

## **Quality Translation Aids in Credibility**

- Bill Judkins

A recent article in the *Economist* noted that consumers are increasingly seeking ways to avoid advertising. Consumer spending on personal media such as DVD's, digital video recorders, and pay television has surpassed advertising spending for the first time in history.

Why does this matter? There is a difference between advertising and public relations. Public relations activity doesn't happen in the realm of advertising – it happens in the realm of what people are reading by choice. Credibility battles can be won and lost in the good, old-fashioned newspaper or trade journal. This is why translation of public relations materials is as important as translating your advertising and technical materials. The likelihood of your article gaining the necessary attention from a foreign editor is increased tenfold when it is properly translated.

One of the primary functions of public relations is to effect third party endorsement. When seeking this endorsement, you are often asking journalists to “spread your message” through newspaper or trade journal articles. Capture their attention with quality translation in their native language. Additionally, public relations efforts can extend to intra-company communications. Company based E-mail blasts, newsletters, and announcements are all forms of public relations—and they should be translated for the audience they are intended to reach. You bolster your credibility with some of your most important people – your staff and management.

When considering a plan, realize that not every article you try to publish will make it to print – but the effort should be made regardless. If you're selling a product in Europe, for example, and you have invested considerable resources to be sure that your manuals, product literature, web presence, and advertising materials are translated, then do a cost analysis for translated public relations materials and include it in the mix.

Although the effect of the activity can be difficult to measure, the effort to provide foreign journalists and editors translated fact sheets, press releases, invitations to plant tours and so on is a critical part of doing business internationally.

Public relations efforts are often much less costly than advertising and can be targeted in similar ways. If your advertising dollars are being spent to attract an increasingly less attentive audience, then consider working with good public relations professionals. Ask your agency if they have someone who can help you develop a plan. Request upfront that you'd like have these materials translated and tracked so you can measure the results.

For more information on the public relations practice visit the Public Relations Society of America at [www.prsa.org](http://www.prsa.org). For more information on translation and localization, visit [www.advancedlanguage.com](http://www.advancedlanguage.com).

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