

Chairman's lead article

Welcome to the first edition of what is intended to be a quarterly newsletter for the members of the Association of Translation Companies. Although I am the recently installed Chairman of the ATC, I am also happy to take on the role of editor and publisher of the newsletter, and hope I can count on the support of all members.

The idea is to provide a platform upon which:

- the activities of the ATC can be publicised to members and non-members alike
- the interests of the translation industry can be promoted to other interested parties
- the aims of the ATC can be aired and discussed
- industry news can be distributed
- vendors to translation companies can promote their wares

Contributions are welcome and can cover a wide range of topics – PR for your business, new personnel, major contracts won, topics you feel need to be discussed, product reviews, even moans and groans.

I am also the editor of the US equivalent of this newsletter, the TCD News, the Translation Company Division of the American Translators Association. When I first started publishing it a couple of years ago, it was a struggle to fill the space and many a 'borrowed' article from translation company newsletters and the like graced its pages. At each TCD conference, I stood up and invited contributions from the members gathered there and slowly but surely, they started to come in. Today, the TCD News is thriving and is packed with all the goings on of that association. I hope very much to achieve the same for ATC News.



Robin Brown
Network Communications A/S, Editor. robin@netcomms.dk



Robin Brown, chairman of the ATC, with the trophy for the best company web site awarded to Network Communications A/S at the ATC annual conference. It was the second year running that Network had picked up the prize. The runner-up was 1st Transnational Translations.

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Chairman's Mission Statement

Sounds very pompous, doesn't it? But I want to use this message to introduce myself to all ATC members and to set out what I want to try and achieve during my term of office as Chairman of the ATC. Those of you who attended the AGM held on October 16th in London will already have heard some of this, but putting it down on paper gives the chance to go into more detail.

A good choice for Chairman?

Is a translation company owner living and working outside of the UK a good choice? I believe I can bring a lot to the ATC:

- I personally know many translation company owners, in the UK, the rest of Europe and in the USA.
- I have a wide range of contacts in the industry and apart from owning a translation company for the past eight years, I also spent 6 years publishing a magazine for the technical documentation industry, which is closely related.
- I can bring energy and enthusiasm to the position.
- It is quicker and cheaper for me to attend meetings in London than for many UK-based members!
- My company, Network Communications A/S, is a founder member of the ATC's equivalent in the USA, the Translation Company Division (TCD) of the American Association of Translators (ATA). Apart from being an active council member and co-organiser of the annual conference, I write, edit and publish this organisation's quarterly newsletter.
- My company is also involved in current efforts to set up a Danish ATC.

My aims

I would like to increase ATC membership by:

- Attracting large translation companies.
- Attracting overseas members. We may have to consider offering a special membership rate to them, as they are unlikely to gain the same amount of benefit as UK-based members.
- Working closer together with synergistic organisations, such as the ISTC.

I would like to improve communications within the ATC by:

- Launching a newsletter for members.
- Revising and relaunching the website, making it more interactive and informative.
- Proofreading all ATC documents before they are published!

I would like to increase the ATC's credibility by:

- Rationalising the Members' Directory. If I were sent the directory in its present state in order to select a translation company, even my limited grasp of mathematics would lead me to conclude that there's something wrong. How can members stating they have three full-time employees claim they have 9 in-house translators, cover every language under the sun, have umpteen offices and still only have a turnover of £100,000?
- Finalising the efforts made to date to establish a quality standard for ATC members.
- Organising a bigger and better conference.
- Assisting the Secretary in raising the profile of the ATC.

Conclusion

My aim is to make the ATC more dynamic, attractive and responsive to its members. The measure of my success will be when it comes to re-election. If I've succeeded, I should face a serious challenge from not one, but several prospective Chairmen, eager to reap the benefits of being associated with such an organisation.

Feedback

I welcome anyone's views and comments and invite active participation. There are a number of sub-committees already established, including Marketing, Education, Membership and Ethics all of which I am sure, would welcome input.

If you would like to contact me, you can do so either via the Secretary, Geoff Bowden, or direct – details follow below.

Yours sincerely,
Chairman

Robin Brown, robin@netcomms.dk

ATC Business Support Helpline

Did you know being a member of the ATC entitles you to a range of free business advice, with the service being backed up by fully qualified professionals, such as lawyers and accountants.

