



Letter from the Editor

It's all about networking!

Regretfully, I missed the TCD conference in April this year. But on the other hand I had a new experience with another international conference that was held in Barcelona in May.

The networking was at its best. You could see people from all over the world coming to meet other people from different countries. Large companies, small companies, all of them together, all with the same aim.

The atmosphere was friendly and enthusiastic. There was a sort of electric energy in the air. Drinks were going fast, business cards were exchanged, and business prospects were in the making.

The new association ELIA—European Language Industry Association—was there too. They had a booth and this was their first public appearance; the results were excellent. Many companies were interested by this initiative on a European level.

Even with all the new, modern methods and globalization, direct contact is still the best. Networking is the right way and the best way to make new connections.

The language barrier was almost nonexistent, even though it was evident at times. For example, during lunch at the hotel a young Brazilian woman sat next to me. She asked the Spanish 'garçon' if there was fish on the menu. His English was very poor, but he understood. He said "no fish, chicken." The young lady was happy since she is allergic to fish and all types of seafood. Then the plate arrived. It was indeed chicken, but accompanied by beautiful prawns.

Translation companies still have their work cut out to ensure understanding between people.

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ABOUT TCD

The Translation Company Division (TCD) is a division of the American Translators Association (ATA). Visit our web site at www.ata-divisions.org/TCD. Subscribe to our Yahoo group by sending an email to ataTCD-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide information and service to our members, and to improve the relationships between translation companies and freelance translators through activities that recognize we are "in association" with each other.

NEWSLETTER

TCD News is the newsletter of the TCD. Readers are encouraged to submit articles, which are subject to editing. Articles reflect the opinions of the authors only, and do not represent the views or opinions of the editor or officers of the TCD.

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TCD 7th Annual Conference Report

By Kim Vitray



I am so pleased to report that the TCD conference held April 20-23, 2006, in Jersey City, NJ, was a resounding success! Vigdis Eriksen and Alexandra Farkas of Eriksen Translations did a tremendous job as our local organizers. We had nearly 100 attendees, which was almost double our conference attendance in 2005, including international visitors from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Guatemala, Israel, and Poland. The online registration provided through the ATA was a huge improvement this year, and the Hyatt provided superb service. We received many positive comments about the program, and attendees seemed to very much enjoy the banquet, the

Friday evening optional dinner-and-jazz activity, and the Saturday evening ATA reception. And last but certainly not least, our final budget was in the black, for the third year in a row.

We are extremely grateful to the following **sponsors, exhibitors, and advertisers** for their support of our event:

- Argos Company
- Beetext Productivity Solutions
- Hebrew Languages Services
- Idiom Technologies
- The Language Technology Center
- Language Weaver
- Lexis-Nexis/Martindale-Hubbell
- MultiCorpora
- MultiLingual Computing
- SDL International
- spanishbackoffice SA

We owe thanks to many others as well:

- Topping the list, **Vigdis Eriksen** and **Alexandra Farkas** of **Eriksen Translations**, our local

conference organizers. They were primarily responsible for site selection and organizing the Friday evening optional activity, but also provided willing and productive helping hands and words of advice and wisdom in many other areas as well.

- Our **speakers** and **panelists**, for their generous contributions of time, effort, and expertise.
- ATA (former) Chapter and Division Liaison **Mary David** and ATA Webmaster **Roshan Pokharel**, particularly for their assistance with site contracting, online registration, name badges, and the TCD website.
- The **ATA** and **its board**, for welcoming TCD conference attendees to their hosted reception.
- Assistant Administrator **Ellen Boyar** of Thomson Scientific, former Administrator **Linda Gauthier** of BG Communications, and conference attendee and special friend **Rina Ne'eman**

