



Choosing a Professional Agency

Many companies make the mistake of believing that if a person is fluent or has knowledge of two or more languages that this person is automatically able to translate professional material. Unfortunately, unless the person has education or special training in the art of translation techniques, costly mistakes can be the result.

Translating is a full time career requiring language-specific expertise that only native speaking professionals can provide. The translation of materials generally requires that the final product be an exact duplicate of the original. This demands writing ability, patience, appreciation for minute cultural differences, an understanding of the structure of the foreign language, basic typesetting and desktop publishing skills as well as content knowledge of the subject.

It is therefore imperative that companies know that investing in a professional service is cost-efficient in the long run, even if it doesn't seem so at first. Professional translation agencies employ only educated language-specialists with numerous years' experience in translations as well as the content subject matter and are thus able to guarantee accurate, professional and timely results.

To make the process of hiring a professional translation bureau hassle free, keep the following in mind:

1. Prepare in advance, all the materials that will require translating and review them to ensure that all the information is collective, coherent and legible.

If supplying files electronically, review the materials to ensure that files are complete with links and corresponding attachments.

2. When placing an order, remember to state clearly the language pairing you require, for example, English into Spanish.

The type of material you require translated, for example, a technical manual for an electronic scooter. The format you require the translation to be in, for example, in PageMaker. The number of words contained in the document, for example, 12,000; and the turnaround time you desire, for example, express or standard. Remember to provide the agency with any previously translated versions and any existing glossaries to ensure accuracy and consistency.



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3. Request that the agency provide you with a detailed quote requiring your signature as consent to proceed with the project.

You should receive the quote no later than 24 hours (Monday-Friday) after submitting the request.

If emergency 24-hour service is required, be sure to contact the agency directly to discuss options and costs.

4. Review the quote form to ensure that the details coincide with your original order.

Sign the form and send it back to the agency as soon as possible so that they can set the project procedures in motion.

5. Ask for the name, extension number and e-mail address of the Project Manager responsible for the translator who will lead your project from inception to completion.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the translation, you will know who to contact.

6. Keep in mind that you may receive an occasional call to review certain details of the project. Do your best to provide as much information as possible to ensure successful and accurate completion of the translation.

An excellent translation bureau will invest the time to get to know you and your company in order to fulfill all the requirements of the project fully and completely. Opt for a translation bureau that specializes in the specified field your project corresponds to. For example, if you require the translation of an electronic wheelchair user manual, seek the services of a home healthcare translation bureau. They will have the most educated, trained and experienced professionals in this field, as this is their area of expertise.

Ensure that the translation bureau you choose maintains excellent quality control procedures in order to guarantee a professional and accurate rendering.

Emergency service can usually be provided within 24-72 hours, but remember that time is also required for editing, proofreading, typesetting, desktop publishing, final review and delivery.



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An expert translator can translate 1500-2500 words per day, but sometimes more time is required depending on the nature and difficulty of the text. Do your best to accept the deadlines the bureau offers as they are the experts and they can tell you whether or not the turnaround time you have requested is realistic for the type and content of your project.

Most foreign languages are more robust and will take up more page space than English.

Smaller projects are usually billed on a minimum cost. Do your best to provide smaller projects in combination with each other to take advantage of cost benefits associated with larger translation requests.

Try to eliminate colloquialism, grammatical and structural errors from your document. By avoiding repetition and by simplifying sentences, steeper costs and longer turn-around times can also be avoided.

By utilizing the services of a professional translation bureau for all your language requirements you gain the confidence of not only becoming a member of the "Family" but by also ensuring consistency in style and layout for all your communication materials.