The ATC Business Support Helpline provides members with free telephone advice, information and guidance in respect of tax, VAT, PAYE, payroll, NIC, employment, Health & Safety, and commercial legal matters. The latter includes:

- Debt Collection Service: a "no collection, no fee" debt collection service
- Business Rates and Lease Negotiation Service: assistance is available for members whose leases are coming up for renewal and for those who wish to challenge the rateable value of their business premises.

ATC members can access the Business Support Helpline by telephone from 8.00a.m. to 6.00p.m., Monday to Friday, excluding Public Holidays, by telephoning 08707 45 45 45 and quoting the scheme number shown on their ATC Member Adviser cards. There is no charge for the advice given and no limit to the amount of use, but the service is only open to ATC members.

The following questions and answers are a representative selection of the types of query handled by the helpline advisors. Please telephone the helpline if you wish to discuss any of the issues raised.

Q: I understand that employees have the right to time off for a family crisis. Is this with pay and under what circumstances would we give time off?

A: Section 57A Employment Rights Act refers to 'Time off for Dependants'. This allows employees to take a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with certain unexpected or sudden emergencies and to make any necessary long-term arrangements. The emergency must involve a dependant of the employee. The right does not include an entitlement to pay, so whether or not the employee will be paid is left to the employer's discretion, or the contract of employment.

Employees do not have to complete a qualifying period in order to be able to take time off in an emergency. They are entitled to this right from day one of starting their job.

The circumstances where an employee can take time off are:

- If a dependant falls ill, or has been injured or assaulted
- When a dependant is having a baby
- To make longer term care arrangements for a

dependant who is ill or injured

- To deal with a death of a dependant
- To deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown of care arrangements for a dependant
- To deal with an unexpected incident involving the employee's child during school hours

It is unfair to dismiss or select an employee for redundancy for taking, or seeking to take, time off under this right.

Q: How much notice does an employee have to give if they wish to return to work after maternity leave?

A: If the employee intends to return to work before the end of her ordinary or additional maternity leave period, she must give her employer at least 21 days' notice of her date of return.

An employee does not have to give her employer advance notice if she intends to return to work immediately after the end of her ordinary maternity leave period. The employer may write out to a woman no earlier than 21 days before the end of the ordinary maternity leave period to a) confirm her child's date of birth and, b) ask her whether she is still intending to return to work after her additional maternity leave. The letter must explain how the employee should work out when the maternity leave ends and warn her that if she fails to respond to the letter, she will not have protection against detriment or dismissal on grounds of taking

additional maternity leave. The employee must reply within 21 days of receiving the letter.

Q: An employee has given us part 1a of the form P45. Can we use the tax code that is shown?

A: The tax code shown on part 1a of the form P45 can only be used when the employee has also given you parts two and three of the form P45. Part 1a is for the employee to retain and if they are unable to provide you with parts two and three, it is likely that they have more than one employment and that they have given parts two and three to their main employer. In this instance you should provide them with the form P46 to complete and you can allocate them with a tax code accordingly.

Q: We are giving our employees and our customers' employees a raffle ticket each for Christmas. Are we correct to say that there is no tax charge on the prize winners?

A: Where a prize is won by an employee, whether they are your own employees or your customers' employees, this will be 'by reason of the employment' and the winning raffle tickets are likely to be treated as non-cash vouchers for which a tax liability will arise even though the prize has been won by chance.

A tax liability will not arise where it can be shown that the raffle is equally open to members of the general public on the same terms as to employees.

Q: Our advertising agency produced some very attractive drawings to use in our advertisements. We now see that the same drawings have been used by the agency in adverts for other clients. Can we do anything?

A: No, unless your contract with the Agency transferred copyright to you. Under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1998, the author of an original work is the owner of the copyright in it. Works produced by an employee in the course of

their employment will be owned by the employer subject to any agreement to the contrary. As the advertising agency is not an employee then they keep the copyright, unless the contract with them provides for the contrary.

Q: I have thought about sending out sales invoices to my clients by fax instead of through the post, as it is cheaper and quicker than sending them by post. I wonder if my clients will be able to use the fax invoices as evidence for input tax. What is Customs' view on this?

A: The normal rules regarding VAT invoices apply equally to invoices sent to your customers by post or using a fax machine, or e-mail. Invoices received in this way are acceptable as evidence for input tax deduction, subject to the normal rules.

