

ONLINE LEGAL SERVICES

A Work in Translation

Attorney Translation Services

(203) 637-4628

www.attorneytranslation.com

Price: Pricing varies according to service required. Go to the ATS Web site for a quote.

Reviewed by Denise P. Ward, Esq., Grean & Ward, Port Chester, N.Y.

Sometimes it's difficult enough practicing law in English legalese. It's much worse trying to understand a foreign version of legalese. Fortunately, Attorney Translation Services is available online to attorneys who find themselves confronted with an important document in a foreign language.

Legal documents have their own special language, and the particular placement of words or phrases often is key in the proper construction of a document. I am fluent in written and spoken Italian, and even so, I struggle to

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understand the arcane technical language in Italian contracts, leases and wills. In situations where proper translation — and therefore interpretation — is essential, I need a translation with an impeccable pedigree.

In addition to translating documents, ATS can create transcripts of foreign-language audio or visual records, and the company's staff of technicians is able to access information stored in virtually any electronic format.

One of the company's founders recalled an instance in which a Boston law firm submitted a spreadsheet for translation. The firm's Information Technology employees tried to open it, but were not successful. The large Microsoft Excel file was archived in a Japanese, DOS-based compression format. After diagnosing the problem, ATS

technicians were able to access the file using DOS recovery software. After this, they made the file more manageable by breaking it into smaller pieces for translation. Finally, when the translating was completed, they reassembled a final version of the file the firm would be able to open without assistance.

In addition to the company's technical expertise, I was pleased to learn all ATS translation is performed by licensed, multilingual attorneys. This is a vitally important element of the services provided by ATS. I often have sent documents to other translation services only to receive a literal, word-for-word translation that was ultimately inaccurate due to misinterpretation of the technical meaning of legal terms.

Proper translation by the ATS attorneys permits the placement of idiosyncratic legal or technical terms within the context of the document, and therefore within the document's intent.

Also significant is the fact that the ATS professional who translates your document is confirmed as not only an accurate translator but also an expert in the legal subject matter of the document. This is clearly essential to ensure a reliable translation.

The high standards of translation imposed on the professionals at ATS don't stop after your document is translated by a licensed, multilingual attorney. The first translations are proofread and edited by another licensed multilingual attorney who checks for accuracy and quality. In my opinion, it's this second level of scrutiny that permits ATS to be a standard bearer for the industry. Without this second tier, further verification of the translation's accuracy probably would be essential. With ATS, you can save both the time and money this would cost.

Turn around time is generally two to three business days, but one of the nice things about the service is its flexibility. ATS can deliver a translated document in a matter of hours if an attorney needs it right away. Otherwise, the language required, the availability of translators, and the complexity, technical nature and length of the document all influence delivery time and pricing. A company representative told me, generally speaking, the more time available for a translation, the better the pricing. Translation services are available for all of the major commercial languages, and I was told that to date, there never has been an unfulfilled translation request.

Translated products, saved as electronic files, are returned to clients via encrypted e-mail. At no extra charge, documents can be delivered with notarized certifications of accuracy from the translator, and a further certification can be affixed with the company's letterhead. Certifications such as these are generally necessary for translated documents to be accepted by courts and administrative agencies.

I was impressed with the quality of ATS translation as well as the dedication to customer service the company representatives demonstrated when I worked with them. A service that provides translations for attorneys by attorneys, followed by another attorney's review, lends a great level of reliability in an area fraught with danger. If I rely on a translator's interpretation of the language of a trust for a complex tax recommendation, that translation must be accurate, cohesive and coherent. ATS was able to deliver a document safely and accurately through what can be an attorney's minefield. ■■■

Closing Argument

Pros: Very effective translation service, complete with all necessary certifications to make the translations authentic and acceptable virtually anywhere.

Cons: Can get expensive if you are in a time crunch.

Verdict: A great service for those who must deal with foreign documents. Being able to rely on an attorney to translate a complex, technical document makes it well worth the cost.