

New areas of work for translators and interpreters

STARTING WORK AS A TRANSLATOR OR INTERPRETER

The Institute of Translation & Interpreting and the University of Westminster

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 University of Westminster

*Our Knowledge,
Your Control*

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My background

- 14 years in translation and software localisation industry
- Berlitz, Trados UK, SimulTrans, Trados GmbH, Trados Inc., Conversis, Amicus TransTec
- Regional, national, and international positions
- Sales, management, director and owner
- BSc (Hons) Computer Science, MBA
- Qualified Lead Auditor for ISO 9001:2000 and CEN 15038:2006
- British Standard Technical Committee for Languages (TS/1)
- UK Trade & Invest Export Communications Consultant
- Founded Amicus TransTec in 2006
 - Software and services to the translation industry
 - Association of Translation Companies (ATC) Preferred Training Partner

www.amicus-transtec.com and www.sellingtranslations.com

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Aims & objectives

- Aim
 - Help you secure new and future fee paying work
- Objectives
 - How to identify current and future trends
 - Results of survey
 - My opinions

Who is buying what?

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% of clients that outsource services*

Service	% Outsourcing
Document translation	85%
Software localization	52%
Graphics translation / localization	51%
Web site localization	49%
Proofreading/editing	48%
Multimedia localization	37%
Internationalization	37%
Technical writing	36%
Telephone interpretation	34%
Testing	28%
Localization of embedded systems / informatics systems	26%
Conference interpretation	20%
Escort interpretation	8%

% of clients outsource by subject*

Subject matter	% Purchasing
User documentation	58%
Software / IT	48%
Marketing	35%
Legal	23%
Sales support	22%
Regulatory compliance	19%
Engineering	17%
Medical/Life sciences	15%
Customer support	13%
Organization administration	13%
Literature	9%
Banking / finance	6%

% of vendors providing by subject*

Subject matter	% Purchasing
User documentation	75%
Software / IT	75%
Marketing	60%
<i>Medical/Life sciences</i>	59%
Legal	51%
<i>Engineering</i>	48%
Sales support	37%
<i>Customer support</i>	35%
<i>Organization administration</i>	32%
Regulatory compliance	29%
<i>Banking / finance</i>	27%
Literature	21%

Survey

- Can be found at

<http://app.icontact.com/icp/sub/survey/start?sid=1305&cid=197799>

- 5 questions about the respondent
 - Name, email, organisation, industry type, title/position

Survey

- 5 questions about the future
 - Languages
 - Subject areas / industries
 - Technical requirements
 - Anything else to be prepared for
 - Any other comments

Question 4: Industry Type

Type	Count
Translation company	54
Other	22
Freelance	19
In-house	6
Student	5
Total	106

Question 5: Position/ title

Type	Count
Not disclosed	41
Director / senior manager	15
Chief Executive Officer / Managing Director	13
Sales	7
Project manager	6
Consultant	5
Lecturer	5
Owner	4
Translator	4
Language technology manager	2
Recruiter	2
Vendor manager	2
Total	106



Survey: Question 6

Which languages (source and target) do you predict will need more translators or interpreters in future?

