Newsletter of the
Translation Company Division of the
American Translators Association

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ATA-TCD Newsletter

ATA Translation Company Division Newsletter

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ata TCD

The Times They Are A-Changin'

The title of this classic Bob Dylan song seems fitting as ATA divisions are seeing important changes, and the TCD continues to move forward and adapt!

We have established new administrative processes such as forming division committees led by the TCD Leadership Council (LC) members. Working in committees encourages teamwork and helps in sharing the burden of the tasks that must be done. It also ensures that each leader serves and remains actively engaged in committees that interest them and where they can best utilize their skills and abilities. In fact, the 2023-24 LC has been engaged and very active, and Assistant Administrator Ray Valido and yours truly are very appreciative of all the hard work that these volunteer leaders are putting forth through the division's committees.

On that note, Ray and I are honored to introduce TCD's Leadership Committee for 2023-2024:

Alaina Brandt	Newsletter Columnist
Gloria Cabrejos Koo	*TCD Newsletter* Co-Editor, Committee Co-Chair
Marina Ilari	*TCD Newsletter* Co-Editor, Committee Co-Chair; Professional Development Committee Co-Chair
Graciela Isaía y Ruiz	Professional Development Committee Co-Chair
Thu Maulden	Digital and Social Media Committee Member
Luciano Oliveira	Website Committee Co-Chair and Webmaster
Cynthia Penovi	Digital and Social Media Committee Member
Paula Penovi	Digital and Social Media Committee Member
Monika Popiolek	Digital and Social Media Committee Member
Camila Saunier	Website Committee Co-Chair and Webmaster
Karla Sopher	Digital and Social Media Committee Co-Chair
Afaf Steiert	Professional Development Committee Co-Chair
Ray Valido	Assistant Administrator; Public Relations Committee Co-Chair; Digital and SM Committee Co-Chair; Project Management Special Interest Group Leader; *TCD Newsletter* Designer
Aniella Vivenzio	Public Relations and Social Events Committee Co-Chair
Charo Welle	Administrator; Public Relations Committee Co-Chair; Digital and Social Media Co-Chair

The LC held its first virtual meeting on March 24, 2023. We focused on reviewing ongoing division projects, and the division committee chairs reported on their activities. The second virtual meeting is set for September 15, 2023. LC members plan to meet again during the ATA64 Annual Conference in Miami.

Speaking of changes, these are some other important changes and initiatives:

New Distinguished Speaker (DS) model: ATA moved to approve the DS program model where a division can nominate a DS every other year. Division officers in the second year of their term (i.e. current LC members) will be invited to nominate a DS. As a result, the TCD will not have a DS in Miami.

As an alternative to having a DS, we are thrilled that the TCD's proposal for a professional forum has been approved! Read more about this further down in this report.

TCD Private Facebook Group: A new Facebook group has been added for TCD members to connect with each other. This is a closed social media group, reserved to members of the ATA-TCD to post questions, share experiences, and exchange ideas that foster cooperation among members. Click here to request to join the TCD's Facebook group.

Division Name: The perception exists that the designation "company" in the Translation Company Division (TCD) may not be adequately inclusive of the diversity and nature of T&I businesses today. As we know, companies—or rather businesses—may be constituted as single-owner or single-employee organizations led by solopreneurs who collaborate with other colleagues.

Under such a premise, the Leadership Committee adopted an action item to propose the new name designation through a Board Action Request (BAR). However, the ATA Board recommended further actions to explore this idea. We may explore this again in the future by means of polling the wider TCD membership.

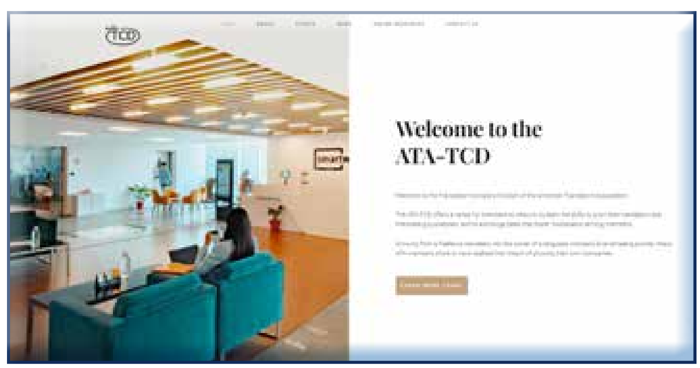
Project Manager Special Interest Group (PMSIG): The PMSIG was created to provide a space for project managers in the translation and interpretation industry to share information and best practices.

At present, the PMSIG seeks to identify other T&I project managers and invite them to membership in the TCD and the PMSIG to discuss what resources specific to our profession could be beneficial, whether they be distinguished speakers, workshops/webinars, or other ATA-related activities and opportunities for training.

Want to get involved? Contact Ray who serves as head of this subcommittee.

TCD Website Revamp: The revamping of the website is in forward motion and a draft version of the new ATA-TCD website was published in a staging environment.

We have been updating part of the content to match some of the content on the live version while matching the ATA requirements for the divisions' websites. The draft version is already looking GREAT! Here is a sneak peek:



Stay tuned for the launch announcement!

TCD on social media: TCD is on LinkedIn, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and now also on Instagram!

Connect with TCD to stay informed, expand your networks, and have access to valuable resources.

What's next for the TCD?

Annual Division Meeting: Join your TCD colleagues at the 2023 division annual meeting on Thursday, September 21, 7:30 p.m.- 8:00 p.m. ET. Come ready to network, get first-hand information on division projects and initiatives, share your ideas, and explore ways to engage and contribute. ATA division annual meetings are open to division members only. To access the meeting on September 21, click here and scroll down to Translation Company Division (TCD).

ATA 64th Annual Conference, October 25-28 in Miami Florida: The conference registration is officially open! If you plan to attend, head towards the conference site to view hotel accommodation and education sessions, and start mapping out your attendance and conference schedule!

Division Off-site Event: Join us at Crazy About You, one of Brickell's most upscale destinations! The restaurant is within walking distance from Hyatt Regency Miami, ATA's conference hotel. Mark your calendars for our Lunch Social and Networking event on **Thursday, October 26, 12:00-1:30 p.m.**!

Where to eat? With whom to eat? We took care of this guessing game on at least one of the conference days! See the delicious menu and registration details that you can enjoy for $50 dollars, which includes tax, gratuity, and a free soda. While we reserved the venue until 2:30 p.m., the plan is to have the lunch event wrap up in time to be able to get to the afternoon educational sessions. There will only be 30 places available for the lunch social, so don't wait—register today!

Crazy About You Restaurant

TCD Professional Forum: The TCD will offer a 60-minute, open-discussion presentation which will be led by Charo Welle, Afaf Steier, Graciela Isaía Ruiz, Marina Ilari, and Ray Valido, members of the Professional Development Committee and members of the TCD Leadership Council.

The presentation will provide a well-coordinated and enriching forum where all attendees may feel comfortable sharing their experiences with a focus on the advancement of the industry.

- Relational QA: Measuring Your Quality Assurance (QA) Process Through Customer Satisfaction
- Technology for QA
- QA Standards & Best Practices
- QA Training

Come prepared to hone your knowledge of quality assurance processes and standards, and gain new perspectives and resources for enhancing your language services. Plan to attend our TCD session whether you are a seasoned or new freelance translator/interpreter, translation company owner, project manager, or professional in any T&I-related field. Standards and Best Practices when Managing Quality Assurance Processes in Translation and Localization Projects, **Friday, October 27, 2-3 p.m., Miami Lecture Hall, Third Floor**.

In closing, we would like to recognize former Division Administrator Marina Ilari for her four years of dedication and accomplishments at the helm of the TCD. Thanks as well go to past and current Leadership Council members for their service and dedication.

As we continue to experience the dizzying advance of technology and industry changes that impact the way we all currently work and interact, the TCD will remain committed to ATA members, whether they own a company or are freelancers. Similarly, as division leaders we are invested in advancing our professions by serving our members.

If you would like to volunteer or if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to any of us.