If invoices are transmitted by fax there is a risk that, where your customers have thermal-paper fax machines, the invoice may not be permanent. Copies deteriorate over time, and as a consequence your customers may be unable to fulfil their obligation to preserve their invoices for six years. You are advised, therefore to warn customers that the invoices may not be permanent if they have a thermal-paper fax machine. This would preferably be a legend on the VAT invoice but can be in any form practicable to you. More modern fax machines copy onto plain paper and these copies are as permanent as normal paper invoices.

Q: I understand that the 13-week qualifying period to become entitled to take paid holiday has now been abolished. Can you tell me why it has changed?

A: The Government has introduced new regulations in relation to the accrual of holiday in response to a European Court of Justice ruling. The Working Time (Amendment) Regulations 2001, effective from 25 October 2001, amends the Working Time Regulations 1998 by removing the qualifying period

for entitlement to annual leave and introducing a scheme whereby leave is accrued by workers during the first year of service.

When the Working Time Regulations 1998 originally came into force they introduced a statutory right for workers to take paid annual leave. However, this right was subject to a 13-week qualifying period and workers were required to be continuously employed for this period before they became entitled to take the holiday that they had accrued. This qualifying condition affected many workers who undertook short-term contracts or casual work, for example, who, by the very nature of their contract, could not necessarily meet the qualifying period and, therefore, did not benefit from paid holiday.

The qualifying period was, therefore, challenged by the broadcasting union, BECTU, in the High Court and the case was eventually resolved in the European Court of Justice, resulting in the 13-week qualifying period being removed.

Workers whose employment commenced on or after 25 October 2001 are now able to take the paid holiday that they have accrued in their first year of service on a month-by-month basis, at the rate of one-twelfth of their annual entitlement. They are technically eligible to take their monthly entitlement from day one of their employment and on the same date each month thereafter. However, the normal notice provisions and consideration of the company's operational requirements still apply.

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TRANSGLOBAL COMMENDED AT INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AWARDS

ATC member Transglobal Languages was a finalist in this year's Trade Partners UK International Business Awards, an initiative with Export Times. Jonathan Smith, founder and managing director of the Altrincham language services provider received a commendation for helping North West companies to improve their international business communications. Competition for this year's awards was particularly strong.

Awards merged

The 2001 awards were the result of a merger between two highly successful events: the Export Times Exporter of the Year Awards and the DTI's Export Awards for Smaller Businesses. The awards honour individuals and companies – from large corporate players to small niche market operators – whose drive and entrepreneurial talents have enabled them to compete successfully in the global marketplace.

The awards were presented in the presence of HRH The Duke of York at a prestigious gala dinner at the London Landmark Hotel in December. The event was hosted by Nigel Cassidy of BBC Radio 4 and featured an introductory welcome by Sir David Wright, group chief executive of British Trade International, and a keynote speech by HRH The Duke of York in his new role as Special Representative for International Trade and Investment.

Delighted

Jonathan Smith commented: "I am delighted to get this commendation for helping British exporters to overcome language and cultural barriers in their international trade. The recognition really belongs to them and we should be encouraged that so many businesses in the UK are actively seeking to improve their export performance."

Transglobal Languages Limited, Oakfield House, Oakfield Road, Altrincham, Cheshire WA15 8EW Tel: 0161 233 0888/0777

NEWS...NEWS...NEWS

Unique Software Gives thebigword The Translating Edge

thebigword, one of the world's leading language management consultancies offering global communication solutions has won the contract to be the preferred supplier to a large global investment bank, largely down to its efficient and unique IT systems. The '**tranZapp**' transmission system simplifies and eases the process of transmitting documents for translation. This aids speed, consistency and security of sending documents for translation.

Documents are submitted by clicking on thebigword icon in any Windows application. The file is submitted automatically over the internet and only requires a standard internet connection. All files are encrypted whilst in transit over the internet using SSL (the same technology which is used by banks and credit card merchants for security), ensuring confidentiality at all times.

Files are translated by thebigword's qualified translators and returned directly to the user's PC, again using SSL.

Reports and documents can be turned around speedily by thebigword and translated into any language required.