- 106 respondents
- 425 references to individual or groups of languages

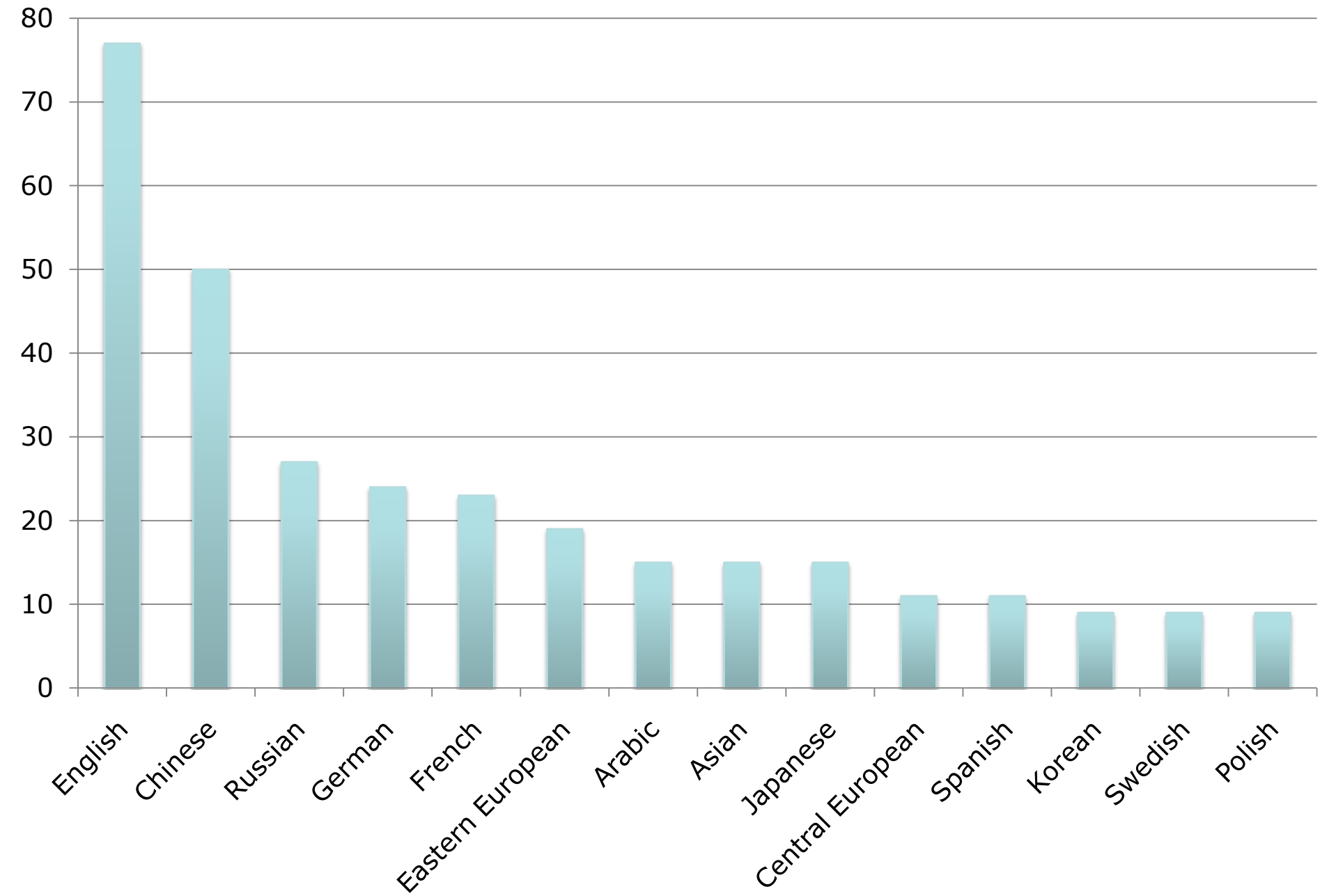
Any guesses?



Top 14 (10 languages, 4 groups)

Language	Referenced
English	77
Chinese	50
Russian	27
German	24
French	23
Eastern Europe	19
Arabic	15
Asian	15
Japanese	15
Central European	11
Spanish	11
Korean	9
Swedish	9
Polish	9

Or as a chart ...

