

### **Question 1**

What languages can you handle?

#### **Answer**

All languages. We handle all languages on a regular basis. The main European and Asian languages tend to be the ones we translate most frequently, but we have handled many more exotic languages too. The only time we have been completely stumped was for a very obscure dialect only spoken by a few people in deepest Greenland.

### **Question 2**

Do you use in-house or freelance translators?

#### **Answer**

We use native-speaking, freelance translation professionals and always endeavour to find the right person with the right skills for each project. Wherever possible, we work with the same translators all the time. This ensures that our clients receive consistent translations, which is of the utmost importance.

### **Question 3**

Where are your translators based?

#### **Answer**

We have an extensive database of qualified (and tested) translators. Some are based in the UK (this is often helpful when our UK-based clients need translators on-site to test their localised software) and others are based in their native countries. For those based in the UK, we insist that they keep in regular contact with their native countries, in order that their language and terminology skills are always completely up-to-date.

### **Question 4**

What are your rates for translation?

#### **Answer**

Our rates are very competitive and certainly lower than the rates of most other companies focusing on IT translation and software localisation. We keep our overheads low, in order to keep our rates down. We also don't make a charge for project management, unlike most other localisation companies. If you have a project that may need translation, we would be happy to provide you with a competitive quote. Please do not hesitate to contact us directly or send your questions/comments using our enquiry form.

### **Question 5**

What areas does **SOFTtalk** Translations specialise in?

#### **Answer**

Our focus is on IT and related work. We believe it is vital to focus on just one area – it is far better to be highly skilled in one area, than to have limited skills in several. Our background is in IT and we have the know-how and ability to provide excellent translation services to IT companies worldwide.

### **Question 6**

Do you offer services other than translation?

#### **Answer**

Translation is our core business. It is also our only business. Again, we believe in offering our clients the best service possible in just one field, rather than giving them just adequate service in more than one field. Our clients deserve the best and that is what we aim to give them.

### **Question 7**

What kinds of products do you translate?

#### **Answer**

As mentioned above, we focus on IT translation. So, we offer localisation of software products, of user documentation and of marketing information. For software, we offer a full localisation service – to fully localise the product to suit its target market. This means that we translate the software, build it as necessary and fully test it to make sure it complies with the client's requirements. If needed, we can also take screen captures from the software for inclusion in on-line help or user documentation. We also offer an on-line help and documentation translation service; for on-line help, this can also be built and fully tested and for documentation, we can also arrange layout work, once the translation is complete. In terms of marketing information, we can translate press releases, website information, packaging, brochures, banners and other marketing collateral.

### **Question 8**

What software packages do you work with?

#### **Answer**

We use all the most common applications for word processing, DTP, help compilation, imaging and software editing. If a client's requirement involves the use of a product that we don't already own, we make every effort to understand the precise requirements and to obtain a copy of the appropriate software if possible. Alternatively, we would work with the client to find the best way of working with their files, to provide the highest quality of translation in a format suitable to their needs.

We also use translation memory software - for further details see the next question.

### **Question 9**

Do you use translation memory software and what does this mean for me?

#### **Answer**

Yes, we do work with translation memory software.

The use of translation memory software helps to ensure cost savings and consistency. The way that it works is that as a translator works on a document, the source and translated texts are entered into a translation memory. As you proceed through the document, if the same text is repeated, the translation memory prompts you to re-use the earlier translation of the same text. This makes the translation process more consistent, more cost-efficient and faster. The real benefits come when you then update the same documents and can process the files against the translation memory - the repetitions and close matches are already stored in the memory. So you are guaranteed to make cost savings and to ensure consistency across your documents.

### Question 10

Translation is a word familiar to me, but what is meant by localisation (or localization)?