And lastly, let's not forget Bob Dylan's call to action:

> *Come writers and critics*
> *Who prophesize with your pen*
> *And keep your eyes wide*
> *The chance won't come again.*

We hope to see you in Miami. If not, stay connected!

Until the next edition,

Charo and Ray

Charo

Ray

Reference

Dylan, Bob, songwriter. 1964. "The Times They Are a-Changin'" lyrics. Universal Music Publishing Group.

From the Editors

Dear ATA-TCD Members,

We are thrilled to share this new issue of the ATA-TCD newsletter with you! We have eight great articles written by seasoned T&I professionals, and we are sure you will find them useful. After all, our purpose is to provide you, our readers, with up-to-date, relevant information related to the Translation and Interpreting industry.

In this issue, Dmitry Beschetny shares how to properly leverage messenger marketing for freelance translators and Jason Willis-Lee discusses pricing for a profit playbook. We are also featuring articles on vendor management from Alaina Brandt and Carmen Cisneros that talk about localization vendor management scorecards and human relationships in the age of machine learning.

Furthermore, the issue includes an article on translation management systems by Guillermo Umpierrez and an article by Marita Propato on how language service companies can help clients succeed.

Finally, readers will find two insightful articles on standards, one by Monika Popiolek who contributes another piece to the Industry Standards Demystified series and one by Verónica Pérez on international and national standards for conference interpreting.

We want to thank the authors, reviewers and the Editorial Committee for their professionalism and commitment with the ATA-TCD newsletter. We appreciate your efforts and dedication!

Last but not least, we want to let you know that the ATA-TCD blog will be inaugurated soon with an interesting interview. Stay tuned!

You are all invited to contribute articles to the ATA-TCD newsletter. For more information, please contact us at marina@terratranslations.com and gloria.cabrejos@gcktraducciones.com.

We hope you enjoy this issue!

Marina Ilari & Gloria Cabrejos
Co-editors

Translation Management Systems

A TMS is an essential tool for organizations looking to expand their reach and increase their global competitiveness.

By Guillermo Umpierrez

Translation management systems (TMSs) are software platforms that automate and streamline the process of translating content for businesses and organizations. They provide a centralized and cost-effective way to manage translation projects, enabling organizations to distribute their content globally. The use of TMSs has become increasingly important in today's global marketplace, where companies are looking to reach new audiences and expand their reach beyond their home country.

But what makes a TMS different from a simple CAT tool?

A TMS typically includes a range of features and tools that support the translation process. These include translation memories, terminology management, and project management, among others.

Translation memories are databases that store previously translated content, which is later used to reduce the need to translate identical or similar phrases multiple times. This helps to speed up the translation process and reduces the risk of human error.

Glossary management and terminology management allows us to enforce consistent terminology and brand messaging across different languages and regions. This helps to maintain the quality of translations and ensure consistency across all markets and communication channels.

Project management is a key feature of TMS software, allowing organizations to track the status and progress of projects, set deadlines, and assign tasks to translators and editors. Project managers can use dashboards to view the status of each project, which provides real-time visibility into the translation process, allowing project managers to make informed decisions and manage projects more effectively.

Additionally, TMSs support collaboration between different stakeholders, including project managers, translators, editors, reviewers, and even clients! This helps organizations review and approve translations more quickly and efficiently while also helping to centralize communication, which prevents information from being lost.

What are some of the different types of TMSs?

Translation management systems can be divided into two basic categories: on-premise and cloud-based, the main difference being that an on-premise TMS needs to be installed in your device in order to access its full capabilities, while a cloud-based TMS can be accessed directly via an Internet browser.

Some outstanding examples of on-premise Translation Management Systems are [memoQ]() and [SDL Trados](), two long-established specialized software solutions that remain big players in the translation and localization industries due to the high-end solutions they offer.

Among the many advantages these and other on-premise TMSs offer, it is worth mentioning that they allow a much greater level of customization when it comes to handling complex files and creating personalized rules that determine how they are imported, in terms of included and excluded text, tags, segmentation, QA settings, etc.

These TMSs also offer very robust functionalities for the management of translation memories and terminology databases, also allowing a great deal of customization in that field. Additionally, these can be a great solution for companies and LSPs with numerous resources and big volumes of work, as they often offer dedicated servers that result in better performance and greater speed.

When it comes to cloud-based solutions such as Lokalise, Phrase, Smartling, Crowdin, and others, they can also be a great option for those who are looking to have a web-based solution that is easy to access, with user-friendly navigation and no need for manual updates, as these are constantly updated OTA (over-the-air) without affecting their users.

Another important aspect to take into consideration is the fact that these tools often double as content management systems (CMSs), which allows organizations to centralize their content in one place, making it easier to prepare translation projects as the import stage becomes unnecessary.

When it comes to dealing with different stakeholders involved in an organization or product, cloud-based tools can be the right choice as they allow the configuration of several connectors and triggers that completely automate the task of moving content from tools like repositories, CMSs, app stores, and databases into your TMS.

How do I choose the best TMS?

Choosing the best translation management system for your organization requires careful consideration of several factors. Some of the most important factors to consider include:

Translation requirements: This includes the types of content that need to be translated, the languages that need to be supported, and the volume of content that needs to be translated. Understanding your organization's translation requirements will help you to choose a TMS that provides the features and tools you need.

Budget: The cost of a TMS can vary greatly depending on the features and capabilities offered. It's important to consider your organization's budget when choosing a TMS and to choose a platform that offers the features and tools you need at a price that fits your budget.

Integration with other systems: If your organization uses other enterprise systems, such as a CMS or a CRM (customer relationship management) system, it's important to choose a TMS that integrates with those systems, which could be done through a native feature or a plugin, as this can help to streamline the translation process and improve efficiency.

Scalability: The TMS you choose should be scalable to meet the changing needs of your organization. Consider the future growth of your organization and choose a TMS that can grow with your organization.

Support and training: Choose a TMS that offers robust support and training resources. This can help to ensure that you and your team can effectively use the platform and get the most value from it. Additionally, you may want to look for a TMS with a user-friendly interface, intuitive navigation, and helpful documentation.

MT capabilities: Depending on the TMS you are using, you will have access to certain MT providers, which will give you the possibility to pre-translate your content using neural, statistical, or AI-based software designed to provide high quality translations.

Stakeholders' needs: Different roles such as software developers and designers, product managers, marketers, copywriters, translators, and QA specialists might have to work directly with these tools, so it is crucial that the implementation of a new TMS translate into higher productivity and more effective collaboration between teams.

In conclusion, a TMS is an essential tool for organizations looking to expand their reach and increase their global competitiveness. Whether you are a small business or a large enterprise, a TMS can help you to manage your translation projects and reach a global audience. With the increasing importance of global reach, the use of TMSs is likely to become even more widespread as those who invest in a TMS that works for their specific needs will be well-positioned to take advantage of the benefits of the global marketplace and reach new audiences around the world.

> ***Consider the future growth of your organization and choose a TMS that can grow with your organization.***

Guillermo Umpierrez is a Software and Game Localization Specialist and Solutions Architect with over 7 years of experience working in a variety of roles within the video game localization industry, both client and agency-side. His passion for language and technology has led him to a constant search for innovation, with a strong focus on building time-efficient, scalable solutions that bring localization teams closer to their goals and products closer to their target markets. Contact: *guillermo@terratranslations.com*

In the age of machine learning, human relationships *Hold the Key*

By Carmen Cisneros

Doesn't it feel as though the world we know is transforming almost every week? We are continually flooded with machine translation and AI news in our feeds, and these subjects will only become more relevant in the next few years. One could say we are in the age of machine learning and innovation through the implementation of AI in our daily life.

However, as a vendor manager for a language service provider (LSP), I feel I am swimming against the current these days. Most of my daily work involves communicating with other people, and vendor management, unlike other parts of the industry, has not seen many changes when it comes to automation so far.

Vendor managers are one of the core teams of any LSP and the main point of contact for vendors. They are the gatekeepers between a company and a vendor and the guardians of one of the most valuable assets in the company, the database.

