THE GOTHAM TRANSLATOR

WHO IS JON RITZDORF?

by **Gigi Branch-Shaw**

I would think that by now most members of the New York Circle of Translators have some inkling of Jon Ritzdorf, and if by some slim chance you haven't, you might want to continue reading. Jon, an active professional of the language services industry, has worked as a localization engineer and Information architect with some of the biggest language providers and the biggest clients, and in addition, is an adjunct instructor for prestigious translation programs, such as New York University and the Monterey Institute of International Studies. His specialty is Technology and for translators, like it or not, this area has become a fundamental part of our ever-changing industry.

Jon actually got his start in the industry as a freelance translator after graduating with a Masters in Chinese Translation from the Monterey Institute. He later moved into in-house positions with agencies that called more upon his technical expertise. After a decade of working for agencies, he has created a unique place for himself as a "Globalization Architect," — a position that melds his technical knowledge, sales strategies and the education of clients in localization processes.

But Jon is also a teacher, a position he holds dear. "I started teaching as a result of feeling that what I was taught in the formal academic environment (when I was working toward my M.A. in Chinese translation) did not jibe with the reality I was confronted with in the translation agency world of buying and selling translation. I thought to myself that there had to be a way to bridge the knowledge gaps that newly minted graduates of translation, and even long-time professionals seemed to have when it came to understanding how to succeed as a freelance translator."*

Jon's commitment to teaching as well as his unorthodox teaching style appeals to both newbies and more advanced tech savvy translators alike. "I realized that the classes I was teaching had less to do with teaching the software and more about building confidence. Also, around that time I came to understand that teaching technical courses is not about telling students

continued on page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

5 Translator Training
7 Coworking
9 Annual Business Meeting
10 Marketing Your Services to Translation Agencies
11 Linguee - The New Online Translation Tool
12 Do Oil and Water Mix?
14 Twitter Basics

New York Circle of Translators
(212) 334-3060

2010 Board of Directors

Lori Colman, *President*
president_elect@nyctranslators.org

Edna Ditaranto, *President-Elect*
president@nyctranslators.org

Margorzata (Gosia) Darwin, *Secretary*
secretary@nyctranslators.org

Peter Yoon, *Treasurer*
treasurer@nyctranslators.org

Margarite Heintz Montez, *Program Director*
nyctprogramdirector@gmail.com

Agnes Meilhac, *Gotham Editor*
agnes@beautyterm.com

Committees

Programs: Margarite Heintz Montez
programs@nyctranslators.org

Continuing Education: Edna Ditaranto (co-chair)
continuing_education@nyctranslators.org
Jordan Fox (co-chair)

Mentoring: Lana Rachkovskaya
mentoring@nyctranslators.org

Nominating: [vacant]

Membership: [vacant]

Publications: Agnes Meilhac
agnes@beautyterm.com

Honors & Awards: Laurie Treuaft
honors@nyctranslators.org

ATA Certification: Edna Ditaranto
ata_certification@nyctranslators.org

Marketing & Public Relations: A.J. Elterman
marketing@nyctranslators.org

Finance: [vacant]

Editorial Committee: Gigi Branch Shaw, Katie Spillane, Ellen Sowchek

The Gotham Translator

Editor
Agnes Meilhac, agnes@beautyterm.com

Design and Layout
Bahl Graphics, kbahlmann@austin.rr.com

Printing
Mail Boxes, Etc. South Orange NJ
mailboxso@verizon.net

Guidelines for Submission
Please submit all contributions as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word format. Articles should be limited to 1500 words or less.

The Gotham Translator is published six times a year by the New York Circle of Translators, Inc., a chapter of the American Translators Association. The deadline for acceptance of contributions is the first day of the month preceding the month of publication. Articles and other materials should be e-mailed to the Editor at editor@nyctranslators.org. The opinions and views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions or the policies of the NYCT or the ATA. All material submitted is subject to editing and becomes the property of the New York Circle of Translators unless accompanied by a copyright statement.

© 2010 by the New York Circle of Translators. All rights reserved. Nothing contained in this issue may be reprinted without explicit prior permission of the editor or, in the case of copyrighted material, the copyright holder.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Gotham Translator accepts and welcomes contributions of articles about all aspects of translation and translator-related issues. These may include, but are not limited to, **specific translation problems** or **approaches to translation**, **legal issues**, and the **business of translation**. We also welcome **dictionary and hardware/software reviews** as well as **reviews of books, conferences and workshops**. Any ideas or leads on interesting stories and articles for which we may try to obtain reprint permissions are also welcome.

In general, articles and other submissions should be limited to around 1500 words. All text should be submitted as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word format. In case of previously published submissions, please advise us of this fact at the time of submission. ■

Do you know someone who'd
like to advertise in

The Gotham Translator?

Please e-mail your text or artwork to gotham_editor@nyctranslators.org no later than 15 days prior to the publication date. Please indicate the ad size desired. If your artwork is in hard copy (business card or other) please mail to the editor at the address below together with your payment.

Ad Rates (single insertion)

Full page (7.5" x 10") $150
One-half page (7.5" x 4.75").....$80
One-fourth page (3.5" x 4.75") $40
One-eighth page (3.5" x 2.25").....$20

Note: All prices are for black-and-white camera-ready copy.

Payment: As soon as you and the Editor have agreed on the ad size and publication date, you will be sent an invoice via email. **We must receive payment in advance before we can publish an ad.** You may make payment by check to the address below, allowing time for checks to clear the bank, or by PayPal to treasurer@nyctranslators.org via https://www.paypal.com/. Click on Send Money, then fill out SEND MONEY FORM.

