

Action to develop next generation

Universities, translation companies and a standards setting body are joining forces to resolve the challenge of developing 'work ready' recruits for the UK's translation profession.

CILT, the UK's national centre for Languages, had been working with Salford University in the north west of England to pilot a scheme designed to offer translation degree students a work placement within a translation company. The scheme was presented at the ATC's annual conference in September and, as a result, plans are now moving forward to start rolling out the scheme to other UK universities offering translation degree courses and the ATC is to play a leading role in the development of the scheme.

So far four other universities offering degree courses have indicated that they want to adopt the model, which relies on translation companies coming forward to offer work placements in their organisations.

CILT is the standards-setting body for languages and, as part of its mission to improve the nation's capacity in languages, seeks to build collaboration between the employer community and education providers in respect of language skills and services.

In 2001, it worked with the University of

Salford on a programme funded by the UK's Department for Education and Skills to develop a 'Graduate Apprenticeship' framework, drawing on the occupational Standards in Translation and the European Languages Portfolio. Although the development funding ceased in 2002, Salford continued to make the model available for their students.

The principle was to bridge the gaps in expectations and experience between postgraduate students of translation, their university tutors and course designers, and potential employers in the industry, and to offer a structure to support all three 'partners' in achieving placements that are successful for everyone concerned.

From 2001 students on Salford's Masters' degrees in translation have benefited from carefully planned periods of up to 3 months' work experience with host translation companies, building a portfolio of their experiences to stand alongside their degree qualification as a means of demonstrating to an eventual employer the practical, work-based learning they have completed.

The ATC's education committee under the chairmanship of Helen Eckersley, had been exploring developing a national work placement framework, for a while, but had found difficulty to gain consensus on its structure.



Anne Davidson Lund of CILT, left, with Chus Fernandez Prieto, of Salford University at the ATC conference

Following the presentation of the Salford scheme at the ATC annual conference Anne Davidson-Lund of CILT and Chus Fernandez of Salford were approached by Helen Eckersley and Aston University's Christina Schaeffner to explore how the scheme might be adapted for use elsewhere in the UK.

A convened meeting at Aston University shortly after the conference has resulted in expressions of interest from four other universities interested in testing the Apprentice Scheme model and rolling it out in other selected areas of the UK. At the same time the ATC is seeking to expand its existing database of translation companies willing to take work placement students.

CILT is putting in a bid for UK Government funding to support the expansion of the Apprenticeship model scheme.

What they say about the scheme

Read what students and participating translation companies have to say about the Apprenticeship Scheme on page 2.

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ATC vice chair Liz Robertson lines up with chairman John Wheen at the pre-conference dinner

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Language Line to be sold

ATC member Language Line has accepted an offer made by US based Language Line Holdings to acquire the company. Contracts have been exchanged with completion of the transaction expected by the end of the year.

Commenting, Ian Williamson, Language Line Limited Chairman said: "The merger enables us to develop, manage and deliver a far more comprehensive portfolio of interpreting and translating products and services."

However, industry insiders believe that the two firms have been competing head to head for the same business and that a take over was inevitable.

The Apprenticeship model Scheme

- what has been said about it

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A student's view

One student told *Communicate*: "what I gained most from the placement was experience of business practice - how to deal with and maintain good relations with clients, how to establish deadlines, estimate the cost of jobs, how to arrange time and how to manage finances. All this was new to me and was invaluable.

"I also gained more experience of packages such as TRADOS and Déjà Vu and learnt more about the information sources used by freelance translators.

"The importance of deadlines and good organisation of time, files, was impressed upon me and in the professional world I found it is not only quality that is needed but also speed and reliability.

"I would definitely recommend the GA scheme to other students. My experience was very positive and obviously the longer the placement the better, however, any time spent in the professional environment is bound to be beneficial to a student's prospects."

The employers' views

The structured three-way partnership, competence-based learning and portfolio-building has offered rewards for employers, students and tutors alike. Here is what one employer, ATC member Transglobal Languages based in Altrincham, north west England, told *Communicate* about their experience of hosting a student during the initial pilot scheme.

Jonathan Smith CEO of ATC members Transglobal Languages said:

"The students have come to us during the Easter and summer holidays when some of us at Transglobal Languages are taking time off. We have found it very helpful to have an extra pair of hands during these periods

"The benefit to us as a translations company has been to have a few weeks' continuous input from someone mature and intelligent with very relevant language and IT skills in exchange for work experience. The students have been able to provide additional input into particular translation projects, assist with checking and word counts, deal with telephone calls and help with general office work.

"The students for their part have got to see how translations come in, get priced and assigned to translators. They have also experienced at first hand the differ-

ent kinds of document we are asked to translate as well as the day-to-day cut and thrust of an office dealing with commercial translations. They have been able to start finding where their preferences may lie in terms of a future career in the translations industry.

"Before the students have begun their placements with us we have got them to sign a confidentiality agreement since they will probably be going off in the near future to work for one of our competitors. We have also drafted a placement agreement which we will probably use in future which sets out briefly the dates, times and expectations on both sides.