Name	Company	Session Title
Jost Zetzsche	International Writers' Group	How Much Is Too Much of a Good Thing? Translation Environment Tools and the Language Industry
Renato Beninatto	Common Sense Advisory	Project Managers Are Your Best Salespeople—How to Leverage Their Customer Interaction to Grow Your Business
Laurie Gerber	Language Weaver	Are We There Yet? The State of the Art and Practice in MT
Charles Campbell/ Ed Zad	spanishbackoffice SA/ Lionbridge	Value throughout the Vendor Supply Chain
Natasha Bonilla/ Jeff Wood	Eriksen Translations/ Monterey Institute	Making Internships Work for You
Kim Vitray	McElroy Translation	Fear Factor in the Workplace: Would You Rather Eat Bugs Than Do Employee Performance Evaluations?
Everette Jordan	National Virtual Translation Ctr.	Translation Companies and National Security Needs
Jonathan Bernstein	Levy Davis & Maher, LLP	The How-To's of Enforcing (or Avoiding) Employee Non-Competition, Non-Solicitation, and Confidentiality Agreements
Shaun Daggett	ClientSide News	Where Are All the Clients?
Evan Geisinger	Native Experts	The Global Language Services Infrastructure of 2014—Strategic Technological Futurism for the Language Services Industry
Benoit Desjardins	Beetext Productivity Solutions	Project Management Software for Translation Agencies: Discover the Real Benefits of Workflow Automation
Bill Rabkin	Idiom Technologies	Changing Market Dynamics: Idiom WorldServer™ LSP Advantage Program Provides New Choices for LSPs
Kristen Weigel	SDL International	Dramatically Improve Productivity for Creating, Cleansing & Maintaining Translation Assets



TCD 7th Annual Conference Report, cont.

of Hebrew Language Services, all of whom gave up a beautiful afternoon they could have spent sightseeing in New York City to instead help with last-minute preparation and set up for the conference.



- **Evan Norman** and **Susan Andrus** of McElroy Translation, for their work on the TCD website and the conference program.

Our Thursday evening banquet was a perfect start to the conference, with good food and drink shared with friends old and new, and a spectacular view of the New York City skyline. Because our conference was co-located with the ATA spring board meeting, we were honored to have ATA President **Marian Greenfield** with us for the evening.



On Friday evening, a group of attendees participated in an optional activity: “**New York at Night: An Evening of Dinner and Jazz in New York’s Flat Iron District**” (and thanks again to Alexandra for organizing this, and

leading us in a fascinating walk/ subway/train journey!). We enjoyed a three-course dinner of fine Spanish-influenced cuisine, followed by music from The Silvia Zehn Duo (Silvia Zehn, piano, and Dmitri Kolesnik, bass).



Our Saturday morning keynote event was once again a panel discussion centered around the TCD mission of improving the relationships between translation companies and freelance translators. The panel consisted of six participants: two freelance translators (**Sarah Yarkoni** and **Laura Brandkamp**), two company owners/managers (**Beatriz Bonnet** of Syntes Language Group and **Werner Hindrichs** of ALS Inc.), and two company owners/managers who are also freelance translators (**Rina Ne’eman** of Hebrew Language Services and **Bin Liu** of Acumen TransMedia Services).



Questions had been prepared and given to the panelists in advance, and then questions and comments were also taken from the audience. There was lively and participative discussion. Following are the questions, and the answers as best as I can reconstruct and summarize them from my notes.

1. Name three specific things that companies can do to help freelancers do their jobs better, and that freelancers can do to help companies do their jobs better?

Companies can help freelancers by: (1) providing clear instructions; (2) paying on time; and (3) being realistic about their expectations.

Freelancers can help companies by: (1) reading the instructions that are provided; (2) invoicing on time; (3) being honest about their capabilities; (4) delivering early to set themselves apart; and (5) providing cultural advice.

Both parties should: (1) ask questions; (2) do their homework; (3) be responsive; (4) improve their skills; and (5) do quality work.

2. Should translation companies outsource project management, and what are the factors to be considered in making this decision and managing this particular relationship?

On the one hand, project management is what translation companies do; on the other, it is also their prerogative to outsource the project management function when



TCD 7th Annual Conference Report, cont.

they need to, because of lack of inhouse resources or time, or because they need specialized assistance. However, the group consensus was that translation companies in general should not outsource project management.

- 3. What are the first three steps in professionally handling a difficult issue, misunderstanding, or dispute between a company and a freelancer?

The first step is direct communication between the two parties, not others, to talk about the problem and practice active listening with each other. The second step is to negotiate in good faith. And the third step is to recognize that sometimes things just happen, so take responsibility for them and try to create a win-win and learning experience.

Other tips were: (1) identify and discuss the issue objectively, not emotionally, and to not take it personally; (2) work to ascertain whether or not there is truly a problem, and then exactly where and what it is; and (3) view each other as partners, not enemies.