The New York Circle of Translators
P.O. Box 4051
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163-4051

continued from page 1

to "click here, do that" but rather about helping them nail down general concepts that will continue to be meaningful over the long-term.

Jon Ritzdorf

"Early on, I gained a reputation for being good with the stereotypical, "non-tech" humanities-minded translators, probably because I come from the same background and went through all the same struggles….I've learned that it's OK to let students challenge your thinking ….My students constantly help me form new opinions and give insight that spawns ideas for new classes, new ways to approach the teaching material and just helping me to be a better educator overall."

In the hopes of spreading his classes to a larger audience, this past fall, Jon launched the Ritzdorf Academy website (www.ritzdorfacademy.com) to promote his university classes as well as his private instruction. His curriculum includes 3 classes, which focus on educating translators on technical skills needed to understand CAT tools, Website Localization and PDFs. In addition, he offers a comprehensive overview of various aspects of the industry to help professionals make better decisions about their business, taking a detailed look at areas, such as working freelance or in-house, the buying and selling of translations, effective market techniques, price calculation, etc.

"I get a rush of excitement every time I see students empowered with this knowledge, especially when it takes them far beyond the subject matter and into the deeper level of making them confident, competitive forces in the translation industry."

Jon continues to share his technological knowledge with translators. Last month, he gave a presentation to the Circle on the current technological developments as well as those on the horizon.

All of Jon's quotes in this article were taken from an interview with New York Circle Member Nicole Lisa in her blog posting Five Questions for Jon Ritzdorf on LBJ: Love Your Job.

Gigi Branch-Shaw is a freelance Fr>En translator who specializes in marketing and editorial translations. She is one Jon Ritzdorf's former students and is grateful that he helped her to overcome the apprehensions of working with html docs, which are large part of her job today. She also works as a project/content manager for online projects. She lives in New York City and is a regular contributing writer for The Gotham Translator, as well as a member of NYCT's Editorial Committee.

FEBRUARY MEETING: POINTS TO REMEMBER

Jon Ritzdorf's dynamic presentation at February's meeting was a great learning experience for all attendees. His message was loud and clear: in this ever-changing economy, if translators want to stay on top of their business, they have to extend their skills.

Most old-school translators tend to remain very set in their ways, including the way they view translation. Jon insists that this is an outdated view and that "flexibility" has to be the new mantra for our profession.

UPGRADING YOUR TECH SKILLS

Jon urged translators to examine the services they offer in their current business model and to consider ways to grow these services over the next decade. Translation is no longer a "boutique service." Clients have no idea how much time it takes to do the job, and probably don't even care. The end result and cost are what matter to them.

In the meantime, the upcoming generations of translators, who are computer literate from a young age, are entering the field, taking jobs for less money and able to understand the complex workings of our technological world. Older and more experienced translators may feel tempted to scorn

continued on next page

continued from previous page

them, in spite of the fact that these younger translators truly have something new to offer. They are more flexible in the way they work and know how to integrate their language experience in this tech-savvy market.

CAT TOOLS

CAT tools continue to be a topic of conversation. Certainly we agree with Jon that they are not always useful, but in today's market you can't get by without them.

Jon urges that CAT tools are a must! You must get a hand on CAT tools. If you already know how to work with one, learn another one. Today's agencies and clients are using a whole range of tools. This makes it absolutely necessary to expand your software knowledge if you do not want to be left in the dust.

Take a look at the current tools available on the market. A number of them can be purchased for a nominal amount and some are even free.

Among the better known (and pricier), SDL 2009 is the first that springs to mind. Although still the leader, it is losing its foothold in the market as it faces many competitors. To many, this will not come as a surprise. The company's customer service and satisfaction levels have dwindled while prices have gone up. But there are other products that Jon encouraged us to have a closer look at: Idiom, Memo Q, Déjà vu, Wordfast and the older Trados old product line.

However, be smart when it comes to investing in a new technology. If you are not sure which one you need or want, Jon's advice is to purchase older software versions (i.e. Adobe Acrobat on Ebay). He also suggests looking for ways to improve your translation speed, for example, by using CAT tools and speech recognition software together.

MACHINE TRANSLATION

MT is another tool that can be used in the translation business. While it has earned a bad reputation, the trick is understanding how and when it can be useful and when it isn't.

The primary concern for translators should be whether or not MT is important to their clients. MT is very good at generating fast draft-quality translations of high volume information. The way to approach it is to get used to more FLEXIBLE quality control. Think of post-editing as a separate, new service, not part of the translation.

Another good point to consider: MT has actually created more work for language professionals as clients have begun to realize how incomplete unpolished MT results really are.

Keeping a finger on the pulse of the translation industry

Jon stressed that all content is being shifted to the web. We are approaching a new era, the end of the print media, and moving toward a web-based world.

Jon argued that every industry today has its own specific set of files, but, more importantly, such files need to be transferable to the web. Industries are moving toward solutions that include web-based files. It is therefore crucial that we as translators know web-based formats (e.g. html, xml) and remain open to the possibilities that the online world is offering.

Translators can also use the web to grow their business in terms of self-promotion and job opportunities. Linkedin profiles are an important marketing tool for making contacts and tooting your own horn, and if you don't have one already, you should consider getting a website. As far as your clients go, make sure you know the preferred browser of your language pair! Monitoring websites for clients in your language is another service you can offer. Likewise, you can also be a watchdog and follow Facebook pages and Twitter feeds for clients in your language. And keywords are another service to help clients grow their web exposure in the Internet marketplace. The more ways you can make yourself useful to clients, the more solid your position will be with them.

