



# Getting the Most from Your ATA Language Services Directory Profile

**Knowing what search options are offered in the *Language Services Directory* can help you craft a profile that fully maximizes the types of searches one could make.**

By Eve Lindemuth Bodeux

When ATA's new website launched in February 2021, ATA's Directory of Translators and Interpreters became the *Language Services Directory*. The directory ([www.atanet.org/directory](http://www.atanet.org/directory)) features profile listings for more than 7,000 individuals and companies offering professional translation and interpreting services. When exploring the profiles, potential clients can customize searches—by language, specialty,

location, credentials, and more—to match a translator or interpreter with their job specifications. ATA provides free access to the directory to encourage its use and increase exposure for members.

As an individual translator or interpreter and member of ATA, you can take full advantage of this incredible marketing tool by carefully leveraging your profile to make it easy for new clients to identify you as a good fit. This includes utilizing the various specializations

and language services the profile format allows you to showcase. For this to be most effective, you need to be consistent about updating your profile.

To ensure your profile is current, set a specific schedule for when you'll review and update your listing. Minimally, this should be done at least annually, but, given the fast pace of change in our industry, you may want to do it twice a year to include new skills or specialties

you acquire that make you unique.

Before you begin modifying your profile, take some time to review the updated directory layout and features. Look at it from a potential client's perspective. Be aware of the directory search options that are available to users when they look for a language professional so you can leverage them to attract the type of clients you're targeting. For example, users of the directory can:

- Search by geographic location and a specific radius (e.g., within 10 or up to 100 miles).
- Define whether they need a translator or interpreter, both of which are conveniently defined for users new to the language industry.
- Specify a source or target language only, or a specific language combination.
- Search by last name if they're looking for the contact information for a specific individual.
- Filter by a translator or interpreter's native language.
- Select a provider's level of education, including high school through doctorate, while also specifying if they require a degree in translation or interpreting.
- Specify that a provider be a member of a given ATA division, including language-specific divisions (e.g., Arabic, Dutch, Korean, etc.) and subject-specific divisions (e.g., Audiovisual, Educators, Law, etc.)

- Choose potential providers according to a specific type of ATA membership.
- Filter according to certification and other professional credentials, areas of specialization, and more.

Users are not required to make selections for all options. The fewer fields they specify, the wider their search results will be, and the more they choose, the narrower their results will be. In language combinations with many practitioners, such as English<>Spanish and English<>French, when less specific searches return a large number of listings, users may add additional filters to limit the number of profiles they need to review to choose a supplier to contact. You can take advantage of this fact by filling out as much information as possible about your background, skills, and services. It's interesting to note that unless the user clicks the box for "Sort Results by Last Name," the results provided will be randomized and not in alphabetical order.

Within the directory, there are some search fields specific to either translators or interpreters. The "Translator Search" section focuses on translation services, including translating, editing, proofreading, and localization. This area of the directory also allows users to specify a translation tool they require (e.g., Across, Passolo, WordFast, etc.). Users can also specify if they're seeking an ATA-certified translator in a specific (or any) language pair.

The "Interpreter Search" section of the directory allows users to select the type of interpreting mode they prefer (consecutive, sight, or simultaneous) or see results containing interpreters who offer any mode. Potential clients can also specify a specific interpreting method, such as in-person, over-the-phone, or remote simultaneous, among others. Those seeking interpreters can also specify if they prefer a community, conference, educational, health care, or court interpreter. The type of interpreter credential sought can also be selected.

Areas of specialization can also be designated when searching for both translators and interpreters. For interpreters, examples of these include business/trade, government/diplomatic, and immigration. For both translators and interpreters, these include arts and humanities, business, social sciences, and medicine. Each area offers a list of related sub-topics as well.

### Creating an Effective Profile that Works

Paying attention to your ATA directory listing will pay you back. To begin creating an effective profile, go to the Members Only section of ATA's website<sup>1</sup> and log in with your member number and password. Under the ATA Membership Information section, click on "Update Your Online Directory Profile" to begin. You will be taken to the main *Language Services Directory* profile page. You should begin by reviewing and editing your contact information. As you create or

edit your profile, be sure to save each section before you continue to the next.

### Contact Information

Always verify that your contact information is up to date. Potential clients can't get in touch with you about possible projects if an email bounces or you have not removed the landline number that's been dropped in favor of your mobile number.

