

All too often when the need to translate content arises, employees are left with little guidance on how to ensure a smooth process. By following these simple tips, you can rest assured that your projects will be handled as quickly, accurately, and cheaply as possible.

Enable the Use of Translation Memory

Translation memory [TM] is a tool used to capture segments of text as they are translated and maintain them for use on future projects. This technology greatly improves accuracy and consistency as well as dramatically cutting costs and turnaround times. However, this tool cannot be used on some projects. Here are some things you can do to ensure that you benefit from this technology.

- Provide documents in a text based format whenever possible. The simplest format for use with a TM is an all English text file, to be returned as an all [target language] text file.
- If a source file requires desk-top publishing, decide up front if this needs to be applied to the target file or not. If only translation is needed, remove the text from the source file and only send the text to your provider.

Enable the Use of a Single Translation Team

Translation is a human endeavor with limits. Depending on the subject matter and complexity, a professional translator can complete 2,000-5,000 words per day. Of course it is possible to improve the turnaround time by increasing the number of people working on a single project, but this can have an adverse effect on the consistency of terminology. While the use of a TM lowers the negative impact of multiple people working a single project, it can never completely eliminate the issue.

- Allow sufficient time for translation. If you are unsure what this is, ask your provider in advance what the ideal time period for completion is and plan accordingly.

Enable Maximum Cost Savings

- Minor revisions in one language can often be more time-consuming and expensive to translate than you would think. Try to have all revisions completed before sending a project off for translation.
- Translation companies usually have a minimum fee to help cover managerial costs of a project. Usually anything less than 200 words will incur this charge. If you need a small number of words translated, try to join multiple jobs together before sending them off for translation.
- When fitting text into a limited space, especially on projects that require desk-top publishing, make sure to allow for word growth or shrinkage (English text tends to grow when translated). This will minimize the hours of editing spent on your project and as a result, the final cost.

Enable Clear Communication

Throughout a translation project, there can be a lot of questions for the client as well as the provider, making clear communication essential.

- If an online management tool is offered by your provider, be sure to use this tool for all communications. This ensures that nothing is ever missed.
- When possible, elect one person to communicate directly with the provider. In a project where so many communications go back and forth, it is easy for important information to be misunderstood if too many people get involved.