Keeping in the dark about advances in technology is not a good move, whatever your field of specialty. We owe it to ourselves to stay current with tech trends, and above all, remember to BE FLEXIBLE! ■

Translator Training: The Need for New Directions

by Eileen Hennessy

The massive shifts occurring in the industrial (non-literary) translation profession/industry are rapidly altering the way in which industrial translators operate. So far, however, there seems to be little discussion about a possible need for changes in translator training necessitated by these shifts.

It is difficult at this stage of the process to make hard and fast pronouncements about the direction that might be taken by training programs, but it is possible at least to suggest avenues of discussion.

The first difficulty in terms of discussing changes in the current model of translator training is the variety of ways in which translation is practiced. There are professional translators who hold jobs in government or international agencies or in private-sector companies. There are professional translators (probably the majority) who operate as free-lancers. There are employees of private-sector companies who are required to translate corporate correspondence and documentation on an ad-hoc basis when the need arises, but for whom this activity is only one part of their job duties.

The second difficulty is that the changes in the profession are creating a divide between (1) translators in the traditional sense of the term (translator-as-writer) and (2) translators whose work is closer to that of copy editors and proofreaders but with the addition of a knowledge of foreign languages and an ability to use computer programs for pre- and post-editing of machine translation (MT) output and for performing the fill-in-the-blanks operations required by computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools.

The need for specialized training for translation copy editors/proofreaders seems to me particularly acute. My personal experience indicates that many persons currently performing these functions have not the slightest idea of what professional copy editing/proofreading entails, and seem not even to know that there is a difference between the two activities. Many of them are also under the mistaken impression that copyediting means rewriting the translation to conform with their own writing style. (Disclosure: I earned a certificate in the Editing Program offered by the School of Continuing and Professional Education of New York University.)

Translators are first and foremost good writers, and while effective writing skills can be and are being taught, good writers and good writing ability reflect to a great extent an inborn inclination and ability and interest. The same holds true for editors and for editing and proofreading skills. In fact, it is a truism in the monolingual publishing industry that because of the existence of these differing inborn abilities, writers tend to be poor editors, and editors tend to be poor writers.

This situation has implications for future translator training, now that translators are currently being asked to perform functions more closely related to editing and proofreading than to traditional translation. Given this situation, it is possible that programs for training industrial translators and translation editors/proofreaders may eventually need to be structured with different tracks for the translating and the editing functions.

What form might a multi-track training program take?

It seems to me that translation editors/proofreaders no less than translators need to start with one or two basic language-pair-specific "introduction to X-to-Y translation and translation editing" courses introducing them to the process of translating, and editing translations of, a wide range of general (e.g. newspaper and magazine articles), personal (birth, marriage, and death certificates, academic records, etc.), commercial, legal, technical, scientific, and medical materials. After completing these basic courses, learners might then be able to select a specialization track or tracks.

Learners who are in corporate jobs that include a certain amount of translating might best opt for taking advanced

continued on next page

continued from previous page

specialized courses in translating commercial, legal, technical, scientific, and medical documentation, depending on their personal interests and the types of careers or companies in which they are employed. There seems thus far to be little use of CAT and MT programs in corporate settings, given the relatively limited need for translations in these settings.

In addition to thorough training in CAT and MT operation, aspiring translation editors/proofreaders need both general editing/proofreading courses and specialized courses in the editing/proofreading of machine output and of translations done by human translators.

The situation is somewhat more complicated for learners interested in a career as professional translators. The translation companies, the middlemen of the industry, now demand that translators be proficient in CAT operation skills. There is also increasing use of MT, on the theory that even if the product requires human pre- and post-editing, MT is faster and less expensive than using professional human translators *ab initio*. This means that in addition to translating, translators are now often required to perform the functions of editing/proofreading/CAT-MT operation, a situation that is likely to continue for quite some time.

Until the need for more specialization becomes generally recognized, determining the appropriate mix of required and elective courses for these jack-of-all-trades learners (how much emphasis on specialized translation courses? on CAT-MT operation courses? on editing/proofreading courses?) may prove difficult. Ideally, translators would focus on advanced specialization courses in translation. The current realities of the industry, however, would seem to require a mixed track, at any rate for industrial translators who want to earn a living in the industry.

All tracks could benefit from introductory courses in accounting, banking, the various sciences and technologies, and the medical sciences, depending on individuals' interests and job requirements, and in basic terminology research using both hard and on-line resources. For all tracks, it is not possible to over-emphasize the importance of continual reading and continuing education in one's specialization(s) in order to stay abreast of new developments and terminology.

This appears to add up to very lengthy training. It seems to me that the ideal program would consist in a combined B.A. + M.A. in Translation Studies, i.e., a program of approximately six or seven years in length. Real-world considerations militate against this. How many college freshmen are already so sure of their career orientation (and their financing) that they can commit themselves to such a program? (For that matter, how many college freshmen in the United States have even heard of translation as a potential career?) How many career-changing adults with jobs and families, and retired adults thinking about translation as a way of supplementing their pensions and Social Security, have the luxury of time and money for such a lengthy program? What is the likelihood that the U.S. Federal Government, for all its occasional pontifications on the importance of training Americans in foreign-language proficiency (read: in the military/political-need languages *du jour*), will take translation and translator training so seriously as to allocate funds for their advancement?

I think the most likely scenario is that changes in the training of industrial translators will come about gradually, incrementally, and on an ad-hoc basis, meaning that for some time to come, various types of training programs will continue to co-exist with self-training, the fragmented offerings of the manufacturers of CAT and MT programs, continuing education courses, and weekend seminars organized by translators' associations. In the meantime, serious exchanges and discussion of the subject among translators, translator associations, and academic and corporate providers of training might help to move us more speedily toward an effective outcome. ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Eileen Hennessy has worked as a full-time free-lance translator since 1972, translating legal and commercial documentation, patents, art history, newspaper and magazine articles, vital records, and academic records into English from French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, German, and Dutch. She is certified by the American Translators Association for translation from French, Spanish, German, and Italian into English.

