

# Identifying & Developing Your Translation Specialisms

Dr Jody Byrne

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## Introduction

- What are specialisms and why should they concern me?
- What specialisms should I have?
- How do I get a specialism?

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## Specialisms

- Psychology
- Public Relations
- Publishing
- Quality Assurance
- Radio / TV
- Recording
- Regulatory Affairs
- Religious Issues
- Robotics
- Safety
- Sciences
- Scripts
- Separation
- Simultaneous Interpreting
- Social Sciences
- Social Services
- Software
- Software Localisation
- Sports
- Subtitling

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### Why specialise?

- Can't I just be a generalist?
- Specialist jobs require specialist translators
- Access to more work
- Command better rates
- More expertise, more satisfaction

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### My story

- BA in Translation
  - IT, general science and technology, essay writing
- Worked In-house and freelance
  - Mechanical Engineering, IT, Medical, Chemistry, Transport, Military, Press Releases, manufacturing, real estate, finance, education, localisation, logistics, lingerie, teabags, guns, hair dye
- Main Specialisms: IT, Medicine, Law, Creative
  - IT/Telecoms, Training Materials, Websites, Medical Devices, Pharmaceuticals, Legal, Consumer Electronics, Marketing and Advertising

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### First things first

- What are specialisms?
  - "Concentration of one's efforts in a given occupation or field of study"
  - "a subject that someone knows a lot about"
- Specialising in what?
  - Subject matter of a particular field, **and**
  - Language used by people in that field

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### Types of specialisms?

- Initial
- De facto
- Organic
- Targeted

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### Identifying your specialism(s)

- Conduct an audit of your skills, experience and knowledge
  - What do you know now?
  - What are you good at?
  - What were you good at in college?
- Everybody is good at **something!**

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### Developing new specialisms

- Specialisms change over time
- Some will become obsolete
- You will acquire new ones



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### Developing new specialisms

- Can your skills be applied elsewhere?
- What subjects are related to your current knowledge?
- In what other areas are your (target) clients involved?



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### Organic specialisms

- If you're good at literary texts, you might consider marketing and advertising
- If you know about mechanical engineering, you might branch into transport, construction, medical devices or process controls
- If you know about computers, consider consumer electronics, transport, economics and telecommunications
- If you know about biology, look at pharmaceuticals, nutrition, medical devices, sports goods, computers

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### Targeted specialisms

- If a company designs software, they will probably need someone who can also deal with contracts and licence agreements, empirical studies, industry-specific knowledge
- A client involved in real estate will probably need someone who can handle finance, utilities, renewable resources, transport, interior design, advertising, construction
- A company which makes tyres will need someone who knows chemistry, automotive, law, marketing, journalism, business and finance, scientific papers

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**Devising a plan of action**

- What do I know now and what do I need to know?
- Formal Education
- Self-learning
- Ad hoc Learning
- Networking

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**To sum up**

- Identify what you already know, even if it's limited
- Identify areas which lead on from this
- Decide which areas you want to move into
- Devise a plan for building your knowledge

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**Selling Your Services Online**

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Introduction

- What's out there?
- If you build it, they will come.
- Give customers what they want

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It's crowded out there...

You have **got** to be kidding me!



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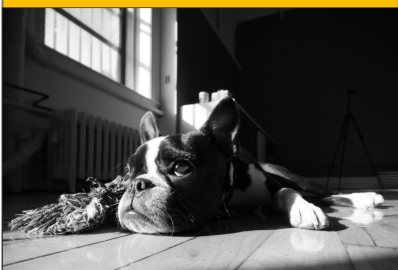
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Please can I have some work? Pretty please?



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### Don't be invisible

- Finding work often involves you approaching customers
- Just as importantly, customers need to be able to find you quickly
- Having a web presence is essential in both cases



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### Tools at your disposal

- Translation directories
- Professional associations
- Social media
- Your own website

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### Directories

- Proz
- Aquarius
- Translators Café



**Warning!**  
Risk of low rates and disillusionment!

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### Associations

- Professional associations like the ITIA maintain directories of members on their websites
- Often the first port of call when people are looking for translators
- **Join!**

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### Social media

- Find people where they spend most of their online time



- Easy, effective and viral

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### Your own website

- Not as complicated a proposition as it used to be
- Little technical knowledge needed
- Your own showroom/marketing brochure

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**Creating a website**

1. Get a domain name
2. Get someone to host your site
  - E.g. Stablehost or Servint
3. Decide how you're going to build it
  - HTML or a CMS like Wordpress or Joomla

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**Creating a website**

- Choosing a CMS
  - Wordpress, Joomla, Xoops
- Easy to use
- Professional-looking...usually
- "Favoured" by search engines
- Functionality to make site more interesting
  - Interaction, sharing, rating, blogging



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**Content**

- Clear, uncluttered and simple
  - Services
  - Specialisms
  - Your background
  - Contact details
  - Most importantly, your USP!

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**Getting people to stop by**  
*...And stick around!*

- Site content needs to be relevant, clear and immediate
  - This minimises your bounce rate and helps improve contact rates
- Site needs to feature highly in search listings
  - AdWords
  - Links with other sites
  - Relevant content
  - Well-structured and standards compliant

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**To sum up**

- Being found by clients is just as important as approaching clients
- A good website is a core part of your web presence
- You can enhance your presence by

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- Questions, comments, criticisms?

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