- 4. What steps can be taken by companies and freelancers toward a system of accountability for professional ethics (e.g., penalties and rewards)?

There was vigorous discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of industry "blacklists." Everette Jordan of the NVTC was to the point regarding unethical behavior: "The government will hunt you

down and charge you with espionage."



- 5. Faced with keen competition and great price pressures, what can both companies and freelancers do to stay viable and in business?

Ideas included: (1) drop prices; (2) offer multiple services; (3) broaden their databases of contacts and resources; (4) go more high-tech; (5) add value; (6) establish themselves as professionals in global communication in order to command better rates; (7) remember it's business, not personal; (8) be reliable and deliver on time; and (9) invest in ongoing relationships with good partners and in honest dialogue.

On Saturday evening, conference attendees were welcomed at a reception hosted by the ATA board. This was a great opportunity for TCD members to talk one-on-one with ATA board members, to bring to their attention any questions, comments, or concerns.



Here's what some of our attendees had to say about this year's TCD conference. You won't want

to miss next year, when we will be bigger and better than ever (stay tuned for future details)!

"Thank you...for organizing a great conference. It's nice to be in a room full of people who spend their days thinking about the same sorts of things that you do. I enjoyed the presentations."

"The TCD conference was well organized and well run—and what a great hotel! Your team deserves credit and gratitude. I appreciate sessions that give me information—and interpretations of it—about the industry that I cannot easily get elsewhere. Also the ATA board reception was outstanding. I also like the keynote panel—a moderated opportunity for open discussion is invaluable."

"Great conference—lots of new attendees! Getting better each year."

"[The conference] was very successful. The organization was highly disciplined and neatly executed. The program of sessions was well arranged, informative, and edutaining."

"There was a good variety of topics, a great venue, and it seemed to be very well organized by all involved."

"Excellent, very well organized, lots of fun. The talks were very useful and interesting and well planned. The New Jersey venue was excellent."





Let the good times roll ... in New Orleans!

47th Annual Conference

of the American Translators Association

November 1-4, 2006 | New Orleans, Louisiana | Sheraton New Orleans Hotel

Don't miss this opportunity to network, market your skills, and reunite with colleagues. With more than 175 EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS, this annual event truly has something for everyone!

Wednesday, November 1, 7:30-9:30 p.m. — Translation Company Division Dessert Reception New Orleans Style

Friday, November 3, 3:30-5:00 p.m. — Translation Company Division Annual Meeting (ABC-7)

Be sure to take advantage of these sessions on the ABC (Agencies, Bureaus & Companies) track, designed especially for owners and managers of translation companies:

Thursday, November 2

- ABC-1 Does Quality Management Matter? *by Javier Labrador*
- ABC-2 Quality Assurance for the Translation Industry: Tips and Tricks *by Dierk Seeburg*
- ABC-3 Quality Doesn't Matter! *by Renato Beninatto*

Friday, November 3

- ABC-4 Fear Factor in the Workplace: Would You Rather Eat Bugs Than Do Employee Performance Evaluations? *by Kim Vitray*
- ABC-5 How to Avoid the Six Most Costly Mistakes in a Translation Project *by Michael Cardenas*
- ABC-6 Why Professional Project Management in Your Translation Company? *by Kenneth McKethan and Graciela White*

Saturday, November 4

- ABC-8 Business Practices for Translators *by Gabe Bokor, Joesph Mazza, Ines Swaney, James Walker, and Ed Zad*
- ABC-9 Has the Tower of Babel Fallen Down? Achieving Efficiency in the Translation of Multi-Lingual Documents *by Michael Sneddon*
- ABC-10 Survivor: Escape from Project Management Island *by Tina Cargile*
- ABC-11 The 10 Commandments for Translation Project Managers *by Luis Carbo*
- ABC-12 Quality Control Analysis in the Real World *by Kelly Dresen and Perry Konstas*



Effective Performance Appraisals

By Alison M. Wallace

Most employers use some type of formal staff appraisal to assess the development needs of their employees. Primarily they should be about measuring performance in a meaningful way in order to assess the training needs. Appraisal schemes too often fail if they are not tailored precisely to work alongside the unique needs of a business.

