

CATI survey results

Part 2. CATI Conference, administration, and organization

By Naomi A. Kleid, Ph.D.



This article continues the analysis of the data obtained from the 93 (out of 190) CATI members who participated in the 10-question,

online survey during September, 2003. (The first part of this analysis, which appeared in the Fall 2003 issue of the *CATI Quarterly*, addressed the *CATI Quarterly* and the CATI website.) This article focuses on the CATI Conference, CATI administration, and CATI organization.

CATI Conference

As reported in the first part of this analysis, Question 1 investigated a variety of issues, including attendance at the CATI Annual Conference. The table below summarizes

the findings for that part of the question, and it shows that most members (74%) have attended a CATI conference, while some members have attended more than one conference in the past 6 years.

People who attended a CATI conference said:

- "There's always something helpful for me there."
- "I think they did a good job for the 2003 conference. I know all the hard work that goes into it. The snacks, continental breakfast and lunch were great. I feel that Maria did a great job organizing it...."

Question 8 asked respondents to comment on the CATI Conference and two members replied:

- "Maybe have it [one day] in May instead of June, [because June]...is a vacation month and members go to their countries to visit families"
- "[Have an early] "condensed report from the planning committee as to what is planned for the next conference." [So that members can start to plan their attendance early.]

Another part of Question 8 asked members to suggest topics for conference sessions. Responses focused on skill-building, professional development, education (especially providing local opportunities to meet the ATA continuing education requirements), business growth, and financial and office management. Some suggestions included:

- "Practical, basic, hands-on, Internet skill building - e.g. finding and using foreign language glossaries, using Google, etc." and "how to use the Internet more effectively to search for terminology"
- "Seminar interpreting" and "conference interpreting."

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Frequency of attending the Annual CATI Conference	Number (out of 93)	Percent
I attended the Annual CATI conference in 2003	34	36.6
I attended at least one Annual CATI Conference 1998-2002	42	45.2
I have never attended an Annual CATI Conference	24	25.8
Overall	100	107.6

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- "Finding assignments out-of-town."
- "How to do accounting for a small business...what are the pitfalls of payroll when you start hiring employees"
- "How to bid on a translation project or an interpreting assignment."
- "New products on the market for interpreters"
- "More info about other organizations like ATA."
- "How to help others to become a good interpreter-translator...."
- "...information on number of continuing education hours for each event."
- "Continuing education topics - medical interpreting, legal interpreting, etc. different than AHEC or AOC sponsored workshops, [on] English-to-Spanish specific topics."
- "...subject-matter-specific presentations."
- "While some conference speakers are very interesting for all audience participants, some speakers may be of interest only to some of the audience. My suggestion is to have a greater variety of subjects each of somewhat shorter duration."
- "More general sessions for people who work with languages other than Spanish. There should be a non-language-specific option in every time slot."
- "...include a true annual meeting of the membership, with reading of the minutes from the last gen-

eral meeting, an agenda, and by observing proper parliamentary procedures. The entire board should be seated on the podium, or at least introduced. Please find a proper balance between interpreting and translation topics. Currently, CATI seems to be leaning more toward interpreting sessions, but I could be mistaken on that."

CATI benefits

Question 9 asked "What are the most important benefits that you want CATI to provide, how satisfied are you with CATI's ability to provide these benefits, and why?" Many write-in answers to this question focused on networking opportunities (which are especially important for translators and interpreters who work alone), professional development and education, job opportunities (including being listed in the Directory and online database), and the people who are

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active in the organization. Some representative comments include:

Networking opportunities

- "Networking, and professional support. It does this by the newsletter and emails received periodically suggesting training, jobs, events."
- "Professional networking. - Development opportunities. - Insight in the translation and interpreting business. I'd like some more opportunities of networking in SC, but I'm highly satisfied otherwise."
- "Mutual support, feeling of community; advice for the translators. In the short time I have been a member of CATI, I have found support and advice when I

needed it. Since our jobs are often solitary, it is good to have a forum for information and fellowship."

- "Networking is the main benefit. Through CATI, I am connected to many highly qualified and ethical colleagues. Granted, there are people who are not highly qualified who join CATI as well, but that's okay. CATI can be a place for them to grow professionally. Another benefit is that we are connected to the ATA."

