

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO FINDING HIGH-PAYING TRANSLATION CLIENTS



Get an endless stream of bigger and better clients, charge the highest rates, and get the freedom and flexibility you crave

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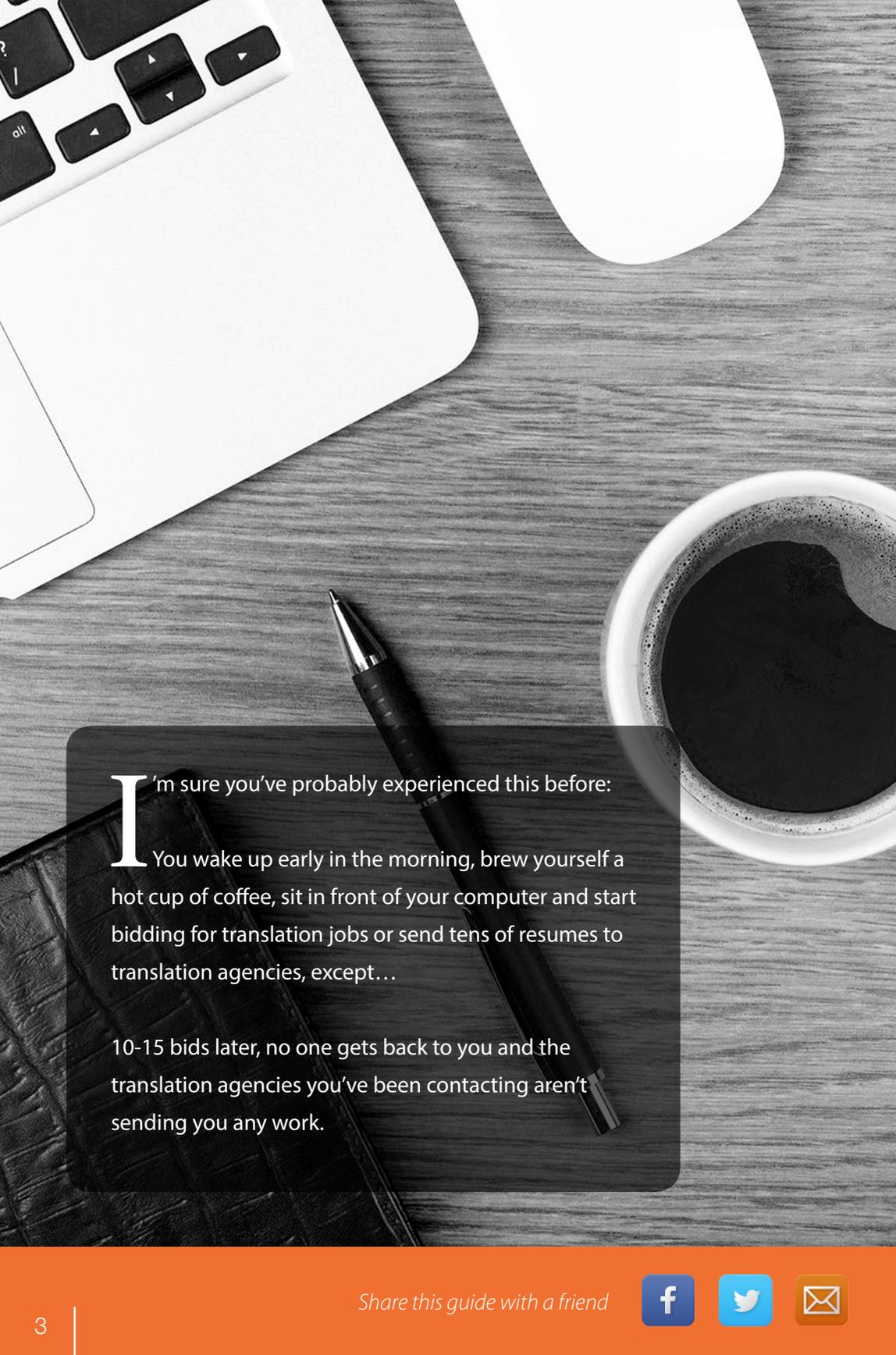
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A top-down view of a desk with a laptop, mouse, pen, and coffee cup. The laptop is on the left, the mouse is at the top right, the pen is in the center, and the coffee cup is on the right. The desk has a wood-grain texture.

I'm sure you've probably experienced this before:

You wake up early in the morning, brew yourself a hot cup of coffee, sit in front of your computer and start bidding for translation jobs or send tens of resumes to translation agencies, except...

10-15 bids later, no one gets back to you and the translation agencies you've been contacting aren't sending you any work.

So you're left staring at your empty email inbox. After a long day, you call it a night and repeat the process all over again the next day.

Does that sound familiar? Have you ever asked yourself, "Why can't I find high-paying clients?" "What am I doing wrong?" Or felt like throwing in the towel and walking away from freelancing?

If so, you're not alone.

