

APPLIED LANGUAGE PLAN FOR PROJECT SET-UP

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1 Introduction

Applied Language Solutions understand how important quality is to **our customers** and therefore, as a follow up to our submission of tests pieces, we would like to put forward the following quality plan to achieve that. This plan covers the all-important 'project set-up' steps which, in our experience, are key to successful on-going quality in all translation requirements.

2 Project set-up steps:

2.1 Understanding the Project Requirements

One of the key elements to setting up a project is ensuring that both parties are clear on the exact workflows currently in place and to agree upon the new methodologies to be put into practise. Depending on the project, conveying and understanding these requirements could take a few on-site meetings. These meetings would not be charged as an expense as it is all part of the learning that will make the account work in the most time- and cost- efficient manner possible for both parties.

2.2 Choosing the Right Translators

Getting the right team of translators in place is one of the critical success actions for setting up this account. The text for translation in this account can be quite specialised and technical. The translators need not only have the right level of subject matter expertise, but also need to have a writing style that fits with the customer image. For the customer's material to have the same 'look and feel' about it across each language, the translation team must be able to produce work with the same style and feel as each other. Mimicking someone else's writing style does not always come easy to people so starting out with the right team who are naturally able to produce the right kind of text is what we aim to do.

The process for choosing the right team of translators would ideally involve the customer's staff. The reason for this is that it gets the buy-in of the customer's local offices into the process and helps them to 'accept' the translations. In our experience, there is usually some resistance to local offices working with translators through a company they have never seen or chosen directly. We plan to mitigate this by getting the local offices bought-in to the process of choosing translators from the start. By allowing them to pick the translators they like best from a range of sample translations, they are immediately bought-in to the process and feel some ownership of it.

This means that if we deem it necessary to have a team of 10 translators in place for a particular language, we would put a team of 13-14 in place to mitigate any leavers, conflicts, holidays, etc. Then we would put forward in the region of 20 translation samples so that the customer has a range to choose from. The idea of the test translations is not to make them 'difficult' but rather to mimic a real-life project and realistic circumstances. That way the decision is as realistic as possible.

Once the customer has given feedback on the translation samples, we can start putting the translation team together. The team will receive feedback and training, reference material and methodologies to follow, and will be put on a retainer for the customer so they maintain availability for this account. The team will have a Lead Translator per language, proofreaders, translators and back-up linguists. The Lead Translator will take responsibility for all reference materials, for the glossary, the cleanliness of the translation memory, instructions to the team, Q&A documents, and quality assessments on the translated works. The other main function of this Lead Translator is to

work in conjunction with the customer's in-country staff to get any questions answered and to ensure they understand the customer's business and how translations need to 'sound'.

ALS submitted sample translations already which were given by translators who are approved by other customers in a similar industry/sector. These translators work for us on a regular basis and produce good work for other customers. If these translators are not suitable for the customer's needs, we have a large pool of other resources to choose from. By following the process above, the intention is to find a team of people who can work perfectly with your team.

2.3 Writing an exhaustive Style Guide for each target document

The purpose of a Style Guide is to establish grammar, style and terminology guidelines for the linguists in the team in order to ensure that everyone involved in the project (translators, proofreaders, editors and reviewers) all have the same rules and expectations.

Many different linguistic elements are taken into consideration and the approach to take with them is decided upon and explained. The guidelines will cover things like sentence length, sentence structure, how to use verbs and tenses, measurements, abbreviations, trademarks, tone of voice, style, acronyms, etc.

Customers will have their own expectations on how they want a translated document to 'sound' or 'feel' and without identifying the linguistic elements that make up that style or feel, then it is harder for the translator to hit exactly the right register. These expectations may vary between language and market and so it is recommended that a style guide is written for each target language.

Applied Language Solutions can offer a sample style guide to use as a basis for this piece although the customer's input is valued here as it is their style and feel that we are trying to identify and portray.

2.4 Alignment of Translated Materials or quality check on existing TMs

Translation memory tools (TM) are key to ensuring consistency in terminology, reducing translation timelines (no same sentence needs to be translated twice) and also reducing the cost of translation (for the same reason). It is our plan to set up a TM for our customer's account, in one of two ways. Firstly we could take the customer's already built TM and use that as a base reference tool. It is key that the translation units held within the TM are of a high level of quality to be a useful resource on the account. It needs to be ascertained that the segments in the TM are 100% reliable. Therefore it is suggested to use our approved translators to check and 'clean' the TMs ready for use.

Secondly, there is a way to create translation memories from the translations the customer has done before, and this is through a process called 'alignment'. Ideally Applied Language would be given access to both the source text and the translation of the same text, which means we could put this through our aligning tool. This tool splits both texts using the specified segmentation rules, and then 'aligns' the source text with its translation. A linguist is then hired to check through these alignment files to ensure everything has aligned properly. In case of any mis-alignment, the linguist will fix the issues and ensure that both halves of the segment pairs introduced into the translation memory

have exactly the same meaning. We work on a metric of approximately 30,000 words per day for alignment in the European languages, and about 25,000 words for the Asian languages.

The result of this Alignment is the creation of a database of source + target pairs with the same meaning. These translation units can then be leveraged onto new texts so the same sentence never need be translated twice. That means the customer does not have to pay for it twice, and the time is not spent on translating it twice.

The larger the database of translation units, the better the speed and consistency of translation. It is a worthwhile investment of time to create alignments and the cost of the task will soon start to reap rewards in reducing the cost of actual new translation work.

2.5 Glossary Extraction

Terminology, i.e. the specific words used in your company/industry, needs to be treated very carefully. The use of terms which feel 'unfamiliar' to your customers, or which strike too high or too low a register, can leave the customers with a less positive experience when they interact with your company. The words you use portray your style, your register, your 'feel' and need to be taken seriously. The same goes for the translation of a term. Different languages will undoubtedly have more than one way to express what an English word says. Which translations are chosen needs to be consistently and carefully done. What we plan to do to set the account up properly is to look through some of the English material and identify words which either recur many times, or have a very specific meaning. These terms will be extracted into a glossary database with some supporting information (meaning, part of speech, etc.) and then translated by the most senior linguist on the account. These terms will then be passed by a customer contact point for their approval. Once everyone is agreed on the terms to use, the glossary database is used in conjunction with the translation memory software, and each time a glossary term is present in the source text, the glossary tool will offer the translated term for use in the translation.

This glossary tool also has a QA function which can be run across the translation at the end. This searches the source text for any terms held in the glossary and reports back a 'hit' or a 'miss' depending whether it finds the translated glossary term in the translated text.

2.6 Training for the team of linguists

Once the team of linguists have been chosen, it is essential to train them so they feel part of the team and understand how they fit into the overall project. They need to be trained on the customer's products, the language they use, the message and style they are trying to portray and how they intend their customers to use their site. It is only when the linguistic team are fully bought into the product and the message the customer is trying to portray that they will be able to do their best work.

Our suggestion is ideally a half day on-line meeting to talk through the customer's products, style, target audience, etc.

Once all of the above is in place, the next key factor is to ensure the team is ready when you need them. Project planning starts and the team are all bought into the project schedule, key milestones and other important dates.