

# Free Stuff: Translation Services

By Richard Lowe

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Internet Tips And Secrets <http://www.internet-tips.net>

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Article Title: Free Stuff: Translation Services  
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(Autoresponder formatted for 65 character wrapping)

One of very cool facts about the internet is that it is truly global in scope. You can send emails to people all over the planet, visit newsgroups and find posts in different languages, and you can rest assured that your web site will probably be seen by people of other cultures and nationalities.

It still boggles my mind when I surf to a Russian or Czechoslovakian site. I still feel a thrill when I find pages from the People's Republic of China, Hungary and Vietnam. This is because I grew up during the Cold War era, and clearly remember speeches where Ronald Reagan referred to Russia as the evil empire. Yet now we can surf their web sites at will, and people in Russia can look at ours as often as they like.

Personally, I think this is the true purpose of the internet, and it's great promise - to help people communicate with one another. By talking (or sending emails or whatever) we can become more in tune with each other's needs, desires, lifestyles, hopes, dreams and other emotions, which in turn allows us all to understand what's going on and why people act the way that they do.

Surfing the internet I have come to know people in Russia, one of the most powerful countries in the world, had to stand in line to get potatoes, something that I eat everyday and take for granted. I have come to tears learning about famines in Africa and felt joy learning of a South African woman's new child. These are experiences that I may never have shared had I not been surfing the internet.

However, one of the frustrations of this vast melding of cultures and communications is language.

Many of these pages, emails and postings are written in languages which are not known to me. I am sure that virtually everyone has felt the same frustration of seeing a wonderful web page and not being able to understand what the author was attempting to communicate.

You will be happy to know that you can use any of the following free translation services to translate text from one language to another.

#### Babelfish

<http://babelfish.altavista.com/>

In a strange and wonderful book called "Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy", a small creature known as a Babelfish allows you to understand (telepathically) the speech of any other race in the entire galaxy. All you need to do is put this small fish into your ear. The fish "eats" speech (more or less) and excretes a telepathic translation into your brain.

If only it were that simple. Needless to say, the Babelfish service (which was purchased by Altavista) is not that good, but nonetheless, it serves the purpose. Simply paste some text into the box (or choose a webpage), select the "To" and "From" languages and click a button. Within a short time the text will be translated for you. It's not perfect but it works.

#### T-Mail

<http://www.t-mail.com/index2.shtml>

You can use this service two ways: by registering, you get a mail address of your\_name@t-mail.com. Messages sent to that mail address are automatically converted from one language to your preferred language. T-Mail forwards the translation to your current e-mail address.

If you don't want to register, you can use your current e-mail account and send a message to a buddy (or yourself perhaps). By typing the appropriate T-Mail address on the Cc: line of the same message before sending it, you instruct T-Mail to translate the email message from one language to another. The original message is delivered as usual to the person on the To: line. The copy is sent to the translator, translated and sent to the person on the To: line.

#### T-Sail

<http://www.t-mail.com/cgi-bin/tsail>

Similar to Babelfish, this service allows you to translate a web page (or search engine results) from one language to another.

#### T-Text

<http://www.t-mail.com/t-text.shtml>

With T-Text, you simply paste some text in a box, select the translation, click a button and viola, you have the translation.

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