Within the address section when editing your profile contact information, it's important to note that to enable geographic searches (used when a client seeks a provider in a specific geographic area), you should enter your physical address even if you don't want it displayed in the directory for public view. This way, your profile will appear in the search results when you match a specific geographic area.

If you don't want your full address (or other contact information) displayed, you can choose this option when setting up or modifying your profile by clicking on the "View/Update Your Published Profile" section and then checking the appropriate boxes under "Please do not include the following items in my directory profile." You may also completely hide your entire profile by selecting the "Please do NOT list my directory profile" option. However, be aware that selecting this option prevents potential clients from seeing your profile.

Also, under the "Edit Your Contact Information" section, be sure to specify your native language so that your profile will appear when

potential clients are seeking a match to that specific field.

### Availability Dates

Another feature of the directory is the ability to let potential clients know when you'll be unavailable. This feature can be selected by clicking on the "View/Update Your Published Profile" section. However, if, for various reasons, you don't want to inform potential clients of your out-of-the-office dates, you can simply leave the dates fields blank.

### Language Information

You must manually add the language combinations you would like to include in your profile. You may add up to seven language combinations using ATA's dropdown list. If you would like to add additional languages or dialects, you may do so in the related searchable free-form field. Make sure to list only those language pairs in which you work professionally to avoid diluting the power of your profile. Your goal is to receive work in the languages where your expertise and knowledge will positively impress your clients. You should avoid listing "all" languages you know if they're not languages for which you offer professional services. Note that you can also set the order in which you would like multiple language pairs to appear. The default setting is alphabetical, but you can modify this to emphasize one language pair over another.

## Before you begin modifying your profile, take some time to review the updated directory layout and features.

### Services, Education, Experience, Tools, etc.

The next section (“Please include the following information in my directory profile”) allows you to provide additional information about the services you offer, your background, tools, as well as the types of payment and currencies you accept. This section uses dropdown lists, file uploads, option buttons, and free-form fields to gather your information.

To start, list the services you provide. For both translation and interpreting, you may indicate multiple services. To do so, use CTRL + click (for PC) or Command + click (for Mac) to make your selections. If there’s a service listed that you don’t offer, just don’t select it and it will not appear in your public profile.

You’ll also be asked to indicate the highest level of education completed, whether you have a degree in translation or interpreting, and how many years of experience you’ve worked as a translator or interpreter. Select one of the options listed for each of these categories. Please note that you can skip these questions entirely since they’re not required. If you leave these fields blank, the information will not show up in your profile. However, the more information you can provide, the more times you’re likely to show up in potential client searches, especially when they’re selecting multiple criteria to narrow a search.

If you’re an interpreter, this section of the profile management interface provides information and

links for how to submit your credential documentation for inclusion in your ATA profile. Follow the specific instructions in this section if that applies to you.

If you provide voice work, you may include a prerecorded voice sample along with your directory profile. Simply describe the sample in the field provided and upload the audio file for access by those viewing your profile. Note that when you upload an audio file, a new window opens. Once you’ve completed the file upload, return to the previous tab to continue modifying your profile. You can also provide information about what type of computer equipment and translation-specific tools you use (if applicable).

To personalize your profile, you have the option to upload your résumé or link to it directly with a URL you provide. If you choose to upload a résumé, review it before posting to ensure that it effectively shows your expertise for the areas in which you’re seeking projects, and that the information provided in the résumé matches what you say in your profile. You may decide to upload a version of your résumé that you’ve specifically prepared for your profile. If you chose to hide some of your contact information from your public ATA profile as described above, you should also consider what contact information you would like to include on a résumé that may be downloaded by visitors to your profile. Note that the content of your résumé is not included in “keyword searches” by users.

You may also upload a photo to further personalize the profile. This is optional. If you decide to use this feature, be sure to use a professional, business-focused photo that clearly shows your face. If you don’t have a suitable photo, just skip this step

Finally, there’s a free-form field in this section with the label “Would you like to include additional information about your services, education, and experience?” This field allows you to add or clarify any information. Use this space to emphasize particular expertise that may not have been covered elsewhere in your profile and to highlight what makes you unique. For example, do you have niche areas of expertise you would like to highlight that are not included in ATA’s dropdown list of subject-matter expertise, or specific services you offer that are not listed? If so, be sure to add them here. Note that areas of specialization appear in the next section of the profile update screen, so you may wish to review them and then return to the free-form field to ensure that you’re using it most effectively.