Some of our responsibilities are:

- Managing and updating the company's database,
- Recruiting and onboarding new vendors according to the needs of the company,
- Supporting project managers and other roles within the company,
- Creating and developing successful relationships with vendors,
- Monitoring contract performance of vendors in the database, and sending feedback,
- Creating regular reports for upper management on costs and usage of vendors.

Although the implementation of technology and automation in vendor management will transform some of these responsibilities in the future, the one task that will always remain at the essence of the role and my favorite thing about the job is the creation and development of business relationships with vendors.

These relationships begin when a vendor manager selects a vendor to provide services for the manager's company. Before the collaboration starts, they communicate with each other in an honest and direct way describing what the company needs and how the vendor can help fulfilling this need. This communication should be tailored to the culture and personality of the vendor and must comply with the company's policies. During this stage, the vendor manager makes an effort to explain to the potential vendor how the company works — their history, general processes, software used, rates, and other such issues.

Once both parties agree to move forward, there might be a test and/or a short interview to see whether the vendor's skills fit the company standards. If these steps are completed successfully, it is time to sign any necessary paperwork to ensure

> *In the age of machine learning, we are at the beginning of the golden age in human business relationships, powered by the implementation of good vendor management practices.*

that both parties align their expectations and adhere to their obligations.

Once the database has been updated with all the vendor's information, the vendor manager will give the go ahead to colleagues to start sending projects to the new vendor while monitoring the vendor's progress. This is where the relationship is set in motion.

Unfortunately, creating and developing business relationships with vendors was not always considered fundamental in the industry. Back when I started my career as a project coordinator, my relationship with vendors was very much transactional, based on the amount of work done by the vendor for the company. Profit was often prioritized over partnership, so we didn't spend much time getting to know one another, even if we worked together every day. We had strict company guidelines when contacting vendors and I remember phoning vendors only to deliver bad news.

Fast forward 10 years, vendor management is transforming, and companies are welcoming these changes with open arms. They are recognizing the benefits of having good vendor management processes in place, because it helps mitigate potential risks such as quality complaints or lack of availability from vendors.

The industry is slowly realizing that vendors and companies alike want a business partner that can be respectful, reliable, honest, competent, and supportive, a win-win relationship that starts with clear communication and ends in mutual trust.

This is why I believe that in the age of machine learning, we are at the beginning of the golden age in human (business) relationships too, powered by good vendor management practices. Vendor managers around the world are networking more, learning from each other, and realizing that things don't always need to stay as they were.

One of the signs of this change is the trend of changing the word "vendor" to "talent" or "partner" when referring to the pool of resources. This word change signals an evolution in the way a company sees their vendors; they want a closer collaboration, building long-term and mutually beneficial relationships with them.

Further evidence of this change is that vendor managers from different companies have started opting for out-of-the-box solutions to attract vendors' attention while creating long-term, sustainable collaborations. To name a few examples, some companies have created accredited training courses tailored to their vendors' needs; others highlight their vendors' achievements publicly through social media. Moreover, I see both parties making an effort to attend and connect at industry events cultivating a deeper understanding of each other's roles, sharing best practices, and at times, pulling back the curtain to show what goes on behind our screens.

The height of this movement is the transformation of vendor management into community management, a trend that keeps growing. Community management sees the pool of resources as a community of members, with shared goals and mutual recognition They engage with each other in a way that promotes their values, encourage active participation and connection to one another while succeeding in their goals.

In a time when current inflation and economic recession are affecting all parts of the supply chain, focusing on maintaining sustainable and positive relationships is the key to keeping the industry together and narrowing the gap between companies and vendors that still exists today.

Join the vendor management revolution today by encouraging human to human communication, transparency, and mutual trust in your own business relationships.

COMMUNICATION

Transparency

Mutual Trust

Carmen Cisneros started her career seven years ago and she soon realized vendor management was her passion. She currently works as a vendor manager at Ultimate Languages (UK). Carmen also volunteers for the Women in Localization UK chapter, in addition to managing a group about vendor management on LinkedIn. In 2022, she published *Take the Plunge*. She also spoke at ELIA Together, Meet Central Europe, and other fora. Contact: *carmen.cisnerosperez@outlook.com*

Why Do We Need International and National Standards *for* Conference Interpreting?

By Verónica Pérez

> *It is one thing to write standards, and it is another to certify against a standard.*

International and national standards can offer robust business and marketing tools for interpreters to enhance their performance, improve the services provided, and demonstrate the quality of their output to clients.

Have you ever wondered why you can use your bank card almost anywhere? Or why can you drive the Japanese car you have rented in Malta as smoothly as your American car?

It is essential to start clarifying two terms that are often confused: standardization and certification.

Standardization is the "activity of establishing, about actual or potential problems, provisions for common and repeated use, aimed at achieving the optimum degree of order in a given context."[1]

Certification is the "provision by an independent body of written assurance (a certificate) that the product, service or system in question meets specific requirements."[2]

In a nutshell, standards are developed to set out recommendations and requirements to achieve the optimum degree of order, in this case, in interpreting. After the standard is published, an accredited certifying body that has developed a certification scheme for that standard will certify the subjects obliged by the standard.

So it is one thing to write standards, and it is another to certify against a standard.

Some background

> ***Standards are developed to set out recommendations and requirements to achieve the optimum degree of order, in this case, in interpreting.***

The idea of a standard on interpreting had been going on in my mind for a long time, since the profession of court translators and interpreters is well-protected in Argentina by law. However, that is different for conference interpreters. When I got involved in national standardization in Argentina, I learned of the ISO community interpreting project being developed. This project was significant for countries like the United States or Canada, where community interpreting is needed since large communities do not speak the official language which they need to access services at the hospital, when discussing their children's report cards with a teacher, etc.

Although not so clearly useful, ISO 13611 "Guidelines for Community Interpreting" was adopted in Argentina. When a country adopts an ISO standard, it does so "as is." You can only add notes explaining differences, similarities, or references to the local setting. And right we were, because there is a growing need in Argentina for community and sign language interpreting with the large inflows of immigrants coming from countries as distant as Syria, as well as the presence of indigenous populations who speak languages other than Spanish.

To put an appropriate process in place to develop national positions and comments on ISO work, as well as to determine the National Standards Body's (NSB) representation at ISO, it is recommended that National Mirror Committees (NMCs) be formed whenever possible within the NSB. In Argentina, we set up a National Mirror Committee at IRAM with AIIC, ADICA, CTPCBA, and members.

Then, there came ISO 18841:2018, "Interpreting services—General requirements and recommendations," which I authored and which is currently under revision.

Standardization is hard work and things proceed relatively slowly (something complicated to accept for a conference interpreter). But as an ISO Working Group Convenor, I appreciate the opportunity to work with colleagues from around the world. I find it fascinating to experience what occurs at a strictly human level in these meetings with experts from various cultural backgrounds. For negotiations to advance and work to progress, it is essential that everybody feel respected and that their contributions are of value. Communication barriers are torn down when that occurs, and people can quickly agree. After all, standardization is an exercise in consensus-building.

The flagship standard for conference interpreters: ISO 23155:2022

After many years of discussion and consensus-building efforts among stakeholders, ISO 23155 ("Interpreting services—Conference interpreting—Requirements and recommendations"), led by AIIC, became a reality. We finally have an international standard specifying requirements and recommendations for conference interpreting services. The standard includes provisions for the qualifications and competencies of conference interpreters, as well as requirements for conference interpreting service providers (CISPs).

To work in conformity with the standard demonstrates a commitment to providing quality conference interpreting services.

The requirements included in the standard can be summarized as follows:

1. Conference interpreters shall have two or more working languages; work in teams of at least two interpreters per booth; adhere to a code of professional ethics; document their qualifications.[3]
2. Conference interpreting providers shall assist the conference interpreters they recruit to meet their requirements; make sure the conference interpreters' working environment is technically adequate and that the equipment provider complies with the relevant ISO standards on simultaneous interpreting equipment; request a sound test, etc.[4]

Conclusion

So, to go back to our original question: why do we need standards?