"We think that it is helpful to formalise the placement in this way so that the student knows that we are serious about it.

"... we think that a GA work placement scheme for translation students along the lines of the one at Salford University could be a win-win situation for translation students, universities and translation companies across the UK."

"I have found it a very enjoyable and rewarding experience and would provide placements again without hesitation. All of the reasons why I was interested in providing placements in the first place have been justified," Nicole van den Wittenboer, of Wittenboer Language Consultancy, in Sale north west England told *Communicate*.

More information about the current scheme

For more information about the current Graduate Apprenticeship model, please contact Chus Fernández Prieto, Coordinator of Postgraduate Student Placements & GA's, University of Salford, School of Languages - m.j.fernandez@salford.ac.uk.

More information about future development of the scheme and standards

For more information about the future development of the Graduate Apprenticeship model, the Standards in Translation or the European Languages Portfolio, visit CILT's website www.cilt.org.uk or contact: info@cilt.org.uk

More information about becoming a host company

To become a host translation company send your details to: info@atc.org.uk or call 00 44 (0) 207 930 2200.

A Star turn ends

After eight years, during which Gerald Dennett has established STAR UK Limited, an announcement has been made that his equity in the UK operation is to be acquired by the parent company Star AG.

STAR UK Limited will continue operations as before, but it is planned that greater integration into the overall strategic direction of the STAR Group will contribute to growing success in the future, according to the announcement.



To ensure continuity of service Gerald Dennett will be handing over the management of STAR UK Limited to STAR AG during the remainder of this year, and will be leaving on December 31 to pursue his career as a freelance translator and language consultant for the STAR Group.

Changes on the way for ATC on-line member directory

The ATC's on-line member directory is now two years old, and has been going from strength to strength since it was launched in September 2003. Member details are added or modified on a regular basis and the directory is getting a high proportion of the ATC web site's annual 35,000 hits from clients looking for member's services.

In the next few months the directory will undergo an update, which will allow members to include their company logos and also the results of searches will be randomised instead of appearing alphabetically. It is hoped that this randomisation of results will benefit members with company names lower down the alphabet.

The CD version of the directory is in the final stages of being researched and, hopefully, we shall be able to start shipping the CD in the first quarter of 2006.

"I hope that ATC members will be pleased with the forthcoming developments and we always welcome comments", said Simon Jefferson the ATC's on-line directory administrator.

To access the ATC on-line directory visit: www.atc.org.uk and complete the form

Pavlovich bows out as Royal Charter is celebrated

In a surprise move, Henry Pavlovich, the longtime Chief Executive of the Institute of Linguists announced his retirement on the same day that members of the profession gathered at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London to celebrate the awarding of a Royal Charter to the Institute in the presence of Prince Michael of Kent.

Speaking to Communicate during the reception, Pavlovich said that he felt that the time was right for him to go. He said: "Having worked hard to guide the Institute towards achieving charter status, I think now is the time to devote time to other challenges. In particular I want to write a couple of books, which I have never had time for up till now."



The IoL's patron, HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO, and the President, Dr John Mitchell, at the Charter Celebrations in London

Until a permanent appointment is made, John Hammond has stepped down as chairman of Council and is taking on the chief executive role.

First Chartered IoL members announced

The Chartered Institute of Linguists has conferred fellowships on two of its members for services to the language industry.

Isabella Moore, once a leading member of the Association of Translation Companies and now chief executive of CILT, the UK's national centre for languages and Diana Wallis MEP, president of the Institute of Translation and Interpreting, were both presented with their fellowships by Prince Michael of Kent. The ceremony took place ahead of a reception at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London to celebrate the awarding of the Royal Charter to the Institute of Linguists.

Isabella Moore told Communicate,



Isabella Moore, chief executive of CILT

"The award came as a complete surprise to me. It was a great honour to have been selected to receive one of the first fellowships presented by the new Chartered Institute of Linguists."

Canadians showcase language industry to purchasers

L'Association de l'industrie de la langue/The Language Industry Association (AILIA) hosted the First Language Industry Showcase at the Ottawa Congress Centre mid September. The theme of the show was "Business Talks," and aimed to support the creation of good business relations between suppliers and buyers of language products and services.

Twenty-eight suppliers from translation companies, language schools, and language technology companies exhibited their products and services to around 200 translation purchasers from the public and private sectors.

Mauril Bélanger, Canada's Minister for Internal Trade, Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons, Minister responsible for Official



Languages, and Associate Minister of National Defence, was the keynote speaker at the trade show. He highlighted the importance of the growth of the language sector for Canada. "Exciting developments are occurring in this sector in Canada," Mr. Bélanger observed. "But we can't become complacent," he warned. "We have to keep pushing ourselves. The future holds the potential for Canadian businesses to really distinguish themselves in terms of the contribution they make to the Canadian economy."

AILIA, a non-profit trade association, was formed in 2003 as part of the Canadian Government's Action Plan for Official Languages. AILIA represents: translation, language training and language technologies. The association currently has more than 150 members.

