top-quality machine translation that'll help you cut back on operating costs and grow your business?

Contact us

DeepL

Have questions? Reach out to us at sales@deepl.com