Standards:

- Are a robust business and marketing tool. Government agencies refer to national or international standards when calling for bids.
- Raise awareness among users.
- Give the service greater value in the mind of the user.
- Allow the profession to develop in a more orderly fashion.
- Enhance working conditions and service quality.
- Permit users of services to have more resources available to make a reasoned choice.

I urge conference interpreters to seek certification because in doing so they will fine-tune their performance and manage the risks while operating in more efficient and sustainable ways; they will be able to showcase the quality of what they do to their customers; and this will help them to embed best practices into their organizations.

NOTES

1 ISO Technical Management Board, "ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004, 3.2." International Standards Organization, published November 2004. https://www.iso.org/standard/39976.html

2 International Standards Organization, "Conformity assessment." International Standards Organization. https://www.iso.org/conformity-assessment.html

3 International Association of Conference Interpreters, "About ISO 23155." International Association of Conference Interpreters. https://bit.ly/42MWTjr

4 ISO Translation, interpreting and related technology committee. "ISO 23155:2022." International Standards Organization, published January 2022. https://www.iso.org/standard/74749.html

Dr. Verónica Pérez Guarnieri is a consultant interpreter at Calliope Interpreters and is also a member of AIIC. She is a convener of ISO working group TC37/SC5/WG2 "Interpreting". She obtained her Ph.D. *Cum Laude* from the Universidad de Córdoba, Spain, in 2017, and authored several technical papers on translation, interpretation, and standardization in indexed journals. Verónica is a consultant interpreter with more than 30 years of experience. She authored ISO 18841 *Interpreting-Requirements and Recommendations*, the first international umbrella standard on interpreting. She participated in drafting a pioneer national standard on interpreting at the Argentine NSB, IRAM 13612. Contact: ***veronica.perez@aiic.net***

PARTNERING WITH LANGUAGE SERVICE COMPANIES TO HELP CLIENTS SUCCEED

By Marita Propato

In this article, I share some insights on my collaboration with T&I companies and language teams.

The epidemiological situation the world has recently undergone certainly brought us challenges, but it also gave us the opportunity to use new technology to expand into new fields and to interact with colleagues, clients and language service providers. The world adapted, and so did our profession.

When COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, interpreters faced a lot of uncertainty with the cancellation of all in-person events overnight. After a hiatus while we all figured out how to respond to the changing landscape of providing interpreting services, business travel and MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions), which used to be part of our day-to-day life, our previous assignments were soon replaced with streaming events.

With the versatility and adaptability typical of our profession, most of us embraced the new ways of working, and with the help of professional associations that were responsive to the changes and delivered training sessions on interpreting platforms and their technicalities, we were able to step up our game and advise our clients on how to keep their communication channels open with their various stakeholders.

As an example, in mid-2020, a language service provider (LSP) based in the US contacted me again after some time to inquire whether I was doing Zoom interpreting. I had already interpreted in online events with the help of technicians who hosted meetings on brand-new online hubs. I now had the chance to leverage that experience to help the LSP handle new projects, and I was all in. I can say that everything went very smoothly, there were no hitches!

I provided advice on the dynamics of remote simultaneous interpreting (RSI), first to the project manager (PM) and then to the users, most of whom were from law firms that had migrated international arbitration and dispute resolution proceedings to online platforms.

As most participants were using RSI for the first time, I took part in several technical runs representing the LSP and shared tips with meeting hosts, attorneys, arbitrators, and witnesses on the use of interpretation channels, raising awareness of the need to improve image and sound for the benefit of everyone involved. During these sessions, I always kept in mind that I was representing the LSP that had hired me, adhering to its communication standards, and to the code of conduct of the associations with which I am affiliated (the Argentine Association of Translators and Interpreters [AATI], the American Translators Association [ATA], and the Association of Sworn Translators of Buenos Aires [CTPCBA]). My interaction with the LSP was always open and I was grateful for the trust the PM and the company owner showed in me.

The project was an extremely gratifying experience. Legal and business are two of my specialties, but it was the first time I was working in international arbitration proceedings online. I had much to learn in terms of both etiquette and terminology. In addition, I needed to become an expert in handling documents at the speed of discourse, and to be prepared to render accurate sight translation, a skill I had learned in college. The PM provided me with background for each case and took care of any follow-up with the client, and I used the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Rules of Arbitration, published in both English and Spanish, for further research. The most satisfying part of it all was that I shared the booth with colleagues from other countries, whom I would not have met otherwise. It was a joy to discover that, in addition to being key referents of our profession, they are such fine persons and booth mates!

Looking back at my career spanning three decades, I have interpreted for heads of state, royals, Nobel Peace Prize laureates, and high-profile personalities in culture, sports and science. But there was this one project that was certainly a highlight in my career and required me to step into the shoes of a PM. After a very demanding selection process, I was appointed Lead Interpreter at the 2018 Buenos Aires Youth Olympic Games. It was a position of great responsibility, as I was accountable not only for my own performance, but also for the performance of all professionals on the team.

The tasks included organizing the Spanish, English, French, Russian and Chinese booths at the Olympic Village, and interpreting for young athletes, *Chefs de Mission*, and International Olympic Committee authorities, simultaneously from the booth or consecutively at press conferences. The intensive coordination involved helped me understand the many responsibilities of a PM and added an interesting perspective of what it is like to work with pools of professionals. I'll always treasure the moment when IOC President Thomas Bach stated at the closing ceremony that "Buenos Aires had delivered outstanding Games." The language team certainly felt proud of having contributed to this recognition.

As language professionals, we can really make a difference and contribute to global peace and understanding. The key role of T&I has been recognized by the United Nations by declaring September 30 as International Translation Day. Our profession is alive and vibrant, with many new fields opening for collaboration and partnering. If you are a new professional and would like to reach out to T&I companies to offer your services, my advice is:

- Do some due diligence to identify the companies that are active in the fields that would be a good match for your profile;
- Design a short CV in which you clearly state your language pairs, experience, education, strengths, specialization, and technology skills;
- Be ready to provide translation samples and references;
- Have honest conversations about qualifications, turnaround, time commitments, certifications,

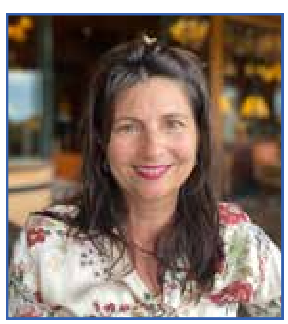
rates and administrative processes, and last but not least,

- Ask for feedback and use the feedback for improvement.

And of course, it is always advisable to pursue continuing education, look for meaningful volunteering opportunities to gain experience, stay in touch with the latest developments by joining professional associations, keep abreast of global issues including international conflicts and climate change, have a professional presence in social media with valuable contributions, work on your network of colleagues, prospects, clients, mentors and mentees, and connect with the things you enjoy to keep work-life balance.

Our profession keeps evolving, and with focus, respect and passion, many goals can be achieved!

As language professionals, we can really make a difference and contribute to global peace and understanding.



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Localization Vendor Management Scorecard:

Assessing the Performance of an Important Function

By Alaina Brandt

Localization Vendor Management (LVM) consists of screening, testing, onboarding, and monitoring the translators who provide the rendered target content that is passed through localization production, delivered to clients, and stored in translation memories (TMs) for recycling into all future work for a client or product line. Localization vendors can include various types of translators, such as editors, interpreters, transcriptionists, voice talent, subtitlers, bilingual service desk operators, and of course conventional translators. The major day-to-day duties of localization vendor managers include managing an organization's vendor pool within vendor databases, accompanying prospective talent through verification procedures, and managing vendor performance and capacity. LVM has important big-picture objectives too, including risk management, capacity building and scalability, and relationship management, to name a few.

