

Why Translations, Interpreting, Branding Documentation and Cultural Understanding Matter

[Part Three of a Four-Part Series]

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Part One: Translation – Beyond the Word. Delivering the Message
Part Two: Interpreting – Beyond What's Stated. Delivering What's Intended

Document Services – Beyond the Pieces. Delivering Consistency.

In Parts I and II of this series, the definition, value and necessity of translation and interpreting in our global marketplace were discussed. In this third installment, we shift our focus to the meaning and value of document services in order to examine the reasons why it makes sense for these services to be provided with translations.

Avantgarde Translations offers document services strictly in conjunction with the written document translation services we provide. These services essentially involve foreign language typesetting, and there are many potential issues related to this exacting process.

Punctuation and Number Conventions

The proper use of punctuation marks and number conventions top the list of issues that can lead to typesetting confusion. Even in related languages, such as Indo European, number conventions and punctuation mark styles and usage can be very different. The following tables illustrate this:

Table 1: Punctuation Marks in Indo European Languages

Language	Question Mark	Exclamation Mark	Quotes
English	What?	What!	“ ”
French	Quoi ?	Quoi !	« »
Spanish	¿Que?	¡Que!	“ ”
German	Was?	Was!	„ “

Table 2 Number Conventions in Indo European Languages

Language	Thousand Separator	Decimal Separator
English	1,000	1,000.00
French	1.000 or 1 000	1.000,00 or 1 000,00
Spanish	1.000 or 1 000	1.000,00 or 1 000,00
German	1.000	1.000,00

A typesetter or overconfident bilingual person who is unfamiliar with these and other foreign language conventions (such as accent marks) can, with the best of intentions, inadvertently delete or change information, introducing errors into a translation.

Other Typesetting Concerns

Other typesetting issues that can cause translation problems include font style, cross-platform conversions, hyphenation, shrinking and expansion, as well as line and page breaks. And languages that read from right to left present their own unique set of problems.

When cited out of context, some of the unintended errors may be fodder for a good laugh, but in reality, they will be more likely to be the source of an embarrassing or costly glitch in the marketplace for a company. Fortunately language service providers are accustomed to encountering these issues and know how to deal with them correctly.

Helpful Hints

Clients can often help smooth the process if, when planning the original document layout, they design in some flexibility for the document to be translated into other languages later. Finalizing the design before getting the document translated will also facilitate the entire process.

Because of the great potential for pitfalls in delivering a perfectly typeset and formatted translated document, it makes sense to have your language service provider handle these critical steps in page layout, too, before delivering it to the graphics design firm or printer for final processing and printing.

Language service companies will never replace graphics design and print firms. However, when working with multilingual projects, consider having your language service provider handle the translation through the page layout step for a smoother process that will garner time and cost savings, too.

A WORD FROM Avantgarde Translations

Welcome to Avantgarde Translation's **BEYOND THE WORD!** In this issue we continue to examine why our services matter to business and share insights on why it makes good business sense to allow your language service provider to handle document services.

BEYOND THE WORD has gone green! If you want to receive it via snail mail, please contact us at (704) 496-2735 or info@avantgardetranslations.com.

You can download a PDF version and view or download past issues from our archives at www.avantgardetranslations.com.



Research Notes & Analysis

When Avantgarde Translations conducted its strategy research through surveys of clients you told us that we would need to offer depth in scope of translators. To date, we have an internal database of some 100 linguists that we have qualified to work on our translation projects. We also have access to thousands more through our affiliations. Be assured that when new translators are selected, they are always qualified before they start to work for us. Thank you for your advice! We value your input for our business and for the best way to do business with you. Please visit www.avantgardetranslations.com to experience all that our company brings to the area of language services. Feel free to forward a link whenever you have an opportunity to refer our services.

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