

The Translation & Localization Industry

Industry Standards and What to Look For

The Translators Working for the Translation Provider

Reputable translation and localization providers need an in-depth vetting process to ensure they hire the best translators, which will include:



EDUCATION:

Did they go to school for translation or receive a translation degree?



CERTIFICATIONS:

Were they certified by an independent organization like the American Translators Association? It is important to note that the American Translators Association is currently limited to tests into English from 14 languages and from English into 15 languages, so it is not possible for all translators of all languages to possess this.



ASSESSMENTS:

Did they pass a language assessment test from a legitimate source, such as the Defense Language Proficiency Test?



WORK HISTORY:

How much experience do they have translating? What specific industries do they have experience translating for, such as medical, financial, government, or business?

Reputable providers should conduct background checks on prospective translators and ask for references as an additional safeguard for protecting clients' documents. The interview process often includes a test project to vet translation skills. Current, verified translators then review test projects to confirm that the candidates' skills are up to the company's standards.

RED FLAGS:



- The translation agency does not have a standard procedure for vetting translators or are vague about translators' qualifications.
- The translation agency does not require a test translation project and does not run background checks on translators.

Industry Standards and Beyond:

Methods and Tools

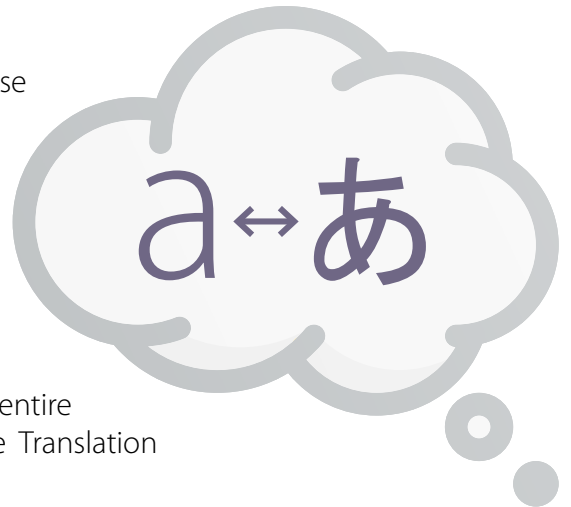
Professional translation and localization agencies use Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools to increase quality, consistency, and efficiency. These tools include glossaries and style guides provided by the client or created by the provider, which help to increase turnaround times and keep the translations consistent and accurate. This is not automated or machine translation, like Google Translate or similar online translation engines, but software specifically designed to support professional translators.

The software breaks each input sentence of an uploaded document into segments. With the help of CAT tools, translators review any automatic insertions that are found in the terminology databases, and then find segments that need to be translated or revised.

Translation Memory

Most translation software includes translation memory: a database of stored words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs the provider has previously translated and can reference for future projects. It scans new projects for previously translated phrases and sentences, called fuzzy matches, for translators to analyze and compare. This also helps to ensure standardized translations for each client, and prevents source text from being translated multiple times.

Some agencies create customized Translation Memory for an entire health system or organization. Ask if the agencies can use the Translation Memory across several facilities, further reducing client costs.



RED FLAGS:



- The translation agency says they do not use CAT tools, or that they rely on machine translation.
- The translation agency is not willing to create a Translation Memory database for use across an organization, for additional client cost savings.

Industry Standards and Beyond:

Process

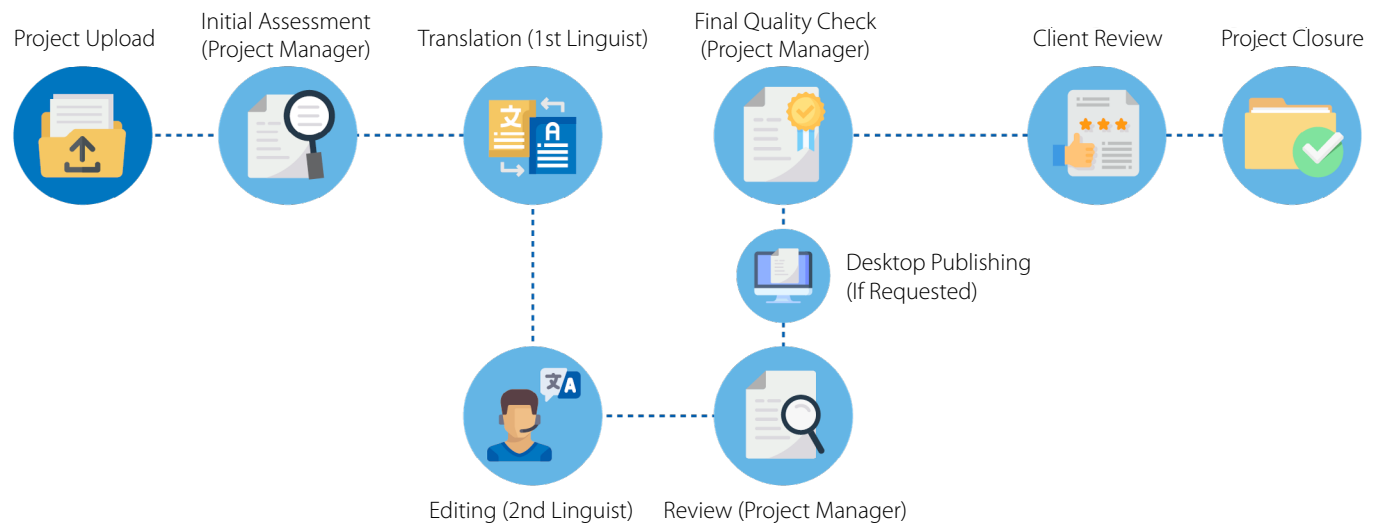
Reputable translation agencies will have a system of checks and balances for quality assurance and control. In addition to vetting their translators, they will have a team of project managers, editors, reviewers, and proofreaders to review the translation and formatting for accuracy, quality, and visual cohesion. More people checking and double-checking each translation project reduces the likelihood that typos, inaccuracies, and visual mistakes will occur.

Quality providers have systems in place to keep their clients' confidential documents secure. In contrast, many translation companies send projects via email, increasing security risks.

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While still not adopted by most translation agencies, CyraCom uses a secure translation portal. After our clients upload their project files to our portal, our qualified linguists can then translate, edit, and review projects directly within our secure system. For most types of projects, there is no need to download documents onto their personal computers, and the completed translation exists only in the Portal.

CYRACOM'S PROCESS:



RED FLAGS:



- The translation agency does not have a process in place to verify translation accuracy, formatting, and a polished product.
- The translation agency does not have a system in place to keep your documents secure.