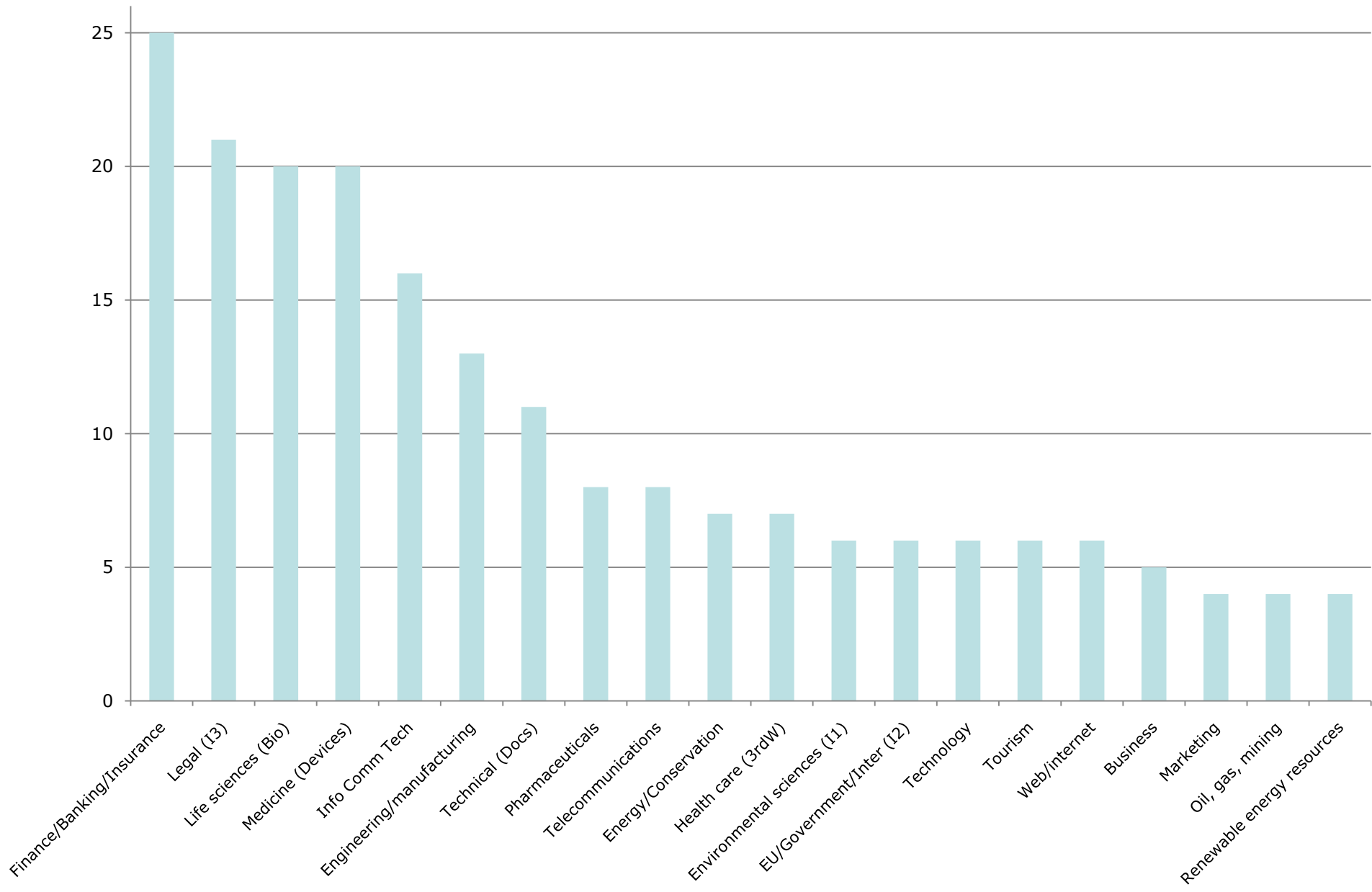


Survey: Question 7

Which subjects, or industries, do you believe will require more translators and interpreters in the future? (for example Life Sciences, Finance)