I know that feeling all too well. When I started freelancing in 2007, I found myself confused, exhausted, and uncertain how to find clients that would pay me what I deserve.

Losing steam, and burnt out several months into freelancing, I even considered switching careers and going back to law school.

I felt like I wasn't sure if I could make it anymore. I often questioned if I was cut out to be a freelance translator.

I knew I was being underpaid but I felt like it was better than nothing because "beggars couldn't be choosers". So I stuck with the sub-optimal rates.

But after having done deep research, spoken with countless top translators charging the highest rates, investing thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours in my freelance translation business, I've finally cracked the code.

Fast forward to now, I charge up to \$250 per hour, work with some of the best clients—like Sony and travel all over the world while running a successful freelance translation business.





Here I am in Paris during my two months of travel in Europe while running my freelance translation business

Currently, I share over nine years of big breakthroughs in freelancing with hundreds of Translators Academy readers to accelerate their progress and help them achieve the income and lifestyle they want.

You won't come across this information anywhere else. In fact many seasoned freelance translators are hesitant to share these "secrets."

In my journey, I've come across every roadblock, failed countless times, and as a result learned what works and what doesn't work in freelancing as a translator.

Over the years, I've discovered and refined the systems, frameworks, and strategies for finding high-paying translation clients.

And in this guide, I'll show you exactly how you can leapfrog years of struggle so you can make more money and work on your terms, not someone else's.



LET'S GET STARTED

Why I wrote this guide:

When you decided to start freelancing, you probably had big dreams of being your own boss, having the flexibility to do what you love the most—but then probably realized several months later that your life looks nothing like what you had pictured.

Instead of having the freedom to travel and work from anywhere in the world, you're bidding on one-off translations and working with translation agencies who don't appreciate the value of your hard work.

Now, if you're anything like me, you're probably sick of being told to, "pay your dues until you gain experience" and to, "work for low pay so you can build your translation portfolio".

You're also tired of dealing with scammy translation agencies filling your email inbox with "urgent" emails asking you to translate for 0.03 cents per word and demanding insane deadlines.

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While you're working around the clock 24/7 and chasing after cheapskate clients to pay you many months later, there are others enjoying the freedom of freelancing, with the time and money doing the things they love. And they never have to choose between making money and crafting the life they want because they can have both.

You don't have to have ten plus years of experience and a Masters in Translation Studies to succeed. If you're ready to start living the life that you want, whether it's traveling the world, spending time with your loved ones, or never have to worry about making enough money as a freelance translator, then you have to embrace this truth...

You can keep doing what you're doing and say 'NO' to the exciting opportunities to travel and the freedom of spending time on what matters to you the most...

Or you can choose to learn how to make more money so you can enjoy the flexibility of freelancing.

Yes, working as a freelance translator isn't only about making more money. But earning more money is what gives you the freedom to do what you love and pursue the life of our dreams.

If you are content with the ordinary life of a freelance translator, getting a few clients "here and there", frustrated, and hustling for one-off jobs, then this isn't for you.

But if you're ready to play in the big leagues and run a real business, then this guide is what you need.



Who is this guide for?

I wrote this guide for anyone wanting to...

- ▶ Break into freelance translation who's unsure how to go about it. Instead of figuring things out on your own, I'll show you how to find high-paying clients (even if you don't have a lot of experience) and save you years of struggle and frustration instead of learning through trial and error.
- ▶ Part-time freelance translators who don't feel like they're ready to make the leap into full-time freelancing. I'll show you how you can get a steady stream of high-paying clients so you can make the leap.
- ▶ Full-time freelance translators who want bigger and better clients to take their business to the next level. I'll show you how to get there by finding the clients that value and appreciate the work you do and that will give you a paycheck that reflects it.

The Pros and Cons of working with translation agencies vs direct clients

Translation has become a highly commoditized industry. This is why it's more important than ever to differentiate yourself and go after high-value clients that will pay for your expertise. In this guide, I'll talk about working for both high-paying translation agencies and direct clients—the type of clients where there is no “middle man.”



You don't have to choose one over the other. In fact many successful freelance translators work with both. Here are the potential upsides and downsides of working with translation agencies and direct clients.

Upsides to working with translation agencies

- ✓ It's easier way to "break into" freelancing—especially if you don't have business skills or experience working with your own clients.
- ✓ No administrative work before or after translation (i.e. proposals, contracts, etc.)
- ✓ No ongoing communication with the client—you just translate

Potential downsides of working with translation agencies

- X The market rates for jobs makes it difficult to raise rates
- X Tight and demanding deadlines that will have you working atypical hours
- X Payment maybe processed 30-60 days after the assignment is completed

Upsides to working with direct clients

- ✓ No limit to your earnings—you can earn 2X, 5X, even 10X the market rate
- ✓ You work with less clients but have the potential to make more money
- ✓ Faster payments—you set the due dates

Potential downsides of working with direct clients

- X You have to invest your time in finding clients
- X You'll wear many hats and will be in charge of managing all aspects of the



translation project

X It takes testing and time to learn the skills direct clients value

For freelance translators that feel like they aren't ready or that they don't have the experience to work with high-paying clients, the issue is really a matter of confidence not competence.

