

Communicate

Spring 2005

The official newsletter of the Association of Translation Companies



International translation markets and forecast special edition



Message from the Chairman *John Wheen, chairman Association of Translation Companies*

LOW COST ECONOMIES STILL A THREAT TO TRANSLATION MARKETS

sites et al) are driving us forward.

We are pleased in this issue to welcome views and forecasts of their translations markets from several national Translations Associations and leading players.

Following on from a mixed 2005 forecast for the UK economy in our last issue, it is interesting to read that some other translations markets are growing. Germany, where translations demand seems tied to exports, is forecast to grow at up to 5%. France and Belgium also predict demand growth.

None of this will yet bring demand back to pre-2002 levels, but traditional sectors of engineering, automotive as well as multimedia (web-

Where all correspondents agree, is over the threat posed by low-cost economies. We are now inundated by emails from developing nations offering translations from £20 (€29 \$38) per 1,000 words. And since local wage costs are often 5% of UK values, these rates still mean huge profits for vendors. As well as hitting Western European translations companies, these offers are reaching our clients, devaluing perceptions of the value of translations. Added to Translations Companies and Search Engines offering free machine translations, how can ATC members and those of other national translation associations defend their positions?

We know that the answer lies in quality, because for all their price advantages, these Internet barrow boys have for the most part, very bad fruit. It is incumbent on us all to say loud and long to our clients and the media that the fundamental need of their professionals around the world is to use local languages fluently and well. Only then will clients' brand franchises and competitiveness enable growing market share and profitability.

The key quality benchmarks are Membership of the ATC (or the growing numbers of EUATC member Associations) and with it the use of qualified translators. And the coming CEN Standard 138.



EUATC offers its support to Leonardo monitor project

The European Union of Associations of Translation Companies has put its weight behind a new Leonardo project initiated by the Netherlands.

The Dutch project will be first coordinated pan-European attempt to analyse and forecast market trends for language services, as well as promoting the importance of translation and interpreting services to industry and state organisations.

The five objectives of the project are:

1. To monitor market trends for the supply of and demand for language services by professional translators and interpreters, which is of vital importance for companies, local and national authorities and branch organisations.
2. To enable industrial and state organisations to recognise the importance of professional translations and interpretation for innovation, trade and progress in the internal market.
3. To monitor and evaluate the qualitative and quantitative short, medium and long-term demand for professional and academic training institutions.
4. To provide a basis for training institutions to adjust their curricula to changing market conditions
5. To enable students to make an informed decision about the choice of their studies, relevant options for international programmes, and eventually their professional career in an expanding EU market and society.

Commenting, EUATC President Alfredo Spagna said:

“The EUATC’s member associations were overwhelming in their support for this important project. Our members believe that the project will help support not only the development of the profession of translation and interpreting but also help private European translation and interpreting companies to gain a clearer understanding of market trends. It will also play a key role in the continued development of professional education for students in these fields.”

In pledging its support, the EUATC has offered itself as a means of disseminating information among its 14 national associations, which together comprise over 400 translation companies and support the project as a source of relevant information and data as required by the project coordinators.

Cautionary tale: I

Some day my prince will come...shopping

Translation companies in Britain and around the globe may have received a tempting approach at the end of November from an 'Arab Prince' seeking an interpreter for a 10 day shopping trip he was planning with his entourage.

In Britain, the Association's General Secretary, Geoffrey Bowden, issued an "exercise caution" notice as he soon got wind that an identical inquiry had been received in the Netherlands. Later, it emerged that the same inquiry was received in the USA and then others around the world reported that the Prince looked to be on a shop-till-he-drops global marathon, which was to be completed within the same 10 day period ahead of last Christmas.

Many translation companies reported having received the inquiry direct. Despite the warning notice from the ATC, some were tempted by the offer, responded to it and had their price quotations accepted with alacrity.

One member of the Association of Translation Companies, Accurate Translations of London admits they were initially taken in by the scam.

Managing Director Peter Brooks said: "We responded to the offer, ahead of receiving the ATC warning. We received a cheque for nearly twice the amount we had quoted and assumed the "Prince" had confused US dollars with £ sterling."

A dozen or so e-mails later the "Prince" had to cancel his visit because, reports Brooks, the Prince's mother-in-law had suffered a stroke after learning that members of her family had perished in the Far Eastern tsunami tragedy.

"We were asked if we would return his money by bank transfer less 15% for the inconvenience we suffered.

"Five days later our suspicions were confirmed when the cheque he had sent us proved to be fraudulent.

"We had not, of course, returned any money, and would not have done so until the authenticity of the cheque had been confirmed, even though it had been credited to our account. That confirmation can take two - three weeks."

It was a simple scam, which despite the use of international translation community networks, still managed to fool some regrettably.

www.accuratetranslations.com

Cautionary tale: II

As seen on TV

Our second cautionary tale comes from ATC members UPS Translations based in London.

UPS translate and top-edit books and were approached by publishers called Elius Books, to edit "John Thaw 1942-2002: An Appreciation" - for readers outside the UK, Thaw was a much loved actor, who died three years ago.

