

Professional editing improves clarity and increases the credibility of your documents



In the business world, documents and other communications are expected to be written to a high standard of quality. Well-written documents build trust in the company's brand, help readers stay engaged and increase the credibility of messages.

The problem is that the writers of most documents are subject-matter experts, not professional writers or editors. This results in documents with errors, inconsistencies and poor structure.

Language-service providers play an important role in providing businesses with the document editing services they need, maximizing quality, and if needed, preparing text for translation.

DOCUMENT EDITING SERVICES

A professional editor will correct errors in basic sentence structure and catch grammar and spelling mistakes. An editor can also collaborate with the document's author to restructure a poorly organized argument, improve the clarity of sentences, replace jargon with direct statements and ensure that claims are precisely stated.

REQUIREMENTS TO BRIEF AN EDITOR

Light Editing

When the document has little need for improvement but requires checking of the basic elements such as punctuation, subject-verb agreement, or correction of a few sentences to ensure clarity.

Requirements:

- Explanation of the readership and intended function of the document
- Clear indication of the specific parts that require editing
- Relevant background info

Medium Editing

When the document needs more than just light editing. Awkward sentences are reworded, verbiage made more concise, transitions between paragraphs made smoother, and style and consistency issues are resolved.

Requirements:

- Everything from the light editing section
- Style guide
- Comprehensive reference materials
- Clear process for the editor to ask for clarification when needed

Heavy Editing

When the document needs substantial editing to ensure the structure, content, language and style achieve the highest possible quality. May involve major rewriting.

Requirements:

- Everything from the Medium Editing section
- Extensive background information and reference materials
- Clear description of the scope of work before editing begins (expected scope of changes, number of iterations, etc.)

Editing services are available whether or not a document requires translation. If the document does require translation, an editor plays an even more important role in preparing the document for translation.

PREPARING DOCUMENTS FOR TRANSLATION

The editor's job at this stage is to ensure that the translator can focus on translation quality and avoid wasting valuable time restructuring content. Here are some key tasks editors perform in collaboration with the author:



- **Limit or replace allusions, idioms, oxymorons, puns, rhetorical questions, metaphors and hyperbole** > These are stylistic devices that require a translator to make judgment calls and spend extra time researching meanings and finding equivalents in the target language.
- **Remove non-essential, culturally-specific references** > For example, movie quotes like, "I'll be back!," as uttered by Arnold Schwarzenegger in "The Terminator," may not be part of the culture in the target language. Once again, research is required to find a culturally suitable substitute, without which the reference must be removed by the author. This inevitably adds more steps and cost to the translation process. Culturally neutral text supplied by the editor is more economically responsible.
- **Simplify language** > Look for complex ideas and words, foreign phrases, slang and any expressions that may not be familiar to the translator. Keep sentences short, since many languages require more words to communicate the same ideas.
- **Focus on clarity** > Communicate ideas directly and succinctly. Avoid ambiguity or fuzzy thoughts. Write in a consistent style throughout the document.



PREPARING FOR A COMPLETE HAND-OFF TO THE TRANSLATOR



Once your document is ready for translation, the editor will help you compile your source text, style guide (if any), and reference materials into a single well-organized package. This is important since projects can't go into production until everything needed has been provided.

The editor also knows to provide source text in "ready-to-go" compatible formats for the following reasons:

- Projects can go into production more quickly;
- There's less risk of error when re-formatting or other pre-translation work is required;
- High-quality translations are easier to produce.

For more information about document editing, please contact the Translation Team: TC@Alllanguages.com or call 647-826-1967