

A.E.L.S., Inc.
(TanuTech)



TanuTech - Bridging Japan and English speaking countries around the world!

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English to Japanese Translations

All of the translators at TanuTech are specialists. The minimum requirement for consideration to become a TanuTech translator is 3 years of experience as a professional translator. Each of our translators lives in Japan and is exposed daily to the living language used in a Japanese environment. This allows us access to translators who know what types of words, phrases and sentence patterns are in current usage.

You may think that this is unimportant if your project is a translation for a computer application, but the reverse is true. Language used in the computer industry changes perhaps the fastest of all fields and a translation done by a translator using a dictionary or language that dates back as little as 3 years would be considered quite “dated” by the reader. You can imagine how that would reflect on your product.

Japanese to English Translations

TanuTech has translated hundreds of thousands of pages of documentation from Japanese into English in all kinds of fields.

Networking and other IT translations constitute the majority of our translation work at present. Companies come to us because very few translation agencies have translators that have programming knowledge.

Our medical translations have been published in journals that are well known in the field of medicine. Physicians often contact us directly and we assist them in presenting their research, which usually leads to it being published.

Tanutech has translated legal documents that have been submitted to courts of law, embassies, and government registrars around the world. Japanese immigration law specialists, lawyers and tax accountants are among some of our oldest clients. Japanese banks have relied on us for translation of their system and ATM service guides as well as contracts.

Automotive, machinery, heavy equipment, medical equipment... one-of-a-kind machines, valves, industrial printers... the list of documentation that we've translated over the years goes on and on...

Whatever the field you need translation in, we probably have had experience in it at one time or another during our 20 years in the business.

Japanese Copywriting

Copywriting in Japanese is an art, just as it is in English. A few of our translators can write copy and others can't, and one of our top copywriters is not a translator. Good ad copy gets people to remember your product and helps sell it. Many translation agencies don't differentiate between copywriting and translation and you take whatever they give you and just pray that whoever did the translation had good writing skills.

At TanuTech, an experienced editor reviews the work of our copywriters and we always have at least 2 other Japanese read the copy and give us their impressions of the work to ensure that your material reads well.

As you can imagine, copywriting costs more because of the added effort. Even in the case where the copywriter and the translator are the same person, we require that the copywriter translate the material first and then rewrite it into something that will grasp and hold the reader's attention. During this process, the copywriter will often change expressions to match those more common in Japanese, change sentence and paragraph orders, and make any other changes needed to create the copy that will have the best chance of selling your service or product.

In tight budget situations, some clients will order a mixture, where the headings and catch phrases are written by a copywriter and the body text done by a translator. This results in something with more impact than a regular translation.

Software Localization

Almost all translation agencies in Japan advertise software localization services, but the truth is that only a very small number of agencies are equipped to handle localization. Unfortunately, the client usually finds this out quite late in the project when the owner of the agency phones and tells him or her that they don't really quite know how to localize the software, but that they *have* translated the documentation. The result is that the documentation is in bad shape because the GUI hasn't been localized yet and 8 times out of 10 has been translated by a general translator who has never had any experience with any kind of software beyond MS Word.

Don't let this happen to you! Let us look at your project and quote on it first. If we can't handle it or if we don't have sufficient resources we'll tell you so. We have successfully handled a number of very difficult projects in the past, many of them subcontracted to us from multilingual agencies whose clients are Fortune 100 companies, so there are very few situations where we can't help and have to refuse.

We've worked with various operating systems in the past from UNIX to the Mac OS. Of course, a large part of our localization work has been done on the Windows OS as well. Visual Basic, C, Perl, C++ and 4th Dimension are some of the programming languages we have experience in.

Localizing software requires specialized knowledge and intuition. Your product launch is important and delays can cost you money and allow competitors to get a jump on you in the market, making you lose far more money than you'd ever "save" by letting an unqualified agency botch the job at a lower price.

Website Localization

There are basically two types of requests when it comes to websites. In the first type, the customer is usually a large international company with a Japanese subsidiary that wants to match the English site to the Japanese. The other situation involves a company that is involved in e-commerce and that wants to present their product to the Japanese market. The first situation is a case of pure website localization.

In website localization, we translate the files and adjust the html code so it will display Japanese properly. Graphic text is translated and resized as necessary within graphic images. The result is a site that looks and “feels” like the site of the parent company.

We have a lot of experience in this area and one of the larger projects we have undertaken involved more than 800 files, some containing white papers 20 pages long.

We differ from other agencies that rely solely on html text editors in that we are able to look at and fix the source code when a file is buggy. Our programming background gives us this advantage over most other agencies and allows us to localize cgis as well.

Japanese Website Development

The second type of website localization involves creating completely new Japanese webpages and graphics that will appeal to Japanese people.

If you look at Japanese sites, you'll notice a large difference between them and the sites you're used to seeing. Most of them are graphics heavy and feature unrelated animation, but all of them are cute. Sites that would be candidates for "webpages that suck" are often successful in Japan.

