

Episode 232: Ask Me Anything – How to Find Direct Clients and What to Write to Them

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Welcome to Marketing Tips for Translators, a podcast with marketing, business tips, and strategies specifically for freelance translators and interpreters. I'm your host, Tess Whitty, a longtime freelance translator with an education and professional background in marketing. Tune in to hear tips from my own experiences or from other translators and industry experts.

[0:00:33-0:01:33]

Hello, and welcome to another episode of Marketing Tips for Translators. As always, I'm so grateful for you tuning in, whether you are in your car, doing dishes, doing laundry, or exercising. I'm so glad that you are taking the time to educate yourself, to tune into this podcast, and to get new marketing tips. So thank you. Thank you, also, for the reviews and the emails. They're truly what keeps me going. Like I said in the previous podcast, this is the second episode in a series where I answer some of my listener and subscriber questions. In this episode, I will focus on how to find direct clients—your favorite topic, again—and how to choose an area of specialization depending on where you live, too. So let's get started. The first question comes from Tomasz.

[0:01:33-0:02:32]

Thank you for sending in the question. Tomasz says, "I really appreciate your proactive approach and a genuine willingness to help. Since you asked: currently I am designing my strategy to reach British and Irish clients in the legal industry. So I think the question is - how to find them and be remembered as the Polish legal translator." I hope this episode isn't airing too late for you, Tomasz. So I think the question is first, how to find them and be remembered as a Polish legal translator. So thank you for your question, Tomasz. Congratulations on already having picked two countries to target and a niche—the legal industry. You're well on your way to finding clients or prospects. You might need to niche down even more to make it even easier to research and find prospects.

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For example, what area within legal translations do you want to become an expert in? Litigations, patents, contracts, etc.? This way, you can be a legal translator and find clients. The more you narrow down your subject area, the easier it will be to be seen as an expert and find them. So, how do you find them? First of all, since I get this question a lot, I want to point out that it is hard to find our ideal clients for all of us. It's hard for me, too, but I hope that I can give some tips on how to go about it by specializing, by niching down, and by focusing on one area at a time. But all

of you need to do the work; the clients won't fall into your lap. It is hard work to reach out and find them, but just try to take action as much as possible and you will see results.

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Today, we have the world's best research tool at our fingertips, for example, and that's Google, of course. For example, I googled how to find law firms in the UK and I got a link with United Kingdom solicitors and law firms listed by areas of law. So you can try that, Tomasz. Then, you can research a law firm to find their contact info and see if they have a website or if they are on social media. Perhaps not, though. I don't know about law firms. But, anyway, start reaching out from there. You can also send information about your translation services by snail mail or regular mail. This usually stands out in today's culture of emails and online information. So, I hope that will help you a little bit. Your other question is how to be remembered as *the* Polish legal translator.

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First, start by claiming your expertise, which you have already done. Then, find proof for it by providing testimonials, providing sample translations, showcasing any training you have, any certifications, etc., everywhere you can: on your website, on your online profiles, in your brochures, etc. Focus on the keywords on your website and publish posts that demonstrate your expertise in the subject matter, but don't wait for clients to find you. Like I said earlier, actively reach out to potential clients either directly or online. I actually had a look at your website. I did a Google search on you and I found your website, yesterdaytranslations.com, and I see that you already do this quite well on your website.

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So, focus on what I said to you. Go out, do some research online, and reach out to potential clients. I hope that helps. The next question is from Ayrar Perez Urbano. Ayrar says, "I have been listening to your podcasts and they are really helpful! I started to work as a freelance translator two years ago but I stopped and I came to the USA. I am currently teaching at a public high school under a cultural exchange program. I will stay here two years more and then I will go back to my country to start my career again and to definitely launch my business, which is something I love and I would like to do for my next years. So one of my questions that you made me realize is to choose a field that I enjoy. My concern is if that will help me since Venezuela (which is my home country) is small and very underdeveloped. I should be covering many areas if I would like to survive."

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Yes, that may be true. I am no expert on the Venezuelan market, but I want to point out that we, as freelance translators, can work from anywhere as long as we have an internet connection and can reach out to clients anywhere. I just published the podcast episode on how to take advantage of the global market and I will also share this in the show notes. Claim your expertise

and an area of specialization. That doesn't mean that you have to turn down other jobs. Some people become freelance translators after having pursued another career and for them, it's easy to choose a specialization. But, I want to give some tips on how to choose an area of specialization, too. I want you to remember that choosing an area of specialization will make you seem more like an expert and that you will become better in this subject area.

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You can provide more high-quality translations and you will be seen as an expert in the area. So, if you want to know how to choose a specialization, here are a few suggestions: Base it on your previous experience. Many translators come into the profession as a second career, and some subject matter really requires expertise. If you want to work with complicated medical translation or legal translation, for example, only people who have worked in the field have this expertise. There are many other areas, also, to choose from. You should also pick an area that you enjoy researching and reading about. You're going to do a lot of reading in your area of specialization, so make sure you find it interesting. If you cannot relate strongly to the subject, you are not likely to become a real specialist in it, either.

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I have heard of or interviewed translators that specialize in narrow niches, such as chemical coatings, horse expositions or horse shows, waste management, orthopedics, etc. And these are very successful translators in these areas, even if they're narrow. I think that they, at least in the beginning, though, also took on jobs in other areas, but they dared to claim their expertise. If you're still struggling, weed out any areas you don't have any interest in learning more about or you don't feel competent translating. For example, for me, it's legal translations. I did some in the beginning, but they took a long time and I didn't find them interesting, so I don't do legal translation.