Access to language services for jobless

East Yorkshire and Humberside Job Centre in the UK has announced that they will be drawing upon the contract that leading language specialist company, Prestige Network, has been awarded by the Department for Work and Pensions for interpreting services.

With the need to communicate effectively within an increasingly diverse UK workforce, the contract will involve booking interpreters every month for various assignments in the region. "We are currently recruiting linguists in the North East and hope to meet the demands of this new opportunity wherever possible from locally based professionals," Anthony Fleming, Director of Operations of Prestige Network told Communicate.

A spokesman for the Job Centre Plus commented, "Job Centre Plus in East Yorkshire and the Humber has decided to take advantage of national Department of Work and Pensions contracts to deliver our face to face interpreter services. We have chosen to use Prestige Network because their service promises the quality our customers need at a competitive rate".

Prestige Network, has been delivering Language Technology and Language Services since 1991. It provides language services to the Public Sector and beyond.

www.prestigenetwork.com

A vertical advertisement for Trans Gulf Management Consultants. At the top, the letters "T G M C" are displayed in white on a dark background. Below this, the text "TRANS GULF MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS" is written in large, bold, white letters. Underneath, it says "AN OVERSEAS MEMBER OF ATC" and "ONE STOP SHOP FOR ALL LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS INTO AND FROM ARABIC". A list of services follows: "Conference interpretation", "(Legal) Translation including Websites & Software", "DTP", "Editing & Proofreading". Contact information is provided at the bottom: "Email: info@transgulfme.com", "P.O. Box 26142, Sharjah, U.A.E.", "Tel: 00 971 6 568 0171", "Fax: 00 971 6 568 0895", and "Website: www.transgulfme.com".

Message from the Chairman of the ATC

John Wheen



Our Conference this autumn was a resounding success! Thanks are due to General Secretary Geoffrey Bowden and Assistant General Secretary Susan Boyd for promoting and organising our best attended event ever.

As our membership grows, particularly amongst our international members, there has never been a better time to discuss in the halls around conference, those supply deals that can lead to better quality, lower cost translations for the UK market and beyond.

So if you didn't make it to SOAS this time, make sure to put Thursday, 21st September 2006 in your diary. That's the date for our next annual conference.

One thing many members commented on to me was the need for more workshops to help improve the management of translations companies. Topics such as Human Resources and marketing were mentioned. Well this year we tried to give executives the opportunity to assess their operations, and to build into their marketing programmes, the unique benefits accorded by ATC membership. Attendees were shown for example, a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity and Threats) analysis for members, drawn up by Council:

ATC Members' SWOT

Strengths

- ♦ Clients
- ♦ UK translations workforce
- ♦ ATC
- ♦ Code of Conduct, Quality Assurance,

- common purpose
- ♦ History
- ♦ British culture
- ♦ UK Home Office recognition

Weaknesses

- ♦ Price
- ♦ Few British nationals with Far/Middle East Languages
- ♦ Internet marketing vs. cheap global TSPs
- ♦ Low Market Penetration outside UK

Opportunities

- ♦ New EU Countries/languages
- ♦ Universal English
- ♦ Web trade
- ♦ Emerging countries import/export
- ♦ EUATC Contacts, EU Initiatives
- ♦ CEN Standard/ UK Market Share gains
- ♦ ATC
 - Promote to Prospective Clients
 - Use Overseas Members to reduce costs

Threats

- ♦ UK education policy
- ♦ Low cost overseas TSPs improving quality
- ♦ India & Eastern European cheap English
- ♦ CIO/LNRPSI pricing, LSL penetration
- ♦ Free machine translation on-line
- ♦ UK Translators selling direct & cheap on bidding websites



It is important that we belong to a professional association which has quality standards and promotes our industry. With increasing messaging to our clients from low-quality, low price translations businesses worldwide, we are under threat as never before. Only by branding ourselves strongly under the ATC umbrella, can we hope to differentiate, withstand the onslaught - and take advantage of all those opportunities!

Have your say!

What do you think are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the translation profession?

We will publish the best contributions in the next edition of **Communicate** and profile the contributor.

Send in your thought to:
info@atc.org.uk

Post cards from the ATC's international annual conference

Download the conference presentations: www.atc.org.uk/annual_conference2005.html



ATC Vice Chair Liz Robertson with husband Bob at the eve of conference dinner



France's CNET represented by Catherine Granell and Xavier Mignot of Accent Mondial caught by the Paparazzi at the pre-conference theatre outing



Monique-Paule Tubb speaking on behalf of the US's ALC



ITI's Cate Avery, right with fellow freelancers, Lanna Castellano and, centre, Anne Hulme enjoy a break during the conference



Israel's Tova Ichai, right, poses with Marina Manifo from Italy at the end of the conference



Déjà Vu's Matilda Persson and Bjorn Harris on duty at their stand



Approved list of suppliers providing translation services, interpreters, Braille and other accessible formats

Invitation for expressions of interest

The Healthcare Commission exists to promote improvement in the quality of NHS and independent healthcare across England and Wales. Its key aim can be summed up in three words: inspecting, informing, improving. In England we are responsible for assessing and reporting on the performance of both the NHS and independent healthcare organisations, to ensure that they are providing a high standard of care. In Wales our role is more limited and we work mainly on national reviews that cover both England and Wales. The Commission is focused on continuously improving health services for patients and the public. One of the ways we do this is by providing accessible information to healthcare providers, patients, the public, stakeholders and Government.