Since 1985, Ms. Hennessy has taught on-line and on-site courses in translating French legal documents into English as an Adjunct Associate Professor within the Translation Studies Program of New York University, School of Continuing and Professional Studies.

She is a published poet and short-story writer. Her works have been published in numerous literary magazines.

She can be contacted at ebhennessy@att.net..

Coworking

by Katie Spillane

The term "coworking" was first coined in 1999 by Bernie DeKoven and Gerrit Visser. The idea started out small and simple. The two consultants ran a website — www.coworking.com — offering articles and ideas about collaborative work. Six years later, Brad Neuberg took the idea of coworking off the web and into physical space by founding The Hat Factory, San Francisco's first coworking space. Since 2005, the coworking movement has exploded into hundreds of spaces across six continents. With the US Census Bureau reporting constant additions to the 20-million single-person businesses located in the US alone, it seems that this new approach to working independently is destined to expand[1]. As Language Service Professionals, coworking presents us with compelling options for networking, increasing collegiality and taking our businesses to the next level.

WHAT IS COWORKING?

At its most informal level, coworking manifests in informal work groups called "Jellies." The concept of a "Jelly" came to fruition in 2006 when two lonely New York City freelancers started inviting friends to share their home as a workspace. The Jelly concept was an immediate hit and the two roommates hit the ground running with the website www.workatjelly.com. The website now lists free weekly and semi-weekly free gatherings all around the world. Jellies take place in cafés, private homes and permanent coworking spaces — virtually anywhere with a willing host. A video on the Jelly site shows crowded rooms filled with laptop-toting workers. Some are working individually, some in groups. Their fields of expertise are diverse — journalism, computer programming, product design, commercial tea sales... Some rooms are more focused than others, but there is an undeniable energy maintained throughout.

Good vibes are great — especially when faced with the alternative of me, myself and my laptop working in the basement all week. But… I couldn't help but notice that a lot of the workers in the video seemed, well, distracted. Fear not. One of the oft-mentioned reasons for finding a coworking space is motivation to focus and get things done — something that can be difficult when a pile of laundry/dishes/3rd grade homework is staring you in the face. For those looking for structure in addition to camaraderie, pay-as-you-go coworking spaces represent the next step up in the organizational hierarchy. This flexible alternative is extremely popular — coworkers using pay-by-the-day "flexible desks" or "hot desks" accounting for 57% of the coworking populace[2]. In New York, spaces like this can be found at rates from $10 to $50 per day. Most spaces offer free coffee and tea in addition to lounge spaces, couches, and, of course, desks. Some drop-in spaces require users to bring their own computers but many others, like New Work City, have onsite computers dedicated to drop-in users.

For those willing to make a long-term commitment, a wider range of options are available. The monthly "permanent" or "dedicated" desk rate in New York runs between $99 and $400, depending on the space and facilities available. While perhaps not necessary for LSPs, coworking spaces that offer access to art studios, metal working ateliers, and industrial kitchen space do exist and charge accordingly. Private offices for two to three desks are also available in some coworking spaces. The price differential for a reserved space, or more space, is not as acute as one might think. The Hive at 55, for example, welcomes drop-ins at a rate of $20/day. A three-person private office at the same location is $1,800/month. You do the math. For professionals who travel frequently (as more than half of coworkers reportedly do[3]), the "Coworking Wiki" offers a visa program through which participating spaces offer up to three complimentary drop-in-days to coworkers with active "home" memberships.

WHO ARE COWORKERS?

With all of these great options, it is no wonder that the coworking world is growing quickly. A recent survey conducted by Deskmag, an online publication dedicated

continued on next page

1 - http://www.inc.com/guides/2010/05/running-one-person-business.html
2 - http://www.deskmag.com/en/what-coworking-spaces-coworkers-want-165

continued from previous page

to exploring the world of coworking, found that most coworkers are new to this kind of working arrangement — half of the survey respondents have been coworking for less than a year. This doesn't mean, however, that coworkers are new to the business world. Although 55% of coworkers consider themselves to be in a "middle income bracket", 25% of coworkers report earning greater than the national average income. What do they do to put themselves in that income bracket? 20% of coworkers are entrepreneurs, 20% are employees of companies with five or fewer employees, and 54% are freelancers. Web developers, computer programmers and those working in the creative industries dominate the coworking demographic, but there is room for everyone. While the crowd is decidedly young (the average age is 34) and male (60% of respondents), it is worth noting that the coworking spectrum is broad. For example, In Good Company is an NYC coworking space striving specifically to address the issues of women working in isolation.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Among the most obvious reasons to leave the home office behind for a coworking space are the tangible benefits derived from working in a shared, formal office space. Virtually all coworking spaces provide the same office basics — beverages, bathrooms, bodyguards — that are nice to leave up to someone else. And, at least in New York, some coworking spaces are wiling to offer flashy incentives to attract new members. 3rdward, a coworking space in Brooklyn, offers a free custom bike to each of its members. The Hive at 55 entices coworkers with free lunches. For some, just having dedicated storage space and parking for cars and bicycles is enough to make coming to an office attractive. Professional-level printing services for artists and architects offered by spaces like Bitmap Creative Labs represent the kind of shared infrastructural cost that can ease the pain of market entry for many independent professionals. Perhaps most attractive to LSPs are the conference rooms, waiting areas and receptionist services that some coworking spaces offer. It may not be worth renting a full-time office to receive the occasional client that drops by (see this nightmare story from Fire Ant and Worker Bee: http://translationjournal.net/journal/30fawb.htm), but as a member of a coworking space… there's no need to do so.