UPS were also to design the front cover as well as the page layout including typography. It turned out to be an extremely difficult job, largely because the proprietor of Elius Books was dyslexic, disorganised and dysfunctional. Worse still, he turned out to be an undischarged bankrupt trading fraudulently, has served time in prison for similar offences previously, had failed to pay the writers, editor or printers, and is the subject of investigation by the Department of Trade Industry. BBC TV's Watchdog show has interviewed Sarah Parkhurst, Head of Translation at UPS, as victims, and the clear message is: "Don't touch Elius Books with a bargepole!" say UPS's MD Bernard Silver. www.upstranslations.co.uk

Company news

Express wins Investors in People award

ATC member Express Translations based in Birmingham have followed up last year's ISO9001 accreditation with a prestigious Investors in People (IIP) award. Express believes that it is the only company in the UK translation sector, that can boast of both achievements.

Their IIP Award was presented at Birmingham Chamber of the Commerce's offices by Olympic silver



Roger Black MBE, left, with RK Chauhan and Usha Chauhan. Richie Woodhall, WBC super middleweight world champion is second from the right next to Barry Knight, the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce

medalist Roger Black and the current World Boxing Council super mid-

dleweight champion Rickie Knight. www.expressinterpreting.co.uk

ITR clocks up significant score - 20 years in the business

In March 2005 ATC member ITR International Translation Resources Ltd will celebrate 20 years in business as a leading provider of translation services. The company translates and localises documentation, software, help systems and websites into all major languages including Chinese, Japanese, Korean

and Thai. Focused on global customers with large-volume requirements, ITR has been a consistent driving force in raising translation quality standards and is widely recognised as a centre of best practice in our industry.

At the forefront of the convergence of

linguistic and technical expertise, ITR helps its many clients to leverage existing and new translations by means of finely

Continued on the next page



Helen Eckersley

ITR clocks up significant score - from previous page

honed processes that help to achieve a high degree of customer satisfaction and loyalty. One of the company's clients recently proclaimed "ITR has helped us gain total acceptance of our localised material; our overseas distributors are delighted with the quality of the translations produced by ITR and now feel fully supported in their sales efforts in their respective markets."

ITR was founded in 1985 by John Fisher and Helen Eckersley, the current joint managing directors who are both well known throughout the industry. Helen is chair of ATC's Education Committee, proactively seeking to forge links with the academic community that will foster a better understanding of our mutual requirements.

Helen is also a key member of the SAE J2450 Committee, an international body that is developing a Standard for measuring translation quality - work that is highly compatible with ATC's involve-

ment in developing the CEN Standard for governing translation processes. ITR attributes much of its success and longevity to the calibre and loyalty of its people. With 50 full-time members of staff and over 1200 contractors worldwide, the company is deeply proud of its senior managers and the teams they lead. As an accredited Investor in People, ITR has a proven track record of training its employees who are multi-skilled as well as multi-lingual. John Fisher says, "investing in training for all our staff is essential for staying abreast of the huge range of technology available to support the translation and localisation processes, and for ongoing personal development in other areas such as negotiation and management skills"

With its 20 years in the business, ITR has naturally witnessed many significant changes, both good and bad, including the growth of technology, the impact of the Internet and at least 2 world recessions. The company has always risen to the challenge and is optimistic for the future of this emerging global industry.

However, when asked, "What is the one thing ITR would change about the translation industry", the directors are unanimous in their view. "We would like to educate every last translation buyer to recognise the value of translation quality and excellent customer service. Whilst competing on price keeps us lean and agile, allowing customers to buy solely on price devalues our expertise and our profession. This has always been our goal and we're still working on it!"

www.itr.co.uk

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company to the editor with
high resolution images
where possible to:
info@atc.org.uk**

Environmental company enjoy Titan-ic growth

ATC members TransAction Translators of Sheffield have been joining forces with a marketing company to help drive forward the export drive of Titan Plastech, manufacturers of environmental containers.

The Rotherham-based division of Titan chose to update their European literature, producing their sales brochure in multiple languages and changing the format to a CD ROM. They used PJA Marketing in Sheffield to manage this project and TransAction to undertake the translation work.

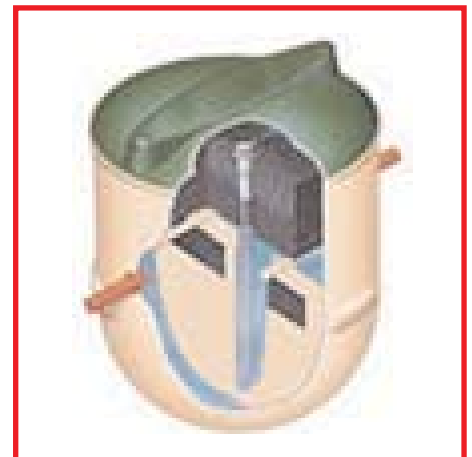
Environmental products have seen a massive growth period over the last few years, with the UK leading the way in good recycling practice. As Bryan Sorrell, from Titan Plastech explains, demand is also rising across Europe: "We have been trading in Europe for several years now but felt it was about time that we tailored our literature to the areas we operate in. We have always been dissuaded from producing our

brochure in multiple languages because of the cost and logistical drawbacks. This time we have changed the format to a CD Rom, with many language options. This simplifies the re-ordering process and also comes as a welcome relief to our salesmen who had difficulty carrying the brochures with them when visiting overseas."

Titan Plastech also supply garden centres, both in the UK and across Europe.

Where UK exporters have previously produced English only literature, it seems that more and more are now choosing to invest in multi-lingual copies of brochures and leaflets.