The Healthcare Commission is committed to ensuring that all people have equal access and rights to health services. This can only be achieved if the information we provide is accessible to everyone. This would enable people to make informed choices about the care they receive and tell us how they can help us shape future services. As a continually developing organisation, our requirements are ever changing. We produce a wide range of materials aimed at various audiences and hold annual consultations on our proposed work. We are implementing a new system of assessing healthcare services and we deal with complaints from people using the NHS and independent healthcare services. This, and our wide range of other work, results in various requests for information in a wide range of accessible formats from lengthy technical reports in various languages to Braille versions of our information leaflets.

The Commission will be creating a list of approved suppliers to provide translation services, interpreters, sign language services and other accessible formats. Suppliers must have experience and expertise in delivering translation services and/or services aimed at increasing and improving accessibility, such as interpreters, sign language, Braille, audio tape etc. The companies on this list will be expected to engage in direct competition with each other for all new service requirements.

In order to be considered for inclusion in the tender process, expressions of interest **MUST** take the form of a capability statement and a pre tender questionnaire.

If you are interested in being considered for the list, a pre tender questionnaire can be obtained by e-mailing tenders.request@healthcarecommission.org.uk. If you cannot or have difficulty e-mailing us, please contact Fahrel Faulkner on + 44 (0) 20 7448 9086

All expressions of interest must be received by December 5th 2005

On-line Polish-English dictionary is launched

In the multilingual world the Internet is an essential tool, particularly as far as dictionaries are concerned. In Poland, just as in any other non-English speaking country in Europe, more and more people look to it when searching for accurate translations of words in their own language as well as for definitions of foreign words in their native tongue.

To meet this demand ATC overseas member GET IT Translations decided to make this task easier for its current and future clients, as well as for all other Internet users.

Speaking to Communicate, GET IT's Piotr Czajkowski said:

"We did not want simply to add yet another supplement to the list of innumerable, anonymous lexical resources available on-line. We preferred to provide a reliable source of information containing not only the basic equivalents of words, but also information about their use together with idioms and collocations.

"Consequently, we acquired the copyright to the Polish-English and English-Polish dictionaries originally published by one of our country's most reputable publishing houses, and developed a toolbar, thanks to which the dictionaries can be accessed from any Internet search engine free of charge. The on-line *Getionary*, whose entries were developed in accordance with strict requirements of lexicographical good practice, has turned out to be immensely popular among users, who are accessing the site in ever-increasing numbers.

"The structure of the dictionaries gives a natural advantage to Polish speakers compared to users whose native language is English. However, English speakers can also benefit from their resources."

Czajkowski continued: "We are also developing the procedures and Internet functionalities which will make it possible to add new entries to the dictionaries and maintain the quality that made the original publication and its Internet version so appreciated. We are committed to channel the enthusiasm of Internet users willing to contribute new words and phrases by processing new additions in the same way that the original entries were developed - that is by providing the verifications of Polish and English philologists, as well as those of professional lexicographers. We hope that thanks to this procedure the *Getionary* will develop without losing any of its original quality and, at the same time, be an organic application whose users will benefit not only from its resources, but also share their knowledge of Polish and English words and phrases."

www.getit.pl

Company news

Essential kit for the piste translates into good business

A company based in Barnsley in the UK is set to capitalise on the increasing popularity of winter skiing holidays, with the assistance of ATC members TransAction Translators and Sheffield design agency G Design and Advertising Ltd. The Porta-ski is a new pocket sized device, which minimises the effort of carrying skis to and from the slopes. Launched earlier this year, the Porta-ski has been received very positively from skiers as it reduces the problems associated with transporting skis.



As a small and new company it was important for Porta-ski to be marketed in a cost effective way. They worked with GDA Sheffield to develop a clear identity for the product, producing a simple website together with supportive product literature. In order to keep costs low and to maximise the reach of the sales literature they used TransAction Translators to produce a three-language version of the literature. Jonathan Gibb, Managing Director at GDA Sheffield comments on the benefits of this approach:

“As a unique and new product it was important that we introduced the benefits of the Porta-ski to as wide an audience as possible, for minimum spend. We worked with Porta-ski’s Managing Director, the inventor of the product, to advise him on the best ways of reducing costs. Having a tri-lingual function to the leaflet meant that we could have a larger print run and the potential reach of the leaflet was enormous.

TransAction delivered the project very smoothly, with minimum delay. This was essential as the leaflets were needed for a large trade show and the design needed to be completed in order to meet our deadline.”

Following the success of the trade show

and ongoing marketing initiatives, the Porta-ski is quickly gaining recognition as the best means of transporting cumbersome skis. The product is very light and can easily fit in a pocket or backpack when not in use, so is suitable for skiers of all sizes.