#### Answer

Translation is a discipline which will convert your English documentation into one or several foreign languages, while preserving your original messages and making sure that they are suitable for your target market(s). Localisation (or localization to use the US spelling) is a similar process applied to software, but it does not restrict itself to words. Your software needs to talk the local language fluently, taking into account hardware considerations (e.g. AZERTY keyboard instead of QWERTY), software restrictions (is it flexible enough to have "Print Preview" translated as "Aperçu avant impression", an almost 90% expansion) and cultural issues ("AM" and "PM" are meaningless to most Europeans who also use the comma as the decimal separator). When these rules are applied to one specific country, the word localisation is used but internationalisation (internationalization) and globalisation (globalization) are preferred for enabling products for world markets.

### Question 11

My products are going to be sold via distributors/agents/subsidiaries in Europe. Surely it should be up to them to look after localisation. After all, it is them who will be selling my product.

#### Answer

Precisely, they need a good product to be able to sell it. So they need to be involved in the localisation process, making decisions about terminology, added functionalities, etc. But does your representative really want to spend three months or so translating your product, when he or she could be out there selling it. For that matter, would you not rather have orders coming in, rather than investing money in your sales people for translation? Not to mention the fact that translation and localisation is a profession. The input of sales/marketing and technical people is obviously important to get the right product to market, but computer-oriented translators specialise in software localisation and are used to solving problems associated with mnemonics, space restrictions, short-keys, etc. quickly and efficiently. They also have the linguistic skills necessary to produce a truly professional product.

### Question 12

OK, so I need to translate, I would prefer my representatives to sell rather than translate, but I do not know how many copies I am going to sell out there and translation can be expensive, can't it?

#### Answer

It does not need to be. As for any other service, prices vary according to quality, response time, complexity, company overheads, etc. and experience. Software localisation experience is something that we have a lot of at **SOFTtalk**, over 20 years of it. We are remaining purposefully small, because we want our clients to pay for their product localisation, not for our overheads. Our consultancy services come free for any committed project. We have developed very good relationships with our clients' subsidiaries/distributors and above all, with our clients in the UK, in Europe and around the world. We would be happy to come and discuss your requirements at any time.

### Question 13

Is there a check-list of localisation issues that I should take into account while developing software for world markets?

#### Answer

The issues involved in localisation are very much product-dependent, although there are some generic ones, such as time and date formats. **SOFTtalk** Translations can also help here - we have created a set of datasheets specifically aimed at companies who are new to localisation and which will help steer you through the possible pitfalls. These are available on request - please do not hesitate to contact us directly or send your questions/comments using our enquiry form.

### Question 14

This all sounds terribly complicated and expensive. Do I really need to localise the software to sell my products into Europe? Isn't documentation enough?

#### Answer

Technically speaking, EEC Regulations only require documentation to be translated. But once in Europe, your product will need to compete not only with other packages which may or may not be localised, but also with local packages developed in the native language.

Contrary to popular belief, not everyone out there speaks English and given the choice between a "native" package and "an English-speaking" product of similar specifications, the user will most certainly choose the most natural solution: the application that speaks his or her language.

### Question 15

How can we expect our products to compete with "native" packages, or with international companies with a large international infrastructure?

#### Answer

**SOFTtalk** Translations specialises in translation and localisation services. We have many years of experience of dealing with these issues and we have a portfolio of products successfully localised using suppliers based all over the world. We are ideally placed to offer you a complete service, from initial consultancy and advice, to reverse engineering, localisation, product rebuilding and testing so that no matter what the size of your company, your product will look just as good as that of your competitors.

### Question 16

From what I know about translation, it can be a bit of a minefield, can't it?

#### Answer

In the wrong hands, yes, it can. But **SOFTtalk** Translations has been in the business long enough to help you through that minefield and to get your products to market with the minimum of fuss and the minimum of expense. If you are new to translation, we can provide you with copies of documents we have put together about developing your products with translation in mind and about reducing the costs associated with translation. These are available on request - please do not hesitate to contact us directly or send your questions/comments using our enquiry form. We would also be pleased to come and discuss your specific requirements with you.

### Question 17

Can you show me some comments from existing clients?

#### Answer

A selection of comments from existing clients can be found on the **SOFTtalk** website (Testimonials page). Here you will find a small selection of unsolicited comments from our clients. This page is updated regularly and comments from previous months are also available in the archive section.