The tangibles are tempting. But, it is the intangibles — networking, collegiality and the development of a professional support group — that are the most sought after benefits of coworking. Many coworking spaces echo the sentiments of the founders of In Good Company:

NYC COWORKING SPACES

Greenpoint Coworking
http://greenpointcoworking.com
Monday to Friday 10 - 6
$10/day to $350/month
240 N. Henry St. #1B, Brooklyn

Coworking Brooklyn
http://wiki.coworking.info/w/page/16583319/Coworking-Brooklyn
Monday to Friday 9 - 7
Barter - $200/month
84 Havemeyer Street, Brooklyn

3rdward
www.3rdward.com
8-midnight Monday-Friday
9-midnight Weekends
$99 month (includes a bicycle!)
195 Morgan Avenue, Brooklyn

Bitmap Creative Labs
www.bitmapnyc.com
24 Hours (Dependent on Membership)
$50/day (Shared desk)
$1295 (double private office)
300 Graham Ave, Brooklyn

The Metropolitan Exchange
http://metropolitanexchange.org
$200/month (Shared desk)
$400/month (Private desk)
33 Flatbush Ave., Brooklyn

Green Spaces
www.greenspacesny.com
24 hours (depending on membership)
$35/day - $550/month
394 Broadway, 5th Floor, Manhattan

New Work City
http://nwc.co
24 hours
$30/day - $300/month
412 Broadway, Manhattan

Hive at 55
http://hiveat55.com
9-6 Monday to Friday
$20/day - $1,800 month
(3 person office)
55 Broad Street, Manhattan

In Good Company
www.ingoodcompanyworkplaces.com
24 hours
$400+
16 W. 23rd Street (4th Floor)

LINKS FOR FURTHER READING:

Coworking Wiki
http://wiki.coworking.info/w/page/16583831/FrontPage

NYC Coworking Meetup
www.meetup.com/coworking-nyc

Global Coworking Blog
http://blog.coworking.com

Google Coworking Group
http://groups.google.com/group/coworking?pli=1

This isolation [of working from home] was articulated in pains: not knowing other women who were in the same boat, not knowing where to go to learn more about running a business and how to grow into a more confident business owner, not having a professional and affordable place to work when their home office was making them feel cut off from the rest of the world, a way to work around other people, or a place they could proudly host clients.

Does coworking respond to these needs? According to Deskmag, it does. 86% of respondents to the Deskmag survey reported finding three or more "acquaintances who have had a positive effect on their work" within the last two months. Beyond rubbing shoulders at the water cooler, it is not uncommon to find coworking spaces going the extra mile to actively work to promote their members. Green Spaces, for example, publishes a newsletter (with a 15,000+ member readership) promoting the services of its members. The first-ever coworking "Unconference" will be held on March 11th and the expansion of networks between coworking spaces seems certain.[4]

What's more, some coworking spaces actively seek to provide professional and educational opportunities for their members. Greenpoint Coworking, for example, offers basic workshops to improve the business skills of its members with topics ranging from personal branding to Quickbooks. Coworking Brooklyn, which shares its space with The Change You Want to See Gallery, offers "monthly programming convening at the intersection of art, technology, activism, and theory," to inspire the hearts and minds of its members. Other coworking spaces encourage members to offer discounted services to each other. I don't know about you, but I'd love to have my accountant just one desk down the line.

COWORKING AND LSPS

I have not found a coworking space dedicated to language service providers, yet it seems clear that many of us would benefit from having a dedicated professional space outside of the home. Coworking would provide us with many of the same benefits it offers to those in other industries. Specialized LSPs might find it advantageous to take up residence in a coworking space dedicated to their industry of choice. An LSP with a desk at the Metropolitan Exchange — a coworking space dedicated to urban planners, architects and researchers — would surely have many opportunities to establish a foothold in that market. Coworking may also provide opportunities to establish partnerships with those in related industries like publishing, internet services, film and literature. And, of course, there are the potential benefits of LSPs sharing space together. Maybe it would be worthwhile to make one of our upcoming NYCT meetings a Jelly work session just to see what happens… See you there! ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Katie Spillane is a Chinese to English translator and cultural consultant. Deeply committed to building bridges between cultures, Katie has recently enjoyed working on projects with practitioners of Chinese medicine, new immigrants and winter-tourism businesses.

4 - http://coworkingunconference.com

Annual Business Meeting

The Circle's Annual Business Meeting took place on January 24, 2011 at Heartland Brewery. Outgoing president Renée Borio-Román opened the meeting by thanking the members for attending and taking an interest in the organization's operation. She also thanked the members of the outgoing board for their hard work and dedication throughout the year. On behalf of the Board, she also recognized the impressive contributions of Agnes Meilhac, the Gotham's editor, who lead the effort to expand the Circle's cyber presence this year. Agnes was responsible for creating a page for the group on Linked-in and Facebook, as well as a blog site. Edna Ditaranto was also thanked for the time and effort put into organizing the Susanna Greiss Workshop and for coordinating a certification examination sitting in May. Gigi Branch-Shaw was thanked for heading up the nominating committee in 2010. ■

Outgoing NYCT Board

Incoming NYCT Board

Marketing Your Services to Translation Agencies

by Corinne McKay

Whether to work with direct clients, translation agencies or both is a personal and business decision. I work with both types of clients and I feel that this mix keeps my work volume and income up while giving me a wide range of projects to choose from. Paula Dieli's blog (http:// essentialprojectmanagement.com/?p=38) has an insightful interview with Peter Berends, the primary translator recruiter at LUZ, Inc. (a medical translation company). It's well worth a read if you're looking for agency clients. Here are some additional tips, and feel free to add your own!

