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MARKETING AND ADVERTISING TRANSLATION

This paper offers guidance for marketing text translation. It will be helpful for companies preparing to translate their marketing content.

A marketing text is very content-intensive and provides much information in a compact form. This text is designed to ensure success by driving sales, winning new business, etc. In terms of translation, a marketing text is much more difficult than any other text. If you handle a marketing text translation in the same manner as with any other translation, the results will likely not meet your expectations. Typically, you should not expect that under similar conditions, marketing text translation quality will be similar to the technical translation quality, since the former requires much more effort than the latter.

Most marketing texts are of dual nature. On the one hand, the advertisement has to emotionally touch the target audience, and on the other, it should provide information that is important and interesting for this audience. Therefore, with a marketing text translation, a translator needs to have two skills: marketing style and subject matter knowledge.

Before proceeding with your translation, consider writing the text in the corresponding language, instead of translating it. Obviously, this new text will be different from the source to some extent. Still, this will ensure an important advantage: any text originally written in the target audience language is typically better than translation of the same text.

Marketing texts vary significantly depending on the local culture. One nation may completely misunderstand the message designed for some other nation. Therefore, there will be times when the source text is either non-translatable at all or can be translated only with a certain notion change. A good example of non-translatable items are slogans. Many of them are simply left untranslated across most markets, such as Panasonic's "Ideas for life" or Samsung's "Digitally yours".

Translation by a native speaker is an industry standard, but a marketing text can be sometimes translated by a non-native speaker. A convenient and cost-efficient solution is to have the text translated by a non-native speaking translator and reviewed by a native speaking reviewer.

Another important method of improving the quality is review by a specialist. A marketing professional will correct the translation to make it more engaging, emotional and targeted at the specific end user.