For a few examples of graphic-heavy, cluttered and yet cute sites check out:

<http://www.nifty.com/> (Japanese ISP)
<http://www.mitsukoshi.co.jp/> (major Japanese department store)
<http://www.dennys.co.jp/dj/index.htm>
or <http://www.dennys.co.jp/dj/index1.htm> (the famous family restaurant)
<http://www.kinokuniya.co.jp/> (one of the largest bookstore chains in Japan)

After accessing a few of these sites, you'll probably understand what we mean... and you will probably agree that you need Japanese people living in the culture to create them.

Our copywriters can create appealing text descriptions to appear around or in the graphics to sell your products and we have alliances with Japanese graphic design studios that can produce these types of pages with the kinds of imagery that the Japanese like.

DTP

TanuTech can take care of all of your Japanese DTP requirements. DTP in a double-byte character set (DBCS) language is far different from that of a European language.

For one thing, point sizes that look all right in English turn into blurbs in Japanese, so adjustment of font sizes is required from the very beginning. Some agencies that haven't had much experience dealing with Asian languages **reduce** the size of the font to make it match the English page formatting. This usually results in text that causes eyestrain for the Japanese reader and gives the publisher a bad reputation for providing poor documentation.

Most Japanese DTP software, if not all, is a localized version of the English and is usually not as stable as the English which means that it requires a lot of patience to use. At TanuTech, we work in all major formats, from FrameMaker + SGML to Quark Xpress and Pagemaker.

We also have close relationships with Japanese output studios for customers that require Japanese film output.

Japanese Web Research

We can search Japanese pages on the Web to find any information you need. When we find something that might be of interest to what you've requested, we make a note of it and its contents and include it in the report that is sent to you after the research has been completed.

If you would like to have certain pages translated after reviewing the report, we can also handle the translation.

Companies often use this service to locate new suppliers for materials for their products as well as to find new customers. Today with more and more Japanese companies putting up websites (quite often only in Japanese), the possibility of turning a search into something that will make or save your company money is greater than ever before.

Searches start at \$25.00 U.S./hour plus a reporting fee of \$10.00 U.S. and are done by Internet savvy staff members.

For those needing a quick read through of a company's Japanese pages and a summary of the information found in them, this service can be invaluable because quite often companies list their director's names*, paid-up capital, main banks, branch and department phone numbers, etc. in their corporate information section in Japanese.

*It should be noted that in the case of personal names (first names) in Japanese, names are often unreadable by anyone but the individual himself or herself because of the special readings given the name by the person's parents. Thus, the first names given in these reports will be the researcher's best effort as to the most common reading for a particular first name. Last names are more standard and if there are 2 or 3 common readings (unusual), we list them in the report.

Product Market Research

This service is useful in the following situations:

Case 1

You've been dealing with a Japanese distributor for a while and he or she assures you that your products are all prominently displayed in quantity in the best stores in Tokyo and Osaka. Somehow though, sales are far below what you'd expected and you want to know where the products are and how they're displayed. You've asked for and gotten a list of shops at which your products are on display, but don't want to fly to Japan to check.

The TanuTech Solution

We have our agents in Tokyo and Osaka visit the stores on the list and report on the location, quantity on display, store traffic, types of people visiting the shop during the visit, and any other relevant data (store on a side-street, long walk from the nearest train station, etc.)

Case 2

You want to expand your client base and you know that there are places that could use your product if they could only find out about it. You need addresses and phone numbers based on an intelligent search of websites, phone directories and other sources.

The TanuTech Solution

A TanuTech researcher checks phone directory yellow pages, does a Net search, contacts trade and any other related associations then makes up a list. After giving you the list, you choose the companies you want to contact and we translate a letter introducing your company and services to the company to be contacted. We can even address and mail the letters, however, we advise clients to mail them from overseas for impact.

Case 3

Your company needs information about what kinds of similar products are on the market now.

The TanuTech Solution

A TanuTech researcher checks manufacturers, suppliers, distributors and makes visits to retail outlets if necessary.

Case 4

Your company needs information that can only be collected in Japanese by someone in Japan.

The TanuTech Solution

We provide you with a customized solution!

Short Translation Service

This service was started in June 2001 to help those clients who need very short documents such as 1-page letters, cards, business cards, etc. translated and/or output as graphics.

People that utilize this service usually need something translated quickly or have special needs such as wanting to have the name of their business transliterated into katakana and put into a .tif file.

Quotations for this service can be requested from the secure form on our site at <https://www.tanutech.com/shortqt.html>.

It is an economical service tailored to those who have just a small amount of material they need translated with the minimum order set at \$15.00. Payment for this service can be made via credit card.

Other Services

TanuTech is always open to suggestions and will make arrangements to help clients with their requirements as far as possible. Our long years in the business of translation and publishing have given us experience and contacts in fields as diverse as logistics and there are many areas that we can assist companies trying to enter the Japanese market. If you don't see the service you require listed here, please contact us.

