

News & Info

Holiday Closing Dates

This end-of-year holiday season, VO will be closed from **Monday 24th December** to the **1st January** inclusive.

We wish all of you a happy and safe holiday and we look forward to seeing you again in the New Year.

A Glance Back, A Leap Forward

It's common at this time of year to take a look back at what happened over the past 12 months, but also to look ahead to what the future might hold.

Here at VO we have some celebrating to do. Not only was October of this year **our biggest month ever in terms of turnover**, but 2018 has been **our best financial year since we first opened our doors in 2009**.

2019 promises to be just as exciting. **Kirsty will complete her coaching diploma**, and we will celebrate **10 years of serving our clients' translation and language training needs**.



VO Behind the Scenes: A day in the life of a translator

Contrary to some common misconceptions, translation involves more than just "reading through a document". Below is a typical day in the life of Kim Barrett who, as well as doing translating work, also has the responsibility of running the business.

9:00 AM — Meeting with our Office Manager

The first thing I do when I arrive at work is check in with Rachel Whyte, our Office Manager, to see if any new translation requests have come in overnight. I used to work a lot in the evenings, but have found it's important to set boundaries. But we still regularly turn work around in record time whenever our clients have a genuine emergency.

10:30 AM — Translation time!

Mornings are the easiest time for me to focus, so that's when I like to concentrate on my translations. I use a software programme called Wordfast, but I still have an old fashioned dictionary on my desk. If I have to do extra research, I'll read through scientific articles or go to online resources such as the OED and Encyclopaedia Britannica. I can also have a lot of email and phone contact with my clients in the morning. If I ever have a doubt about a translation, it's important to ask the questions.

1:00 PM — Lunch

Meeting people face to face helps facilitate working relationships. We make an effort to meet with our clients regularly as well as our external suppliers who work on translation projects outside our internal scope of expertise.



3:00 PM — Other business

If I'm not working on a translation, I'll be taking care of another aspect of the business: sales, marketing, social media, HR, finances. When you run a small business, you have to be on all fronts!

6:00 PM — Home time!

The nice thing about translation is the great feeling of accomplishment you have when delivering a project on time, or even ahead of time. This allows you to switch off, until the next project, which usually follows hot on the heels!

VOCABULARY

extravaganza - an elaborate and spectacular entertainment or production

plague - a contagious bacterial disease

wreak havoc - to cause great damage

step in (phrasal verb) - to become involved in a difficult situation, especially in order to help

lo and behold - something you say when you tell someone that something surprising has happened

stop in its tracks - to stop moving forward or continuing

sparklers - a handheld firework that emits sparks

tally - to calculate the total number of something

out of hand - out of control

vie - to compete eagerly with someone in order to do or achieve something



Festival of Lights

From its simple, mid-19th century religious beginnings to the cultural and artistic extravaganza its known for today, **Lyon's Festival of Lights** is a gathering of artists, tourists and locals that is as well known in France as it is throughout the rest of the world.

A brief history of light

Tradition has it that in 1643, the plague was knocking at the city's doorstep, threatening to wreak havoc on its inhabitants. But the archbishop of the Lyon stepped in and asked the Virgin Mary to spare the city. Lo and behold, the plague was stopped in its tracks.

Fast-forward to the year 1852. A ceremony was organised for December 8th to inaugurate a new statue of the Virgin. Despite the threat of inclement weather, sparklers and flares lit up the statue to the delight of the Lyonnais. People then began spontaneously lighting candles and lamps and leaving them on their windows and balconies, unknowingly starting a tradition that would carry on more than 150 years later.

A modern day twist

The first modern day version of the festival took place on the 8th of December in 1989, when Lyon's mayor wanted the city to shine a little brighter on the international scene. Light shows were organised in what would ultimately transform the once religious event into an artistic and cultural celebration.



This year, 41 monuments, including churches and bridges and squares and other public places throughout the city, were transformed by colourful displays of light and sound. Official statistics haven't been tallied yet, but each year the city plays host to up to 4 million visitors from France and abroad, making it one of Europe's largest cultural festivals.

Not everyone's cup of tea

With such large numbers of tourists descending on the city for four days straight, some people feel the festival has gotten out of hand. Restaurants and hotels and small business owners are happy for the extra business it brings, but some residents don't appreciate vying for a seat on the subway or having to navigate through extra crowded pavements.

Whatever your opinion on the matter, it cannot be contested that Lyon's Festival of Lights offers a unique experience in Europe, one that has evolved throughout the centuries to become a cultural and artistic light show of international renown.