

What Does It Cost for Language Services?



There are several different types of translation services available depending on your needs. Sites such as <http://translate.google.com> and www.gts-translation.com/webtranslation.asp offer free, very basic translation services for emails and websites. However, more extensive language services offer the use of interpreters; translation of audio or video presentations; or translation of business documents, training books, or e-learning courses.

The most important thing about any language service is not the cost, but rather finding the right fit for your needs. Employing “word-for-word” translation or interpretation is never a good idea. Instead, find a translator or interpreter who has extensive knowledge of the subject at hand as well as thorough knowledge of both languages involved.

Exact costs of language services vary depending on original language, target language, and type of service—length, type, and subject of written material, and type of interpretation needed.

Translation Services>>

The general example used here is for translation of a standard business document.

500 words
Independent translator
Between \$60 and \$100

Translation services company
Between \$90 and \$150

2,000 words
Independent translator
Between \$240 and \$400

Translation services company
Between \$360 and \$600

50,000 words
Independent translator
Between \$6,000 and \$10,000

Translation services company
Between \$9,000 and \$15,000

Interpretation Services>>

Exact costs may vary depending on required skills, travel arrangements, technical needs, length of assignment, and interpreter availability. There is often a minimum half-day requirement for hiring an interpreter, and it's also beneficial to provide the interpreter with background materials of the subject matter ahead of time.

Types of interpreting include:

Ad-hoc (a few sentences at a time during the presentation or event)

Simultaneous (for example, usually there are headsets for all who need interpretation; sometimes more than one interpreter is needed.)

Various interpreting environments include:

Whispering (only interpreting for 1 or 2 people in the room)

Media, court, or medical (industry-specific)

Educational (classroom-based)

Over-the-phone

Rates:

Independent interpreter
Starting rate: \$30 to \$50 per hour

Interpreter services company
Starting rate: \$45 to \$75 per hour

Source: American Translators Association (www.atanet.org); Global Translations (www.gts-translation.com/); and Today Translations (www.todaytranslations.com).



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