

Enabling effective communication with its large number of non-English speaking residents has long been a priority for Wakefield District Council. This saw the opening of Wakefield Language Services in 1989, an interpretation and translation service available to all staff from local statutory and voluntary organisations, such as Family Services, Health, Housing, Benefits Agencies, Job Centres and GP's.

Wakefield Language Services aim to provide a progressive and high quality range of language services, as and when required. They ensure that the service is managed effectively and can cope with all irregular trends and service uptake in terms of translation and interpretation projects.

The Wakefield Language services allocate interpreters for different appointments within family services, such as meetings, interviews, and doctors and hospital appointments which are sourced internally from their large pool of interpreters. They also arrange for documents to be translated into different languages, Braille, large text and onto audio tape. Over the last six years the demand for translation at Wakefield Language Services has grown dramatically, so they recently began outsourcing all translation work to their sole provider, Applied Language Solutions.

Challenge

The task is for Applied Language to complete all translation projects on behalf of Wakefield Language Services, to ensure that the staff members of the Wakefield District Council receive the desired translated documents and publicity to distribute between their members.

The documents mainly consist of Government and Educational materials including, school letters, government information forms, social service and housing letters, which once translated will aid the

local families and supporting groups. Due to the specific and delicate information that may be included within these documents it is imperative that all documents are accurately translated and remain contextually accurate.

Applied Language Solutions regularly embark on translations for specialised industries such as Medical, Legal, Financial, Technical and Marketing, including whole websites and printed catalogues. They also provide language interpreting services as well as British Sign Language interpreting.

Wakefield Language Services are "so happy with the service". They believe that "the level of service and price can not be beaten" so they "have no intentions of changing providers in the future."

Due to the regularity and increasing demand for translation, Wakefield Language Services must keep costs to a minimum and are therefore seeking a high quality service at an affordable and competitive price, with a quick translation turnaround.

Also for this reason, they require a reliable service that can contend with regular projects in a spectrum of different languages. Some of the language combinations have included, from English into Polish, Farsi, Latvian, Portuguese, Czech, Urdu and Russian and from German, Chinese and Kurdish into English. Some more uncommon language combinations include Pashto into Kurdish and English into Tagalog and Tigrinya.

Each project is given an individual deadline which in some cases may be restrictive. When this occurs, there is a greater emphasis on ensuring the project runs smoothly and without any problems.

Solutions

Each company, who outsource their translation to Applied Language Solutions, is given a dedicated project account manager who will remain the key contact for their account. Once a new account is set up and the price is agreed by both Applied Language and Wakefield Language Services, the project account manager must then conduct a thorough selection process to ensure they have selected the best and most suitable translators for the job, from their database of highly skilled Individuals.

Applied Language Solutions is committed to using only professional in-country translators and interpreters, of whom they have over 14,000 on their books. These translators work in over 150 languages including all the major European, Asian, African, Middle Eastern and American languages.

As the translation projects are regular and ongoing, communication and a strong working relationship between Wakefield Language Services and Applied Language Industry and Project Managers is key. This will ensure that all instructions are clearly set and well understood. Any problems that may arise between company contacts can have a seriously negative impact on the partnership, therefore it is imperative that Applied Language deliver 100% quality, 100% of the time.

“The customer care was especially good. They are always very helpful and polite. We always get an excellent, fast and professional service.”

As each project is completely different from the other, it is the job of the assigned project manager to select suitable translators with the correct skill set. Wakefield Language Services documents are for departments within Wakefield District Council so the selected translators require skills and experience in government and educational translations and in some cases, a background in housing and social services. Additionally, due to

the varied target languages, most projects require a different translator.

The deadlines set by Wakefield Language services are usually straightforward giving Applied Language a suitable turnover time. Although, there have been a few occasions when the deadline is restrictive. This will place more emphasis on the effectiveness of the project management. The processes must be streamlined to ensure that the level of service is consistently maintained and that Wakefield Language Services and their customers are happy with the service.

Applied Language will always ensure that set deadlines are achievable. If the deadline is extremely tight additional translators will be assigned to the project to ensure the deadlines are met.

Benefits

Due to the increasing demand for translation, Wakefield Language Services planned to outsource their translation service. In order to select the best and most reliable translation provider, they enquired at a number of different translation companies, out of which Applied Language had the quickest response rate. After being contacted by Applied Language, Wakefield Language Services were quick to realise their translation costs were the most competitive.

“The cost of translation is extremely low. You can't beat it.”

The whole process, from when each project is upgraded and assigned to a translator to the completion and distribution of the translated documents is very efficient. This was made easier with the regular and thorough communication between Applied Language and the customer. Regular contact ensures that the project manager has clear instructions of exactly what the project entails. All details surrounding the languages needed for translation, the context and style of the document and the deadline date will be discussed.

As Wakefield Language Services often request translations from English into a number of diverse languages, when assigning new translators they will be briefed and be fully aware of the translated documents end-use. This process has been streamlined by dedicating a project manager to this customer, as they have developed an understanding of the customer and have a full knowledge of their translation history.

Government Translation

Once the project is assigned to a translator, they will couple their government and educational experience with exceptional linguistic skills, which gives them an excellent knowledge of the subject matter. For each selected translator, it is imperative that they have a wealth of first-rate experience working with Applied Language Solutions, guaranteeing translation quality.

On the rare occasion that the project deadline is restricting, it is vital that the process runs smoothly and Applied Language always deliver. The project team and translators will always do all they can to meet and exceed deadlines.

“The turnaround is fantastic. Regardless of whether the deadline is limiting, the process is always extremely quick. On many occasions we receive the translations next day delivery.”

Future

Wakefield Language Services are “so happy with the service”. They believe that “the level of service and price can not be beaten” so they “have no intentions of changing providers in the future.”

For more information on Wakefield Language services see:

<http://www.wakefield.gov.uk/HealthAndSocialCare/wls/default.htm>

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For a free quote visit www.appliedlanguage.com

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