The skills you feel like you're missing can always be learned. I'll show you what it takes to get your first three high-paying clients, even if you don't have a ton of experience or graduate degrees in translation.





THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EARNING MORE MONEY

Over time I've developed, tested, and bulletproofed my system to getting bigger and better clients and now, for the first time, I want to share these strategies with you. And here is where it all starts...

Step #1: The psychology of earning more money

For a lot of freelance translators the biggest hurdle is getting comfortable with talking about money without making it awkward. Our subconscious beliefs are often at the very core of what hold us back from earning more money.

When I first started freelancing, all I did was worry.

- ▶ "There are so many other experienced translators with higher degrees"



- ▶ “Why would anyone pay me that much?”
- ▶ “All clients care about is getting the cheapest and fastest translation”

I thought money and credentials was all clients cared about when hiring a translator. I would fret about quoting a “fair price”. But your pay shouldn’t be a moral question. After all you’re running a business, not a charity!

So how do you overcome your set ways of thinking?

First, you need to believe that you deserve to be paid what you’re worth, and I hope it’s more than 0.03 cents per word.

Second, remove all emotion from the money conversation and view the question from a business perspective.

Third, understand what your clients really care about. If the client is a right fit for you, then what they care about the most will be the results your translation services produce.

If you’re able to communicate how you’ll be able to help your clients reach their goals through your translation service, then what you charge will be of little importance. Change your attitude towards money and your results will be remarkable.





HOW TO FIND YOUR FIRST THREE HIGH-PAYING CLIENTS (AND WHY YOU'RE LOOKING IN ALL THE WRONG PLACES)

Imagine how it would feel to get your first three high-paying clients? Especially clients that value the work you do and give you the time you need to finish projects.

Would you be excited? Feel more confident? Finally be able to enjoy the work you do?

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What would you do with the extra time and money? Travel more? Invest in yourself and attend conferences?

Like many freelance translators, these are all the things that I wanted. But I had no idea how to find the clients.

Mistake #1 Looking in all the wrong places

First, let me tell you where you won't find high-paying clients. You'll never see them post translation jobs on websites like Translators Cafe and ProZ. Your time is better spent elsewhere.

In fact, most lucrative translation jobs are never advertised. Most high-paying translation jobs are found through personal contacts (whether it's a project manager, fellow translator, or past clients) and not through translation job portals where you'll most likely bid your way to the bottom.

Mistake #2 Spending time on activities that won't bring in clients

Most of the advice for freelance translators comes from a good place, but it's misleading. I'd even go as far as saying it's downright bad.

You'll hear things like, "create a logo", "get on twitter", and "you need a website with professional branding". So we end up spending a ton of time creating a complex marketing strategy only to realize later we have no clients to show for it.



THE STEP-BY-STEP METHOD TO FINDING YOUR FIRST THREE HIGH-PAYING CLIENTS (THE RIGHT WAY)

So how do you find your ideal high-paying client? And where do they go when they need your translation services?

A lot of freelance translators try to be the “jack of all trades” and work with any client that comes their way and then wonder why they’re having a hard time finding high-paying translation jobs.

So they throw their hand up in the air and say things like:

- ▶ All the good clients are taken!
- ▶ It’s because my rates are too high
- ▶ There’s too much competition in my language pairs

On top of that, when you ask what their perfect client looks like, they won’t be able to tell you.

Successful translators don’t play the client guessing game. Before you start pitching to random clients, here’s what you need to do.



BE A SPECIALIST NOT A GENERALIST

Specialists are always paid more for their translation services. And this is not only unique to translation, but virtually every industry—from doctors, lawyers, to engineers.

Many freelance translators feel like specializing is counterintuitive. They're afraid of "pigeonholing" themselves.

But the thing about specializing is it boosts your earning potential because when you're an expert in your particular field you can command higher rates.

How to find goldmine specializations

It's a well know "secret" by many top translators, and it's why a small number of folks dominate their area of expertise.

This is also how some freelance translators become the "go-to" person in their specialization, especially when the demand outweighs the supply. As a result they reap massive rewards.

The "secret" is they listen to the market to determine what's sought after for their language pairs when choosing a specialization. They never rely on their passion, instead they follow the money trail.



Getting paid the big bucks in your specialization requires two things:

1. Knowing what skills are valued by the market
2. What skills you need to excel in so you can beat out the competition

When you align the two, then that's when you're on to something.

Now you may not always be good at the exact skills your target market values and it does take some work to hone those extra skills needed to dominate your specialization but the rewards will be HUGE.

The Riches are in the niches

When you sell to everyone, you'll sell to no one. In order for clients to come to you when they're in need of your translation services you have to position yourself as the go-to person. And it all starts with knowing who your ideal client is.