- Target your marketing. As Peter comments in the interview, there's no bigger turnoff than a generic, carbon-copied e-mail asking for work. The more personalized your e-mail is, the better. For example, something like "Your agency's focus on the translation of annual reports caught my eye; during the 2010 annual report season I translated all or part of five companies' annual reports and I would love to help you with similar types of projects" is much more attention-grabbing than "Dear Sir or Madam, I would like to offer you my services."
- Don't lump all agencies together. Yes, in general agencies pay less than direct clients and also add a middle layer between the translator and the client (which can be a plus or a minus depending on the project and the client). However, top-quality agencies pay respectably and can save you some of the administrative overhead that comes with working for direct clients. Just as in every other business sector, there are agencies that operate on the Wal-Mart model and agencies that operate on the Mercedes-Benz model.

Just as in every other business sector, there are agencies that operate on the Wal-Mart model and agencies that operate on the Mercedes-Benz model.

- Charge real money and earn it. I think that a lot of translators eschew the agency market because they think it's all 8 cents a word and 5,000 words for tomorrow. Insider tip: it's not. I think that quality-conscious agencies know that quality-conscious translators save them money because their work needs less editing and they help keep the agency's own clients coming back. Give some metrics of your quality: you proofread a hard copy of every translation (no missing text, no untranslated text); you compile a list of queries and send them all at once, allowing time to get the queries resolved before the deadline (no endless stream of e-mails to the already-busy PM, no file submitted right at the deadline with queries still outstanding); you always meet or beat your deadlines (no stressed-out PM having to make excuses to the end client).
- Focus on high-margin projects. For example if you actively seek out projects on which you can produce 500 finished words per hour and you charge 15 cents per word, you're earning $75 per hour. I think that it's also fine to let your agency clients know that you are most interested in medium to large projects, for example

see Marketing page 15

STUCK FOR WORDS?

Try Linguee, The New Online Translation Tool

A new multilingual online 'dictionary' called Linguee was launched in September 2010. Unlike automatic translators such as GoogleTranslate, Linguee offers contextual translations by bringing the all important human element into the translation process and citing the website and the source of the translated text. Touted as a translation 'web crawler' rather than an automatic translator, it's really rather good and will surely be used by professional translators to help with their research.

Linguee is the brainchild of Gereon Frahling (who came up with the concept whilst working at Google Inc.). Software developer Leonard Fink was invited to join the project and the rest is history! The original German / English version of the site went live in May 2010 and already receives 600,000 daily searches and nearly 80,000 unique visitors every day.

These are impressive figures, but when you visit the site you will understand why. The interface is extremely user friendly and it searches for common phrases along with individual words. It is presented in the form of a two-column comparison table with the source language displayed on the left, and the target translations on the right. But probably the most important feature for translators is that it offers a contextual translation and also states the source of the translation and a link to the website from which it was taken. The frequency of the translation is also provided and there is a 'comments' function allowing people to leave feedback.

Linguee only deals with translations that have been carried out by human beings. Its bread and butter texts (like automatic translators) are those from the United Nations and the European Parliament, in other words, those that have already been professionally translated. Patent translations also get a look in as regards to translation sources. However, with the controversial proposal for an EU-wide patent and the possible use of automatic translation in this sector, this source may well turn out to be less accurate in the future.

Focusing on quality rather than quantity, the Linguee website explains that out of one trillion sentences that have been run through the system, 'only the top 0.01 per cent, i.e., 100 million translated sentences, are retained'. Currently, the language pairs available are English and German; English and Spanish; English and French; and English and Portuguese. Plans are currently underway to add further languages, including Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Russian and Italian. The multilingual search facility is free to use at the moment, but it is thought that charges may apply in the future.

Linguee received a glowing review from the French version of technology website TechCrunch. However, as one comment stated, as with any free dictionary, the translation should always be checked against a veritable source.

Language professionals checking out this new multilingual search facility may well be pleasantly surprised!

Sources:
www.linguee.com;
http://fr.techcrunch.com;
www.blogs.ft.com/technology;
www.prweb.com

Reprinted with permission from an entry posted on Wednesday, September 1st, 2010, on http://www.thetranslationpeople.com/blog/ (filed Translation Industry News, Translation technology) ■

About The Translation People

The Translation People (http://www.thetranslationpeople.com) is a leading translation services provider with a global network of translation experts. The Translation People are headquartered in Manchester, UK, they also have offices in Birmingham, London, Glasgow, Paris and Bonn. They offer language translation services, localisation, multi-language desktop publishing and interpreting services to global organisations in a wide range of fields including mechanical engineering, healthcare, control and instrumentation, legal, financial, industrial and consumer electronics and process manufacturing.

Do Oil and Water Mix?

by Jost Zetzsche

Imagine this scenario: You've finally written that new business brochure. The layout has been fine-tuned and you've steered it through all the necessary quality checks. All that remains is to take your PDF file to the local print shop, where the owner tells you that he would be glad to print your materials. There's only one small problem: He really doesn't know what to do with that complex PDF file. He admits that he's not interested in the technology of the printing business—he loves the sheer beauty of the fonts and prefers type-setting the old fashioned way. After all, Gutenberg didn't use PDFs. . . .

How does this scenario register on your reality meter? Does it sound rather unlikely? Perhaps the idea of finally creating a business brochure is as improbable as the printer who could not do his job. Be that as it may, I would like to primarily focus here on the printer's failure to do his job.