Maryline Tergella, Project Manager at TransAction Translators explains why this is a good move: "In a competitive market, anything you can do to make yourself more accessible to your customers has to be good for business. English speakers have long had the perception that English is a world wide language, it is only in the last ten years that companies have begun to tailor their message to their audience and have gone



*A Titan control product
on to reap the benefits."*

Titan Plastech have plans to introduce their products to further European countries, including the Baltic States and other new EU members.

www.transaction.co.uk

Aget reports export led growth in 2004

ATC member AGET Limited has reported that last year proved to be very successful.

Managing Director Marion Godfrey told Communicate: "In 2004 we further developed our customer base in overseas markets and that the volume of exports now accounts for more than fifty per cent of the company's turnover.

"This has been achieved mainly through

clever customer relationship management, involving the close level of involvement expected by clients based in continental Europe, and in Germany in particular, and by offering services like 'translation +', which injects cultural awareness and sensitivity to the copy."

AGET focuses on the high end business and once again, in 2004, most of the company's output was for publication.



Aget celebrates the fruits of their 2004 labours - Marion Godfrey is front right

"Our success would be impossible without the in-pu of a committed team."

www.aget.net



Marc Woolmer and Miranda Sambridge, Andiamo's! newly appointed director

ATC member Andiamo! of Cirencester, are scheduled to receive a coveted Investors in People Certificate in mid-April.

During the past year the company has been evaluating the development and achievement of all our Associates: for

Andiamo! wins its laurels

example, two of its Project Controllers are learning Arabic, one Japanese and another French. Others are following technical courses linked to the translation industry.

“What we hadn't realised was that chocolate treats on a Friday afternoon would also play their part in helping us to win the award!” said Andiamo's Marc Woolmer.

Andiamo! recently celebrated the first anniversary of the opening of its Leeds office managed by new Director, Miranda Sambidge who, after six years with the company in Cirencester, brings her mine of professional experience to the new role. Helped by her colleagues at Head Office, Miranda is working with companies north of the Humber in the UK.

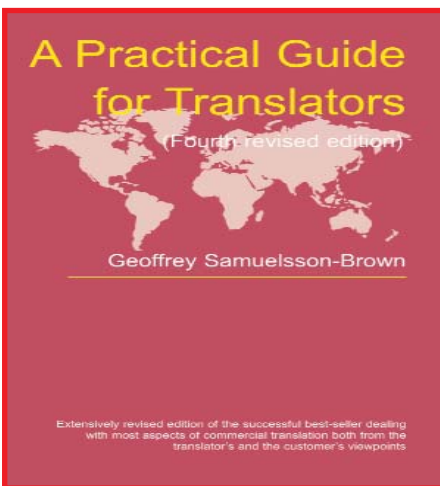
Andiamo! has also been invited to coop-

erate with the prestigious Centre for Translation Studies at Leeds University.

Tourism, pollution monitoring and medical equipment are three of the principal areas in which Andiamo! has significantly expanded in recent months. Its experience in tourism has enabled the company to establish relationships with new clients in tourist destinations throughout the UK, while the translation last October of 250,000 words on keeping the environment clean will contribute significantly to ensuring that the British Isles will remain an environmentally-friendly place to visit.

Other significant developments reported to Communicate by Andiamo! is the recruitment of an Associate to handle the increasing volume of medical translations.

www.andiamo.co.uk



In this fourth edition of the "Practical Guide for Translators", Geoffrey Samuelsson-Brown has achieved a major task of extensively exploring the different aspects of translation.

However, this book is not a theoretical manual on the art of translation or styl-

Guide practical and indispensable

- says guest reviewer Comtec's Anne-Claire Charrier

istics, although this subject is raised in one of the chapters. With a humorous tone, this practical guide presents answers to the many questions a translator-to-be might have. Accountancy, management, translation tools, reference material, formatting, quality control and complaint management are some of the areas comprehensively covered by this work. This updated version is also full of advice on recent and cutting-edge technologies appropriate to the translation industry and the appendices contain handy proofreading tips as well as useful contact details and reference books.

As a member of staff in a translation company, I was particularly interested by the insight of the translation world that is provided by Geoffrey Samuelsson-Brown, who describes with accuracy the mechanisms of translation, from the client's order to the final delivery, both from the client's and translator's point of view.



The advice provided is of high quality and the guide offers solutions to most problems encountered by translators and translation companies in their relationship with clients (complaints, non-payment of invoices, etc...). The common problem of client education is also discussed while there is a stress on developing a better understanding of our sometimes undervalued profession.

The "Practical Guide for Translators" is an indispensable tool for anybody willing to establish themselves as a freelance translator, but also to full-time translators and translation companies, by challenging systems in place and offering a new approach to the translation business.

The book can be ordered online at 20% discount for Communicate readers at:

<http://www.multilingual-matters.com/multi/display.asp?isbn=18>



Humour for tourist guide phrase book

Holger Mühlbauer is best known to translation profession insiders as a member of the German Mirror Group working on the CEN standard for the provision

of translation services as a DIN representative.

Wearing his DIN hat for a different purpose, he has assembled Standardisiertes Wörterbuch an excellent dictionary and phrase book in three languages, German, English and French. The publication uses memorable cartoons to illustrate the phrases to great effect and it is all based on two key standards EN 13809:2003 and EN ISO 185513:2003. Who said standards are dull?