Rapid-fire market research to pinpoint your perfect client

I know niching down may sound counterintuitive but it's what will separate you from all of the generalists out there wondering around like lost souls.

It's incredibly seductive to go after clients in different types of industries. After all you want to keep your options open and cast a wide net, right?

Well, it doesn't work that way. Translation is a highly competitive market and



clients have an endless choice of translators to work with.

Niching down is how you'll break away from the rest of the pack. And it starts with knowing the exact client you're going to pursue right down to their appearance.

- ▶ Demographics: Age, ethnicity, gender, income level, and job title
- ▶ Psychographics: Personality , values, opinions, and lifestyles
- ▶ Behavior: What are their hobbies and where do they hangout online and offline?

After you've filtered through the details of your ideal clients, then ask yourself, "Do they have the willingness and the financial ability for pay for my translation services?"

This is a critical step you need to examine in your business. Just because clients have a need for your translation services doesn't always mean they have the willingness or the ability to pay for it.

If you find yourself "educating" clients on why they need translation services then know that they either:

1. Don't have the ability to pay for you translation services
2. They don't have the willingness to pay for your translation services

Instead of lecturing clients, your efforts will be better used finding "hungry markets."



What are hungry markets exactly? They are the type of clients that already know your translation services will help them reach their goals or solve their problems and are willing to pay the price tag that comes along with it. Once a clients needs to be convinced then you're knocking on the wrong door.

How to get "into" your client's head

You can't understand someone until you've walked a mile in their shoes. So, how are you going to sell your translation services to a prospective client if you don't know what is important to them?

One of the biggest mistakes you can make is to only think of yourself as a freelance translator, when in reality you offer so much more to clients. They don't only come to you for translations, they come to you for something bigger.

What that is will vary depending on the type of client you're working with. For high-paying translation agencies it's minimizing risk. Their reputation is on the line working with you so your ultimate goal should be to build trust with project managers. Direct clients on the other hand may want anything from growing their customer base to saving time.

Getting clients hooked from day one

As a freelance translator, it's up to you to do your homework and find out what your prospect wants the most—and then use that information to hook them in. But what most freelance translators end up doing is selling the features of their services (what they actually do) and not the benefits (the results clients get from the translation services).



Why bring this up?

Because clients aren't always going to connect the dots. Which is why highlighting the benefits of your translations is so important. It addresses the underlying question of, "What's in it for me?" That all clients have. By answering this question you'll instantly grab the attention of your prospects and separate yourself from the 99% of the other translators out there.

Once you've discovered the demand for your language pairs, found a lucrative specialization, identified your perfect client, then it's time to learn where your ideal high-paying clients go when they have a need for your translation services.



HOW TO FIND HIGH-PAYING CLIENTS USING THE 1% STRATEGY

Over the years, I have developed an interest in how some people are willing to pay exponentially more for commodity services—like \$3,500 for a handbag, \$600 for a pair of shoes, or even \$800 per hour for a high school tutor.

That's right, \$800 per hour for a high school tutor in an industry where the average pay is \$15 to \$18 per hour.

So how are these tutors able to charge dramatically more than their colleagues? And what can freelance translators learn from them?

Well, these tutors have identified who the top 1% of their market is (wealthy parents), then found out what their ideal clients wanted the most (to get their children into prestigious universities like Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, etc.)

The 1% strategy is going after the cream of the crop in your target market. It's how I've been able to charge 2X, 3X, and even 5X more than what other translators charge in my language pairs and specialization.

And what I charge is a drop in the bucket for my clients because some of them command hundreds of dollars per hour, and some up to \$1,500 per hour.





- Some Lawyers Are Now Charging \$1,500 Per Hour FEBRUARY 9, 2016
- Volkswagen Diesel Deal Likely To Be Announced Thursday 7:06 PM EDT
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LEADERSHIP LAWYERS

Some Lawyers Are Now Charging \$1,500 Per Hour

by Claire Zillman @clairezillman FEBRUARY 9, 2016, 9:16 AM EDT

USING THE 'FOOT IN THE DOOR STRATEGY' TO LAND HIGH-PAYING CLIENTS FASTER

Have you ever wondered how some freelance translators have put together a nice portfolio of major high-paying clients?

Where do they find these clients while so many freelancers are “spinning their wheels” and working on small time one-off gigs?

Many successful freelance translators get their clients through a simple and effective process.

It doesn't involve glacier-slow, tedious tactics such as blogging, social media, fruitless networking events, or uncomfortable self promotion techniques.

Fortunately, the technique I'm about to offer you is straightforward and easy. That's where the “Foot in the Door Strategy” comes in—an actionable step-by-step method to land lucrative clients. Here is how it works.

Point of entry

Want to translate for Nintendo? Or Sony? The best way to get the inside scoop on these companies is to find another translator already working for them.

Now, I know what you're thinking, "Why would anyone want to help me out?" and "Other translators don't want to share their clients".

But the truth is people love to help other people out, when they're approached the right way.