It may sound implausible for a professional print shop to be unprepared to handle new technology. However, in our world of translation this unfortunate scenario is a bit more likely. We are exquisitely inconsistent in our expectations: We expect other service providers to be highly experienced in all areas of the service they provide, but many translators feel exempt from this same expectation for our services. Like the print shop owner described above, we know we have to be very skilled to be successful—skilled, that is, in our linguistic or subject area. But why are so many of us unwilling to extend our skill sets to include mastering the tools that are necessary to fully practice those skills?

I'm talking, of course, about technical skills, especially those that involve a computer.

I've spent a lot of time thinking about what makes so many of us shy away from becoming more skilled with our computers. Here are some of the root causes that I've unearthed.

PERCEPTION OF SELF AND OTHERS

I have been publishing the *Tool Kit* newsletter for six years, I've written a book, *The Translator's Tool Box: A Computer Primer for Translators*, and I often teach workshops to stimulate interest in using technology for translation. And though I mainly talk to translators of functional texts—such as technical, medical, or legal texts—many of their tasks are applicable to other fields of translation as well, including terminology maintenance and the ability to quickly access previous translation. During the past several years, I've made it a practice to always ask my audiences how they view themselves. The answers are always the same: We see ourselves as artists, authors, communicators, bridge-builders, and cultural transition-makers. While all of these are true, it's striking that so far no answer has been technical in nature.

Because we define ourselves within one of the proud categories above, we tend to close doors to other categories that we view as less attractive. Being an IT specialist just doesn't stand up well to the more lofty aim

of the cultural specialist; a database administrator doesn't have the flair of a literary artisan.

The image most often found on translators' home pages is of St. Jerome, the patron saint of translators and the grand translator of the Bible into common Latin. Now, St. Jerome achieved great things as a linguist, but his image on some of these websites with a quill in his hand, bent over a roll of parchment, seems to communicate something else: a highly romanticized idea of translation that has very little in common with our role as modern translators in a highly computerized world. It seems clear that many of us would prefer to identify with figures like St. Jerome rather than Larry Page or Sergey Brin. In fact, however, we need both sides of the coin to have a meaningful impact on the course of our profession.

(This is, of course, the reason for the inception of Jeromobot, the patron saint—some also call him the chief cheerleader—of the modern translator.)

NO BUSINESS AS USUAL

Another possible reason for our shyness in regard to technology may be an attempt to avoid acting like businesspeople. Translators and technical writers come from a wide variety of backgrounds, but one common thread that connects us, especially the freelancers among us, is a desire for independence. Many of us share a wish not to be employed within a traditional business framework. However, we tend to mistakenly believe that we should also avoid acting within a traditional business framework.

The fact is, we are businesses, albeit ones that (sometimes) allow less structure than other models. And one of the common aspects of any kind of business is the need to invest. Necessary investments for businesses include marketing, equipment upgrades and purchases, familiarizing ourselves with the equipment, and engaging in other forms of continued education in areas such as technology and marketing. Just as a printing press and other printing equipment are primary tools for a print shop owner, the computer and computer software are our main tools.

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

A third reason may be an almost instinctual fear that computers are a real threat to our livelihood. Translators, especially those translating functional texts, feel threatened by translation memory and machine translation. There's a deep-rooted fear that the machine may take away our livelihoods and, in the process, produce a product greatly inferior to the sweat of our creative brow.

Being an IT specialist just doesn't stand up well to the more lofty aim of the cultural specialist; a database administrator doesn't have the flair of a literary artisan.

But let's not kid ourselves: The kind of texts that machines can produce are not the kind that you and I want to waste our time on, anyway. These texts are highly structured and repetitive, and come from a closely defined subject field. The best counter to this kind of fear is to reach back to our self-perception as artists and artisans, and to use these skills for texts that are worthy of that talent. Let the machine do what it's good at—we'll do what we excel at.

No, oil and water truly don't mix, but our profession does mix with technology. We will just have to realize that translation and technology are complementary subject areas rather than opposites. ■

About The Author

Jost Zetsche's newsletter can be subscribed to at www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit and his book can be purchased at www.internationalwriters.com/toolbox.

(And Jeromobot's ongoing adventures are chronicled at www.youtube.com/user/TranslatorsTraining)

Twitter Basics

by Eve Lindemuth Bodeux

What is Twitter? It is a "Micro-blogging" service: any message sent on Twitter must be 140 characters or fewer. You can actually say more than you would think in 140 characters and a special vocabulary and set of abbreviations has evolved as a kind of *Twitterspeak*, to help people say more with less.

Why Twitter? Twitter is a great way to send out quick bits of information such as pithy comments, links you find interesting or updates about you, your business or anything else. Twitter is also a good way to gather information from colleagues, competitors, clients and potential clients. Twitter is, in essence, a huge data stream of small bits of information.

Choosing your Twitter name: When choosing your Twitter name, select something that is meaningful to you and that sounds professional—or even your own name. Don't make your user name too long: when people retweet (forward) your messages on Twitter, the character count of your Twitter name counts against the total 140 characters for the entire message.

Reflect on your professional versus personal personas and don't mix the two on Twitter. Show some personality, but be careful not to share TMI (too much information!).

Observe: When you are first involved in Twitter, observe and see how it works, before diving in. Once you get the hang of it, you may want to post 5 – 10 tweets before following your first person. That way, people can see your list of Tweets and be more encouraged to follow you back.

Remember that anyone can follow you – and you can follow anyone! This makes twitter very interesting. If you like what someone has to say on Twitter, whether they are famous or your neighbor, you are free to follow that person. You do not have to wait for them to approve you, like in LinkedIn or Facebook. This promotes the flow of ideas. Often, people that you follow will follow you back, but not always—and vice versa. You should build up your own unique network of those you follow and those who follow you. You want to follow people because they share interesting information or you find their posts appealing in some way.