Time is crucial

Rachel Wild, tranZapp manager at thebigword explains, "Time is a crucial factor for a lot of our clients, as information is continually being updated. The speed of thebigword's service is therefore a crucial element of our work."

Rachel continues, "thebigword's own software,

tranZapp, allows our internet server to automatically submit files for translation. The fact that information is secure and the software ensures that all files are encrypted whilst in transit over the internet is a very important factor in many job specifications."

Tim Carr, project manager at thebigword, goes on to explain how the translation process works. "As language trained account managers, we provide expert project management. We have to understand our client's needs in depth. We choose suitably experienced translators before any large project starts. We are able to make use of advance translation memory software. This ensures that any stock paragraph or phrase is automatically recognised and can be filtered through any subsequent translation we complete."

thebigword is one of the fastest growing language management consultancies in the UK. The company has been established for more than 20 years.

Working with a global database of 4,500 translators, covering 115 languages, thebigword has a client base of more than 4,000 companies in the commercial, public and private sectors. These include Toshiba, Peugeot, Clerical Medical Investment Group, Honda and various government departments.

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Market Research - The Road to Success

by John Wheen, Vice-Chairman A.T.C. & Managing Director
1st Transnational Translations

At the ATC's year 2000 AGM, ways in which the Association could better serve its Members were the subject of heated debate. Several ideas emerged, including improving the flow of marketing information to help us all compete more effectively.

As an ATC Committee Member with marketing training, John Wheen was nominated by the Council to produce a survey proposal document covering market research areas valuable to our Membership. A draft was published in April 2001.

Target Information

The proposed research areas were:

- Market Size by Value & Volume: Overall Translations Market Growth in the UK and other key Countries, split by In-House and outsourced.
- In-House Market: What type of organisations have in-house translation?
What language combinations are employed?
Are employees, overseas offices or software used to translate?
Is outsourcing an option?
- Outsourced Market: Who are the big users and suppliers by Translation sector such as technical, software localisation, websites?
What are the growth areas?
And what about Interpreting and Voice-overs?
- Languages: Which ones are demanded and which are growing? Japanese? Urdu?
Just what trends are emerging? What rates are clients paying? Are there surcharges for urgency?
- Clients' views: Why use a translations Company rather than freelancers?
Where do they look for them? How do they feel about key selection factors such as quality, accuracy, speed and price? Which of us have they heard of? Why did they choose their supplier? Does the ATC help our image? Are clients loyal?

Why will this help us?

In our effort to gain more business, or survive the recession, we need to get smarter than our competitors. The sort of help research can give includes:

- Targeting sales messages to types of Organisations likely to buy the translations we offer
- Getting our pricing right

Market Research - The Road to Success

- Understanding whether our service matches clients' needs and how to change it if necessary
- Recognising the size and scope of additional Sectors we can expand into now
- Tailoring our promotional copy to match what clients will react to
- By studying trends, to develop our Companies to make the most of future potential growth areas

What happens next?

Following approval of the new Council, the Marketing Committee under John When's chairmanship is seeking three quotations for the research project via the Market Research Society. The Committee will award the contract following presentations and thereafter monitor the progress of the work through to conclusion.

Funds are available and it is hoped that the Research can be published to Members in time for the ATC Annual Conference in September. Edited versions of the survey will be used to gain press coverage to boost the Association's stature and awareness. Then hopefully we'll all be on the road to success!

John When, 1st Transnational Translations, translations@1stTransnational.com

**Additional input was received from Yahia Rezgui of Language Line Ltd
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Conference Report

The annual ATC conference was held on October 16/17 at International House, Piccadilly, in London, with the theme 'Strengthening your translation business to survive and prosper in an uncertain world'.

International flavour

In order to reflect the truly international nature of the translation business – and the interest being shown in ATC membership beyond the UK – there were presentations from locally placed translation professionals on developments in their markets, namely the USA and Denmark. The theme remained international with presentations as varied as 'Identifying the threats and opportunities facing the translation industry nationally and internationally' to 'Buying translation companies can seriously damage your sex life'.

Bob Clark, in his role as co-editor of Language International magazine, kicked off with his 'threats and opportunities' presentation, informing us of predicted growth for the industry as a whole, particularly in the form of e-commerce. Doom and gloom were also included in the form of a brief look at how the IT industry's collapse is rubbing off on localisation work.