In an effective organization the introduction and running of an appraisal system formalizes good management support. It will not work where the system is used as a mechanism for managers to manage people out of the business. To be a successful and valuable experience, the appraiser must have credibility with his or her team. Where there is an absence of trust, respect, and open and honest dialogue, there will be no rapport and no meaningful interview consequential results.

The appraisal is not a time for addressing issues that have been stored up during the year, telling staff for the first time what their shortcomings are, or asking why they have not achieved the expected levels of performance. Such feedback should be dealt with as part of the normal day-to-day management activities.

The quality of appraisals varies hugely. These can range from a brief interview with the line manager to 360-degree staff appraisal, psychometric tests of aptitude and ability, and assessment centers. Lack of planning and care in any appraisal process can alienate the employee. If telephone calls are taken during the interview when this is supposed to be a private, focused, and confidential discussion, what does that reveal? 360-

degree appraisals reduce many of the risks of a one-to-one appraisal, but they can be time consuming and generate huge amounts of paperwork, which means the process frequently grinds to a halt before completion.

With the accelerating pace of change in traditional employment paths, downsizing and outsourcing, corporate restructuring, and career portfolios, the nature of the contract between an employer and an employee has radically altered. There is no job for life, and the appropriate career development in return for loyalty and willing effort at work from the employee has all but disappeared. Employees have had to take responsibility for their own career development to maintain their own employability, and thus personal development plans have been popular. At their simplest these have been drawn up by employees to review the competencies they need in their current job and sometimes for their next role in the organization. This will be based on their performance appraisals or one-to-one assessments.

Do appraisals reliably identify training needs? Appraisals generally have a very negative concept. No employee particularly looks forward to being appraised. The expectations are at best a "could do better" outcome. How do you achieve the best value from your appraisal system? The first step is to understand the performance appraisal system. If the business does not understand its purpose or context, it cannot deliver it in an authentic manner.

Headline points should include:

- having a system that supports improved performance

- allowing time to plan everything in advance
- having good managers in place on a day-to-day basis
- listening and letting the appraisee talk
- being honest
- basing any assessment on fact not opinion
- delivering the training decided on and personal development plans
- providing feedback and reviewing any objectives throughout the year

The appraisal scheme should have clear objectives as to what the benefits are to the business, the team, and all staff. Commitment to the scheme must be given and maintained. An appraisal scheme should only be introduced and maintained if it has the full support of the appraisees.

Consideration should be given in both structuring and maintaining the appraisal scheme of the legal ramifications to avoid discrimination issues, data protection implications of handling appraisal information, and contractual and equal pay issues. If job roles are to change, is there scope for agreeing to this? Are pay raises to be limited to the outcome of the appraisal? Is a promotion to follow? How can bias be avoided? Are older workers being refused training in new knowledge requirements? There should also be a proper appeals procedure for airing and resolving grievances about the appraisal process.

Finally, all participants should be adequately trained in the process and skills of appraisals. There should be a proper timetable so

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Lido-Lang Technical Translations Launches XTRF

By Jurek Nedoma

New Global Management System for Translation Companies

XTRF is a global management system designed to help translation companies to streamline all of their daily activities and guarantees smooth management of the company while reducing administrative costs. Used by all departments in these companies—human resources, sales, project management, finance, ISO 9001, and top management—the role of XTRF is to automate repetitive activities and to support all users by providing as much information as possible, increasing work effectiveness, minimizing the hourly input needed to control the company's activities, and reducing the margin of error.

All computation related to the XTRF management system is handled on a server, so only minimal computer capability is necessary: the PC needs only to have an Internet connection and an installed web browser.

XTRF was launched in Barcelona, at the Localization World Conference, where we were able to canvass the opinions of our prospective customers from all over the world. We were sure there was no better place to introduce our product, and we were not disappointed. XTRF turned out to be a real success.

XTRF enables users to smoothly process all projects from the customer's initial inquiry through completion of payment. Thanks to a complex price-settings panel in XTRF, it is possible to store even the most complex offers, and to meet even the most sophisticated needs of each and every customer.

Creating a fully customizable system is a software developer's

nightmare, but we achieved this, and were proud to present it at the Localization World Conference. Some of the features that are an inseparable part of the system are: flexible configuration panel including built-in e-mail templates; flexible definition of internal users' and external partners' access rights; and customizable project and invoice numbering and naming.