Professional development and education

- "Networking events, continuing education hour credits."
- "The most important benefit for me is the classes. The additional info that is disseminated about other agencies that also provide support and training for us is very good."
- "Professional resources; camaraderie; notification of continuing education opportunities and other gatherings."
- "Professional updating and hints and tools."
- "Current information and professional development opportunities."
- "The most important benefits from an association such as CATI are the maintenance and promotion of professional standards of members, informing them on subjects related to their work and encouraging exchange between individual members."

Job opportunities and the Directory

- "Information about jobs in the area, which CATI does distribute in a timely manner."
- "I love the job postings. The Di-

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rectory listings provide me with good work. Thanks"

- "Directory and potential client referrals."
- "The Directory has been a major source of work from the NC community who buys annual copies."
- "The best thing CATI provides is the Directory, because you can look up an experienced interpreter/translator for the many languages listed."

- "Recently I have received several emails and phone calls because of our online directory. This is a very valuable service the organization provides. Thank you!"

The people

- "The CATI secretary handles everything so well. She is the contact for us when we have problems.... That is a benefit!!!!"
- "The lovely and caring people working for our instruction."

Suggestions for CATI

Some people offered suggestions for ways in which CATI could better meet their needs:

- "Maybe CATI could be more instrumental in helping newcomers network with more experienced translators and interpreters."
- "I would like to see more articles, workshops or seminars about the impact of technology in translation and interpreting. How to use that technology and implement it in your practice. This topic is not being addressed at all in any of the articles."
- "More workshops, continuing education courses, etc. CATI is providing more and more of

those, so I am satisfied with my membership."

- "Collegiality, chance to "talk shop." I feel we could do this better if we had regular meetings."
- "I would like CATI to protect my

"I would like CATI to protect my interests as a professional freelance translator. For example, client education is crucial. Many clients do not understand the importance of using a professionally qualified translator who also has solid expertise in their specific area of specialization."

interests as a professional freelance translator. For example, client education is crucial. Many clients do not understand the importance of using a professionally qualified translator who also has solid expertise in their specific area of specialization. Many clients simply take the lowest bidder, with little regard to expertise. Overall, I think that CATI is doing an excellent job."

- "Maybe more marketing so prospective clients take our profession more seriously. Granted that we have no control when anyone with a Spanish name can print a card and say 'I am a translator' to make some quick bucks. I feel this would at least separate us 'the ones that are taking this seriously' somewhat from the crowd."
- "Please continue to bring speakers like Mr. Degueldre to the annual conference. I always enjoy reading what Ann Sherwin has to share with us. Thank you for all your hard work!"
- "Each area where there is a cluster of members should have at least two activities a year. The ideal would be at least one social and one educational event per year. And these need to be publicized outside our membership –

for instance in the N&O business calendar. Even if it doesn't increase attendance, it would let the business community know that we exist and that they don't have to ask neighbors and FL teachers to fill their T&I needs."

- "While all CATI activities are interesting, I would suggest more of these in the daytime, especially in winter when it gets dark earlier."

Statements of member satisfaction

Many people expressed their satisfaction with the organization:

- "I've just joined CATI and as a new member, I'm very pleased by the attention and encouragement I've received from CATI."
- "I joined CATI to meet other people in my profession, to get my name out there and to learn as much as I can from other experienced interpreters and translators. I am happy to say that I have gotten what I set out to get from CATI. Everyone is very kind and helpful."
- "I especially enjoy having the CATI Directory because I can always find other interpreters who live in my area and who may have information about areas that I may have questions about or need additional information."
- "I appreciate CATI for providing membership in a substantial, viable, increasingly visible and ultimately influential professional organization. The annual conferences and occasional additional workshops provide valuable opportunities for professional development, skill-building, and networking. I feel CATI is doing an

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increasingly better job of providing these benefits."

- "I am very happy to be a member of CATI. This organization has made me a better translator than ever."
- "I welcome the increased community exposure from efforts such as Mike Collins' newspaper interviews. Encouragement of such efforts to increase public awareness and public education will hopefully result in business awareness of the ever-increasing need for language services."
- "The Conferences have been a confidence booster as well as valuable continuing education and information."
- "I think that Shelley is the greatest and serves as a pivotal point to keep us all informed and is very prompt about returning e-mails and directing us to the proper source for answers."
- "Outstanding communication via email from CATI."
- "Congratulations to the CATI Board and the webmaster and the *CATI Quarterly* editor for obviously trying to improve the organization and increase member benefits."
- "The CATI Board works hard to provide interesting events for members. With the new ATA accreditation requirement for continuing education, I would like CATI to give added priority to educational meetings and events so that this requirement can be met locally."
- "...a strong Board, a professional looking Website, a wonderful newsletter have helped to gradually change CATI's image. Often times I have heard people tell Jackie Metivier how wonderful

CATI is now that she is the President. And I truly agree: Jackie is doing a wonderful job. So, my suggestion for CATI is: continue to attract professional, hard working people who are truly committed to the profession."

