

Presenting to Potential Clients: You and ATA's Client Outreach Kit

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Perhaps you've worked with direct clients and would like to improve your approach to them. Or maybe you're thinking about the rewards of working directly with buyers of translation or interpreting services, but you'd like some pointers on how to wade in. Either way, ATA's Client Outreach Kit is for you.



What Is the Client Outreach Kit?

ATA's Client Outreach Kit will give you the tools you need to attract direct clients by positioning yourself as a resource for translation and interpreting buyers and users. The core of the kit is a fully customizable PowerPoint presentation that you can use when speaking to potential clients—at chamber of commerce meetings, trade association events, professional seminars, brownbag lunches at local law firms, or any other venue that would draw the kind of client for which you are looking.

The kit also includes a set of practical, stand-alone Skills Modules to help you make the most of the core PowerPoint presentation. Topics include writing and delivering an elevator speech, developing effective public speaking habits, getting invited to speak, writing your own introduction, and handling question-and-answer sessions effectively. Modules are available as PDF files.

The kit was developed several years ago by a team of volunteers, including Chris Durban, Lillian Clementi, Dorothee Racette, and Ellen Banker. In 2014, we refreshed the kit, making small updates that allow you to use it more easily in your own presentations to clients. In November, we presented the updated version to a lively crowd of attendees at ATA's Annual Conference in Chicago.

Tips for Increasing the Effectiveness of Your Client Outreach Presentation

The kit (currently only available in English) is designed so that you can use the PowerPoint as is, or extract from it and tailor it to your audience. Here are some highlights from the kit, plus some suggestions we've added.

Buy into your own product/service and your own presentation. As obvious as this may sound, you need to internalize the values you're presenting. This takes time. Perusing ATA's Client Outreach Kit will help

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you do this. You might simply read through the kit a number of times, at brief intervals, and jot down your thoughts as you go along. This will help you "inhabit" the text and make it your own. Expand on the points that have the most to do with your audience. They will feel you are speaking straight to them on behalf of yourself and your profession, not mouthing a canned speech.

Practice your talk, ideally with a patient friend who will give you feedback. If you plan to use the PowerPoint, ask if you can meet with a tech support professional at the place where you're speaking ahead of time. Arrive well in advance of the start time, allowing plenty of time for set-up and troubleshooting. This will make a big difference in your appearance of confidence and control. Bring a printout of your presentation just in case, so you can sail along even if there is a last-minute glitch.

Keep your posture loose, not rigid. Practice this ahead of time, as often as you can think of it, whether you're around people or not.

Try to start out with a humorous translation anecdote—they abound in our profession! But keep in mind that the idea is to create something positive out of the funny-yet-scary thing that could happen in translation (or when interpreting) if not carried out professionally. Shift the potential client from fearing how a translation or interpretation could go wrong to looking forward to capturing a vast landscape of opportunity by hiring a professional interpreter or translator. This will

involve discussing reasons to translate/interpret in the first place, with a focus on the audience's industry.

From that set-up, move to the all-important reasons for using a professional translator or interpreter, as opposed to using cheap or free in-house solutions. This is also the time to expand on the need to work closely in a true team effort with translators or interpreters—to make the result context-appropriate and to ensure that it serves the intended purpose.

Point out that the buyer of a text translated (or interpreted) into a foreign language really has no way to judge the quality. This is an opportunity to refer translation buyers to ATA's client education publications *Translation: Getting it Right*, *Interpreting: Getting it Right*, and *Translation: Buying a Non-commodity*, all found on ATA's website.

Discuss the need to plan ahead. Points you should include are the importance of assessing specific needs for a translator or an interpreter, considering the intended use of the translated text, the source and target languages, and the need to review the final translated text. Emphasize the need to hire a professional—not just any bilingual—and to spend wisely (e.g., perhaps not translating as much as originally intended). It is also crucial to tell your audience to listen to the translator's or interpreter's advice. This would also be a good place to provide helpful information on how to evaluate vendors' claims. For example, you can point out the need for experience and that professional



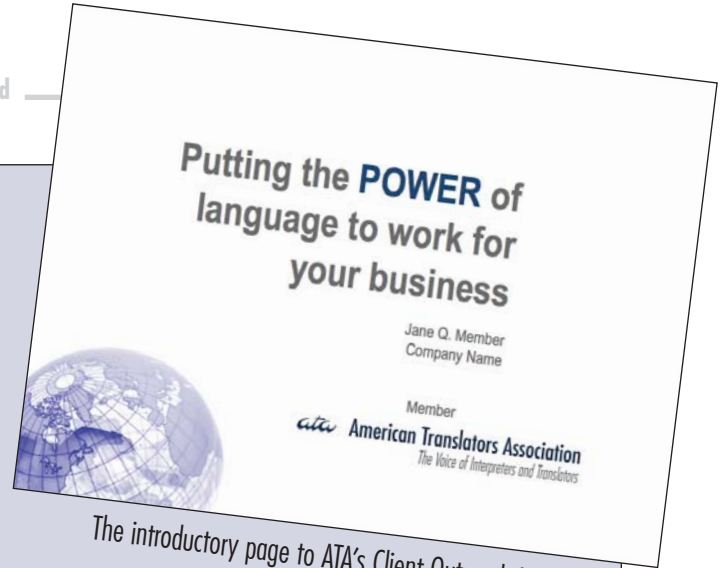
translators should always work into their native languages.

Be very careful about keeping your talk to the time allotted. We could all go on talking forever about our profession, but your professional image suffers if you don't keep within the time allotted for your presentation. This is where your practice session(s) with a friend will help. Time yourself.

Another point you might want to consider is to think about all that goes on when you're not at the podium. Be aware that you do your best marketing when you are completely relaxed and not even thinking about "pitching." It's who you are, personally and professionally, that will attract people to you. Put your best foot forward and let the real you shine through. And remember: a formal presentation may lead to good business, but your sincere interest in others is the best, most natural form of marketing. Practice listening to the needs and concerns of others. Learn to draw people out on the real business problems they face. You'll be surprised by what happens when you go to a business, professional, or community event with the mindset of taking part and learning about other people. This is real marketing, in the best sense of the word. The actions that result from this mindset will also help you get invited to speak in the first place.

We Want to Hear from You!

Send us your stories! We're interested in hearing about your own marketing experiences with the Client Outreach Kit, including what works and what might need rethinking. ATA's Public Relations Committee would like to save such anecdotes for



Related Links

Client Outreach Kit

www.atanet.org/client_outreach/index.php

Client Outreach Kit Feedback Form

www.atanet.org/client_outreach/feedback.php

Interpreting: Getting it Right

www.atanet.org/publications/getting_it_right_int.php

Translation: Getting it Right

www.atanet.org/publications/getting_it_right_tran.php

Translation: Buying a Non-commodity

www.atanet.org/docs/translation_buying_guide.pdf

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use in our PR efforts. Please send them to us at www.atanet.org/client_

[outreach/feedback.php](http://www.atanet.org/client_outreach/feedback.php). We wish you much success as you reach out! ■

ATA 56th Annual Conference Continuing Education Credit Information

For complete information:
www.atanet.org/conf/2015/ce_credit.htm