

It is my pleasure to present another outstanding company, Vocalink (<http://www.vocalink.net>). This interview was conducted with Amelia Rodriguez CEO of Vocalink.

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1. Tell me about your business, how/why/when did it begin?

Vocalink started in 1995 because I wanted to launch a meaningful career when my kids started high school. I was bi-lingual and wanted to be an interpreter. I quickly learned that being bi-lingual was not enough to be successful. It was clearly important to be an expert on specific subject matters that pertain to the different industries.

After my first court hearing, I told myself that it was important to be respected in my industry. With that goal in mind, I went to school to receive training in the federal court training program. This allowed me to qualify as a legal interpreter.

2. What is your core business (primary product or service) and who is your consumer?

I consider Vocalink's core business as multilingual communications. We provide interpreters and translations for a variety of clients.

The communications industry includes many facets of reaching a company's target audience such as marketing materials, engineering design plans, public relations, etc. Everything that a company touches revolves around communication; whether that is with their staff, the consumer, or their vendors.

Vocalink's focuses in three major areas: Healthcare, Judicial and Corporate communities.

I believe there are two major markets in our industry: the US ethnic market, and the international market. Most of our clients are companies that have a global footprint. These companies are opening locations in emerging markets, or displaying and/or selling products in other countries.

These places represent new buying groups which are necessary to reach in order to ensure continued growth for any organization.

3. What is the greatest challenge Vocalink faces in providing consistent and competent quality service?

Our industry is often misunderstood by the lay community. However, language translation and interpreting must work within a defined cultural framework. I believe that many bilingual people are like golfers. The community is large, but the translators/interpreters must rise to the quality of Tiger Woods or Jack Nicholas in order to be successful.

The heart of the business of communication is three-pronged:

- 1) Language - understanding the language through substantial vocabulary
- 2) Cultural – understanding the impact that culture has on the interpretation
- 3) Subject Matter Expertise – the need to understand a client's business

(continued)

4. How does Vocalink recruit qualified and competent Interpreters?

Even though we certainly depend on conventional advertising to locate candidates, the power of word of mouth referrals is extremely important to our finding of candidates. In addition, we target audiences where we know we can find those with the skills needed to perform. But even then, our interview process and language assessment tools are instrumental in ensuring that only those with the right set of skills and professionalism represent our company.

5. What type of training do you require of your Interpreters?

We require an extensive language evaluation, as well as completing several education modules which focus on specific subject matters as they relate to Joint Commission requirements. This spring, Vocalink will be opening Openlingo E-versity Inc., an avenue for all interpreters around the world to be effectively trained through our online program. We believe this venue will be the key to offering interpreters everywhere different options for continued education, as well as general opportunities to grow in the knowledge of the profession.

6. What are the top three languages most requested?

Spanish and Arabic are clearly the top two languages. The third varies depending on where we are conducting business. It rotates between Russian, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

7. Has Vocalink found any particular technology effective in managing business?

Indeed. All of our technology proprietary items provide real time data. Two examples of our technology tools include: Ucheck™ and Uclock™.

Ucheck™ is a tool that ensures compliance is current for all interpreters and is a key competitive advantage if/when the Joint Commission requires an audit (see <http://blog.vocalink.net/blog/bid/108683/Newsflash-Ucheck> for more information),

Uclock™ is a paperless timesheet used by our team that helps our clients determine immediate review of who is on site and what their current expenses are to ensure they are able to stay within their budgets.

8. Has Vocalink been able to give back to the community in any specific way?

Absolutely! Vocalink has provided complimentary interpreting services for local community events with the Department of Health and with our local Shriners Hospital. Our next community event is as a co-sponsor of the Deaf Health Fair held at the University of Cincinnati.

9. How do you see your role within the IMIA as an IMIA ISP member?

Contributing to promote best practices within the industry and creating a reputable name for the company around the globe.