Winter Sports are in the ascendency and are increasingly enjoyed by skiers from all backgrounds. Further growth is predicted for the sector as airlines and holiday companies continue to offer very affordable winter breaks. The ski-accessory market has also grown 10 fold over recent years, therefore Porta-ski are placed exceptionally well to capitalise on this boom period.

LTC opens US offices to meet growing client demand

Due to increasing business activities in the United States and major existing customers such as Bowne Inc. and the World Bank, ATC members Language Technology Centre recently opened a new office in Washington DC.

“Our first U.S. employee started working in June, although operating initially from the UK,” LTC’s Adriane Rinsche told Communicate.

“The decision to start a company in the US has come as a result of increasing demand for LTC software and services, and the need to support our American clients within their time zones.”

email: info@langtechUS.com
www.langtechus.com

Hermes adds Malaga office to its Madrid HQ

Leading Spanish translation company Hermes Traducciones y Servicios Lingüísticos has opened a new office in Malaga in October.

The new office is located at the modern Technology Park of Andalusia, which hosts a number of leading national and local companies.

Speaking to Communicate Hermes’ Juan José Arevalillo said:

“The main goal of these new premises, which has a capacity for up to 12 people, is to foster the in-house work groups, to increase the share of translation projects completed by our staff, which, at the moment, reaches 80% of the global Hermes Traducciones production.

“In addition, Hermes Traducciones man-



Hermes’ Juan José Arevalillo

agement hopes to reduce the time devoted to project management thanks to the availability of more internal resources, which, in turn, will result in an even closer control over all the production and quality control phases.”

www.hermestrans.com

No FT? No comment when in China

China’s burgeoning industrial and business strength has created a growing market for quality Chinese language news and business information. The Financial Times has recently invested in the expansion of its zhongwen.FT.com website, a move intended to leverage the FT brand and the Chinese site’s existing solid reputation to gain a leadership position in the international media market in China. The newly expanded site will provide China-related and world news, comment and analysis to Chinese-speaking business readers in China and worldwide.

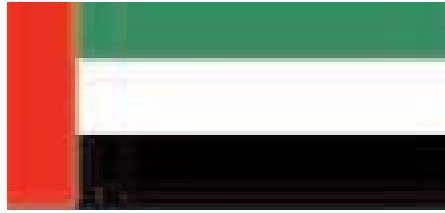
FT has selected ATC member Asian Absolute to provide Chinese news for the zhongwen.FT.com website. Under the deal, inked in June, a dedicated team of Asian Absolute translators provide same-day translations of existing English language Financial Times content for the Chinese language version of the FT.com news website. The decision by Financial Times to outsource the translation work for the Chinese site is seen by many as unusual (its main competitors all have in-house translation teams), but FT’s past acumen on the web augurs well - its flagship FT.com site, once regarded as an expensive failure, is now a healthily profitable model for the rest of the industry.

The initial operation sees Asian Absolute’s translations of China-focused news, analysis, editorial and comment form the core content of an expanded FT Chinese language news site. This is a unique venture, combining the FT’s leadership position in the news industry with Asian Absolute’s strength in quality Asian language translation work. The London-based company also has a sizeable operation in Beijing.

Asian Absolute Director Henry Clough said, “We are delighted to be in a position to support the FT in this development and are excited by the challenge of making their brand as well-respected in China as it is in Europe and the US.”

www.asianabsolute.co.uk

National market report: United Arab Emirates & the Gulf States



Hard work and dedication pays off in United Arab Emirates

Sahar Moussly of ATC overseas members Trans Gulf Management describes the obstacles she had to overcome to establish her translation business in UAE

I started Trans Gulf Management in 1997 in the UAE. It is a rapidly developing oil-rich country with a growing demand for translation, creative copy writing and simultaneous interpreting for conferences reflecting the expansion of the country's economy.

Like many many other Arab states, UAE is a male dominated society. This meant, that as a female I recognised that I would have to work harder than my male counterparts to overcome the prejudices against female businesswomen.

Like any other country that is opening its doors to new investments, it is hoping to attract multinational companies as part of a long term strategy designed to diversify the economy and reduce its dependency on oil. UAE is a country that offers a lot of opportunities but not without many obstacles and challenges.

The country is only 35 years old and the translation business is not regulated as you might expect in other more established countries. Consequently many unprofessional opportunists try to jump on the wagon at the expense of quality

translation and interpreter providers.

The country is a free tax haven, but any company has to pay high registration fees to the government and to a local sponsor.

The best approach for a UAE-based translation company seeking to gain any credibility is to be accredited by the Ministry of Justice, which is what Trans Gulf Management did.

Eight years on, running a translation agency in the UAE has proved to be very hectic but very rewarding. Clients in this part of the world do not understand the importance of translation or interpretation, a translator is never given enough time in the planning, therefore a translator is always working under pressure to keep tight deadlines. Meanwhile, interpreters do not work under ideal conditions and many times we find ourselves jumping into an interpreter's booth without having a clear idea about the paper we are interpreting, let alone having documents in advance.

Generally clients delay payments, although, as a reputable company, we

still pay our translators and interpreters on time. Inevitably, this leads to financial pressures on the company.