Understanding the context for LVM brings these big-picture objectives into better focus. In 2018, Salua Kamerow and Nikki DiGiovanni wrote about the lack of regulations around the professional practices of translation and interpreting, noting "[localization and translation are]… completely self-regulated profession[s]" ("The Confidentiality Dilemma in the Language Profession"). While regional and federal regulations are being written around what constitutes the professional translation and interpretation services through which organizations meet the federal mandate for meaningful language access for people with limited English proficiency (LEP) to governmental services, education, and healthcare (to name a few areas), the inconsistencies throughout these regulations will take years to iron out. (The page "Civil Rights – Limited English Proficient (LEP)" gives a basic definition for meaningful language access. The link to that page can be found in the Works Consulted section of this article.) As such, in the largely unregulated industry that is language services, vendor managers are the on-the-ground regulators. The expectations around deliveries, translation memory ownership, and payment terms that are outlined in contracts are among the risk mitigation strategies that vendor managers employ to address third-party risk too, which, per Agostino Carrideo's book *Vendor Management: An Insider's Strategies to Win and Create Long Lasting Change*, is the biggest risk to organizations.

In the CSA report "Vendor Management at LSPs," Hélène Pielmeier and Benjamin Sargent call developing a pool of qualified and readily available talent "demanding and time-consuming work" that "busy project manager[s] can't pay attention [to] long enough to perform" well (4). This is no fault of PMs. PMs usually do not have the time to "give due attention to tasks unrelated to immediate project requirements" (4). Again, the main objective that firms have for their project managers is their ability to quickly assign work. For organizations working toward a "repeatable" or "managed" level of localization maturity, vendor management "alleviates the pressure on project managers" by decreasing their time to assign jobs and increasing their capacity to manage more work (6). Per CSA, a "small team of vendor managers can make dozens of project managers substantially more efficient" (3).

Companies certified to the international standard of best practice *ASTM F3130-18 Standard Practice for Language Service Companies* must have systematic vendor management capabilities in place too. Vendor management related requirements in the standard include the ability to recruit and screen independent contractors and in-house translators to test translators for their suitability for performing translations given the specifications for work and to assign work to professionals with the necessary competencies in the source and target dialects, translation, the subject field, technology, data security, and whatever other requirements that a project might entail. Certification to the standard became available in 2021.

There's clearly a strong case for having a dedicated vendor management function in any organization that contracts directly with translators. Learning the unique characteristics of localization vendor management is beneficial too for any human resources professional tasked with hiring and supporting the professional development of in-house translators. Understanding the case for vendor management is an important first step, especially when formalizing informal procedures and resources like vendor databases that were built by project managers. Understanding the case is also important when judging the value of vendor management in ongoing budgets and communications. Understanding the case should also prompt quarterly and yearly reflection about the state of vendor management in your organization. Does your organization have a dedicated LVM function? What gaps in your current practices around the recruiting and onboarding of translators might there be? What benefits can be derived from adjustments and improvements to your program?

For organizations and practitioners needing a little guidance in this area, the Localization Vendor Management Scorecard, or the LVM Scorecard for short, is a framework for assessing an organization's LVM performance in 5 key areas: overall function, screening invitations, onboarding, performance management, and Rolodex management. Once consensus is reached around an assessment, people can use their scores as a basis for prioritizing the areas to establish and develop within their LVM functions. The LVM Scorecard gives guidance too about practices that could be implemented to take LVM performance to the next level.

How to Use the LVM Scorecard

The LVM Scorecard is relatively easy to use. The LVM Scorecard contains five sections: overall function, screening invitations, onboarding, performance management, and Rolodex management. Here's a brief list that summarizes what aspect of LVM each of the sections cover.

- **Overall Function:** The Overall Function section covers infrastructure, including documentation, file management, automation, and cross-departmental collaboration.
- **Screening Invitations:** The Screening Invitations section covers the talent application and testing processes that vendor managers design and translators follow when applying to work with an organization.
- **Onboarding:** The Onboarding section covers the information that should be shared and the introductions that should be made to bring new translators aboard an organization.
- **Performance Management:** The Performance Management section covers the work done to set individual translators up for success, measure their performance, and develop their skills once they're onboarded to an organization.
- **Rolodex Management:** The Rolodex Management section covers strategies for cultivating a strong talent pool and maintaining a healthy database from which project managers can draw when assigning translation and localization work.

Each section of the LVM Scorecard has five questions (or series of questions). The questions are meant to be easy to answer during your first read through. The questions are posed so that they can be answered with Yes for 1 point, Somewhat for 0.5 points, or No for 0 points. As people work through the questions, they're encouraged to reserve judgment and think of their answers as statements of facts. After they've gone through and answered each question, they can give themselves a score in each section or for their LVM function as a whole. Scores include non-existent, insufficient, developing, advanced, and exemplary. After they've got their score, the questions in the scorecard are meant to be reflective as well. That is, the scorecard can be revisited to plan development where improvements are needed and to learn where the LVM function is performing well.

Another useful exercise may be to have a group of stakeholders in an organization work together to assess LVM performance. People could share their assessments anonymously through a survey (please cite your source if you use my scorecard!), they could prepare answers in advance of a meeting, or teams could work together on different sections of the assessment. A simple brainstorming meeting may not seem technical enough, but the *IEC 31010:2019 Risk management — Risk assessment techniques* standard by ISO and IEC recommends doing just that as an effective method via which to collect together a broader range of risks from the stakeholders who are most impacted by the work. For those looking for further prompts that could guide a team's work, the questions posed in Paul Boone's article "4 Steps to Getting Started with Vendor Management" are a great starting point for thinking about vendor management.

Further Discussion on the LVM Scorecard

Whatever methodology is followed to assess an organization, the discussion below gives more context for the questions asked in each section of the LVM Scorecard that may help guide the work through the scorecard.

Overall Function

When implementing the LVM Scorecard in an assessment of your organization, it's important to let the document meet organizations where they are. The first question asked in the Overall Function section of the scorecard is a great illustration of that. The first question asks if an organization has a dedicated vendor management function, which, depending on the context, could mean very different setups. Large language service companies (LSCs) will have entire departments for vendor management, while a startup may have someone who is doing LVM as a part-time role. So long as VM responsibilities are assigned via some sort of a documented system, an answer of at least "Somewhat" can be used for this question.

Another important area addressed in this section of the scorecard is automation. Vendor management definitely requires repetitive work, including sending the same 'invitation to apply' message over and over again, collecting signatures on contracts, and processing invoices to name a few. Organizations should automate as much of the manual, data-entry type of work as they can, given their organizational maturity.

Screening Invitations

The Screening Invitations section of the LVM Scorecard focuses upon the procedures via which translators who are specialized in a particular domain are invited to apply to work with an organization. The section addresses the specialization that vendor managers need to have in terms of their familiarity with the markets in which they recruit. For instance, an LVM office can require certifications or specific degrees, but only if those certifications and degrees are available to a translator coming from a specific market. This section goes on to address rates. In my opinion, a conversation about rates can and should be initiated at the very start of the process, so that translators can determine if the long and time-consuming process of applying to an organization is worth it to them in the end. The dialogue about rates can start immediately at recruitment, with a message like, "Hello translator, I found your profile on this directory, and your specializations seem to be a great fit for the work our organization does. We pay a rate range of X.XX to X.XX per word/character. Would you like to apply to work with our organization?"

This section addresses the moral rights of translators too. According to the U.S. Copyright Office, within copyright law, the term "moral rights" (derived from the French droit moral) "refers to certain noneconomic rights that are considered personal to an author," including 1) "the right of attribution" or "the right of an author to be credited as the author of their work," and 2) "the right of integrity" or "the right to prevent prejudicial distortions to the[ir] work" (Authors, Attribution, and Integrity: Examining Moral Rights in the United States). The terms and conditions that translators are asked to sign routinely strip them of their moral rights over their work, with no regard for whether crediting the translator would make sense given the content, in more creative domains for instance. Crediting translators for their work as a matter of due course establishes a great deal of credibility for an organization.

The section goes on to address what happens after a translator applies too and the need to have criteria and methodologies in place that allow for the unbiased review of a translator's portfolio. In the full-time job application process, a best practice, for instance, is to remove people's names and identifiers from their portfolios to prevent unconscious bias in the review of those materials. That, and similar practices, could be implemented into review of translators' portfolios as well.

