ATA Webinar Series: Questions and Answers

The New Remote Interpreting Landscape: Back to the Hack
Presenter Katharine Allen

- Does consecutive interpreting require a second audio channel? Or only RSI since two people speak simultaneously?
  - Consecutive does not require a second channel as only once person speaks at once.

- Will you provide a referral for a few companies that provide 3rd party, white labeled OPI/VRI dedicated platform? There are so many new players in the market, that a personal referral is most appreciated. Thank you!

  - Well, I can only speak from personal relationships with company owners and not from the perspective of a language services company – but Certified Languages International (CLI) provides OPI white labeling and Boostlingo is a vendor-neutral platform that also provides OPI and VRI white labeling. I have a lot of respect for both companies.

- What ring light do you suggest? Is one ring light enough or a dual-ring light better?

  - I ordered a popular one off of Amazon: https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B07GDC39Y2/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_search_asin_title?ie=UTF8&psc=1
  - It works fine for a home office and the mobile phone holder is a nice added benefit. The tripod will go short enough to stand it on a desk and long enough to stand on the floor – and it has three different shades of light and three levels of brightness. I don't know more than that – how much light you need will depend on your space, what kind of natural light is also available and what you are trying to accomplish.

- What headset and mic do you recommend?

  - This is such a moving target. There are an increasing number of places where people are recommending headsets for Remote Interpreting. There is a Remote Simul Channel on YouTube where colleagues have posted a LOT of videos about RSI, including a couple that showcase headsets for PCs and for Macs (see links). I encourage you to simple google this topic on Google and YouTube. You will find a lot of information, and as tech changes fast, it's good to search for more recent posts about the topic. I offer a few resources here.
  - Which headset style is going to work best for you is very individual. Most RSI interpreters I know have several headsets and have to work with them for awhile to settle on the one(s) they like best.
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IODBW7yY1TM&t=11s (PCs)
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swYVSge-bv4&t=15s (Macs)
  - And an accompanying blog post: https://www.languagelocus.com/2020/04/evaluating-headsets-for-vrirsi-specs.html

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- o AIIC – the International Association for Conference Interpreters – has also published a guide for remote interpreting that includes recommendations for headset specifications: https://aiic.ch/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/aiic-interpreter-checklist.pdf

- Do you charge for recording if it is used only internally? If it is used for outside, how much extra do you charge?

  - o This has only been an issue since COVID with the public meetings I've interpreted for – given the non-profit nature of the clients I've worked for I've chosen not to charge. However, I encourage you to research this topic more. Here is a link to a document that outlines your legal rights to recordings of your interpreting performance – again, this has been hashed out in the conference world and is still an invisible topic on most other interpreting arenas.
  - o AIIC: Memorandum concerning the use of recordings of interpretation at conferences - https://aiic.org/document/4427/Memorandum%20concerning%20the%20use%20of%20recordings%20of%20interpretation%20at%20conferences%20-%20ENG.pdf
  - o Here is a paragraph from this document that is particularly interesting: "*5. The performance of conference interpreters is protected under international law. The Berne Convention provides protection for the interests of authors; translations are protected as original works and translators are protected as authors. When fixed in material form, of any nature whatsoever (printed, sound or audiovisual recording, records, discs, magnetic tapes, videograms, slides, films, wire, cable, transparencies, photocopies, microcards, or any similar method) the performance of the conference interpreter becomes a translation within the meaning of the Berne Convention and the exclusive rights foreseen in the Convention apply to the author.*"

- Hi! Thank you very much. It was a great presentation. Are you open to be contacted directly later if we have any more questions or need advice?

  - o Of course – you can contact me at: sierraskyit@gmail.com

- Conferences are now a lot shorter than they used to, how do you manage quoting for 2 hours and charge more or less the same as what you would charge for a whole day. After all, you still have to study a lot for 2 hours only.

  - o This is another moving target in the field and I could not agree more. You have to find a rate that cuts out what you used to get paid in travel and time – but that still compensates you for the prep time. And these "short" events sometimes pack in multiple speakers, ppts and topics. So I couldn't agree more that they still require a lot of preparation.

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- In the non-conference side, I'm seeing an emerging practice of a 2-hour minimum for a 1-hour job. But then after that there is pressure to charge under a model more appropriate for consecutive assignments (adding increments in 15- and 30 minute chunks). These are individual decisions, but I encourage you to figure out what you feel is acceptable and then work on the client education to help them understand why what may seem like a higher rate is actually reasonable.

- Should we charge the client for the prep time as well? I charge for travel expenses within a number of miles to the client's remote center.

  - See the previous answer. One of the reasons simultaneous assignments are usually paid at a higher rate is precisely due to this prep time – the cost gets folded into the higher charge instead of a per-hour charge.

- Can you share a "responsible" rate including time of prep?

  - I really can't because it varies so widely according to market – conference interpreters will be able to charge a responsible rate much higher than in a community setting – and the market will also vary according to language pairs. Some languages can command higher rates because there are fewer qualified interpreters. But in general, you could apply a rule such as adding a third or doubling what you are charging for consecutive assignments and having a minimum set rate – such as a two-hour minimum for anything under two hours. You'll also need to take into account when you will insist on having a partner for the event.

- Is there any difference between Whatsapp and Whereby?

  - Yes, a lot of differences. Whatsapp is a widely-used text and video messaging app that is used all over the world. One of its pros is that it works well in low bandwidth settings. But it has potential cons, such as being owned by Facebook, etc. I encourage you to try them out – download the computer and phone apps – try them out -see what you like. And be comfortable with several ways to create that virtual booth because the person you partner with may have their preferences. It's all about being open to new solutions because tech changes so fast.