Company Information

A.E.L.S. is a registered Japanese company that was founded in 1981 by Billy Hammond as a sole proprietorship and later registered as a corporation in 1986. We have used our trade name of TanuTech since 1997.

Contact Info

A.E.L.S., Inc.

Shandorie Bldg. 4th Fl.

Kitakawaramachi 1-5-26

Sakai City, Osaka, Japan 590-0076

Ph/Fax: Intl. + 81-72-221-3400

e-mail: tanutech@tanutech.com

www.tanutech.com

Security

The security of data is very important in our business. All of our workers have signed non-disclosure contracts and we do not allow access to our client's projects by anyone who is not directly connected with the project being worked on.

We can handle PGP and GnuPG messages for customers that have very sensitive data. If the customer requests it we can also work on his or her project on a standalone machine that doesn't have an Internet connection. Very few translation agencies offer the level of security that we do. Our work on sensitive documents for lawyers and companies requires that we maintain a very high level of security at all times.

Privacy

Our customer's privacy is important and we do not share customer data with third parties. Requests for quotations for short translations are taken via our SSL server to protect privacy and safeguard information transmitted.

Translation Tools

TanuTech has the latest Japanese version of the CAT tool, "Trados" and we have used it since version 1.5. We also use our TanuChu Dictionary that was developed in-house in our translations.

In spite of the hype, translation memory tools are valuable only when you have large amounts of repeated text, and offer almost no advantage on documents that have varied text (almost everything other than instruction guides). In addition, the Japanese version of Trados has a history of being unstable in the English to Japanese direction and many Japanese translators do not like to use it because of this. Many Japanese translators demand more money for a translation where they are forced to use Trados because of the time they have to spend debugging tags when it goes haywire.

Why Japanese costs more

Choices between katakana, hiragana and kanji

People often ask why work in Japanese is more expensive than European languages. One of the reasons for this is that Japanese uses two alphabets (syllabaries) known as katakana and hiragana plus Chinese characters known as kanji. In English, when you type a word, that's it - it's typed, but in Japanese the person doing the typing has to decide on whether to put it into katakana or hiragana (usually a simple choice) and then whether to convert it to kanji. Once the decision to convert the word into kanji is made, the typist is usually confronted with choices of the kanji that have the same reading as the hiragana or katakana. The choices on a Windows machine are presented in groups of 9 and may require scrolling through over 10 displays to find the right character. This takes time and increases the cost of keyboarding Japanese. For the translator, he also has to decide whether the word would be more appropriate in hiragana or kanji. This choice is made based on the intended audience of the document being translated as well as how commonly the kanji is used in documents of the nature being translated.

Software

Localized Japanese software is expensive and the same application may cost up to 10 times more in Japanese. For example, Quark Xpress is an application that costs over \$2,000.00 in Japanese. The use of expensive software requires that the software investment be recovered through higher prices.

Small number of qualified translators available

With the Japanese recession, unqualified translators have come crawling out of the woodwork and not a day goes by when we do not receive unrequested resumes from 2 or 3 new wannabes. But the fact remains that good translators are few and far between and they are usually busy. Our requirements for new translators are very strict and unlike other agencies that offer 200+ freelancers, we are very selective in choosing translators and have dealt with some of our regular translators for more than 15 years. We do not use non-professionals and all of our translators have more than 3 years of experience as a full-time or self-employed translator that has made his or her livelihood translating. We believe that our adherence to this policy has enabled us to stay in this competitive industry for 20 years and we have clients that have come back to us everytime they've needed something translated for more than 18 years.

Getting the best translation

Here are some things that should help you get a better translation and save money doing so.

1. Submit the final version. Changes after you've handed over the material cost money.

2. Don't require that the final product be formatted the same as the English.

Japanese font sizes normally have to be increased over the English to make the text easily readable. Requiring that the same pagination be kept leaves only one option - to squish everything in so it fits.

3. Allow ample time. Rush jobs cost more.

4. Unless you absolutely require it, don't require a glossary and glossary maintenance. We understand that a glossary can be useful in some situations, however, working with a glossary takes time because it requires checking terms against the glossary to see if they're there or not, and then deciding if the word is appropriate.

One of the most ridiculous translations that we've ever seen was produced by an agency that had to strictly follow a glossary. Glossaries cost money and although the company does have a need to unify translations, the use of a glossary should be carefully considered in light of the added cost and time necessary to work with it.

If you need to submit a glossary, make sure it contains only words such as component names, GUI terms or other unique words. Some of the worst glossaries are those that contain common words, which will lock the translator into using them instead of words that would prove to be more suitable to the sentence.

5. Identify the target audience. Tell us whom the final product is intended for. Is it a company guide that will be circulated only among knowledgeable individuals in the same industry? Is it to be directed towards the general public? Is it a manual intended for advanced users? Information such as this will help you get the translation you are after.

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read through our catalog.

For more information please feel free to drop us a line at:

tanutech@tanutech.com

or give us a call at

Intl. + 81-72-213-400

We look forward to hearing from you.

The TanuTech Staff



Allow us to help take your message across the road of cultures...