When you're reaching out to a fellow translator to dig up the dirt on a potential client, your intention should be to build a relationship and not to ask for a job right off the bat.

This is the classic mistake most freelance translators make. Instead of authentically connecting with other translators they send messages like these:

SUBJECT LINE: Spanish > English translator

Hi Tom,

My name is Eva and I'm a Spanish > English translator. I'm looking to get more clients and network with other translators in my language pairs. I'm thinking it would be great if we can work together. If you have translation projects you can't work on I would be happy to take them. I look forward to hearing from you or working with you in the future. *[Asks for a handout and doesn't engage the translator]*



Thank you,

Eva R.

When in reality they should be sending messages like this:

SUBJECT LINE: Fellow NCATA member and translator in D.C. [Warming up a cold email]

Hi Kerry,

For the past couple of weeks I've invested considerable research on companies like Apple and Cisco. During my search, I've come across your impressive LinkedIn profile. [Compliment] I would like to hear what your experience was like working with them. [Asking for information without looking for a handout]

I have 3-5 brief questions to ask you. [Acknowledging their time is valuable] Would you be available for a quick call or coffee meeting on Tuesday at 11:00 am? Let me know if this works for you. [Makes the decision process simple by setting a specific time and day. If it doesn't work for them, they'll let you know].

Thank you,

Nick R.



Which email would you want to receive?

The self-serving, it's all about, "me! me! me!" email or the genuine message from a fellow translator asking you to share your story?

And if you're wondering, "Why ask about their experience?" Well, it's a way to open up the conversation and learn more about the prospective client without the translator putting their guard up.

People love to talk about themselves and they'll share a ton of valuable information without you coming off as an opportunist.

Based on my experience of using the *Foot in the Door* strategy, 95% of the conversations will result in the translator offering the information of a decision maker for the company you want to work with.

As I've mentioned before, clients rarely post on translation job portals where you'll most likely bid your way to the bottom. What they do instead is ask their inner circle to find someone vetted.

This strategy will get you in front of the clients so when the opportunity presents itself you'll be able to seize it. This word-for-word script has landed me some of my biggest clients. And by using it, I've also been able to build a network of top translators from scratch.

If you're still weary about translators hesitating to share the wealth of information, try finding someone working in complimentary but different language pairs to up your chances.





CRAFTING AN IRRESISTIBLE OFFER SO YOU CAN GET TO THE YES

So how do you craft an offer your prospective clients can't refuse?

First, it has to be something that piques their interest which they care about. Unfortunately, this is where a lot of translators drop the ball.

They offer a "one size fits all" translation service by saying things like, "I can help you translate your website" to clients, without address the key question of, "What's in it for them?"



The offer should be a no-brainer. It should get the client wanting to hear more. Do this by aligning your translation services with their goals and connect the dots for them.

Paint the picture by saying, "I can help you attract more clients by translating your website so you can increase your revenue."

By identifying the problem and providing a solution this will automatically separate you from the sea of faceless translators commoditizing their translation services.

And by doing your homework upfront, you'll be able to charge exponentially more than other translators because of the value you provide.

So now that you have a name for the decision maker (through the Foot in the Door strategy) and you've crafted an irresistible offer, what do you say to the prospective client?

I'm going to show you a method that's pretty easy which doesn't involve outdated tactics such as cold-calling or going to networking events that'll waste your time.



THE SIMPLE SECRET TO REACHING OUT AND CAPTURING THE ATTENTION OF DIRECT CLIENTS

How do you get prospective high-paying clients to open and read your email, especially when they're swamped with thousands of emails in their inbox?

We've all sent emails at some point in our careers as freelance translators only to get no reply. And then found ourselves taking the silence as a personal rejection.

And even though high-paying clients may have a need for your translation services, they also happen to be extremely busy people.

Imagine having a demanding schedule and getting an email like this:

Dear Sir, Madam,

It is with great enthusiasm that I am forwarding my resume for your consideration. My record of academic achievements and professional career history demonstrates attributes that make me a valuable professional. *[Never addresses the main question of what's in it for the client]*

My name is Shannon, an experienced French mother tongue freelance translator.



I am working with different combinations of languages; from French to English. I can also perform translation to English and French in cases proofreading is performed by a native speaker afterwards. My fields of specialization are Advertising, Agriculture, Anthropology, Aquaculture, Automotive, Banking and Financial, Bioengineering and Biomedical Engineering, Computer and Information Sciences, Computer Engineering, Computer Games and Gambling, Electronic Games, Games of Chance, Education, Environmental Science, Ethnic and Cultural Studies, Forestry, Linguistics, Literature, Medicine — Public Health Education and Promotion, Music History and Literature, Nuclear Engineering, Sport and Fitness, Tourism and Travel, Women Studies. [Laundry list of specializations make her look like a jack of all trades and commoditizes her translation services]

I am a good reader and reviewer and able to work under stress, co-operative, self-motivated practical energetic, organized and excellent communication skills. My CV which I have attached for your review is the confirmation of my skills and reveals my ability in providing excellent translation service. [Only talks about herself, never mentions the client's goals or problems]

Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time and feel free to order my services. Your cooperation is genuinely appreciated. I look forward to your reply. [No specific call to action to invite client to learn more about her services]

Best Regards,

Shannon H.