Future Industries/Subjects

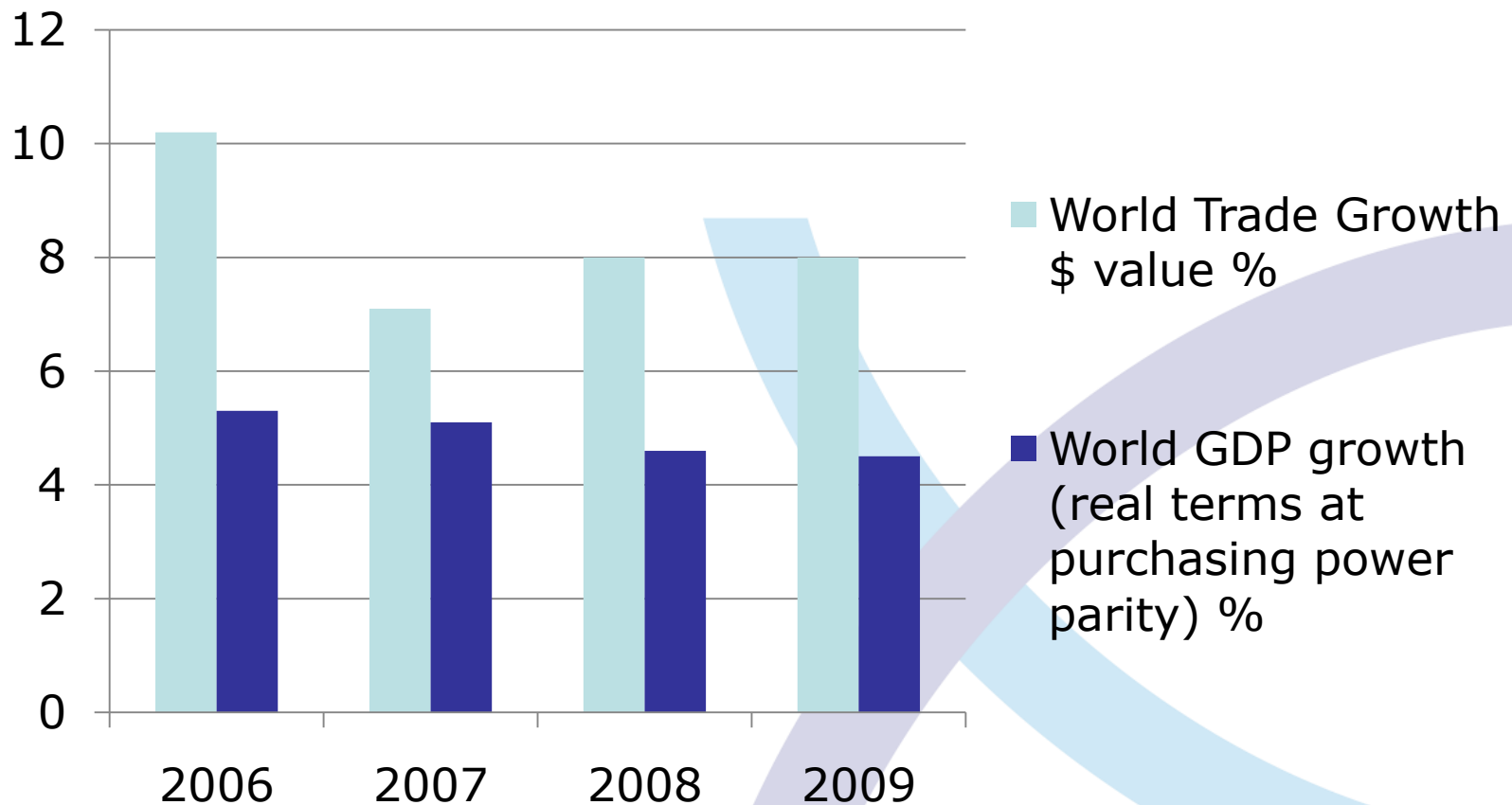
Top 20 from 'mentioned' 54 industries with 265 total 'votes'



How to Spot Up and Coming Sectors

- Translation companies' web sites and press releases
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Lists_of_companies
 - Fortune 500, FT 500, Times 1000
- Rich list, Times Most Profitable companies list
- Queens Export Awards (International Trade)
- Economist World in Figures
 - Growth
 - Developing (inc. China, India, Russia) 7%
 - Rich industrial (inc. US, Euro-zone, Japan) 1.8%
 - Good Outlook in 2008:
 - Agriculture, Defence, ECommerce, Energy, Entertainment, Health Care, Information Technology, Travel & Tourism
- Be aware:
 - Top global companies don't change much
 - Disruptive technologies Skype, Wi-Fi
 - Latest thing may not need much translation
 - Is it better to go for what the others are forsaking?

World trade & Gross Domestic Product



Examples of Up and Coming Sectors

Collaboration	Convergence
Mobility	Knowledge/Information
Compliance	Single Source
Web	Security Physical
Life sciences	Security Data
Space?	Defence
Leisure	Globalisation
Health Care	Games
Entertainment	

