



WHY SHOULD I USE A LANGUAGE SERVICE PROVIDER (LSP)?

Your company needs to translate its products, documents, or web content, and it may seem like the easiest solution is to find a bilingual person in your department to do the translations. But is that the best strategy? A bilingual co-worker typically doesn't have the time or skills to properly translate your content. Not to mention, it will be next to impossible to find a polyglott who speaks all the different languages you may require! A typical translation project involves much more than just translation.

If you want the translated information to have a professional presentation—one that reflects the caliber of your business—you will also need desktop publishing, file engineering, and project management to coordinate all the steps.

A Language Service Provider (LSP) works with you to enable the launch of your products into your target markets. This process is known as **localization**.

Localization includes:

1. Translation done by a native speaker of the target language, located in the target market, so you can be sure your message will be understood as you intend
2. Cultural assessments, adaptation, and transcreation (the creative adaptation of marketing copy)
3. Desktop publishing
4. File preparation and preparation of instructions and reference materials for the translators
5. Preparation and use of "assets," including translation memories, style guides, and glossaries that optimize the translation process to ensure quality and reduce your costs
6. Engineering (returning a translated file to its original format, be it a web page, a UI, or a web application)
7. Testing (ensuring that a product works in the target culture)
8. Project management
9. Internationalization audits to ensure that the source material is optimized for localization

Five Important Things an LSP Provides

1. Ability to tackle your translation needs as a program, and identify cheaper, faster, and

better ways of completing your translation work.

2. An understanding of varying file formats and how to handle them.
3. Ability to make the most of the industry's tools, such as translation memory (TM). You can use TM for future updates to reduce the number of words that need translating, saving you time and money.
4. Language strategy consulting, which can help you understand what markets to target, which languages to complete, and which materials to localize.
5. Scale and breadth of resources that you typically can't build or manage internally. An LSP can scale up and down as needed to meet your fluctuating volume demands. Plus, working with an LSP allows you to focus on your company's core competency and leave the translation work to others.

Another advantage?

An LSP employs professional translators. We've all seen the funny email forwards or web posts that contain horrible mistranslations. We assume these were developed by people who did not have a full command of the language. But, it is possible they were developed by bilingual people who simply did not know the cultural nuances, idioms, language conventions, and preferences of the target culture.

Seven Key Differences between Bilinguals and Professional Translators

1. A professional translator is a linguist, with an advanced degree in linguistics, translation studies, etc.
2. Many LSPs require their linguists to reside in the target locale; many bilingual people are well removed from the target culture (consider a third-generation Mexican-American translating for the Mexican market).
3. A professional translator knows the industry tools (such as translation memory) and understands how to use them to speed up work and improve consistency.
4. A professional translator may have an area of expertise such as medical, IT, software, etc.
5. A professional translator may be required to have at least three years of experience in

the localization field to work on your project.

6. A professional translator has successfully completed qualifying translation tests (live project tests).
7. A professional translator knows how to use translation assets, such as glossaries and style guides, and understands their importance. He or she will also be able to contribute to improving them.

Effective translation requires that the translator understand subtleties in both languages. For example:

- ➔ Idioms, metaphors
- ➔ Current terminology in a specific subject matter
- ➔ Cultural differences (especially when regarding variations of the same language, i.e., Spanish)

A professional translator not only considers the words that are used, but also the culturally sensitive matters, resulting in a text that is optimally acceptable and *appealing* to the target audience.

Working with an LSP

An LSP has access to multiple professional resources. (Lionbridge works with nearly 22,000 qualified translators.). Only an LSP has the breadth of resources to tackle a large, multi-language project.

To begin a project, you submit the necessary files to your LSP, along with instructions about the required languages and final file format. The LSP asks if there are any specifications or references that should be used, such as a style guide, glossary, or translation memory, and may suggest creating these things prior to localization. A kickoff meeting helps ensure that all key project details are exchanged between you and the LSP.

Thirteen Tasks an LSP Performs

1. **File preparation.** Extracting text from an application so that translation tools may be used; preparing translation memories.
2. **Localization kit preparation.** Creating a set of instructions for the translator.
3. **Translation.** Rendering the source text into the target language.

4. **Edit.** Ensuring translations are accurate, and contextually and culturally appropriate.
5. **Post-translation engineering.** Clearing protective meta-tagging from the files returned from translation and putting the translation back into its original format (source application).
6. **DTP or build.** Performing desktop publishing (for docs) and/or engineering (for help, web, UI/software, etc.) to recreate the deliverable in the target language.
7. **Proofread / linguistic QA.** Verifying that the finished job conforms to client instructions on format, presentation style, and content.
8. **Graphics localization.** Translating graphics text and resizing, if required.
9. **Facilitation of in-country client review.** Guiding in-country partners' review of the translation.
10. **Implement review comments.**
11. **Final QA.** Reviewing the final translation, using a linguist other than the original.
12. **Testing.** Ensuring that the translation is accurate, that there are no typos or grammatical errors, and that all formatting is correct.
13. **Final production and delivery.** Creating the final deliverable, such as a .PDF, a website, an application, etc.

Example

The web has infinite examples of poorly translated material. These problems can be avoided by using an LSP, and by doing adequate preparation work in collaboration with the LSP. One notable translation error follows:

Global headlines in May 2009 highlighted a translation error made by Audi. Ordinarily, Audi would be celebrating all these minutes of free news coverage over the announcement of an upcoming car, especially in this tough economy.

But instead, Audi is quite embarrassed. What happened?

Audi claims that its PR firm mistranslated the name of the car from German to English as "White Power." This term is synonymous with racial hate, white supremacy, and neo-nazi movements. Not the best image for a German automaker.

Three Things to Remember About LSPs

1. LSPs work with professional translators. A professional translator, with expertise in the field and in the language, will save your company time and money, and help maintain your brand.
2. An LSP will handle all the tasks peripheral to translation.
3. An LSP will help you build a program that eventually saves you time and money, improves your quality, and helps you sell your products abroad.

About Lionbridge

Lionbridge (Nasdaq: LIOX) is the leading provider of translation, localization, and testing services. Organizations in all industries rely on Lionbridge language and testing services to increase international market share, speed adoption of products and content, and ensure the integrity of their global brands. Based in Waltham, Mass., Lionbridge operates across 26 countries, and provides services under the Lionbridge and VeriTest® brands.

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