Ticket service or as the Germans would say: Vermittlung von Eintrittskarten





PASS Engineering issued a new service release for PASSOLO 5.0 in January. In addition to various enhancements, a number of new features have also been included in this update - for example:

- Assistant for adding files from complex directory structures
- Leverage command to make use of translations and dialog layouts from other PASSOLO projects.
- Direct access to the TRADOS TM Server via an internet or intranet connection (TRADOS Add-In).
- Enhanced parsing and editing of derived dialogs (Microsoft .NET Add-In).

Other recent offerings from the PASSOLO stable include: optional parser for the localization of ODBC databases. In addition to the parser add-ins for software file formats, PASSOLO now offers an add-in for the localization of ODBC databases.

This new add-in supports the localization of the following database formats:

- MS Access, MS Excel
- MS SQL Server
- Oracle
- MySQL
- IBM DB2

as well as any other ODBC data sources that provide a corresponding OLE DB database driver.

With this integrated solution, allowing you to process further resource types, you can achieve even faster, easier and more cost effective localizations.

Test the new add-in for ODBC databases with your database. You can download a demo version here: <http://www.passolo.com/en/download.stm>



The Language Technology Centre announced that they have released a new version of their internationally well-known business process management and workflow control software system, the LTC Organiser. The new version 5 will revolutionise the computer-assisted business process management in the language industry.

The new version includes:

- ♦ New LTC Organiser interface for use with QuickBooks® Pro Edition 2004 & QuickBooks® Enterprise Solutions 2004 USA & UK.
- ♦ Agency support in the Supplier Module. The user can enter an agency name and several contacts for this agency. Search by Supplier "Type".
- ♦ Pre Budgeting in the quotation module. Average cost can now be associated to price lists and calculated according to average supplier fees.
- ♦ New Time Sheet Module for internal suppliers when using the corporate version. Also available online using the Supplier Web Interface Form. Controlled by setting access rights. Various reports.
- ♦ Setting of individual payment terms for Supplier and Client (number of days before payment is due).
- ♦ Web Interface Forms ~ set a different upload limit for each Supplier or Client Supplier Unavailability type can be set in the setup and selected in the supplier module and Supplier Web Interfaces
- ♦ Import XLS template improved (client currency, VAT rate, more supplier source & target language fields, subject areas, etc).
- ♦ Supplier quote calculation now takes into account the languages and uses them to check the languages specified in the supplier fee section
- ♦ Default company task type
- ♦ Insert your company logos directly into your report templates. Quotes, Invoices and Purchase Order

The release of the latest version, version 5.00, of the LTC Organiser has been followed by a strong endorsement from the early users of the business process management software.

The Language Technology Centre (LTC) reports that its business has increased significantly and puts much of the growth down to the issue of LTC

Organiser version V5.00, which has prompted them to take on another sales manager.

According to LTC's Adriane Rinsch:

"I believe that our sales team is now better equipped to offer stronger support and better services to existing and potential customers on a worldwide level."

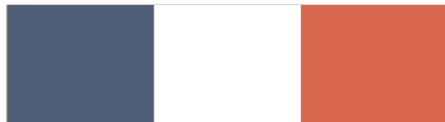
One customer picked up by LTC in the last quarter has been World Bank in the US who have taken on four corporate licences and Web Form.

Commenting Rinsch told Communicate: "The World Bank Interpretation Unit has decided to move from a customized home-grown system to LTC Organiser. The new system will help the unit manage the interpretation assignments, schedules, calendar, and other administrative support for the services provided to the WB Group."

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 Any images submitted with copy should be high resolution only.



France: Price and price again

Report from Catherine Granell of CNET



France conducted an enquiry on 278 French Translation Companies. The results of this enquiry were very interesting.

The broad lines are:

- ♦ Translation companies in France are mature: their average age is 12 years and the oldest company is 31 years old
- ♦ 24% are dependent on one big client
- ♦ They are mainly small structures with an average turnover below £200,000
- ♦ They have an average of 3 employees
- ♦ 64% use CAT tools which prove there are dynamic and progressive
- ♦ In 2004 the global turnover of translation Companies has increased by 12%

New statistics will be given next year at which time we will be able to define the evolution of our market more precisely.

Translation in France in 2004

It seems that in spite of a fairly rough context, translation services have survived 2004. Many of us have complained about the tendency of prices to fall and we have been fighting very hard

to keep our prices at the right level.

Yet, some companies say that, in the mind of their buyers, quality matters less as clients look for cheap translations. Nevertheless - this being a very broad statement - it is sure that a market for cheap readymade translation (in the style of made in China T-shirts) has appeared. But, this is obviously not the niche chosen by serious and professional Translation Companies

What about 2005?

The French Stock Exchange has been healthier since the beginning of January. Therefore the pressure on prices has slightly decreased. But a fact still stands: it is now possible to buy extremely cheap translations in low cost countries, like India for example, and this puts tremendous pressure on the price of large volumes of translation. When a buyer tells you that he can purchase a translation into English at 0.02 € per word and that he has been told to investigate on the subject, it is very difficult to put your prices up even if you know that at that price he cannot be receiving quality work.

We are now in a world that thinks in terms of globalisation and delocalisation and cannot ignore this new parameter in our business.