The free-form information you add to your profile appears on your listing under the “Additional Information” heading when viewed by users. It’s important to note that all the text you enter in the free-form field is seen by users when they access your profile (human readable) and is searchable by users of the directory in the “keyword” field on the search page<sup>2</sup> (machine readable). Keep that in mind

when writing this section and think about key phrases that a potential client might enter as search terms and how they will view this information on your profile. Users can use one- or multiple-word searches and phrases that are both human and machine search readable. For details on how the search function works for the “Additional Information” field, review the list of tips found on ATA’s website entitled “Keyword Search Tips.”<sup>3</sup>

## Areas of Specialization

In the next section, you may list up to 12 areas of expertise for your translation or interpreting practice. If you feel that you have more than 12 areas of expertise or sub-areas, prioritize them so that you list the areas you focus on in your business. You can also add additional details about your areas of expertise in the free-form section discussed above.

Once you’ve completed this last section, use the Submit button to finalize your changes.<sup>4</sup> You will then see a summary of your current profile. Review it and click on the “Change My Contact Information” or “Change My Profile” links at the bottom of the page if you would like to make additional edits using the process outlined above. (Note: you should avoid using your browser’s back and forward buttons at this stage to ensure that your updates are not lost.) When you’re satisfied with the information contained in the profile, you can continue to the final steps.

## Final Steps: Review Your Public Profile and Your Next Review

As mentioned previously, it’s always a good idea to view your profile as a user of the directory will see it, rather than as you see it when updating or creating it. To do this, return to the public search page<sup>5</sup>, choose “Search by Last Name,” and enter your last name to locate your public profile. (You can also choose to search using other criteria that match your profile to see if you would like to tweak your profile further once you see the results.) Once your name appears in the search, click on it to access your public profile, just as a potential client would. Review the information it contains in this format. If you wish to make any changes, make sure you’re still logged in to your ATA account, return to the Member Center page<sup>6</sup>, and modify your profile until you’re satisfied.


Now that you’re good to go, think about using the unique URL for your profile to promote your services. Copy your profile’s URL from your browser when viewing your profile as a user, not from the profile update screen. You can use it on your website, on your résumé, in your email signature, or other promotional materials.

Finally, don’t forget to schedule a yearly or six-month review to make sure your contact information, areas of specialization, and all the other items in your profile are current. Remember to update this information as you evolve as a language professional.

## Bonus Tip!

Request the Individual Member logo<sup>7</sup>—or use your ATA-certified translator (CT) seal<sup>8</sup> or credentialed interpreter (CI) designation<sup>9</sup>—and link to your profile in the *Language Services Directory* from your website.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ATA on-demand webinar, “Maximizing Your ATA Directory Profile to Attract Your Ideal Clients,” presented by Eve Lindemuth Bodeux, <https://bit.ly/Bodeux-directory>.
- ATA’s Membership Committee has created a video tutorial on how to set up and update your ATA directory profile listing. It will be released within the next few months. Look for it soon on ATA’s website, YouTube channel, and other social media. 

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> [www.atanet.org/membersonly](http://www.atanet.org/membersonly)
- <sup>2</sup> <https://bit.ly/individual-search>
- <sup>3</sup> “Keyword Search Tips,” <https://bit.ly/directory-keyword>.
- <sup>4</sup> In addition, if you’ve been using the “Save” or “Save and Continue” buttons for each section of your profile, each section has also been finalized individually.
- <sup>5</sup> <https://bit.ly/individual-search>
- <sup>6</sup> [www.atanet.org/membersonly](http://www.atanet.org/membersonly)
- <sup>7</sup> ATA Logo Usage Guidelines, <http://bit.ly/ATA-logo-guidelines>.
- <sup>8</sup> ATA-Certified Translator Seal, <https://bit.ly/ATA-CT-seal>.
- <sup>9</sup> ATA Credentialed Interpreter Designation, <http://bit.ly/ATA-CI-credential>.



**Eve Lindemuth Bodeux** is a 20+-year veteran of the language services industry and has worn many hats. She is an ATA-certified French>English translator focusing on corporate communications, market research, and international development content. She also has multilingual project management expertise for clients worldwide. She is the author of *Maintaining Your Second Language: Practical and Productive Strategies for Translators, Teachers, Interpreters, and Other Language Lovers*. She sponsors the online book club for translators *Global Reads Book Club*, which focuses on books in translation. She has graduate degrees from both the University of Lorraine (Nancy II) in France and the University of Virginia. She currently serves on ATA’s Board of Directors. [eve@bodeuxinternational.com](mailto:eve@bodeuxinternational.com)