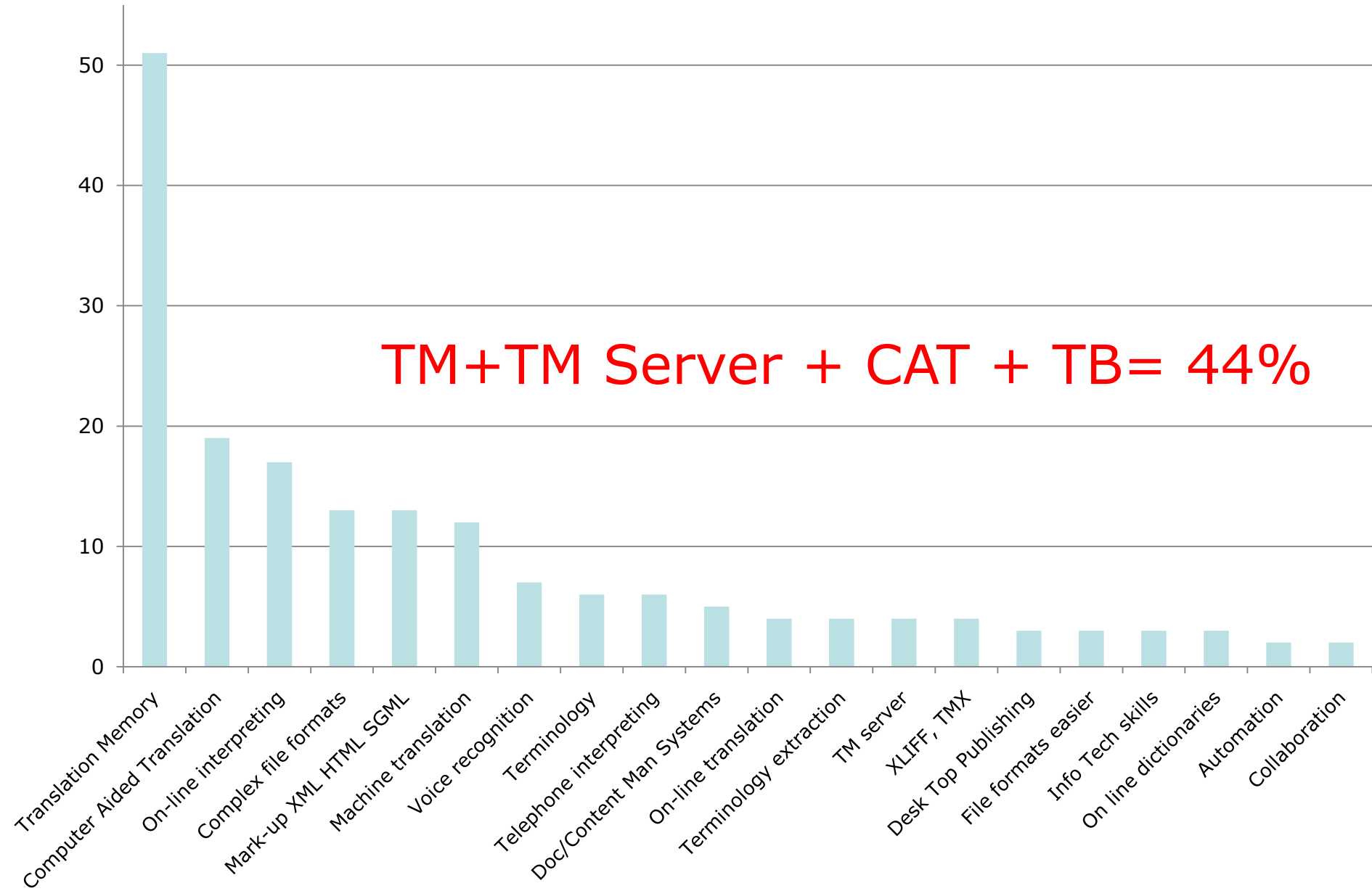
Survey: Question 8

What technical requirements do you think will exist in the future?

For example use of translation memory, on-line interpreting, complex file formats?

Technical Requirements

Top 20 from 'mentioned' 181 items with 228 total 'votes'





Technology

- It's not just a one-off purchase price
 - Upgrades
 - Support (yahoo forums)
 - training (<http://www.itl.org.uk/ice/index.asp>)
 - Computing platform
- Is the technology for you or your client?



Survey: Question 9

Is there anything else you think translators and interpreters should be prepared for in the future?

Price

Cheaper rates (&
more work, more
skills)

Defend your rates

Exchange rates

Time rather than
words, Shrinking per
unit compensation

Technology

TM, CAT, Web, On-
line, collaboration,
Mark-up langs., File
formats, Technical,
MT, working from
home, tele-working
esp. Interpreters,
internet research

Skills

interpersonal, social and cognitive skill, CPD, less English pivot Interpreting, research, info retrieval, more complex work, working without context

Services

Flexibility, glossary, term extract, post-editing MT and non-native, range of industries & source langs., layout,

Quality

Mother tongue, non-professionals, EN 15038, check work, subject specialise

General

The unexpected?
Change, global
competition,
Shrinking market,
job insecurity,
shorter delivery
times, lesser quality

Business

Set-up, legal, marketing,
make a name for yourself,
Finance, tax, from MLVs to
networked FLs, business
management, trusted
network of colleagues,
network: forums, ITI,
ProZ, Translator's Café



Survey: Question 10

If you have any additional comments
please feel free to add them

Any comments?

Capabilities

Commercial
Translation
Technical
Subject

Communication

Team-work
Translation &
interpreting
Intra-industry
Promote / educate

Threats?