Email: catherine.granell@cgtraduction.fr



Increasing volume and decreasing prices

Report from Enrique López-Ebri of QSD



further increase in exports for 2004, in spite of a recession at home. It's no wonder then that the volume of translations ordered has also increased. In fact, from our own knowledge and experience, there has been an increase of approx. 5-7%, which is in line with the latest export figures.

On the other hand, turnover has not increased to the same extent, because the translation industry, at least in Germany, has not yet learned to take advantage of the benefits of the increased use of memory tools. Competition in the low and medium price sector means that the end customer is increasingly reaping the financial benefits - and in many cases other price concessions - of this streamlining on the part of translation companies and translators. In the higher price sector, this worrying development is more moderate, since the subject matter is often much more complex, and thus the professional expertise and the overall quality of the translation plays a more important role than the price.

This trend for increasing volume is set to continue in 2005, as is the intense and often unqualified competition from the lower price sector. However, over time, this situation will also rectify itself. Many of the estimated 4,000 small and micro-enterprises in the German translation market have had to close their doors for business over the last 12 months. According to information from the Federal Statistical Office, only 417 translation companies in Germany are capital

companies, a very small number for a country with 83 million inhabitants. Thus, professional service providers are still in with a good chance.

The fields in which the highest translation revenue is to be expected in 2005 are mechanical engineering, automotive engineering, chemistry and multimedia.

The languages which saw the greatest increase in 2004, and continue to do so in 2005, are those of the Eastern European countries, energetically striving to become integrated into the economy of Western Europe.

A strong increase in global cooperation in the field of translation services is a pleasing development in social terms. It does, however, entail the great danger of quality being compromised - at least until standard quality guidelines are established, and become commonplace across Europe.

The common efforts of the translation industry, as part of the European Standard Project prEN 15038, are thus a step in the right direction.

Enrique López-Ebri is Managing Director of the LOPEZ-EBRI GROUP and Vice-President of the German Association of Translation Companies (QSD e. V.) and chairs the German Mirror Committee for the Standard Project "Translation Services".

Email: elebri@lopez-ebri.de

See recruitment advertisement next page.

Those who do not sell abroad, do not require translation services. Germany, traditionally the world's no. 1 exporter, has recorded a



No post Olympic blues for Greece

Comment from Penny Marianou of the Hellenic Association of Translation Companies



Despite pessimistic forecasts about Greek market conditions in the post-Olympic era, the translation market does not seem to

be suffering; although there is definitely a cash flow problem.

The Greek translation market is quite "young" and "unsophisticated" compared to western European markets but it is growing and improving rapidly in line with local economic development and globalisation.

Penny Mariou is President of the Hellenic Association of Translation Companies and managing director of Litterae, which is also an overseas member of the Association of Translation Companies.

Email: penny@litterae.gr



Quality is the key for Portugal

Comment from Fátima Castanheira, out-going President of APET

Portugal is still an emerging market, which has been showing steady if not spectacular growth.

While others have suggested that Internet providers are a threat, we take a contrary view.

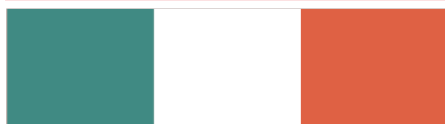
APET members have been concentrating on selling quality. Afterall, a customer only needs to encounter one problem with a cut price Internet service to understand that low prices generally equate to low quality and very little opportunity for redress.

We continue to look to the longterm development of the market through greater cooperation between the academic institutions and the profession, as well as continuing our efforts to educate purchasers.



Fátima Castanheira is Managing Director of TRADUCTA Tradução, Interpretação e Informática, Lda based in Lisbon.

Email: info@traducta.pt



Strength of EURO affects Italian market



The market in Italy is varied. However, it is often the case that the industries employ transla-

tors and translation companies, rarely fully understanding the difference in services on offer. That is why sometimes a translator is asked to translate into some languages he or she does not have a command of.. Similarly, some translation companies are asked if they translate from or into more than one language.

The market is quite alive, there are currently about 160 translation agencies that are members of Federcentri. It is currently difficult to say how many translators there are in Italy, as while many are

(continued on the next page)

The Translation Company



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TRANSLATOR

(German-English)

We are seeking an experienced translator (English native speaker) specialising in commercial/ legal/ technical translations at our head office in Bremen, to commence at the earliest possible date.

You will have: A degree, at least 2 years' experience as a translator, excellent German, and familiarity with terminology database maintenance, translation tools and management of translation projects.

We offer: An interesting field of work in a young, highly motivated team. Your enthusiasm and translation skills will be rewarded with an above-average salary. We look forward to receiving your application, which we shall of course treat in strict confidence.

Send your application with CV to:

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www.lopez-ebri.de

(from the previous page)

associated with AITI or ANITI, many others are not. However, the perception is that there are many translators and a great portion of them are steadily working.

The Italian market has been affected by the consequences of 9/11 and the strength of Euro, reducing Italian exports and thus the need for translations. Italy has also started to feel competition from Countries like Poland, Romania, Hungary and others, which are in a better position to provide low cost transla-

tions. More and more, we feel that various Italian industries are asking for superior quality translations at considerably reduced prices, a position that is very difficult to reach and maintain, due to the essential time that has to be dedicated to each translation project.

Additionally, the strong fiscal and legal environment existing in Italy, places greater pressure through taxes and laws. For example the privacy law in Italy is still under way and it does not seem to be good news for translators and translation agencies, considering that we deal with so much data during each project.