Onboarding

The Onboarding section of the scorecard focuses upon efficiently training new translators in the operational procedures they'll need to follow when working with an organization. The focus here is planning and efficiency in acknowledgment that translators' time going through onboarding procedures with an organization is typically not reimbursed. Translators do this unpaid work with the promise that work will come later.

The section starts with a question about NDAs and the other contracts that translators need to sign when contracting with an organization. These contracts are an area in which automation can really help. Rather than having a VM send these contracts as an attachment to translators and later needing to monitor manually the expiration dates for contracts, a document management system in which contracts can be annotated and signed simplifies this important activity and frees up the vendor managers' time to focus upon activities for which their expertise is better put into practice than it is when manually sending files and collecting signatures. Here, I'll note too that, according to "9 Clauses to Include in Every NDA" by Axial, negotiation is a natural part of any contract signing process. Typically, in the language industry, translators are expected to take the terms in contracts as they come. Big LSCs in particular have a "take it or leave it" approach to contracts and take advantage of the fact that, if one translator turns down a contract due to rigid terms and inflexibility, they can just move on to other translators. Giving translators the opportunity to negotiate on terms sets a more positive tone at the beginning of working relationships.

This section goes on to address early communication between a translator and an organization in which they've passed through the application process and are now being set up to accept contracted work. Translators are better set up to perform well with an organization when they know how their work fits within the larger organization, where they can access answers to frequently asked questions, such as through a knowledge base, and who to reach out to when their questions are not so easily answered. The section addresses the protection of an organization's data as well, and limitations that can be placed on contractors' access to valuable linguistic assets like translation memories and termbases. This acknowledges that these assets, once sent in a physical file format, cannot be recovered.

Performance Management

The Performance Management section of the scorecard covers how production is handled once translators have been onboarded to an organization and they will begin taking contracted work. A misconception that organizations need to be aware of is the expectation that, once onboarded, translators need no further instruction in order to be able to perform. But quality managers, vendor managers, and project managers who expect that a translator will understand their organization's quality expectations after a single test—or no test at all in rush circumstances—set new translators up for unnecessary frustration at best and failure at worst.

To set new translators up for success, they should receive materials that facilitate rather than impede their work. This includes defining quality expectations in specifications, sending source texts that have been pre-edited with translation in mind, and reinforcing expectations by providing feedback from the quality evaluations of their work. For any first projects, including the translation test, be aware of the translation errors that are specific to the organization that new translators are unlikely to know without further training. New translators shouldn't be docked for these. Throughout each new translator's probationary period, comprehensive feedback should be provided to them about their work so they can become aware of and learn to avoid recurrent issues. Eventually translators won't need to be provided with feedback from the editing that takes place over their work. (Indeed, continuing to provide feedback in this comprehensive way for every translator on every job can be impractical.) They'll have acclimated to an organization's definition of translation quality, at which point they can be fully added to your talent database as trusted providers.

If an editor continually has to make a great deal of changes to a translator's work, that increases the likelihood that mistakes will be missed in deliverables to the client, thereby risking an organization's quality guarantee. That might mean it's time to let a translator go. On the other hand, recognizing and awarding stellar performance through rate increases is a great way to share the savings that result from the efficient processes that can be followed when the translation that passes through production is stellar from the start.

Rolodex Management

The Rolodex Management portion of the scorecard addresses the performance of an organization's talent pool as a whole. For starters, CSA Research's "Vendor Management at LSPs" gives 80% use of the talent in an organization's roster as a healthy benchmark. This benchmark makes a lot of sense considering the amount of administrative time that organizations invest in recruiting, screening, and onboarding vendors, and on the flip side, the amount of administrative time that translators spend applying and being onboarded to organizations.

This section also addresses strategy around job assignments. Specialization is key here, as is the development of a unique brand voice for the clients for whom translation services are provided, and protecting linguistic assets. In some organizations, job assignments are made only on the basis of if a translator works in the language pair that is needed, if they have the lowest rates, and if they are available. Taking into consideration the specializations in the domains encompassed by the work is also necessary, even if subject matter specialization comes at a higher cost.

In terms of building teams that are specialized to a specific client, building healthy relationships is key. First, translators who work as contractors should work with multiple clients, rather than relying upon a single client for all of their revenue. For the health of an organization too, relying heavily upon a few translators for all work represents organizational risk, should those translators become unavailable. Within language service companies, establishing small teams of translators for each client or product line for which translation services are offered can be a great way to ensure that those in a team develop and execute on a consistent brand voice. Small teams dedicated to a particular client and product line will only have access to the linguistic assets for that client too, and when an individual on a small team needs to leave an account, or as accounts grow and bigger teams are needed, new translators can be trained. Compartmentalization allows companies to distribute the risks associated with contracting with third-party vendors.

Conclusion

This article has presented my Localization Vendor Management Scorecard via which organizations can assess their performance in key areas, including the overall function, screening invitations, onboarding, performance management, and Rolodex management. I hope you've learned from this article that the localization vendor management function is key to ensuring that relationships are built and maintained with talent that can produce the language that makes localized products efficient in their production, but—most importantly—accessible and compelling. Considering that translators produce the translations that make localized products work for target users, and their work is stored in databases for recycling into all future translation work through translation memory and machine translation leveraging, I hope you can see the importance of cultivating strong relationships with a roster filled with specialized talent through the LVM function too.

If you have any questions about it or would like to work with me as a consultant to take your organization's LVM performance to the next level, don't hesitate to reach out to alainambrandt@gmail.com.

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ISO 23155:2022

Interpreting services — Conference interpreting Requirements and Recommendations

Industry Standards Demystified – Part 9

By Monika Popiolek

ISO 23155:2022 specifies requirements and recommendations for the provision of conference interpreting services. It is primarily addressed to conference interpreters and conference interpreting service providers (CISPs). It also serves as reference for users of conference interpreting services. Its scope covers basic principles and best practice and the required competences and qualifications of conference interpreters. The document also describes the various conference settings, interpreting modes and maps the process. The standard is applicable to all parties involved in facilitating communication between users of conference services using a spoken or signed language. The scope of ISO 23155 does not cover any translation services.

ISO 23155 was developed in response to a worldwide growing need for general requirements for the provision of quality conference interpreting services. It offers information and guidance to users and all parties involved in conference interpreting. These users include: conference interpreters, conference interpreting service providers (CISPs), consultant interpreters, language service providers (LSPs), international organizations, governments and agencies, conference organizers, conference centers, providers of conference interpreting equipment, and educational institutions.

Apart from the standard introduction and scope, ISO/DIS 23155 provides basic information about conference interpreting, relevant terms and definitions, modes of interpreting, teamwork between interpreters, code of ethics, and requirements for competences and qualifications of conference interpreters.

Clause 3 provides definitions for key terms, such as: 'A', 'B' and 'C' language, working language, conference interpreter, conference interpreting service provider (CISP), spoken language interpreting, signed language interpreting, conference interpreting service, consultant interpreter, mode, consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, whispered interpreting, note-taking, interpreting system, interpreter console, booth, relay interpreting, distance interpreting etc. This information is an important industry resource in itself.

Clause 4 offers basic information about conference interpreting. It is clearly stated that conference interpreting is a profession, and not an informal practice. Conference interpreting is provided at bilingual and multilingual conferences to facilitate communication between participants using different spoken or signed languages, and that it is an intellectually demanding activity. Conference interpreting can be particularly strenuous and stressful owing to specific characteristics of such assignments and inherent risk factors such as the level of technical detail, quality of equipment, public speaking, dependence on partners, work environment (booth size, ventilation, lighting), the difficulty in achieving a good work-life balance due to traveling, higher than usual error rate, unpredictable schedules, etc.

