

Fast & Cheap Quality Translation – Fact or Myth?



By: Vic Marcus

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Introduction

Have you ever thought about getting that awesome tattoo and hoped not to regret it later?

Most of us have, including myself. A tattoo can be something simple that takes minutes to complete or more elaborate that takes months, if not years.

It can be done by a professional tattoo artist at a reputable parlor or by an amateur somewhere in a basement.

Whether you choose to go with a professional or an amateur, there will be a certain risk factor associated with each one.

That risk directly relates to the cost and quality of the service provided to you.

Surprisingly, tattoo parlors and artists are no different from language service companies and translators.

The ugly truth behind translation services is people may think that all translation services are made equal. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

It's really like comparing apples and oranges. And in every crate of apples and oranges there are a few bad ones that may spoil it for everyone else.

Some companies may be able to charge less for their services. However, the odds are they can do this by cutting corners. Here are some examples.

Relying too much on technology

It's easy to plug your text into a free translation tool on the web and get results. What's troublesome is that some companies and translators do this and then charge for their work.

If this is the quality you are looking for, you might as well do it yourself for free.

Not working with professional translators

Some companies may use bilingual people who "think" they know how to translate. It's an equivalent of someone watching a few episodes of *Law & Order* and thinking they can suddenly practice law.

Using economies of scale

This includes paying translators in other countries ridiculously low fees.

Who can live on that?

Language translation is one of the oldest professions in the world and **professional translators** deserve to be compensated accordingly.

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Applying different processes to their translation workflow

For example, they only use one linguist for translation, editing & proofreading (TEP) process. Whereas, others may use one, two or three linguists for a project (one for each of the TEP steps).

A true TEP process will yield the highest quality service.

The Value of Professional Translation

As Jonny Henchman points in his article: [Translation: Price is what you pay, Value is what you get](#),

“The big issue is that many language service companies have been competing against each other in a race to the bottom on cost and deadlines for so long that many of their clients believe that price and speed are the only differentiating factors in the industry.”

Think about this.

You’ve already invested significant time, money and resources in creating your content in English.

Your reputation is on the line in your messaging.

Now you need the same content in other languages.

Why cut corners now?

Conclusion

If you want it fast and cheap, be prepared for low quality work. If that’s okay with you, there will always be someone to do it.

If quality is an important part of your brand and content messaging, I recommend you work with an experienced language services company that works with professional human translators.