- "I think CATI is doing a good job. The conferences have a lot of good material with good speakers. Both the conferences and the *Quarterly* are informative. Also, CATI is small enough so that you can network and feel a part of the group."
- "I think this survey is a very positive idea and a good way to invite participation and ideas from members who may be somewhat reserved. Well done! Now I'm really enthusiastic about reading the next newsletter and discovering the results. Many thanks to all concerned."
- "I feel that by this very survey the leadership is attempting to involve all of us and that is a very positive point. Good idea!"

Statement of dissatisfaction with the survey

One respondent was disappointed that he or she had not been asked to be critical, but had only been asked to offer positive comments or suggestions for change. That respondent found a way to express his feelings nonetheless:

- "I don't like that you ask only for "positive" comments. This defeats the purpose of a questionnaire. You should ask for comments, without prompting a certain type of response. comments will be constructive, even if occasionally they might be critical. If you want an honest feedback and not just some phony lip service, you should accept an honest feedback. How else could problems be detected and issues be solved?"

Consultant's recommendations for the Conference

Hold a CATI Board Meeting that is open to conference attendees on the evening before or day after the conference.

At the conference, have several 1-hour or 1.5-hour break-out sessions, sometimes called parallel sessions, where attendees can learn about subjects of more limited interest, for example:

- Basic computing for interpreters and translators – how to download, view, or send different types of files – held in a computer lab
- Online searching and web-based tools for translators and interpreters – held in a computer lab
- Using MS Word – held in a computer lab
- Getting work
- Bidding on work
- Tax considerations for freelancers (offered by a CPA or tax preparer who is looking to increase his / her clientele)
- English grammar and punctuation review (taught by an ESL teacher)

If more training is needed than can be accomplished in the short break-out sessions, offer extended workshops on the afternoon before or day after the conference. Topics might include those listed above, but several topics could be combined or covered in more depth.

Consultant's recommendations for the CATI administration and organization

CATI members say they want and need CATI to do more marketing about the value of using professional translators. Many ap-

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proaches are possible, but they all require significant outputs of time and energy from members.

Some suggestions are:

1. More letters and articles from members such as Mike Collins to the newspapers explaining the value of high-quality, professional translation and certification.
2. Send articles from the *CATI Quarterly* as "Press Releases" to the local newspapers (especially the smaller ones looking for content) asking them to reprint the articles.
3. Publicize the conference to non-CATI members (and

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charge non-members more to attend). This would help get the CATI name out, show the value of the organization, and

show that CATI members are people who are getting more education and training than the average translator or interpreter.

4. Perhaps, if there is sufficient interest and support, offer a mentoring program to new translators and interpreters so they can learn one-on-one from someone with more experience.

In conclusion

Overall, CATI is doing a good job, because members said:

- "CATI is holding up a standard of excellence for our profession in the Carolinas."
- "CATI is well worth my membership dues."
- "It is a great organization...it just needs more member involvement."

Naomi A. Kleid is President of InfoExact, Inc., a consulting company specializing in training, usability, technical communication, and translation from French to English. David Heath is Vice President of InfoExact. Visit us at www.infoexact.com.

Learn how to run an online survey

For people who want to learn how to create and run their own online surveys, Naomi is offering a hands-on course on online survey construction through the Carolina Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC).

The course is called: "Online Surveys: Designing, Deploying, Deciphering." On July 17, students will learn how to develop and enter an online survey into the free version of SurveyMonkey. Then the students will collect data for a month.

On August 14, the class will learn how to analyze the data that they collected.

People interested in taking this class should contact Naomi at

nakleid@mindspring.com

or the course administrator for the Carolina Chapter of the STC at

www.stc-carolina.org/training/index.shtml



**CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF
TRANSLATORS & INTERPRETERS**

CATI Quarterly G. David Heath Editor
104 Muses Court, Cary, NC 27513