Machine translation
post-editing
Price & units killing
profession
Anglo-centric
Second language

Positive

Not replaced yet
Shortages do
exist: e.g. Welsh,
game testers and
German

Quality Spectrum

Flexible Generalist

Expert Specialist

Quality Spectrum

Flexible Generalist

- Higher utilisation
- Lower price
- Work through agents
- Widely skilled
- Post-editing
- Accept work
- "Unit" work

Expert Specialist

- Higher pricing
- Lower utilisation
- Marketing 'yourself'
- Deeply skilled
- EN 15038
- ITI
- Qualified
- Mother-tongue
- CPD
- Choose work
- "Value" work



Good Advice

- The first few years of freelancing could be really hard
- Be prepare to work long hours and weekends, be competitive
- Once you have a portfolio of clients then you can start choosing

A Translation Company Operations Manager

Good advice

- Translators will always need to combine three skills:
 - Understanding of the source language,
 - understanding of the specialist subject
 - and the ability to write clearly in their target language.
 - This last one, the ability to write clearly, is the one most often forgotten!

Nick Rosenthal, Managing Director, Salford Translations
Mentor on ITI Peer Support Group



Pricing

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Pricing

- Rates Surveys:
 - ITI (<http://www.iti.org.uk/indexMain.html>)
 - CIOl (<http://www.iol.org.uk/membership/merchandise.asp#publications>)
- Why are there downward pressures?
- Office of National Statistics Services Producer Pricing Index (SPPI)*

* <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/product.asp?vlnk=7351>

Downward Pricing Pressure

- Relative price of services vs. product
- As products become less expensive relative cost of document translation increases
- Cost of living still rises, so 'human' translators need to increase costs (unlike car manufacturers robots)
- Technology assists rather than revolutionises
- Microsoft Vista and Office 2007 have a Pearl not a Start button!
- On-line and PDF not printed manuals
- Minimisation of devices – and interfaces
- Wikis created in target languages

Downward Pricing Pressure

- Easier for sellers to target existing translation clients – who 'initially' differentiate on price
- Difficult for clients to understand quality
- In the Anglo-speaking world translation is an often unbudgeted after thought
- Selling concepts kept easy to maximise probability of winning sale
- Low barrier to entry for competitors but difficult to 'steal' competitor's clients
- Perceived transparency e.g. Trados analysis

Downward Pricing Pressure

- Discounting to 'Strategic' or high profile clients
- Chamber of Commerce?
- Exporters support
- Love of words
 - e.g. FrItDeEs not FIGS
 - Compare with 'language' used in Regional Language Network cases studies
 - E.g. <http://www.rln-east.com/case-studies/>
- 'lack' of government funding?

So what are the answers?

- Not poaching clients (usually an accusation levelled at aggressive TSPs*)
 - Unlikely as new entrants more or less have to do this
- Promotion outside our industry
 - 'Support' from government agencies

* TSP = Translation Service Provider

Pricing strategies

- Value based
 - The value your service brings to your client
 - E.g. alignment of previous translations could, for example, save up to 50% of the cost of a translation – do you charge a percentage of the saving or a flat rate on the hours worked?
- Cost based
 - Cost plus a percentage for profit
 - Most TSPs double the Freelance price and then add their overheads
 - ITI Salaries and Rates Survey 2001 page 6

Pricing strategies

- Going in low
 - It is difficult to raise prices afterwards
 - You could try raising prices gradually over time “boiling the frog”
 - Even experienced translators find it difficult to raise prices over time to translation companies
 - Translation companies don’t want to upset existing clients



