

Why it's (almost) not possible to have an urgent translation

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I often receive requests for urgent translations, also of complex and very long documents.

I worked in big and small companies before working as a full-time translator and I know that **an ideal world**, made of long delivery times and no urgencies, **does not exist**. I understand, then when a company's employee ask me for a translation of a 50k words manual with delivery after a week, for example. I think it is necessary that the message reach all company levels. Let's see some reasons why it is almost impossible to have an urgent translation.

1. First, if a translator is not a beginner, **he/she seldom has many vacancies in his/her planner** (and luckily!). Yes, he/she's accustomed to deal with urgencies and changes on schedules, but if the request concerns a high number of words, it's difficult he/she can insert it among the ongoing projects.
2. Anyway, even if you are lucky enough to find a translator with a vacancy to arrange your translation project, please note that a **medium good and accurate translator translates about 2500-3000 words per day**. This is because translation is not a simple transposition of words from a language to another. Document translation require a "preliminary study", even short, of the document, to understand its features, possibly difficult points, style, target readers. Moreover, above all if the text is highly specialistic, **we need deep researches** on the subject and terminology. And **YOU DON'T FIND EVERYTHING ON INTERNET**, not even today.

Provate allora a dividere il numero di parole che ha il vostro documento e avrete una prima stima di quanti giorni saranno necessari per tradurlo. E **diffidate comunque di quei traduttori che promettono la traduzione di quantità ingenti di parole in poco tempo**. Molto probabilmente la traduzione non sarà di qualità ineccepibile o **sarà affidata a più persone diverse**, con possibili **problemi di uniformità di stile e terminologia**.

So, try to divide the number of words your document has, and you will have a first estimate of how many days are needed to translate it. And **mistrust those translators promising the translation of huge amounts of words in a short time**. Very likely, the translation will not be of great quality, or **it will be divided among many different translators**, possibly with **concerns about style and terminology uniformity**.

3. To your estimate, **then add a few days more** for the document pagination, above all if it has many drawings, formulas, diagrams, as in a manual.

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4. Please note too that **a translator is not a robot** and **something unexpected can happen**: a disease, the PC is breaking, a delay in a previous project or a sudden change in the delivery date of an already scheduled job.

For that reasons, **I suggest you to contact a translator** at least a couple of month before the date you need your document translated. That way, **you can have enough time to choose among different quotes** the one fits your needs most, and you have not “to settle for” a translator because, maybe, he/she’s the only one available. Moreover, if the translator has more time available for your project, he/she will work with more attention and calm, avoiding the risks that hurry and delivery pressure involve.

And if you have some more questions, tell me how I can help you.

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