Having said all that, perseverance and hard work will pay off. All the states in the Gulf region are considering the UAE in general and Dubai in particular a benchmark to measure their achievements. Therefore, a company that sticks to its principles, offers a quality service and looks after its employees will soon be able to extend and work in the whole of the Gulf region.

The business, like elsewhere in the world, is under threat from cut prices and low quality. However, for those persevering in offering a translation and interpreting service with a difference and willing to work hard, they can develop a successful and profitable business in the UAE.

But no one should be under any illusions about the requirements to establish a translation business in a country such as the UAE which is still developing.

I have mentioned that hard work is essential - and that can often mean saying good bye to weekends and quiet evenings. So you need to be able to take the pressure - especially if you are to accommodate particularly demanding clients and, at the same time maintain good personal relationships with them. But it is not just the clients who you need to keep on side, the translators and interpreters are equally important. But if you really want to survive in this market it is of paramount importance to employ someone dedicated to follow up invoices and delayed payments.

When you gain a good reputation, do not feel complacent, work harder to maintain this reputation and you will be a winner.
www.transgulfme.com

Best practice:

Managing company debt

Extending credit is a risky business and informed caution is essential when assessing that level of risk. If you think that enforcing the terms of a contract is time consuming and expensive here - try litigating in a foreign jurisdiction. Some basic precautionary steps might minimise your exposure. The desire to make the sale can sometimes overwhelm common sense. However, sensible precautionary steps will protect you later without frustrating the sale. Always remember the following:

Basic Checks - Every reputable company in the developed world has a credit status of some sort - ensure you are as well informed as possible. Credit checking is frequently an inexpensive way of

Prevention is better than cure - says Carl Hackman of debt management specialists CCI Legal Services

ensuring that the recipient of your product is in a position to pay for it. Credit checks in the developed world are usually a good indicator that it is safe to enter into a credit arrangement at the recommended level. Emerging markets are more difficult to gauge but reports are available and if used in conjunction with caution will still provide some protection.

Know your customer - Your staff should always ensure that they know who they are dealing with. It is no use trying to mount a legal action in a foreign jurisdiction (or this one) if you have not established the legal identity, address or contact details of the contracting party. Checks made in the contracting country are sometimes the only way of establishing the existence / identity of the organi-

sation. Again they are not expensive and can save considerable sums later.

Record Keeping - It may sound obvious, but the number of recoveries which fail because the order has been lost or mislaid is astonishing. Put in place a system which ensures that every order is preserved. Frequently orders are varied - never accept a variation to the terms of an order over the phone - it must always be confirmed in writing - email is easiest. Always ask the person varying the terms of the order to confirm their identity and job title.

Trade Association

Does your trade association hold a database of organisations who have previ-

continued on the next page

Continued from the previous page
ously caused difficulties to other members? This might be the best indicator of all. Most pro-active trade associations maintain such lists.

Invoicing

Time will run from the date of the invoice. Invoice immediately upon delivery of the goods. By invoicing in a timely manner you can minimise the potential for delayed repayment. This will certainly have repercussions should you wish to impose penalties for late payment.

Contract Terms

This is a topic in its own right and will be dealt with in Part 2 of this series. Invoice your creditors immediately and ensure your standard terms are watertight. Don't put them on the invoice - it is too late. Notify your clients of the standard terms at the time the contract made (point of sale). As far as the terms are concerned this is a topic in its own right and will be dealt with separately.

Penalise Late Payment - Claim interest

Once a payment is overdue then interest can be charged on all commercial debts.

- ♦ Claim interest under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998
- ♦ Claim debt recovery fees under same Act
- ♦ Sending out a letter before the

invoice is due asking for confirmation that the order was received could also prove useful.

Many countries have a system of late payment penalties within the legislative framework - If you are trading from outside the UK find out whether such a law exists and if so use it. If there is no similar legislation simply incorporate penalty clauses into your standard terms & conditions providing for interest and reasonable debt recovery costs.

So when is a payment late? - Wherever the contract provides for payment periods the payment is late if it is made after the last day of the credit period.

If no credit period has been agreed, then in the UK the '98 Act sets a default period of 30 days after the invoice following which interest can run. This is not a statutory credit period. Contractually, whenever no credit period is agreed in a contract the principal debt will still become due from the moment the goods are delivered or the service performed. Once payment is delayed don't delay - act.

Credit Insurance & Letters of Credit

As ever with insurance you are paying for someone else's mistakes. If you can bear the expense of being charged a percentage on every transaction, and your industry is considered a "safe risk," then it has its place for the emerging overseas markets. Otherwise, taking the steps above in conjunction with the measures recommended in stages 2 and

3 ought to provide sufficient protection.

So far as Letters of Credit are concerned - over 50% of them fail on the first presentation. Unless your profit margins can withstand the cost of putting in place a guaranteed letter of credit, doing so may well render the transaction a commercial nonsense.

Stage 2 focuses on using your Standard Terms as a means protection from debt. Stage 3 focuses on what to do should steps 1 and 2 fail - namely recovery - Lawyers and Debt Collectors.



