



Top tips for working with translators

- If you have materials that require translation you should use the services of a professional translator. Badly translated material makes a poor first impression on potential clients and may even be insulting or offensive.
- Decide exactly what information needs to be translated. Translators will charge according to word count so don't waste money translating passages that will be completely irrelevant to foreign clients.
- Some areas of specialism may be more expensive and prices will vary depending on language combination. Rare language combinations or specialist subject areas are likely to be more expensive.
- Keep sentences short and simple as they will translate better and avoid culture-bound clichés or literary references as they don't translate and will probably be misunderstood by your target audience anyway.
- Finalise the text in your own language first before you begin the translation process – the more versions you have, the easier it is for errors to go unnoticed.
- Make sure your translator knows what and who your text is for. The style, word choice, phrasing and sentence length will all depend on who the text is aimed at and where it will appear.
- If your subject is technical make sure your translator has knowledge and experience of translating materials within that industry.
- Don't be tempted to bring the foreign language text into line with your own standards. Be aware that typographical conventions vary from language to language – for example in German nouns take capital letters and in Spanish neither months nor days of the week take an initial capital.
- Good translators will ask questions and welcome feedback during the translation process – you should find this a useful part of the exercise as it helps to clarify any sections that could be misunderstood.
- At the final stages, always have typeset copy proofread by the translator to ensure designers and editors have not inadvertently amended anything which changes the meaning of the translated content.
- Discuss with your translator how you would like the final translation delivered – e.g. in Portable Document Format (PDF) for easy distribution or html file if the translated material will be used online.
- And finally, give realistic deadlines, with due consideration for the time required for the process of translation

For more information or to find translators in your area please contact the Regional Language Network on 0121 329 3297 or info@rln-westmidlands.com