Clause 4 also sets the requirement that conference interpreters shall work in teams of at least two interpreters per booth when a conference exceeds 45 minutes. Depending on the language combination and the complexity of the assignment, this time limit can be reduced. The number of conference interpreters in a team of conference interpreters primarily depends on the number of languages used at the conference, as well as on its duration and difficulty. It is also recommended that, due to health and quality considerations, an interpreter's working day should not exceed two sessions of three-and-a-half hours, separated by a 90-minute break, and these recommendations are much stricter in case of distance interpreting (aka remote interpreting).

Clause 5 deals with the competences and qualifications required of conference interpreters. The required competences are divided into: intellectual, linguistic, interpreting, communicative, intercultural, technical, interpersonal, research, information acquisition and knowledge management, business, information security, and stress management.

According to clause 5 of the standard, as part of the formal qualifications required, conference interpreters shall present documented evidence of meeting at least one of the following criteria:

a) a degree from a recognized postgraduate study program in conference interpreting;

b) a degree from a recognized higher-education undergraduate study program of at least three years in conference interpreting, that is equivalent to a postgraduate program in terms of scope, content, and core competences taught;

c) a degree from a recognized higher-education study program (Bachelor level or higher) in a subject other than conference interpreting, and proof of 150 days of experience working as a conference interpreter in compliance with this document;

d) accreditation as a conference interpreter by an international organization or a national government agency or department.

Clause 6 describes the service process and requirements and recommendations before, during and after the conference interpreting assignment. Additionally, this section of the standard covers such issues as: confidentiality, travel arrangements, preparation, information and terminology management, ongoing quality assurance measures, planning phase, responsibilities of the client requesting the conference interpreting service etc.

Clause 7 covers the requirements concerning the conference interpreting service provider (CISP). This includes responsibilities of the client requesting the conference interpreting service and the CISP, agreements with conference interpreters and other important issues that need to be addressed before the start of the conference and after the conference.

ISO 23155 includes six informative (as opposed to normative) annexes:

- Annex A – Conference Interpreting Workflow
- Annex B – Example of a code of conduct for conference interpreters
- Annex C – Content of assignment agreement
- Annex D – Head of team
- Annex E – Team Strength
- Annex F – Customary conference interpreters' recruitment practices

Given the fact that ISO 23155 is a recommendations standard, conference interpreting service providers (CISPs) can certify against it. From the practical and certification point of view, fulfillment of all the requirements set out in ISO 23155 allows the CISP to demonstrate conformity of their services to this document and their capability to maintain a level of quality in interpreting services that will meet the client's and other applicable specifications. In theory, individual conference interpreters could also certify against the standard but the certification of individuals is a complex process governed by different regulations and rules, so certification of individuals under this standard may not be possible at this time.

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> ***ISO 23155 was developed in response to a worldwide growing need for general requirements for the provision of quality conference interpreting services.***

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Messenger Marketing for Freelance Translators:

How to leverage it properly

By Dmitry Beschetny

There are numerous ways to connect with potential translation clients through social media, especially through LinkedIn, Google Business, Facebook, or even Instagram. The only problem may be the unavailability of these major platforms in a particular country. That's exactly the case in my home country of Russia, where all these platforms, as are many VPN services, are banned.

However, even if I use, say, LinkedIn via proxy servers, which seems to be a walkover for me, why should my potential domestic clients go through such extra effort? Besides, some of my potential clients wouldn't use LinkedIn even if it were available to them. This got me thinking about how else to reach my potential clients via the Internet, so I turned to the growing messaging platforms like WhatsApp, Telegram, and others that have become an essential part of the client journey[1] and, in turn, an important channel in both B2C and B2B marketing for me as a freelance translator working in the legal field. However, it can still feel like finding needles in a haystack when trying to identify your potential client in the ocean of messaging platforms.

In this article, I will share some simple techniques on how a translator, whether an individual or a company, can use mobile chat apps to connect with potential clients and facilitate their translation business. Let's find out!

Do's and Don'ts

While messengers don't offer as many features for promoting translation services as the platforms mentioned above, I don't think an LSP needs to use all the tools and their features available on the market. Instead, using just a few tools and their features to the fullest can be rewarding in terms of successfully marketing your translation business.

Surprisingly, a messenger can even beat a major platform when it comes to a specific feature. For example: I don't need to buy a premium subscription (unlike LinkedIn, WhatsApp doesn't even offer paid services, at least for now) to see who viewed my status on WhatsApp, so why not update your WhatsApp status[2] regularly with relevant translated content and see who viewed it? Your WhatsApp status update will never be boring as you can pick a font, a background color, or record your voice. Both regular WhatsApp and WA Business are good for this, although WA Business is more geared towards working with projects, as it allows you to sort leads and clients according to the status of a project.

In my WhatsApp status, I help potential translation clients by explaining differences such as those between a translator and an interpreter, a bilingual person and a translator, and between a certified and a notarized translation, and I make suggestions aimed at reducing stress and helping clients get the most out of their translation budget. Of course, I post my translation credentials and links to my services, explaining their value.

> **Using just a few tools and their features to the fullest can be rewarding in terms of successfully marketing your translation business.**

Only people who have saved my number can see my WhatsApp status updates. Satisfied clients quite often do. As my practice shows, existing clients appreciate such explanations and suggestions and often reply in direct message asking for more information, then return with more jobs or refer me to potential clients who are looking for a legal translator.

In Russia, my first choice of messengers would be WhatsApp and Telegram. Other country-specific messengers may work well too, such as Russia's VKontakte or WeChat in China, but my Chinese colleagues surely know better.

Both WhatsApp and Telegram allow creation of a group to communicate on a particular topic, and the groups where participants may request a translation quote are not necessarily called anything resembling "Legal Translation from English into Russian," which would be my ideal target audience. However, your target group is just a step away if you use the right keywords to find your clients.

In Telegram, for example, I used the Russian keywords "наши в" (Eng: our people in ...) to quickly find Russian immigrant communities in English-speaking countries and specific states or territories. I also looked at Google search data on the most popular countries for moving abroad to find that most people leave my country to go to the U.S.[3] I just came up with that off the top of my head, and it worked well.

Participants of these groups are usually looking for a Russian to English translator like me to provide official translations of their vital records, bank statements, vaccination records, or case descriptions to consult a lawyer. The translator just has to type a keyword into the search box in the chat list.

My favorite keywords are "перевести" (Eng: translate), "официальный перевод" (official translation) "сертифицированный перевод" (Eng: certified Translation) "юридический перевод" (legal translation), "переводчик" (Eng: translator), "свидетельство о рождении" (Eng: birth certificate), and "диплом со вкладышем" (Eng: diploma and a transcript) which allows me to highlight the chats where participants might have left their request for Russian translation services.

Just a few seconds and here we are. A list of potential customers. No magic, it just works like

a clockwork. I do this twice a day: in the morning in the Moscow time zone, when my hometown wakes up, and in the evening, which is morning in the U.S. Next, I send these people my template messages to introduce myself, ask for the source files, and then give them a quote.

Speaking of don'ts, please follow the group rules and don't be too salesy. Remember that group moderators usually do not tolerate solicitation of anyone's services in the group without prior permission and payment. Owners have created their groups for different purposes, so people discuss and attend exciting events to meet other people, get tips and information about their destination, and do many other things that may have nothing to do with translation services. So be careful; otherwise, you risk being blacklisted and losing your potential clients. The right way to communicate is to send a direct message to a potential client and potential clients will usually like engaging with a personalized approach! You can also use such groups to promote your services on a (usually) paid basis.

The other way round, this technique works for translation into Russian. I just joined local groups of English-speaking expats and some of the *InterNations Moscow* community groups[4], where I met some good clients. They are professionals who have moved to Moscow and need to move their families as well and translate related documents.

Translation Requests and Sales Funnel Automation

Since I usually check for new translation requests as often as twice a day, the reality is that sometimes I'm too late to provide a quote, so it would be a good idea to automate this process and continue monitoring even when it's night in my time zone. If I was able to use the iOS 16.4 settings to automate VPN on/off for LinkedIn and other platforms not available in my country using the local IP address, why can't I use Python scripts to create a bot to automate checking for new translation requests? I think that's doable, but that would probably be a topic for another article on Messenger Marketing. Alternatively, maybe readers of this article will give me a hint in the comments. I would appreciate it.

