



FIVE WAYS TO STRETCH YOUR TRANSLATION BUDGET—NOW!

A VIALANGUAGE WHITEPAPER

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Now, more than ever, international business opportunities happen in real time. In order to be effective, it's almost as if you must be everywhere at once. Welcome to the global economy. While targeting international markets can help increase revenues, it can also put a strain on budgets, especially translation budgets. The translation and localization efforts needed to support international markets involve a range of activities, from the product itself to Web sites, supporting sales collateral, technical documentation, user guides and more. And as additional features and services are added, the content that requiring translation increases as well. In this challenging environment you need to make your translation and localization dollars go further. You need to be smart about how you handle translations.

Here are five tips for optimizing your translation dollars:

1. Avoid Last Minute and Rush Fees

Don't make the mistake of assuming that a translation job will be turned around faster just because it "seems like a small job." Assuring the highest quality standard requires the same five steps to be undertaken whether the job needs to be back in one day or seven days. These include:

- File preparation and translation memory setup
- Translation editing and proofreading
- Formatting
- Quality assurance check
- Review and delivery

Last-minute turnaround times often result in higher fees. The industry standard is that translators, editors and other translation service team members are paid a 50%-100% premium for rush requests. Planning your translations and looking critically at your translation schedule helps you plan ahead and avoid the rush charge. If your organization typically requires 24-hour turnaround on translations, set up a separate contract with your translation partner to accommodate this level of workflow. Doing so will enable you to settle on a workflow process that takes into account your turnaround needs in the context of your available translation budget.

2. Centralize Your Translations

Combining a Content Management System with an online client portal such as viaLanguage's Online Language System (OLS) will not only help you organize your translation effort and track individual jobs, but also simplify the way you manage your content and billings. It can also save you up to 30% on the cost of future translations.

Nowadays, most content is distributed through multiple channels: software, help files, websites and hard copy. Traditionally, each channel has used its own source format, and conversion from one format to another required extensive re-engineering, re-writing and desktop publishing work. For many companies, it has been valuable to switch to standards like XML and SGML, which have extensive re-use and exporting features. Although SGML has long been a standard in the automotive industry, which has significant volumes of content to manage, XML solutions can offer the same leverage without the huge implementation costs.

On a simpler level, a wise choice of DTP applications can result in significant downstream savings. Applications such as Adobe FrameMaker not only support non-Roman character sets, but also allow easy export to HTML and XML and functional PDFs. Your localization partner should be able to advise you on whether changing your source application will produce cost savings.

Another service from viaLanguage, the viaLanguage Memory Bank™, can also help you stretch your translation budget by setting up a customized service that allows you to quickly and easily store, organize, update and apply your prior translations to future jobs.

3. Prioritize your Content

Remember, translation services are typically based on the number of words translated. The fewer words you need to educate your consumer or market of your products, the less cost you will incur. In addition to cutting the word length of source documents, you should also look critically at specific documents targeted for translation. Reusing existing content wherever possible, repurposing translated content and focusing on the high-priority content in media such as the Web will result in a leaner, more tightly focused translation process.

- If your technical documentation is produced by your engineers in an ad hoc manner, consider hiring professional editors and technical re-writers with a brief that emphasizes clarity and brevity. This will not only reduce the word count, but also yield translations of higher quality.
- Use “Controlled English” (CE) to improve readability and usability as well as cutting word count. There are a number of industry standards and tools available to help build controlled vocabularies and check adherence.

4. Avoid Text-Embedded Graphics and PDF Files

Simply stated: text expands as you translate from English to virtually every other language, so content such as text embedded into graphics and specific page layout designs call for further redesign and subsequent reviews. Any time you are working with graphics that need to be localized in other languages and cultures, issues such as graphic sizing, page design and user interactions need to be considered. Your LSP (Language Service Provider) should have the skill set and available applications to help you plan ahead and identify possible design and layout issues, and facilitate a more straightforward translation/localization project.

5. Internationalize your Software

It should come as little surprise that the number one way to cut localization costs comes at the beginning of a product’s lifecycle. If the designers of a product, Web site or document construct it with no thought to the need for translation and localization, it will be more expensive to translate and localize that content and design after the fact.

Internationalization can be defined as “the process of designing or later preparing a product so that it can be easily localized into different languages.” Examples of internationalization tasks include adapting the software to support multiple currencies, postal code formats for different countries and provinces as well as supporting double-byte or bi-directional languages such as Chinese and Arabic, respectively.

In the real world, most products do not get built in an internationalized state, so before getting too far down the path toward localization, it is often worthwhile to seek out internationalization consulting.

To learn more about how viaLanguage can help ensure you reach your multicultural markets and communities, call us at 1-800-737-8481 or visit us at www.viaLanguage.com.