And still we were not satisfied. XTRF flexibly covers the invoicing process, customer relationship management, and the preparation of quotations. XTRF was designed by the managers of a translation company in cooperation with developers experienced in the most modern programming technologies. With more than 15 years' experience running a translation business we are well versed in our field, and know how to solve organizational problems related to the regular activity of a translation company. As a result of this synergic action, the XTRF system provides a complex solution to the real needs of translation companies of any size. That is what has provided us with the edge, and what makes XTRF a reliable and experience-based system, designed to manage all activities of the translation company.

Finally, what is considered by us to be a unique feature is that we have developed an ISO 9001 panel that meets all of the requirements of the ISO 9001 standard. Nowadays, when an increasing number of companies are applying for ISO 9001 certification, accurate assistance—along with automation of preparation for internal and external quality audits—becomes a very important point. Everyone needs a system to help analyze all company processes. We are convinced that XTRF is the right solution because we also are ISO 9001 certified.

The ISO 9001 panel introduces a new standard among management systems in translation agencies. Creating reports on company standing and trends, employee effectiveness, customer satisfaction or claims, client profitability, provider evaluation and automatic re-evaluation—these are the XTRF features that respond to the newest market requirements. We are convinced this will facilitate the way translation companies function.

Bearing in mind the rapid development of the translation and localization market, it is necessary to keep abreast of changes and—preferably—anticipate and react before they take us by surprise. We believe that XTRF—an intelligent management system based on cutting-edge Java technology—provides us with a unique opportunity to do just that.



Mr. Nedoma and his wife Barbara established Lido-Land Technical Translations in 1991. He can be reached at jurek_nedoma@lido-lang.com. Please visit www.xtrf.eu.

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that appraisals interact with other staff processes and pay reviews and to ensure timetables are adhered to and therein effective follow-up. If a business can crack the challenge of making appraisals welcome, this will undoubtedly add to better performance of staff and the business, providing satisfaction all around.



Ms. Wallace is Partner and Head of Employment at Steptoe & Johnson in London, www.steptoec.com. She can be reached at awallace@steptoec.com.



New ATA Language Technology Division established

In August 2006 the ATA formally established the Language Technology Division (LTD). This followed a newly introduced member fee structure in November 2005, which entitles the members of the Association to choose freely among the available divisions at no additional costs.

The primary objective of the division is to offer a central place where cross-language and non-domain specific topics arising from the use of Language Technology, developing and deploying standards as well as praxis relevant work in terminology research and maintenance can be discussed, explored and queried. The communication among the members of the division is supported via a member-only forum and blogs for news updates posted on the division's website. The website also serves as an information portal with the general public through the posting of newsbites and articles related to Language Technology as well as link collections of other relevant websites. The founders of the division envision a peer supported knowledgebase and plan to offer continuing education opportunities in cooperation with other bodies of the ATA.

I am curious, I want to know more

First you might want to visit the Language Technology Division of the ATA at <http://www.ata-divisions.org/LTD/>.

I think this is interesting. How can I join?

Membership in the ATA Language Technology Division is available to ATA members of all levels. Simply sign up in the Members Only section of the ATA Website, in your ATA membership application or with your next ATA membership renewal.

Existing ATA members can now join the Language Technology Division online by logging in with their membership number and e-mail address in the header of any page of the ATA website at <http://www.atanet.org/>.

- Once logged in, you should see a header titled "Change Your ATA Information Online" (about halfway down the page) and under that a menu item called "Join An ATA Division."
- When you click the link "Join An ATA Division", you will see a list of all the divisions you currently belong to and under that a list of divisions you do not currently belong to.
- To join the LTD, you just need to click in the box next to the division's name.

What else is there for me to do?

Naturally the division maintains a mailing list. If you want to be subscribed to the mailing list to get the latest news, participate in discussions, ask for advice or offer support send an email to the following address:

To subscribe: ataLTD-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

1. *Add to the title:* Subscribe ataLTD
2. *Add to the body:* Your name and email address

I am excited about this. Can I contribute?

The division is interested in any form of contribution, whether you want to write an article, work on a wiki, edit content or simply scout the latest trends.

Please contact the Division's administrator Michael Metzger at his email address: mm9@sbcglobal.net.