Conclusion and Final Thoughts

The practice of using mobile chat apps to facilitate business and connect with potential clients does pay off and the technique is easy. First, identify messenger groups where your potential clients hang out. For example, if your target audience is refugees, it would be a good idea to have a clear understanding of their resettlement locations, and then use location to search for the local community. Never forget to make sure you follow the group rules before advertising your services, then start searching in groups using the keywords. Whatever your area of expertise is and whatever your keywords are, just avoid using vague words or terms that your potential clients are unlikely to use to describe what you do.

Messenger marketing makes it easier to build a customer base. Messengers also have higher open rates, as people are more than three times more likely to read a message than open an email.

Messenger marketing strategies can create meaningful relationships between a translation services provider and clients. However, it is not enough to simply join WhatsApp or Telegram groups and then handle incoming requests. Rather, a translator needs to use messengers intelligently by identifying the right online communities and creating an effective promotional strategy.

And yes, I completely agree with Madalena Sánchez Zampaulo,[5] the author of *The Online Presence Roadmap – A Practical Guide to Confident Online Marketing for Translators and Interpreters*, who said in her recent interview, "It's better if it comes from more people than me. Something practical that can help…It's always a good idea to do marketing in different ways!"

NOTES

1. Juniper Research: Mobile Messaging Leaders Revealed, as Business Messaging Traffic Set to Grow to 2.8 trillion by 2027 globally
2. https://faq.whatsapp.com/643144237275579/?cms_platform=android
3. Where The World Wants to Move To: Where each country wants to move to the most, according to Google search data
4. https://www.internations.org
5. VOICE Podcast from March 21, 2023: Lives in Translation by Stephanie Rodriguez VOICE with Madalena Sánchez Zampaulo

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Pricing *for a* Profit Playbook

By Jason Willis-Lee

> *Value must always stay above price, and while it might sound counter-productive, in practice you need to give people such value for their money that it's worth more than they paid for.*

"Raise your pricing game," they all cry. It's a popular mantra, isn't it? And it's also a well-subscribed topic. Boy oh boy, do I see a lot of colleagues jumping on the bandwagon at every translation conference event I apply to speak at—or, can you believe it, even in journal articles. Truth be told, I even hear about it on some podcasts I listen to. After all, robust pricing leads to robust money and we all like to follow the robust money. Well, don't we?

So what makes me different when talking about pricing? What's my UVP (unique value proposition)? How do I differentiate myself from my competition and stand out head and shoulders above the jostling crowd? Well it's a good question: and it's not so easy to answer, of course.

I see the usual common-sense advice to raise your rates with clients one at a time rather than burn all your bridges at once: adopt a 'wait and see' approach, play around with budget cycles, and consider raising fees outside of the usual calendar months like January and September. That's all well and good. But whichever way you cast your dice, pricing is a sensitive and tricky topic.

Purple Cows

Here are five signs—in no particular order—that you have a poverty mentality in business:

1. Not charging enough for your translation service or product
2. Offering a discount just because someone asks for one
3. Giving a discount before you are even asked for one

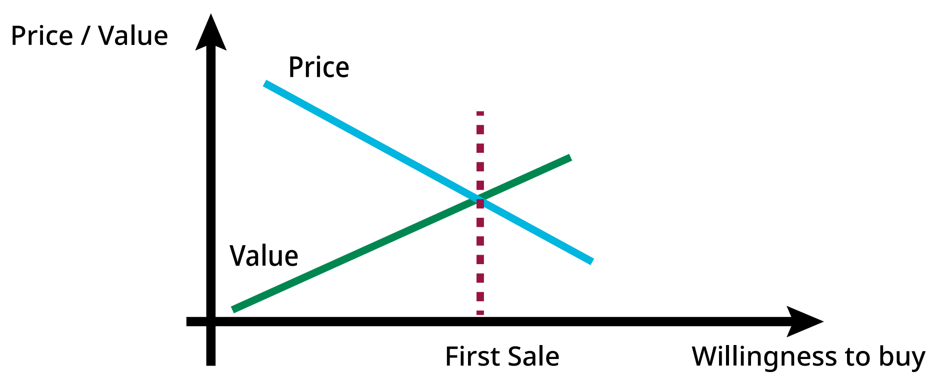
4. Difficulty speaking out and asking for what you want in a negotiation
5. Fear of losing customers overnight if you raise your prices

Do you recognize any of these in yourself or your business? And even more importantly, how do you tackle the scarcity mindset that underpins them?

Personally, I tend to go in for a straight no-nonsense focus on the price-to-value ratio. Ask yourself: how do people make their purchasing decisions? Answer: value must always stay above price, and while it might sound counter-productive, in practice you need to give people such value for their money that it's worth more than they paid for. Because that is the way to get repeat sales. Most mediocre businesses are below that point and have to continually find new customers (no fun at all, no siree). They only make one sale per customer.

Repeat business has to be exceptional and remarkable[1]. Something worthy of making a remark about; what marketing influencer Seth Godin terms a "purple cow." So good that people talk about you. So how do you do it?

Before you all rush out and start coloring your cows in purple, here are two ways to alter the price/value ratio. You can do it the hard way: lower the price. But remember, here you can only go down to zero. Or you can do it the easy way: increase the perceived value to customers and prospects. ***Niche down and position your offer to book out.*** Now you can go infinitely high this way. This option just sounds so much cooler, doesn't it?



Raise Your Game

So what are my personal top tips for raising your pricing game? First of all, read as many marketing books as you can lay your hands on. One of my top recommendations, just based on current radar antennae, is *This Is Marketing* by Seth Godin—but basically you can read anything written by Seth. He has published over 20 books now. Take a close gander at *Tribes and Purple Cow* while you're at it. And on top of that, listen to as many marketing and pricing podcasts as you can get your ears close to. Here are three for starters: *The Pricing Lady* with Janine Liston; *Marketing* with Brendon Buchard (he also has another called *Motivation* which is worth it if you can fit it in too); and *Turn Yourself into a Booked out Freelance Translator* (full disclosure: this one is hosted by your author, ahem).

By the way, did you know you can even become a certified pricing professional with the [Pricing Society](#)? How about them apples? I nearly choked on my profit playbook when I read that one. I guess you can become certified in most anything these days if you put your mind to it... I'm not that sure I would take things quite that far, but pricing does seem to be by far the easiest way you can improve your bottom line if wielded skillfully as a conscious business strategy.

In its way, it's just like devising your conscious spending plan when drawing up a budget. Spend wildly on things you love and cut back mercilessly on things that, well, are just not that important. But of course you need to be in a pretty strong position to start with so you don't have to constantly lower your fees just to make deals. That's just a race to the bottom. And that's not good for any of us, is it?

If you calculate that you need to charge higher than average, it's up to you to identify the clients who are likely to be able to pay your rates.

To sum up, pricing is essential to create a sustainably profitable business. They should always be pitched correctly and implemented in an optimized way. Give your pricing the attention it warrants to set you up for success so you can best serve your clients for the long term.

NOTES

1 https://www.businessinsider.com/seth-godin-this-is-how-you-create-a-remarkable-product-2012-10

Jason Willis-Lee, MITI (www.jasonwillislee.com, www.medicolegaltranslations.com, www.entrepreneurialtranslator.com) graduated in physiology after training as a doctor. He put in a brief stint as a clinical research associate before switching into applied linguistics and earning a postgraduate qualification in translating and interpreting from the University of Bath (UK). He now lives and works full time in Madrid as a self-employed translator (niche fields: clinical trials, medical reports, and academic research articles) in the Spanish-English (ITI certified) and French-English language pairs. He co-founded the collaborative networking translation project Medico-legal Translations (www.medicolegaltranslations.com), recently started the podcast Turn Yourself into a Booked out Freelance Translator aimed at early career professional linguists, and recently launched the Become a Booked out Freelance Translator online course.

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