In conclusion, we may say that the translation world in Italy is going to face some changes and challenges in the future. This will result in the need for greater specialization, the use of more advanced IT tools (from CAT to DTP), together with the need to be prepared to adapt to the sudden changes in the market that lacks the stability of the past.

Mirko Silvestrini, is Managing Director of Rapitrad - Traduzioni e Consulenza per l'Estero and President of the Federcentri.

Email: rapitrad@rapitrad.it



Although accustomed to functioning in a single dominant language, the United States shows growing respect for proper use of foreign languages. A current bipartisan resolution in the US Senate declares 2005 the "Year of Foreign Language Study."

The US government recognizes the need for increased multilingual abilities to address such essential elements as the expansion of global business, issues of national security, and healthcare for speakers with limited English proficien-

Senate recognises importance of language in expanding global business

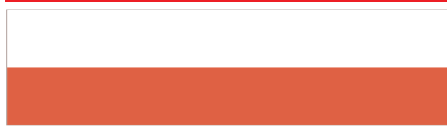
cy. The success of The Association of Language Companies (ALC), as the only association established exclusively to represent and further the interests of US language services companies, reflects a maturing public awareness of these issues. More sophisticated expectations from a better-informed client base suggest a strong future for the industry.

Suzanne Robinson, President Liaison Multilingual and a leading member of American Language Companies (ALC). She is the ALC's observer on the CEN Committee considering the



Standard for the provision of Translation Services.

Email: suzanne@emultilingual.com



We certainly started 2004 with a lot of apprehensions. It was the year when Poland and its neighbours joined the European Union; a very important time for us. Its first months brought greater demand for translations, though we were sure that the real boom would come after the accession.

The expected spectacular rise did not happen, though what did change was the structure of translation jobs. We began working for an even greater number of foreign entities. Ease of contact, a smoother invoicing process and the awareness of the common customs area

EU membership reaps its rewards

- Piotr Czajkowski President of GET IT reports

increased the mutual trust between us and our EU partners and facilitated the process of placing orders in Poland. What we used to fear before the accession was that we would be swamped by the competition of the old EU states. Personally, I was fearful that our standards, concepts, or even the size of our company would be insufficient for us to effectively compete with powerful firms from Western Europe. Consequently, I was glad to find out that our ideas about running the company, our ISO, certified as early as 2001, the headcount (18 in-house employees), our large group of contractors, over one million euros in annual turnover, our reference list containing the names of the most prominent global corporations and our work as a contractor of the European Commission are all aspects of the GET IT activity which we are genuinely proud of. We are comfortably able to face increased competition and this has made us look into the future with hope and trust.

The market? The market is changing. Cooperating with translators residing outside Poland is becoming increasingly popular. We work with contractors all over the world. Translations into European and non-European languages performed by native speakers are no longer a problem. The market is transforming to keep up with the mentality of

its users. Some time ago it was unthinkable to have a native proofreader in Australia. Today she/he will easily enter information into the database placed on our server in Warsaw. No-one finds it strange that orders are transferred online or that information about finished translations is sent to a client via e-mail or a text message. Everyone is used to electronic signatures or full CRM in contacts between translation offices and their clients. This is how the world is changing and we change accordingly. Neither Poland nor the other new EU Member States lag behind old Europe in terms of technology. Products and services offered are at the highest global level, which is indicated by continuously increasing turnover, also with foreign entities. Some global companies transfer their production to Poland, some also offer their services here and open representative offices. In our field, we see such firms as Bowne Global or Alpnet, who coexist with us in the market. There is plenty of room.

What else do we see here?

One of the things is the twilight of old technologies. In our contacts with clients, facsimiles and couriers have given way to the Internet - e-mail, wire transfer and web communicators. We are observing a slow decline in the amount

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of printed material, which is being replaced by multimedia presentations, web pages and web catalogues. The importance of the geographical location of companies and their addresses is decreasing, what matters more are unchanging e-mail addresses and web sites, on-line ordering and the possibility of obtaining a finished translation without moving from your desk.

What will the Polish world of translations be like in 2005? I believe that it will grow more and more professional. Also, we will observe the phenomenon

of polarisation. Large companies with a logistics and technology background will get stronger and subcontract some jobs to smaller, more specialised and brand-focused ones. Advertising, marketing and PR on large scale will be a luxury accessible only to the largest firms. Translators will also specialise to a greater extent and I hope that they will more cooperate with agencies rather than work on a freelance basis, which is a common phenomenon in Poland, though admittedly becoming less so.

One clearly visible change in the Polish market, as well as throughout the world, is the increased demand for translating

Internet sites. More and more companies seem to realise that English must not be the only language to use, so multilingual web pages are becoming more and more popular. Apart from this, people travel looking for new opportunities and perspectives, which means that the demand for conference interpreting is growing - Poland hosts an increasing number of them.

Hopefully these trends will continue.

Piotr Czajkowski is President of GET IT Ltd an overseas member of the Association of Translation Companies.

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After a dramatic rise in translation work during the millennium boom, especially in ICT, the Dutch translation sector has seen a stabilization in turnover over the past few years, in line with most of the business community.