This is the first part of three articles about credit risk management to be published in Communicate. CCI Legal are the ATC's preferred providers in this important area.

Part 2 will address the standard **CONTRACT TERMS** which ought to provide the best protection in the event of failure to deliver payment.

Part 3 is intended to deal with the measures available should parts 1 and 2 fail - **LITIGATION AND COLLECTION**

www.ccilegal.co.uk

Best practice: Good client briefing

**Claire Ingram of ATC members
Wordbank shares her experience**

The 'garbage in/garbage out' (GIGO) syndrome, where the quality of the output is in direct correlation to the quality of the input, applies to many life scenarios but is particularly relevant to the localization process.



Good briefings result in good translations

The quality of the brief from our clients directly affects our ability to achieve their objectives of speed, value for money and effective communication in local markets but, unfortunately, not all clients fully appreciate this connection.

The ideal client brief is outlined below together with the four main areas of difficulty that we regularly come up against in the absence of a clear and detailed brief.

Avoiding mismatched expectations

A client, for whom we were localizing their website into several languages, had assumed that we would track down the original source files from their various agencies and could not understand why we kept asking for them. We had assumed that they would take responsibility for providing them, our client had assumed that we would - and a lot of time was lost.

The best solution for avoiding these misunderstandings is to put everything in writing at the outset so that the client cannot slip in additional responsibilities or files that were not mentioned in the Purchase Order.

Continued on the next page

Absolute must have information

1. Source text - final approved version if possible
2. File format or proposed file format
3. Target languages by country
4. Mode of address preferences
5. Language style
6. Services required eg Marcoms Translation
7. Delivery date
8. Delivery format
9. Client approval process
10. Purchase order or written confirmation

Helpful but not essential information

1. Background to campaign or project and/or creative brief
2. Word count
3. Target market and audiences
4. Marketing communications objectives and desired response from target audience
5. Contact details for local approval contacts and their scope for making changes
6. Reference materials that we can use to gauge tone of voice, imagery, style etc
7. Previous or similar recent projects

Continued from the previous page

Lack of understanding of the implications of making late changes

Another major issue is the lack of client understanding of the time and cost implications of making amendments once the project has started. Many do not understand that to change just one word in English can involve rebriefing each of the translators, rechecking the copy in each language, changing the layout if the new words take up more or less space, and proofreading again.

The solution to this problem lies with better client education about the localization process so that they understand the implications.

Poor communication between client and creative agency

Localization companies often find themselves stuck between the client and their

design agencies. The client is driven by commercial objectives while the agency wants the end product to look good in the corporate portfolio. Neither party has a complete understanding of the linguistic, cultural, technical, file engineering, process and project management challenges involved in localization.

Consequently, the localization specialist is often faced with copy, imagery, embedded graphics, fonts and encoding that will not work beyond the borders of the domestic market and has to act as a go-between between the two. To preempt this situation, we try to encourage our clients to involve us at an early stage as a 'prevention is better than cure' strategy can save a huge amount of time and money later down the line.

Who has control?

The fourth area of difficulty can be the inherent tension between the regional marketing centre and the local contacts.

If the approval process hasn't been clearly defined by the client at the outset of the project, a great deal of time and money can be lost at this stage. The client must ensure that they have local country buy-in before starting the project and that roles, responsibilities, timelines and processes are agreed between client and the local offices before getting the localization specialist involved.

Our recommended approach towards all client briefing issues is firmly founded on 'prevention is better than cure'. Time and money can only ever be saved by getting projects right from the outset. As an industry, it is in our interest to ensure that our clients have an understanding of the linguistic, cultural, technical and process issues involved in localization so that we can work with them to achieve their commercial objectives.

Claire Ingram, Head of Production at ATC member, Wordbank

Get ready to take advantage of the growing telephone interpreting market

The language provision industry has reached a point where the process of consolidation, so typical of many cottage industries entering their maturity stage, has started to accelerate. The bigger multinational language provision companies, which hitherto have had a narrow focus on localisation have spotted and are now actively addressing opportunities in interpreting and in particular in telephone interpreting for both the public sector and commerce and industry - *Language Answerpoint's Yahia Rezgui explains why.*



Language Answerpoint's Yahia Rezgui, above

The reason for this is two-fold:

- 1. Telephone interpreting itself is a huge relatively untapped market. The public sector side of it is reckoned by some estimates to be worth £50 million and growing**
- 2. The bigger companies know that this can also be a very effective way of building up repeat business across the whole range of language services, thus giving the customer virtually no reason to look to competitors to fill-in the gaps.**

Smaller companies are aware of the value of having a comprehensive range of language services and in particular of offering Telephone Interpreting.

However, until recently adding Telephone Interpreting would have been beyond their reach both technically and financially.

Being such a niche application, the technology for Telephone Interpreting is not available off-the shelf. All established large suppliers commission their own proprietary systems costing hundreds of thousands of pounds. In so doing they set a standard in the mind of the user that defines how Telephone Interpreting should be done. This is why some companies who claim to be able to offer Telephone Interpreting have struggled to make any progress in the market place. In the eyes of the user, who is used to technical and operational standards set by the larger companies, the smaller companies offer a "degraded" service or

worse still, a service that cannot be called Telephone Interpreting.