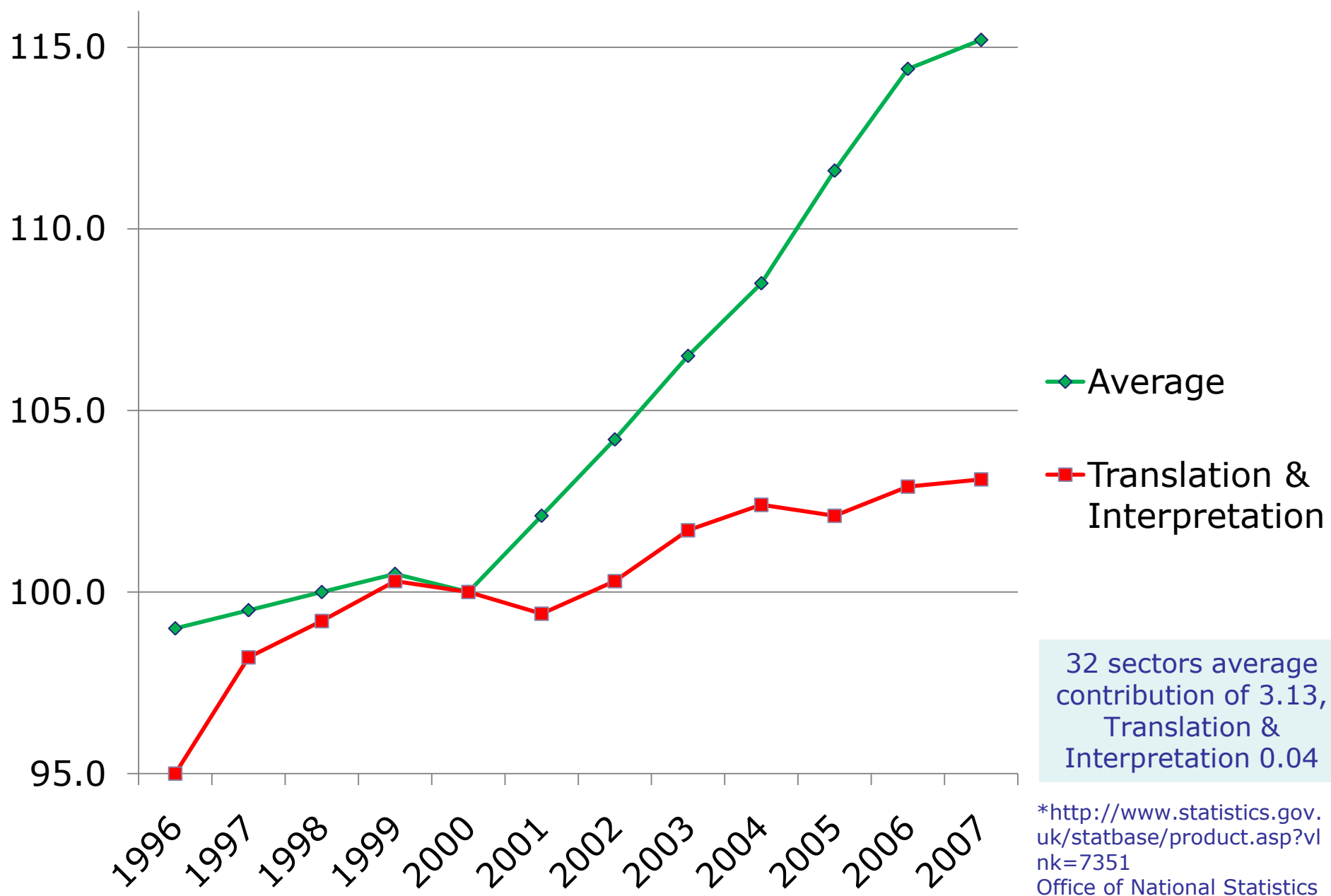
Cumulative inflation*

Year	UK Inflation*	Cumulative
2000	Baseline	Baseline
2001	0.7%	0.7%
2002	2.9%	3.6%
2003	2.8%	6.5%
2004	3.5%	10.2%
2005	2.2%	12.7%
2006	4.4%	17.6%
2007	4.0%	22.3%
2008	4.1%	27.4%

