TELELINGUA

INSIGHTS

ISO STANDARDS FOR THE TRANSLATION INDUSTRY: WHAT, WHY AND HOW?

What exactly do ISO standards for the translation industry entail?

What are their provisions?

How do ISO 9001 and ISO 17100 differ?

Why are they important for your company?

Are you a global corporation with operations around the world? Do you therefore produce **huge volumes** of content in **a number of different languages**, with multiple **technical** and **communication** requirements?

Then it is particularly important to collaborate with an ISO-certified Language Service Provider (LSP). ISO certification **guarantees quality control at every stage of the translation workflow**, from receipt of the source document to final delivery of the target documents in one or more languages.

Originally, quality standards were developed by the ISO (International Organization for Standardization) for manufacturing businesses.

Subsequently, generic standards were also established for the services industry, including those in the ISO 9000 series.

Finally, due to the continuing development of the language industry on a global scale, a specific quality standard was put in place as a framework for **Language Service Providers (LSPs)**. This is the ISO 17100 standard (formerly EN 15038).

ISO 9000/9001

ISO 9000 is the set of guidelines most widely used in the services industry. The purpose of ISO 9000 standards is to help organizations build and maintain systems, resulting in:
- increased efficiency and productivity
- reduction in unnecessary costs
- continuous quality assurance of processes and products or services
- customer satisfaction

ISO 9000 documents help to understand the vocabulary that is essential in order to improve processes and quality. However, ISO 9000 documents do *not* include specific actionable items that could result in improvements. These are featured in ISO 9001.

Indeed, **ISO 9001** standards provide a documented process and protocol which tells employees what is specifically required of them to improve processes within their company.
The standards in the ISO 9000 family are generic and applicable to all organizations, regardless of type, size and product or service provided.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CERTIFICATE
ISO 9001 : 2015

ISO 17100

In contrast, **ISO 17100** is intended for implementation only by LSPs. Indeed, this standard "specifies requirements for all aspects of the translation process directly affecting the quality and delivery of translation services".

Certification according to ISO 17100 requires the LSP to meet all the specifications, although the implementation methods may differ depending on the size and complexity of the organization and, in some cases, on the volume and complexity of the translation service being requested of the LSP.

ISO 17100 describes the three phases of the translation process (pre-production, production and post-production), with a strong focus on administration, documentation, tracing, review and revision, as well as on the roles and responsibilities of the various specialists who are involved in the translation project, from beginning to end (project managers, translators, reviewers, revisers, proofreaders, terminologists, IT staff, DTP specialists, etc.).

Let's take a closer look at ISO 17100 specifically:

1) Provisions relating to the level of the actual production process:

- The core translation (including the translator checking their translation)

- Revision (by a second person, which is a mandatory part of the standard), review and proofreading processes
- Availability, management and maintenance of resources (translators, revisers, reviewers and proofreaders, and others who work in the certification/validation area, for example DTP specialists or programmers)
- Required skills of the translators, reviewers and proofreaders:
  · translation competence (qualification from an institution of higher learning)
  · linguistic and stylistic competence
  · subject matter expertise (profound knowledge of a limited number of specialized areas of expertise)
  · research skills (ability to understand, solve problems and seek solutions)
  · cultural knowledge (preferably living in the country of the target language)
  · technical skills (able to work with modern translation tools)
- Development of project managers' competence and skills
- Use of translation tools, translation memories and other technical resources
- Development, maintenance and audit of a quality management system
- Procedures for information security (safe storage and safe return of all translations)

2) Provisions relating to the level of the pre- and post-production processes:

One of the new and interesting features of ISO 17100 compared to EN 15038 is that the success of a translation project is down to the cooperation and interaction between the client and the LSP, rather than being the entire responsibility of the LSP. For example, the nature and scope of the translation, use of style guides and availability of reference material such as terminology lists and translation memories should be defined and agreed in advance by both parties. The standard also requires a process for handling client feedback and satisfaction.

Last but not least, ISO 17100 states that the LSP is responsible for the secured archiving of the translations and that data protection requirements must be met, given that translations sometimes contain confidential or sensitive information (e.g. medical content).

AUDITS

Both internal audits and external audits are required for ISO 9001 as well as ISO 17100, to ensure that the quality management system is working properly and to ensure conformity. Internal audits of each department at Telelingua International, Telelingua France and Telelingua USA are performed every year by our teams of internal auditors.

External audits are performed by a qualified, independent auditor who has been trained specifically for this purpose by an international certification body. During the audit, evidence is gathered that Telelingua meets the requirements of the standards. This evidence includes, for example, interviews with relevant staff, checking records and client jobs carried out, and monitoring activities.

ISO 9001: External recertification audit every three years, with intermediate follow-up audits every six months.
ISO 17100: External recertification audit every six years, with intermediate surveillance audits every two years.

Our ISO 9001 and ISO 17100 certifications show that quality is our top priority and demonstrate that we continuously strive to meet our clients' expectations.

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