These are the type of emails that get deleted and put you on the junk email list.



It only takes 2.7 seconds for a prospective client to decide whether to reply or delete your email. Here's how you can capture the attention of direct clients so they read your emails.

- ▶ Show how you can solve a specific problem with your translations
- ▶ Make your communication client centric and start with a compliment
- ▶ Establish credibility— that you've helped similar companies solve X with your translation services.
- ▶ Keep it short and sweet in 90 words or less.
- ▶ Demonstrate that you did your homework and speak their language by using jargon right off their website and marketing material.
- ▶ Create a call to action—don't send the email without inviting them to learn more how you can help them reach their goals. If they're interested, you want them to contact you.

Before you send an email to a prospective client, always ask yourself the main question, "What's in it for them?"

If that underlying question hasn't been addressed then your email will be overlooked and deleted.



THE 80/20 RULE TO GETTING AN STEADY STREAM OF CLIENTS

One week you're on the roll, flying high, and making the most you've ever made. Then the next couple of weeks, zero.

How does this happen?

Some will tell you this is the reality of a "freelance translator's life." So you do what you've always done and prepare for the dry spell silently hoping a big project comes along in the next week or two.

If you want to get off the feast or famine treadmill, then I'm going to let in on a solid way get a steady stream of clients.

How to make your earnings more predictable by generating recurring revenue

Now I want to ask you, what would it mean to your translation business if you never had to worry about where your next client was coming from? Would you be less frustrated and overwhelmed?

You see, there are endless opportunities for recurring revenue that we ignore as freelance translators. We're always on the lookout for the next new client. Once the project is over, we're back on the prowl.



As a result, we get stuck on the 'one-off' translation assignments and then ask ourselves, "Now what?" When the project is done.

Here are some strategies to get an endless stream of clients for your business, increase your earnings, and reduce the stress of not knowing where your next client will come from.

Subcontracting

There are times when a client will offer you a translation project and you won't be able to work on it because you might be on vacation or working with another client.

The first choice is for you to accept the project and be at risk of putting your workload into overdrive. The second choice is passing it up and telling the client you won't be able to handle it at the this time.

The third choice is hiring a subcontractor. You're probably wondering is it worth it? Absolutely! Why turn a client away when you could go the extra mile, tap into your network, and find a qualified translator to help them when you aren't able to?

By doing this you won't have too much on your plate as you would if you were to take on the assignment. Instead, it's a win-win situation. The clients has their problem solved, you pay it forward and refer a colleague, and you take a commission for referring the job. This is what customer service is all about and it's what'll keep your clients coming back to you over and over again.



Power partnerships

Your personal network is more valuable than the amount of experience you have. Building a network takes 2X the effort of the marketing tactic du jour but will give you a huge return on investment.

If you want an infinite number of leads for your freelance translation business, then you have to partner up with other translators in your specialization. Remember how I had mentioned that most high-paying clients don't advertise lucrative translation jobs?

You need to be ready when the opportunity presents itself. You can do this by joining forces with a translator working in complimentary language pairs. Meaning if you're a French > English translator, partnering with a English > French translator in your specialization will expand the number of hot leads.

Freelance translation is a business built on relationships. Building a network of top translators is how I've been able to generate thousands of dollars for my translations business and so should you.

Safety net strategy

A few unpaid invoices or a lack of new clients can send your freelance translation business in a downward spiral. It's also what holds translators back from making the leap into full-time freelancing.

So how do you get the security of a 9-5 paycheck without giving up your freedom and flexibility?



That's where safety net strategy comes in.

In other words, finding clients who hire you to provide translations on a regular basis: say a couple of days, a few weeks, or even monthly, which means getting paid by that client on an ongoing basis.

The benefits of this are a predictable income and less stress when a client cancels on an assignment, or pays late because you have a safety net to fall back on.

Here's the process to lock in high-paying clients.

Pinpoint golden opportunities for ongoing translations

This will vary depending on your specialization. But the goal is to actively pursue golden opportunities for recurring revenue.

Here are some real life examples of the type of businesses that need ongoing translations which could bring in recurring revenue for freelance translators:

- ▶ Law firm—Translations and transcriptions of Spanish audio for trials
- ▶ Anime distribution company—Japanese subtitling and dubbing for films
- ▶ Academic research—Translation of research papers from Brazilian Portuguese > English
- ▶ E-commerce—English > German translation of a website, product descriptions, and marketing campaign.

Identifying how you can add continuous value to your clients each month will not only help you set a safety net for your translation business but you'll also be



able to make up to \$1000 or more per month of guaranteed income.

Referrals

Did you know word of mouth is the primary method behind 20 to 50 percent of all purchasing decisions?