The largest translation companies in the Netherlands still deal mainly with translations for the ICT sector and have survived the dot com fallout. The smaller companies deal with all kinds of texts or specialize in legal, technical, scientific, policy or commercial texts. The market

The Netherlands market still benefitting from ICT

- reports Michel Vrisekoop of the ATA

is demand-led, so trading conditions are tight.

Quality is another important market criterion, and one on which the Dutch ATA is also focused, by means of its quality control standard 'Taalmerk'.

The Dutch ATA celebrated its 10th anniversary on 6 November 2004. The celebratory congress was entitled 'Translations in 2015' and the topics discussed included the opportunities offered and threats posed by machine translation, subcontracting translation work to

low-wage countries such as India and China, European translation standards and global networking.

It was expected that in 10 years' time, translations will be generated mostly by computers, but will still need the finishing human touch, especially in specialized fields.

Michel Vrisekoop is President of ATA.

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The Belgian Association of translation companies, (BQTA-Belgian Quality Translation Association asbl), consider 2004 as a consolidation year, compared with 2003. Many pressures have been made on our customers (mostly by their own management) to decrease their overall costs, which include translation costs. Many projects have been reduced from, for example, 15 languages to 10 or 5. Many projects have been delayed.

Thus, our feeling is that, in 2004, there was no increase of the global translation market.

However, there was an increase in the number of translation companies in the market; which meant an increase in competition, pressure on the margins, and sometimes Internet companies selling at cost prices.

This situation is very serious and is damaging the image of our sector. BQTA feels that our industry must react by educating the customers and by selling on

Price pressure as more companies enter translation market

- reports Fernand Bouceau of BQTA

quality over price. This strategy will be implemented in 2005. BQTA hopes that EUATC will also follow this strategy.

Demand growing in 2005

This could be eased by the fact that the year 2005 seems to show a newly growing demand for translations. BQTA feels that the coming twelve months will be more positive in terms of volume and that hopefully the prices will reflect the cost of quality.

BQTA remains confident in the mid and long-term development of multilingualism in Europe, America, and Asia.

BQTA will develop an action focused on the customers in order to sell them on the importance of their commercial image, and the need to provide top quality in their communication systems (including translation). This quality has a price, and is an investment in their future.

Fernand Bouceau is President BQTA



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LETTERS

If you have views and opinions about anything you read in **Communicate** send a letter to the editor: info@atc.org.uk





Moves towards peace bring hope for Israeli translation market

- report from Tova Ichai

The Israeli market has suffered quite a lot during the past four years due to internal political problems that have immensely affected business in general - private companies as well as the public sector.

Starting in 2001 Israel experienced the collapse of the high-tech industry, which had tremendous repercussions on the economy. Then, of course, the events of 9/11 and the growing effects of international terrorism.

In Israel we found both small and medium-sized businesses closing because of debts and the lack of cash flow. Banks do not grant credit as before. Large private companies were forced to cutback overheads by reducing payrolls, either by firing personnel or by cutting back in salaries, benefits and bonuses. Another solution, in many cases, was to relocate offices in an attempt to reduce rent and other expenses

Exclusive locations such as prestigious high-rises found themselves with empty large rentable spaces. The owners started proposing free rentals as long as tenants would cover all other expenses.

Due to closure or reduced activities of private businesses, the public sector, has found itself with less income taxes being paid by the public. With less funds available, payments from official sources were delayed - or sometimes completely 'unavailable' - causing a domino effect and resulting in cash flow strictures for municipalities as well as for commercial companies. Many municipalities have been unable to meet their payroll commitments, and the hardships have continued to plague the economy. Many businesses who worked primarily with the public sector had to close, and there was a very high rate of bankruptcy during 2002-2003.

Unfortunately, a high level of unemployment continues in 2005.

Forecast for the next 12 months

The political constellation has recently started to change. There is new leadership in the Palestinian territory, bringing with it new hopes. Until this moment, there was little hope. Now at least, hope has returned. Investments have started coming back to the region and activity is increasing. If the new promises will be kept, the entire region will flourish and economic prosperity will very quickly be restored, since the infrastructure is already in place.

For the time being there is some resistance inside Israel from certain political parties against the decisions of the Prime Minister. But the Prime Minister is determined to proceed with the peace process despite any opposition there may be.

How our organisation is doing

Our organisation started in 1993 with the local market only. Our clients came to us directly from the private and the public sector, as well as private individuals.

In 2001 we entered the international market. Now we are working with Europe, USA, Canada and Asia. Our international clients are for the most part translation companies. A small number of direct clients and some private individuals also reach us through our website. Now, 30% of our activity is international, while the rest remains local. We aspire to increase this percentage by making contacts and networking with different countries.

Expectations for the coming year

With renewed hope in our region, our prospects are good. If things continue to improve there will be new prosperity in



Tova Ichai

the region - and that will include Israel's neighbors, who we hope will stop being hostile. Politics has a strong effect on the activity of a business.

Regarding threats to translation companies in Israel, these come both from individual freelance translators and also from translation companies that are cutting prices, or providing poor quality translations; thereby giving the entire profession a bad reputation. We, as a professional translation company, go the extra mile by giving the added value of in-house quality control, which is provided by a proof-reader and an editor. This service is not always understood by the local client, who looks 'merely' at price and delivery time.

Opportunities for translation companies in Israel abound if there will be peace in the region. Israel is a country of immigrants where one can find any language one might require. If investments come from all over the world, as expected, there will be a great need for translations in different languages. There is also a huge potential market for Arabic, and we believe that this language will prove to be much more significant for us.

