**Dotting the I-s and crossing the T-s**

A study conducted late last year by U.K. firm [Global Lingo](http://realbusiness.co.uk/article/24623-poor-grammar-on-websites-scares-59-away) found that 74 percent of consumers pay attention to the correctness of the prose on company Web sites, and 59 percent of respondents said they would avoid doing business with a company that’s made obvious errors. A more recent survey—this one published in March by [Standing Dog Interactive](http://www.standingdog.com/blog/do-grammatical-errors-affect-sales/)—revealed that 58 percent of consumers were either “somewhat” or “very” annoyed by the presence of copy errors, with one respondent volunteering: “If … I see a typo, I’ll leave without buying a thing.” Yikes.

Fortunately, such militancy doesn’t appear to include beloved bits of branding that already bend the rules. Nobody’s suggesting that Apple’s “Think Different” should be corrected to read “Think Differently.” And while “Got Milk?” might be flat-out incorrect, “Do You Have Any Milk?” just lacks a certain kick.

But still, the long list of famous gaffes really ought to be enough to make companies pay closer attention to that ad copy. What brand wants to suffer the embarrassment that McDonald’s and Hardee’s did when both touted a new “[Anus Burger](http://consumerist.com/2009/09/24/anus-burgers-run-wild-across-americas-restaurant-signs/)”? Did that [Days Inn location](http://thegrammarvandal.wordpress.com/) that advertised a “Free Wife” instead of free WiFi have to make good? In 2011, Old Navy had to send back an entire shipment of sports team T-shirts when the “Lets Go!” lettering omitted the apostrophe before the “s.” Too bad Victoria’s Secret didn’t take a lesson. Last year the clothing brand dropped a needless apostrophe (“You’ve never seen body’s like this!”) into its Secret Body campaign.

Colgate introduced a toothpaste in France called Cue, the name of a notorious porno magazine.

Coors the American brewer lost its fizz in Spain when their hip phrase "Turn It Loose" came out as "Get Diarrhea".

Scandinavian vacuum manufacturer Electrolux used the following in an American ad campaign: Nothing sucks like an Electrolux. But in America if something 'sucks' it means it is really bad.

Ford seemed to have a problem in Brazil where sales of the Pinto flopped. On investigation the company found out that Pinto was Brazilian slang for "tiny male genitals." Ford pried the nameplates off and substituted Corcel, which means "horse." They also fell short with their NOVA cars in Latin America– “no va” means “it doesn’t go” in Spanish

On a packet of Fritos crisps - YOU COULD BE A WINNER! NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. DETAILS INSIDE.

"Body by Fisher", boasted the auto giant General Motors. "Corpse by Fisher" was how the Belgians read it.

When Gerber first started selling baby food in Africa, they used the same packaging as in the USA -- with a cute baby on the label. Later they found out that in Africa, companies routinely put pictures on the label of what is inside since many people cannot read!

Ikea is a Swedish company and so some of their products sound strange in English, but kind of cool. However, calling a children's work bench 'FartFull' wasn't a good idea. In Swedish, "fartfull" simply means "speedy. In English it has a totally different connotation (full of farts).

In Chinese, the Kentucky Fried Chicken slogan "finger-lickin' good" came out as "eat your fingers off."

Marks and Spencer Label on a Marks & Spencer's Bread Pudding - PRODUCT WILL BE HOT AFTER HEATING.

Parker Pens translated the slogan for its ink, "Avoid Embarassment - Use Quink" into Spanish as "Evite Embarazos - Use Quink" ... which also means "Avoid Pregnancy - Use Quink." When Parker Pen marketed a ballpoint pen in Mexico, its ads were supposed to say "It won't leak in your pocket and embarass you." However, the company mistakenly thought the spanish word embarazar meant "embarass." Instead, the ads said that "It won't leak in your pocket and make you pregnant!"

When Pepsi started a marketing campaign in Taiwan, the translation of the Pepsi slogan "Come Alive with the Pepsi Generation" came out as "Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead."

Puffs tissues tried to introduce its product, only to learn that "Puff" in German is a colloquial term for a whorehouse. The English weren't too fond of the name either, as it's a highly derogatory term for a homosexual.

Chicken-man Frank Purdue's slogan, "It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken," got badly mangled in a Spanish translation. A photo of Purdue with one of his birds appeared on billboards all over Mexico with a caption that translated as "It takes a hard man to make a chicken affectionate."

On packaging for a Rowenta iron - DO NOT IRON CLOTHES ON BODY.

In Italy, a compaign for Schweppes Tonic Water translated the name into Schweppes Toilet Water!

On a Sears hairdryer - DO NOT USE WHILE SLEEPING.

When Sharwoods launched its latest product range in the UK, it promised the "deliciously rich" sauces based on a traditional northern Indian method of cooking would "change the way consumers make curry". So confident was Sharwoods that its new 'Bundh' sauces would be a hit that it backed the launch with a huge £6 million ($14.2 million) television advertising campaign. What it failed to foresee was that "bundh" in Punjabi has an altogether less savoury meaning - the nearest English translation being, to put it bluntly, "arse".

A famous drug company marketed a new remedy in the United Arab Emirates. To avoid any mistakes they used pictures. The first picture was of someone ill, the next picture showed the person taking the medication, the last picture showed them looking well. What they forgot is that in the Arab world people read from right to left!

An American T-shirt maker in Miami printed shirts for the Spanish market that promoted a visit by Pope John Paul II. Instead of "I saw the Pope (el Papa)", the shirts read "I saw the potato (la papa)".





 