Imagine increasing your monthly income by 20 to 30 percent? I'd like to believe it would take a huge amount of stress off your shoulders.

Once you have some happy direct clients under your belt, you can leverage their word of mouth to expand your clients base.

Why is word of mouth so important?

That's because it's more targeted, persuasive, and it produces big results in half the time it takes to get new clients for your freelance translation business.

If the client compliments you on your work, use it as an opportunity to ask for a referral.

Most translators never actively pursue referrals. They hope the great work they do speaks for itself and that new clients will "magically" appear.

Be proactive not reactive. Guide your happy clients in the right direction and ask for an introduction to their network.

Unlike cold calls and emails, referrals warm up the communication and will put you in front of vetted prospects who will be ready to open up their wallets.



HOW TO DOUBLE, TRIPLE, AND EVEN QUADRUPLE YOUR RATES

I remember the first translation project I landed. I was excited because it was a big win for me. After two months of sending resumes and bidding on translation job portals, finally I had a call back.

But then came the dreaded question, “What’s your rate?” I was a deer in headlights. Up until then, I had never really put much thought into my rate.

It fluctuated because I was using it as a tool to be competitive with other freelance translators in my language pairs (big mistake, but we live and we learn).

Like many newbie translators, I would just throw out a number that I was comfortable with. When I tried seeking advice on the internet about how much to charge, I kept reading things like, “Charge however much you need to live.”

The problem with this advice is we all have different living standards. Someone who lives in London has higher costs of living than someone who lives in Cairo, but that doesn’t mean they should charge any less if the client will get the same outcome from their translation services.



The Goldilocks trap of translation rates

I want you to think back to the time you had to come up with your translation rates. Were you afraid of charging “too high” and getting turned down by the clients? Or maybe you felt like you were charging too low but felt like it was better than nothing.

And like most translators, you may have gone with the market rate in your language pairs and what others in your field were charging.

The thing is, successful translators don't care what the going rate is for their language pairs. They charge 2X, 3X, and even 5X what their competitors are charging. They know that there is no such thing as a rate that's “just right.”

My goal is for you to break free from this “Goldilocks trap” of not charging too high, too low or just right.

Since we've debunked the myth behind “fair” rates, I'm going to show you how you can charge premium prices, using a little-known pricing strategy—even if you're a new translator.

Flipping the script and charging what you're worth

Quality, reliability, accuracy. That's what you want prospective clients to think of, right? So you write this on your website or your LinkedIn profile hoping to convey that message. But if you're charging what everyone else does, your rates maybe saying something completely different.



Let me explain.

When you charge average rates, what you're telling clients is that you're average. Do you want high-paying clients to think of your work as plain vanilla?

Which brings me to my next point. You can't control the market rates for your language pairs. Here is the step-by-step process to charging what you're worth.

Step #1 Focus on the value not the price

Clients don't pay you for your translations, they pay you for the results your translations produce. Once you peel back the layers behind each translation request and you discover why clients want it in the first place, then what you charge won't matter.

For example, if a client wants you to translate their website, what they want is to expand their customer base. Your translation services is what helps them reach out to the new market they're trying to attract.

Quantify the value of your translation services. What is the return on investment clients expect to make as a result of your translations? How do your translations help boost their earnings?

Base your rates on the results you produce. This is what I call value pricing. Always target clients that will do whatever it takes to solve their problems and reach their goals—these are the clients who'll pay your premium rates.

Most freelancers approach their rates like an expense, when in reality it's an



investment for the client. Communicate to clients the results they'll get from working with you. When you know how your translation services can transform their business, you'll never ask yourself whether you're charging "too high."

Step #2 Why your clients want you to charge more

Academic studies have shown that price is quite often used to determine value and quality. That's where premium pricing comes in—higher rates imply a higher quality.

There will be no need to talk about the quality of your work because your rates will do all the talking.

So by charging higher rates, your clients will assume your work to be superior compared to translators charging a lower rates.

Obviously you have to do great work to backup that assumption but the point is what you charge plays a big role in how your client views your work. High-paying clients have a lot at stake and are weary of translators with low rates.

Why we're afraid to charge higher rates

How many times has fear of driving clients away in droves stopped you from charging what you're worth? I'd assume more times than you can remember, right?

Sometimes our pricing strategy is deeply rooted in the fear of scaring away clients. That was especially true for me.



I was petrified of increasing my rate. For a long time my psychological barriers held me back from making the income I desired.

I wasn't able to raise my rates until I shifted my mindset from the money to the value of my translation services.

A common complaint of freelance translators is getting haggled on their rates. Here's how you stop getting clients to low-ball you: premium pricing.

Higher rates immediately disqualify the penny pinchers and hagglers. It serves as a method to deter the leeching non-serious buyers.

When you charge on the low end of the scale you'll deal with high maintenance clients who perceive less value from your work.