So does this mean that the smaller companies are going to be sidelined at best and gradually driven out of the language provision market altogether at worst?

The short answer is yes, if they don't adapt to changing conditions and cement their relationship with their customers by broadening their portfolio of services.

AnswerPoint Language Consulting with over 20 years experience of business development and in particular Telephone Interpreting has made it possible for all language services providers to add Telephone Interpreting to their services by making both the technology systems and the processes that underpin them affordable and accessible.

As an independent industry insider AnswerPoint is positioned to be a facilitator and an advisor to the industry and not a competitor.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity or to organise a free consultation to consider your options and explore this and other opportunities please contact Yahia Rezgui in absolute confidence.

www.languageanswerpoint.co.uk



European Union
of Associations
of Translation Companies

First EUATC international conference set for success

Demand for places at the event taking place in International Press Centre are now limited and those wanting to participate should visit the EUATC web site (see below).

is essential to work hand in hand with the EU Institutions in order to find a European solution to this latest translation challenge.

The EUATC conference will address the following issues:

- ◆ **Current and future EU translation and interpreting policy**
- ◆ **How the private translation sector can support the EU in facing the multilingualism challenge**
- ◆ **Facts, figures and trends in the translation industry**
- ◆ **Future challenges for the translation industry**
- ◆ **Developments in translation technology**
- ◆ **The future of multilingual communication**

This is your opportunity to obtain current European industry information and to network with translation companies in other countries seeking partners for bids, consortia or strategic alliances.

The challenge of multilingualism is one of the key issues on the EU agenda. Twenty official languages, new rules and directives, technological and economic developments: Europe of today is forcing the EU Institutions and the wider translation industry to face a new generation of issues.

For the past ten years the EUATC has been studying different aspects of the translation industry from the perspective of the translation company including translator training, market surveys and quality issues. The major development for the industry as a whole has been the development of a new CEN standard for translation services. The EU Commission is currently engaged in responding to the challenges of multilingualism and the EUATC believes that it

Top European speakers

The speaker line up, which includes two members of the European Commission, draws on expert speakers from five countries around Europe. For the full speaker line up visit:



www.wordbank.com

The European Union of Associations of Translation Companies is gearing up for its first international conference taking place in Brussels on November 25th writes EUATC President Alfredo Spagna (photographed above).

Czechs form translation association and join EUATC

An association representing the interest of translation companies has been formed in the Czech Republic and it has immediately joined the European Union of Associations of Translation Companies.

The formation of the Association of the Czech Translation Agencies followed a year's probationary membership of the EUATC for leading Czech translation company Skrivanek Translation Services, who were asked to form a representative translation company association as a condition of gaining full membership status of the Europe-wide association.

Speaking about the formation of the

ACTA, its founding chairman, Pavel Skrivanek said:

"In an increasingly competitive and globalised world the need for a representative organisation in the translation business within the Czech Republic has never been more pressing. Translation companies here are facing common problems and they have recognised that collective action will benefit the whole profession. Importantly too, the formation of the ACTA now allows for the Czech Republic's voice to be heard in the wider European forum, as it intends playing a full part within the deliberations of the European Union of Associations of Translation Companies to which it now belongs."

Pavel Skrivanek, right, first President of the Czech Republic's ACTA



Responding, Alfredo Spagna, President of the EUATC said: "I am delighted that such an important country as the Czech Republic has formed an association to represent the interests of translation companies.

"The EUATC is active on many fronts - particularly with the European Commission and Parliament - and our voice is considerably strengthened with the addition of the Czech Republic to our ranks."

Contacting the ACTA
Association of the Czech Translation Agencies (ACTA)
Na Dolinach 22
147 00 Praha 4, Czech Republic



Bulgarian association to join EUATC too

The newly formed Bulgarian Association of Professional Translation Agencies (BAPTA) has applied to join the EUATC.

The association has been established by four leading Bulgarian companies with the aim to promote, enforce and protect the professional and ethical standards among translation companies. It is also working to promote quality translation

services and participate in the development of standards on a European level. Other key objectives include, developing closer links with academic institutions and promoting the use of professionally produced translations to the market. Its first President is Nikolay Lazarov Nikolov.

Are you a public service interpreter? Want more work?



Yes please!

The Association of Translation Companies is establishing a database of public service interpreters for the exclusive use of its members, who would like to be able to offer you work opportunities if you are an experienced and suitably qualified public service interpreter operating in the United Kingdom.

To be included on this new database send an email to info@atc.org.uk and write 'ATC public service database' in the subject line and request an application form.

If your application is accepted, there is **NO CHARGE** to be included on the ATC new public service database, which, it is planned, will go live in the New Year.



Association of Translation Companies
www.atc.org.uk

Communicate



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We welcome stories and press releases from translation companies belonging to the ATC, and national members of the associations making up the EUATC. We also welcome submissions from those supplying the translation profession. Where possible please supply graphics, pictures and or logos.