Sedef Olcer, CEO of Global Languages and Cultures in Chicago, USA, was scheduled to deliver a presentation on 'How the translation business looks from the other side of the pond'. This was a theme inspired by a remark overheard at an American conference, when a translation company owner during a forum session asked for a debate on the encroachment of European-owned translation companies on the US market. Sedef was invited by the ATC to speak on this, and even undertook a

Conference Report

survey of US translation company owners. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend the conference in person due to the events of September 11, and her slide presentation was delivered by Robin Brown.

Joergen Nielsen, an independent industry consultant from Denmark, talked on 'Protecting the interests of translation companies – establishing a Danish ATC' on the moves in that country to organise a trade association to represent translation companies. Joergen's presentation included a history of the establishment of the various organisations representing translators in Denmark and tracking the path towards an organisation for TCs.

Larry Gould, CEO of thebigword.com, one of the UK's biggest translation companies, brought a little light relief by explaining how 'Buying translation companies can seriously damage your sex life.' Fortunately, Larry did not go into too much personal detail, but did give the audience an insight into the trials and tribulations of an acquisitive policy.

John Thorogood, of the Languages national Training Organisation, talked on the 'National standards framework for translation and interpreting', reporting on the progress being made on defining these important training standards for the industry.

Elizabeth Robertson, of Robertson Languages and the ATC's representative on the EUATC committee, talked on the theme of 'Will a Europe-wide quality standard finally give translation companies the marketing edge?' A very hot topic and one to be debated under the auspices of EU on January 31 in Brussels. A report on the outcome will be featured in the next issue of ATC News.

Havila Peck and Mark Shuttleworth, of the University of Westminster and Imperial College respectively, debated 'Are universities failing or serving the translation profession?' from their viewpoint involved in the delivery of translator training at university level. I was not too sure whether they

reached a conclusion on their theme or not, since their presentations centred on the curricula their respective institutions deliver.

Anne Duckworth and Kathrine Harvey, of translation company Wordbank Ltd and Hedley Rees-Evans of translation company and tools vendor SDL International Plc delivered a joint presentation on a real-life application of web content management software within a translation company. The Wordbank team described the criteria they had applied to selecting a web content management tool and how they deployed it on their customers' behalf, Hedley was able to fill in the picture by describing SDLWebflow's own functions for updating and management of multilingual websites.

Other activities

The presentations were complemented by a full programme of workshops, and each session was punctuated by a lively question and debate period.

To view the presentations of all those mentioned in this report visit the ATC web site (www.atc.org.uk) and click on "Speakers notes and Presentations" in the conference box on the home page.

ATC Annual General Meeting

The AGM concluded the first day of the conference, and included the formal initiation of the ATC's new officers: Robin Brown, director of Network Communications A/S as Chairman and John When, managing director of 1st Transnational Translations Ltd., as vice chairman and chairman of the Marketing Committee. Other offices were filled as follows:

- Charles Sonabend of APT Transtelex Plc as Treasurer
- John Lord, Central Translations Ltd., chairman of the Ethics Committee
- Helen Eckersley, International Translation Resources Ltd., chairman of the Education

The full council of the ATC is as follows:

Brendan Behan	Europa Technical Translations
Peter Brooks	Accurate Translations
Robin Brown	Network Communications A/s
Sean Carnegie-Brown	Done Information
Lynn Everson	Lifeline Languages
Simon Jefferson	Language Bureau
John Lord	Central Translations
David Moore	Comtec
Gary Muddiman	K-International
Yahia Rezgui	Language Line Limited
Elizabeth Robertson	Robertson Languages International
Colin Smith	International Translations

Charles Sonabend	Apt Transtelex
John Wheen	1st Transnational Translations
Anthony Withers	Anglia Translations

Robin Brown thanked outgoing chair Colin Smith for his contribution to the growth of the Association in the four years he had held the post and prior to that when he had served as vice chair. He also paid tribute to Sean Carnegie-Brown for having established the Marketing Committee and for have been instrumental in helping to clarify the function of the Council and the executive.

Next issue

Plans for the next issue of ATC News:

- Interview with ATC Secretary Geoff Bowden on the role he fulfils on behalf of the ATC
- Article from LISA on localization issues for translation companies
- Report on the moves at European level to establish a quality standard for translation companies
- What is happening across the pond – summary of translation company news in the States