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Hungary wrestling with state monopoly

Laszlo Vegso reports

Naturally, the rule of thumb that growth in the translation market is always at least proportionate to the increase in GDP will still be in effect. This means that an increase of a few percent can by all means be expected in 2005. Of course, how much growth and in which sectors is what really matters to translation companies. This is why it's worth looking at each high-growth sector separately.

First of all, the state still has a monopoly on the official notarization of translations in Hungary. The Hungarian gov-

ernment took steps to create a new law on the notarization of translations after EU accession (May 1, 2004); however, no new law was adopted in 2004, probably due to the unexpected change in government that took place in the fall. I participated in the first couple of meetings on the preparation of the new law, and according to the opinions voiced there (which were completely concordant with the suggestions I myself put forward), notarization of translation and the task of court interpretation should be gradually transferred over to translators. The state company that monopolized this business



Laszlo J. Vegso

made €6.5 million in revenue in 2003

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from notarizing translations and the other translation services associated with it. Therefore the new law can be expected to increase the income of translation service providers by some €7 million per year.

A second important area may be the increase in demand for translation services on the part of industrial sectors connected to motorway construction. After two years in slow gear, new motorway construction projects finally got under-

way in 2004. This will definitely become a steady source of work in 2005.

The third area relates to the translation and interpretation needs of EU institutions, which continually grew in 2004 following accession. This growth should reach a level where it starts to stabilize in 2005. On the one hand, it increases the number of translators working at the institutions themselves; on the other hand it means a greater number of translations ordered from contracting translation agencies. The lack of simultaneous

interpreters with two languages is perceptible. These days it is not easy to put together an interpreting team consisting of simultaneous interpreters who have two foreign languages, because most of those with practice and training now interpret on site for one of the EU institutions.

Laszlo J. Vegso is CEO, President MULTI-LINGUA, Inc. and a director of the Association of Hungarian Translation Companies.

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Those wishing to compromise on quality and government interference are seen as the greatest threats to the translation market in Romania.

That is the verdict of the newly formed Romanian Translators Association and the soon-to-be-established Romanian Association of Translation and Interpreting Companies.

Those wishing to sell on quality rather than price have formed the new association (see story below) and have applied to join the European Union of Associations of Translation Companies.

Speaking about the market conditions, Florin Zori, the Vice President of the Romanian Translators Association and a leading figure behind the formation of the Romanian Association of Translation and Interpreting Companies said: "We think that time is of the essence and having an organisation that can challenge

Government attempts to interfere in translation market thwarted

cut price low quality providers is essential. We have a young market and we need to educate purchasers to the benefits of always seeking a quality solution to their translation needs."

However, last year a new law in Romania posed potentially an even greater threat to the stability of the translation market. It required translators to apply for licences by the middle of 2005 to be able to continue working.

The law was introduced in June, but had yet to be applied when a general election returned new Government in December. This presented an ideal opportunity for the newly formed Translators Association to mount a successful lobbying campaign both in the corridors of power and the media to amend the law.

"We felt that the Government should not be interfering in the profession. Around 12,000 Romanian translators would have been required to pass an examination,

regardless of their education or experience. Fees of between €200 and €300 per language were being proposed. For translators with two or three language pairs the financial impact would have been devastating.

The impact on translation companies who both employ in-house translators and regularly use freelancers would have been damaging. Thankfully the new Government saw sense and dropped the requirement."

Having seen off the Government threat the two associations will be focusing its efforts on the quality agenda.

Florin Zori is Managing Director of ASCO INTERNATIONAL SRL, one of the five leading translation companies behind the formation of the Romanian Association of Translation and Interpreting Companies.

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The European Union of Associations of Translation Companies is set to further expand its membership base.

The latest country to ask to be admitted to the EUATC is Romania.

Up to five translation companies have agreed to establish the Romanian Association of Translation Companies (AFIT), which will use the values of EUATC and the coming EN 15038 standard as its base.

The initial steps were completed last year to register the association's name AFIT (Asociatia Firmelor de Interpretariat si Traduceri) and a web site has also been established: ww.afit.ro.

The newly formed Association has formally applied to join the EUATC. Other former Eastern bloc countries to have

EUATC expands membership base

joined the EUATC in the last year include, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Poland. Hungary have been members for some years.

2004 also saw the readmittance of The Netherlands' ATA to membership of the EUATC. They were founder members and stepped back while it resolved its approach to the EUATC's CEN initiative.

Alfredo Spagna, who took over as President of the EUATC at the start of the year from Spain's Miguel Nunez told Communicate: "I am delighted that we have prompted the formation of yet another translation company association in Europe and I hope that the application will be approved by our Council.

"We represent 15 national associations which in turn speak for more than 400 translation companies across Europe. That puts us in a powerful position to speak to European institutions with great authority."

Spagna has made strengthening the links between the Association and EC institu-



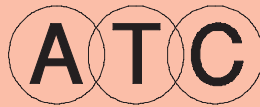
Alfredo Spagna

tions one of his top priorities for his two year term as president. Another is to help develop further the worldwide links following on from 'a meeting of minds' in Canada last year.

"I will wish to see through to a positive conclusion the CEN project and, hopefully mount the Association's first conference in Brussels later this year at which the Standard is bound to feature."

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