It is easy to block people on Twitter from following you. This is usually a pretty drastic measure that you would reserve for true spammers, but it is great to have such recourse in this forum where it is easy to mark people as spam and never have to hear from them again.

You can "talk" to people on Twitter without even being connected to them directly, by sending out a message that references their Twitter name. And, they can do the same for you. This opens a whole new world of potential contacts for you on Twitter. This means that you are directly connected to your own contacts, but also to everyone else in the Twitter universe.

Twitter is a great place to surf around and spend some time reading various Tweets. It is sort of like the Internet in its beginning days, when it was fun to go from link to link, from idea to idea. If you like what someone in particular on Twitter has to say, see who is linked to that person, and you will discover other individuals that interest you as well. And, if you find someone whose Tweets you no longer wish to follow, just unfriend them and move on—you are not obligated to stay connected to people. It is a very fluid environment.

Twitter has an international reach. It provides easy access to colleagues all over the world. This expands your network in a way that you would never be able to do if you had to meet everyone in person—in "real life."

Make new contacts/expand your network – again, one of Twitter's features is, you can make new contacts and expand your network well outside what it would have been if you were limited to only connecting with those who you meet face to face. I have Twitter contacts that I know personally, but most of my Twitter friends are people I came across on Twitter who were talking about interesting things, so I decided to follow them, or they followed me, and we have never met in person.

Establish yourself as an expert. Twitter allows you to do so by simply sharing information and having conversations with people. If you talk about things that you are passionate about, and know a little something about (without being overbearing or too pushy), people will respond and want to

be in your Twitter network. Twitter is a place where you can and should share information with others that you find interesting. In turn, others will share information with you as well.

Twitter is a place to gather information about competitors and clients in a non-obtrusive way. Remember, you do not have to be approved to follow someone on Twitter, so you can follow or read the feed from anyone you choose. If you have a potential client that you would like to approach, follow their Twitter feed for a while to see if you can find out anything useful. Also, following competitors can be useful as well. See what ideas they are talking about and their approach to business.

Promote yourself via Twitter. Don't be afraid to toot your own horn on Twitter at times, but do use a soft sell. If you are constantly promoting yourself, it will turn people off – and they can easily stop following you. Hard selling on Twitter won't get you very far.

As with LinkedIn, Twitter is just one of many marketing initiatives you can take. If you put time into it and build up a community on Twitter, you will eventually get referrals from colleagues or actual project work from your contacts there. Just know that it is a long-term investment, and, like any in-person networking, any monetary results will not be obvious right away. I really appreciate the community I have on Twitter, and I look at the bigger picture, not just short term gain from my involvement there. ■

About The Author

Eve Lindemuth Bodeux is Principal of Bodeux International LLC, a translation and localization consultancy for end-clients.

Marketing (continued from page 10)

$500 or more. High-margin projects can also come in unexpected places, as I described in a previous post about translating official documents (http://thoughtsontranslation.com/2010/02/11/translating-official-documents/). Each invoice might be small, but on most official document translations I make at least 50 cents per word.

- Use the objective data that is available to you. Don't market to agencies as if you're throwing spaghetti against a wall; pick some agencies that mesh with your business goals and market just to them. For example, search the Payment Practices database (http://thoughtsontranslation.com/2008/11/17/using-payment-practices-as-a-marketing-tool/) for agencies that are rated highly by other translators.
- In general, target small and medium agencies. Not every big agency is a sweatshop, but I think that in general, large agencies are geared toward the high volume, low margin market. In addition, you're more likely to find small and medium agencies that work primarily or exclusively in your specializations.

Reprinted with the author's permission from her blog, Thoughts on Translation (http://www.thoughtsontranslation.com) ■

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Corinne McKay, CT is an American Translators Association-certified French to English translator specializing in law, international development and corporate communications. From her office in Boulder, Colorado, she provides high-quality translation services to international development agencies and research institutes, law firms, international communications companies and quality-conscious translation agencies. She also provides on-site French interpreting services to clients in the Boulder/Denver metro areas.

Corinne's clients benefit from her intense involvement in the translation industry as the (2008-2010) President of the Colorado Translators Association and the Chairperson (2009-2011) of the American Translators Association's public relations committee. She has been selected as a presenter for the annual conference of the American Translators Association since 2004, speaking on topics ranging from freelance business practices to open source software to social networking tools for translators.

In 2006, Corinne published How to Succeed as a Freelance Translator, a career how-to guide for beginning and established translators alike. It has since sold over 3,000 copies and has become a widely-cited reference for the translation industry.

THE GOTHAM TRANSLATOR

The New York Circle of Translators (NYCT) is a New York State not-for-profit corporation grouping independent translators and interpreters as well as companies and organizations. It is a chapter of the American Translators Association (ATA) which is, in turn, an affiliate of the International Federation of Translators (FIT).

NYCT members work in a variety of languages and specialties. Our members are committed to the exchange of ideas and mutual support. One of our goals is to educate the general public about the professional nature of interpreting and translating.

NYCT members enjoy the following benefits:

- Free monthly meetings featuring speakers on all aspects of the translation profession
- Networking opportunities at monthly dinners and annual holiday party
- Professional development workshops and seminars
- Subscription to our newsletter, The Gotham Translator
- Listings in the NYCT Online Membership Directory and the annual NYCT printed Membership Directory
- Referrals (if you indicate that you accept them, existing members may direct work requests to you or clients may contact you directly)

Visit us at www.nyctranslators.org and join online!

THE GOTHAM TRANSLATOR

PO Box 4051
Grand Central Station
New York, NY 10163-4051