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You should, of course, pick a profitable field. This point doesn't exclude the previous ones, but it's worth considering if you specialize in an area where there is not much need for translation, your language combination, or that does not have money to pay for translations. It will not be profitable for you. It's wise to focus on an industry (law, IT, pharmaceuticals, etc.) and market in which clients have to translate text in order to do business with other countries and cultures. So what are those areas for Venezuela? And I think you speak Spanish, so look at Spanish. You have a lot of options. It's also smart to focus on an industry (corporate communications, hospitality, tourism) where clients hope that a good translation will bring them more business and profit. And, of course, think about your interests and hobbies.

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Hobbies are a common area of expertise. We know a lot about subjects we are interested in.

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For example, I would love to translate yoga material. Yoga is one of my hobbies, and I am trying to become a yoga teacher. I would love to translate that topic. When you have chosen a specialization, you can always hone your skills in the field by taking courses, either university courses or online courses. You can also attend workshops in the subject matter and read as much as possible about it. Try to find more experienced translators in the field who can mentor you or proofread your work in the beginning. But you were worried about whether you would have to be a generalist in Venezuela. I don't think you would have to be a generalist. The more you are seen as an expert in a certain area, the more clients that need translation in this certain area will be attracted to you.

[0:11:39-0:12:39]

Question number three comes from Janet Li. "I would like to know how and where to find the direct client in my niche. What should I write for the content of the proposal?"

So thank you, Janet, for your question. I don't know what your niche is, but I hope you found some good tips in my reply to Tomasz earlier in this episode. So, what to write for a proposal—this is a good question. First, do a lot of research about your potential clients so you get to know their business and how you can help them. If you pick a nation and area, read as much as possible about it and about potential companies in this area. Find out as much as possible about them. You might benefit from the guide or workbook that I have on the Marketing Tips for Translators site called *Five important steps for finding direct clients*. You can download it for free on my website. I will put a link in the show notes, but you can also just go to marketing tips for translators. It's on the first page.

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Then, once you know how you can help them or what their problems are, you can find out whether they need translation. Of course, you need to find the companies that need translation, which might sometimes be hard because they don't even realize it themselves, depending on who you're trying to target. You can write an email or a letter to the person you have identified as the right person to contact for translation services. So who is this? This can be a marketing manager, a localization manager, or the CEO, etc. It's much better if you can find this out. If you're focusing on agencies, it's usually the vendor, manager, or project manager. In other areas, for example, for me, it's usually the translation or localization manager that I'm trying to target.

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There were times when, once I had identified the company I wanted to target, I had to call the receptionist and ask who was responsible for doing translation work. This was very hard for me because I don't really like talking on the phone, but it is one way to find out for sure. And then, you can use warm email prospecting. I talked about this and interviewed an expert on it, Ed

Gandia, in Episode 29: Warm email prospecting for translators. And if you go there, you can also get a free checklist on warm email prospecting that even has a template in it, *Five important steps for finding direct clients*, that you can download from my website. It covers warm email prospecting, so you can download that to get some templates. In Episode 29, I discussed what email prospecting is and what it isn't, how it's different from sending just cold emails and mail, the most important elements of a successful email message to a prospect, how to implement warm email prospecting in your business, and examples of warm email prospecting emails.

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So, if you want the examples, go listen to Episode 29, too. But, basically, you should explain who you are and how you know of them. Then, relate to some news about them, for example, a new office, a new website, or how you found them. Then, explain how you can help, if you have done something similar, and what value you can provide to the companies. Don't forget to end the email with a call to action like, "Can we meet to discuss?", "Would a phone call next week be suitable?", "Click the link to schedule a free consultation," or something similar.

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So, thank you so much for listening. I hope I have answered your questions. If you had any follow-up questions, you can always reach out to me in the show notes or by emailing me at marketingtipsfortranslators.com. The show notes can be found at marketingtipsfortranslators.com. If you have questions or comments, leave a review and all that good stuff before you go. I also wanted to tell you about a free masterclass coming up in February. It's a webinar called "5 Mindset Shifts to Grow Your Translation Business to 6-figures, How to Go From Working Too Much for Too Little to a Thriving Freelance Translator Business Working With Your Ideal Clients and Projects." Because, guys, we can work hard and still struggle to find clients, and, usually, we also need to change our mindsets.

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Do you feel like you're working with the same old clients, you're unable to grow your income, or you're working too much for too little? I want you to know that it doesn't have to be this way. With some new strategies and, in particular, a new way to look at your business, you can be on your way to a six-figure freelance business. I have interviewed many six-figure freelance translators. I haven't interviewed myself, but I have been able to have a six-figure freelance business for the past six years and I want to share the five most important mindset shifts or ways of thinking that we have all made to get to a six-figure income. So join me to find out what to do to start shifting your mindset and growing your business in 2020 and beyond.

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I will include a link for you to find out more information about this free masterclass in the show notes, too. It will be held on February 11th and February 13th. Or you can go right now to marketingtipsfortranslators.com/mindset-shift-webinar. I hope to see you there. Take care and keep marketing. Thank you for listening to Marketing Tips for Translators. I hope you found some good tips to apply to your freelance career. If you did, a great way to show this is by leaving a review on your favorite podcast listening app or to share the episode with other colleagues. Do you have a topic, question, or guest you would like to hear about here? Send me an email to podcast@marketingtipsfortranslators.com.