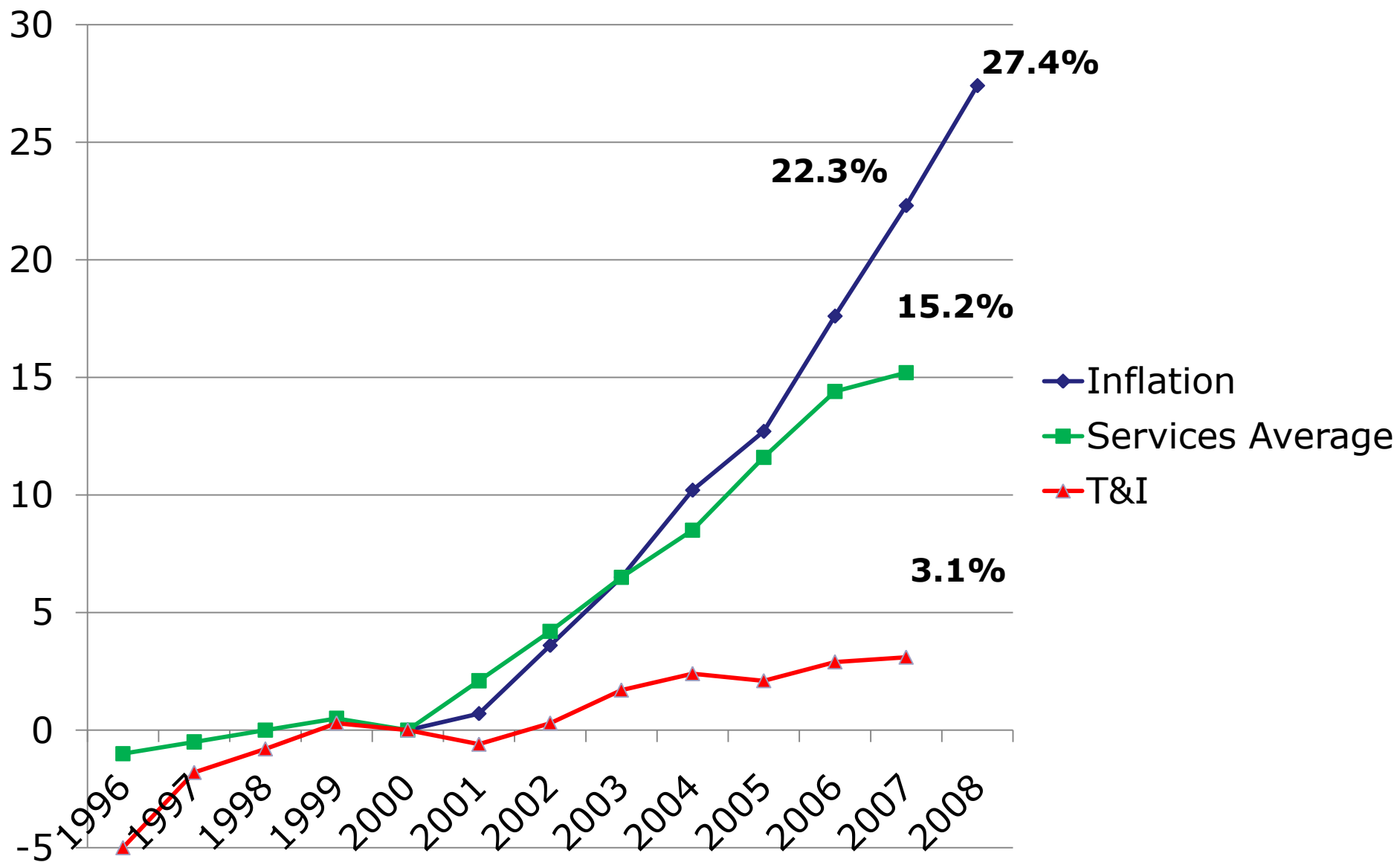
**Average
3.4%**

*"Headline" Inflation figures from <http://www.moneyextra.com/dictionary/uk-inflation-history-003663.html>

Services Producer Price Index Growth*



Services Producer Price Index Growth^{C12,C14}



T & I = Translation and Interpreting

UK Inflation 2007 1.9%, Growth 2.2%
(Economist World in Figures 2008)

What does all this 'pricing' mean?

- The industry can't raise its prices so you're unlikely too
- Utilisation is initially more important than pricing
- Technology can make you more efficient
 - CAT tools (especially memories), voice input, large monitors
 - There are hidden costs with technology
- Direct work has a higher unit rate but a higher cost of sale



Networking

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Web and Google Presence

- If a work giver searches the web for you what will they find?
- If a work giver searches the web for services you provide will they find you?
- A basic web site is a good start
- Packages start from £20 ish per year
- Start Google analytics immediately
- Purpose
- Web copy
- Maintenance



Networking

- Marketing – but it is not the same, you still need to 'sell'
- Local and national professional associations
- Events
- On-line social and business networking
 - LinkedIn , Xing (both have translation related groups)
 - Plaxo, ecademy, Facebook
- Become an insider
 - Direct client conferences
 - Is there anything you could speak about?



Summary

- Many opportunities in the future
- Technology will be important and help efficiency
- Utilization is initially more important than price
- The ITI and its members are there to help



“A Noble Profession”

Survey comment by ‘A Linguist’

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Questions?

- Now?
- Or if in the future please contact me ...
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References

- Amicus TransTec
 - www.amicus-transtec.com and www.sellingtranslations.com
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