These low end clients suck you dry of the time you'd spend finding hungry markets. Be okay with the fact that you're not going to be a good fit for everyone. When you charge more you'll get less clients but you'll earn more.



HOW TO SKYROCKET YOUR PRODUCTIVITY SO YOU CAN EARN MORE AND WORK LESS

Several years ago, I noticed something interesting. I was working really hard trying to get more clients for my translation business. And even though I was working around the clock—the results were pretty disappointing.

I was busy creating a social presence, scheduling tweets, Facebook messages, blogging like a mad woman, tweaking my website, answering relevant questions on LinkedIn forums, sending mass emails to prospects—but I had nothing to show for it. A big fat zero.

I realized I was staying busy for the sake of being busy. So I took a step back and decided to rebuild my approach to my time management system. And this instantly made a HUGE difference in my translation business.

Getting in the “magic zone” and getting more done in less time

As a freelancer your time is the most valuable asset you have. Once it’s gone you can never get it back. Just like we keep track of our money, we also have to watch our time so we can optimize it to maximize profits.

Getting more done in less time isn’t about working harder or being more determined. Our environment and social influences have a bigger impact on



our ability to get things done.

In fact, willpower (setting your mind to it or trying harder) isn't the secret sauce of productivity. Social psychologists have even coined a term called "willpower depletion" to show what happens when we resist temptation after temptation.

Every single day we exert willpower from declining that sugary treat to resisting the urge to check Facebook.

Eventually this interferes with your ability to be productive as we face willpower depletion and decision fatigue. Our attention is constantly being pulled in many directions, which brings me to my next point:

Step #1 Identifying the tasks that will produce the biggest results.

If your goal is to find your first three high-paying clients, then you need to identify the activities that will help you land those clients and then ignore the rest.

This automatically eliminates other "busy work" that congests our productivity—like blogging, tweeting, and sending random resumes.

Using Pareto's 80/20 principle, scrutinize your schedule and pinpoint the following:

- ▶ What are the 20% of tasks that are leading to 80% of your frustration and overwhelm?
- ▶ What are the 20% of activities that produce 80% of your desired results?



Once you've identified the time sucking activities, then it's time to cut it out of your schedule.

Step #2 Discovering your “magic zone”

The lines between life and work are blurred when you're a freelancer. You don't have to show up to work at a specific time and there is no one to monitor your work performance.

This is the area most freelance translators complain about the most in their lives and why it's so pressing to have a routine in place.

Many successful freelance translators have an unfaltering morning ritual in place. This is what I call the “magic zone”, which is the time of day you're most productive to work on the income generating activities.

For many people, this is usually in the mornings (before willpower depletion) because as your day progresses you get distracted or sidetracked—which happens often as a freelancer.

Also, never use your feelings as a measure for getting things done. We'll often say, “I'll get it done tomorrow, when I feel like it.” The trick is to just do it. Make it a non-negotiable like brushing your teeth or taking a shower.

Starting your workday productivity the night before

How many times has this happened to you? You go to sleep the night before with the best of intentions that tomorrow you'll be more productive. That you'll



magically get everything on your to do list done.

The next morning, you fall victim to old habits and you're back to doing what you always do. Before you know it, half the day is gone and you still have a lot on your plate.

In my experience the best way to break this habitual cycle is to decide the night before what the the important income generating activities you want to complete the next day are. That way when you wake up, you'll have a head start.

The "one thing" rule to get more out of your workday

Multitasking is the enemy of getting important things done. You get pulled in many different directions only to later realize that you have numerous half completed tasks waiting for you.

That's where the "one thing" rule comes in. It breaks down tasks into the simplest form. Each day focus on the most important task that will generate the biggest result in your business, no matter how long it takes to get it done.

Don't move on to other tasks until you finish the previous one. Using this technique, you'll develop a laser like focus because you'll have small manageable tasks and not a huge daunting one that'll have you pushing off important work for days.



Theming

Each day of the week should be dedicated to a particular area of your business. This simple technique has helped me get more done and grow my freelance translation business faster. For example you can dedicate an entire workday to finding and researching potential clients.

Another day could be just for follow ups with prospects you've contacted. Theming will help you take the guessing out of what you'll be doing each day. By using this strategy you'll hit the ground running each morning.





ACTION STEPS

So there it is! I've shared some of my systems and word-for-word scripts to running a successful freelance translation business—one that will give you the freedom and flexibility you crave.

Now it's time to take action. You won't build a successful freelance translation business overnight and it will take work on your end, but you can learn from the hundreds of hours I've spent over the years testing and developing these methods so you can have the business and life you deserve.



Now, you're all set—but first I want you to do these two things:

Step #1

Using the “one thing” rule, write down the ONE action you're going to take, today, to get closer to getting your first three high-paying clients.

Step #2

If you've enjoyed this guide and know a fellow freelance translator that's trying to land bigger and better clients, then send them this link:

You can also click these buttons to share this guide via Facebook, Twitter, or email with one click.

Thanks for reading!

Take care,

Maryam Abdi

