

## Reaching Your Audience in a Global Economy

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### Global Language Solutions offers tips for translation success

In today's competitive business landscape, most companies simply cannot afford to ignore global markets. International sales contribute substantial earning opportunities both on- and offline. However, entering a foreign market can be challenging: unfamiliar advertising cultures, different laws and regulations, and a foreign language present potential obstacles. How can you be sure you are selecting a translation team that has the experience and the training to properly convey your message in the target language...and, for that matter, culture?

Based on its experience translating documents and websites for Fortune 500 global brands and leaders in the health, financial, legal, and government sectors, Global Language Solutions offers the following tips for a successful translation process by selecting the right provider:

1. **Commitment to quality.** Make sure that a defined workflow and documented quality assurance procedures are in place and are used at all times. Look for a provider with a firmly established project management process involving different team members (translation, editing, proofreading). Don't be afraid to ask the provider how they ensure quality. Whether a \$150 or \$50,000 job, one-page or 200-page document, the level and commitment to quality and adherence to processes and procedures should be the same.
2. **The price is right.** To provide quality, it takes time and effort. Just because you select the agency with the lowest cost does not mean you will get the worst service – or the higher priced translation does not guarantee the best accuracy. One way certain providers cut costs is to sacrifice quality. For example, they may choose not to follow a multi-step quality process. Instead, they use one translator and skip the editing and proofreading stages by other team members. Because of this, they might be able to offer rock bottom prices. On the other hand, there is no need to pay extra for extensive overhead costs. Keep in mind - price is only one factor to consider.
3. **Industry expertise.** Just as you would not hire a divorce lawyer to manage your meeting with the IRS, it is highly recommended you hire a translation agency or translator with experience in your specific industry. This is particularly important for highly regulated industries, such as medical devices, clinical research, finance, etc.
4. **Understand staffing decisions.** Just who is really doing your translations? Are you working with a one-person show, or does the agency have a large pool of translators to pull from? Were all those translators carefully screened and tested during candidate selection process? Does the agency require its translators to be degreed? Does it have an in-house certification program? Visit [www.globallanguages.com/FAQ\\_index\\_2.html#9](http://www.globallanguages.com/FAQ_index_2.html#9) to review GLS' translator selection criteria, which include native fluency in the target language, a linguistic degree from one of the world's major universities or language schools, industry specialization demonstrated by an advanced degree or specialty translation experience, knowledge of word-processing/ email programs, and computerized translation memory tools, translation references, and more.

5. **All words and cultures are not created equal.** The experienced translation agency will address country-specific cultural and linguistic issues. Brand names, for example, may need to be adjusted to target cultures to ensure that they don't have different connotations in the foreign language that could prove to be damaging to the brand or even offensive. Coca-Cola sells a lot of Diet Coke in the U.S. However, 'diet' in Germany and Italy suggests illness, thus the company renamed it Coca-Cola Light<sup>1</sup>.
6. **Use translation memory (TM) tools.** Translation memory (TM) software analyzes repetitive text in the source documents and then queries a translation memory database to identify previously translated segments. TM ensures consistency of terminology, expedites future revisions, and reduces translation costs. Consistency is improved because the TM software will always propose the same translation for the same source sentence. Even a large group of translators, working from different locations, can produce consistent translations, provided they work from the same translation memory. These tools should not be confused with Machine Translation (MT) software.
7. **Turn to professionals.** You've heard the saying: "Do what you do best and outsource the rest." Since translation is most likely not your core competency, you're probably in the market for a professional translation provider. But remember, not everyone who speaks a foreign language is a translator. Ensure your vendor has experience in your particular vertical market, understands the regulations and nuances of your business or service, demonstrates an efficient quality process, and can supply a reputable client list with references.
8. **Centralize the translation process.** In addition to the aforementioned tips for selecting a language service provider, successful translation is also an internal initiative. Often time, global companies with several offices both domestically and around the world rely on their distributors, agents, and representatives in other countries to do the translations. Needless to say, sometimes these translations are unprofessional or even disastrous and, in many cases, no one knows what has been done and who is in charge. By "centralizing" translation management via one department, a core contact team, or even a designated project manager, companies can streamline all translation efforts and communicate their messages across to various countries more consistently, effectively and, often, less expensively.



### About Global Language Solutions

Global Language Solutions (GLS) is a full-service translation company delivering solutions in over 100 languages to increase its clients' multicultural and international market share. GLS provides culturally and linguistically accurate document translations, website localization, multilingual typesetting/ graphic design, real-time interpreting, voice-overs, and globalization consulting services. Its clients include public and private companies, convention centers, government agencies, and multinational organizations across a variety of industries. For more information, visit [www.globallanguages.com](http://www.globallanguages.com) or call +1-949-798-1400.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniels, John, Lee Radebaugh, and Daniel Sullivan. *Globalization & Business*. Pearson Education, NJ. 2002.)