

Ensuring You Get Paid

**Before, During, and After
the Project**

- Introduction/opening comments
- Before you accept the project
- During the project
- After the project
- Questions/comments

Introduction

Is there a problem?

Analysis of PP responses for Jan - Aug 2004

Total number of responses analyzed	471	
Paid on time	326	69.2%
10 – 25 days late	31	6.6%
26 – 45 days late	18	3.8%
46 – 90 days late	15	3.2%
+91 days late	15	3.2%
Not paid or not paid in full	50	10.6%
Not rated	16	3.4%

Before you accept the project

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Get the contact data

- Full or legal name
- Physical address
- Mailing address (if different)
- Phone and fax numbers
- Email address
- Other info

WHOIS

- <http://www.betterwhois.com>
- <http://www.uwhois.com>
- <http://www.whois.net>
- <http://www.allwhois.com>
- And hundreds of others

Sample WHOIS Record

Domain ID:D5493413-LRMS
Domain Name:PAYMENTPRACTICES.INFO
Created On:05-Jan-2004 13:14:23 UTC
Expiration Date:05-Jan-2005 13:14:23 UTC
Sponsoring Registrar:R139-LRMS
Status:ACTIVE
Status:OK
Registrant ID:C4143320-LRMS
Registrant Name:Ted Wozniak
Registrant Organization:Payment Practices
Registrant Street1:1400 E US Hwy 77 #36
Registrant City:San Benito
Registrant State/Province:TX
Registrant Postal Code:78586
Registrant Country:US
Registrant Phone:+1.9563612969
Registrant Email:trwozniak@earthlink.net

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Online databases/resources

- The Black and White List
www.gotranslators.com/Engl/Reports.php
- Payment Practices Tools In The Translation World
www.gotranslators.com/Engl/BPTools.php
- Blue Board - Proz: www.proz.com
- Hall of Shame - TranslatorsCafe:
www.translatorscafe.com

Newsletters and Mailing Lists

- **Payment Practices**
www.paymentpractices.net
- **Untrustworthy Translation Agencies**
www.translationdirectory.com/non-payers.htm
- **The TCR List** (Translator Client Review List)
www.tcrlist.com
- **Translation Agency Payment Practices**
<http://groups.google.co.uk/group/transpayment>
- **Translation Agency Payment**
finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/translationagencypayment
- **TradPayeur**
finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/tradpayeur
- **Betaalmoraal**
groups.yahoo.com/group/betaalmoraal
- **Zahlungspraxis**
de.groups.yahoo.com/group/zahlungspraxis
- Other sources of information: BBB, Dun & Bradstreet, credit agency reports, court records and company registries.

What to do if there are bad reports?

That depends on the reports and is your decision in the end.

- What exactly was reported?
- Were there "quality issues"?
- How recent is the information?
- Was it an isolated incident?

Try to get the "big picture" and make your decision accordingly.

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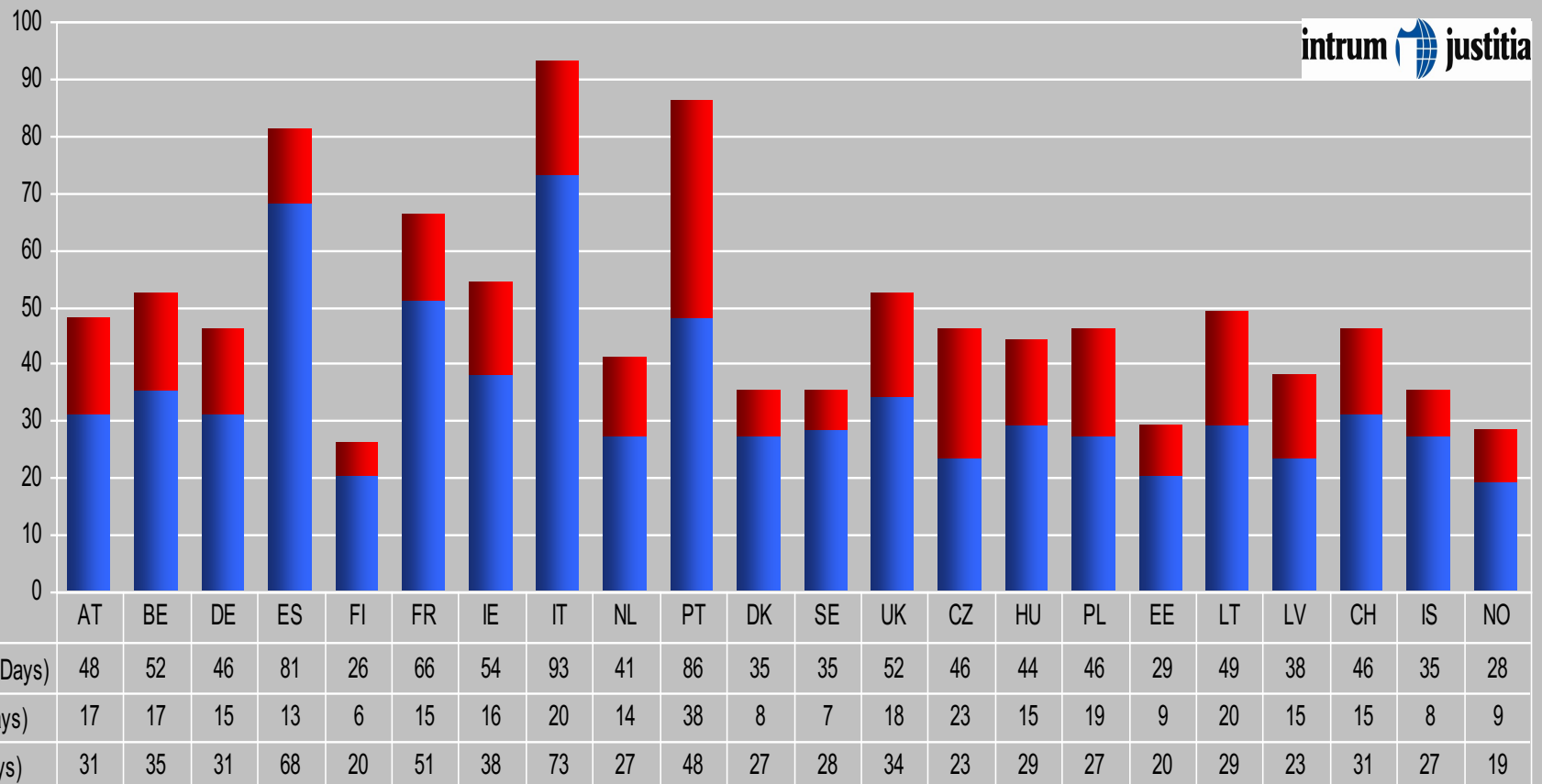
Acceptable/standard terms

- Net 30 (or 60 or 90)?
- 2/10 Net 30?
- When the agency gets paid????

EU Directive 2000 35 EC on Combating Late Payment in Commercial Transactions

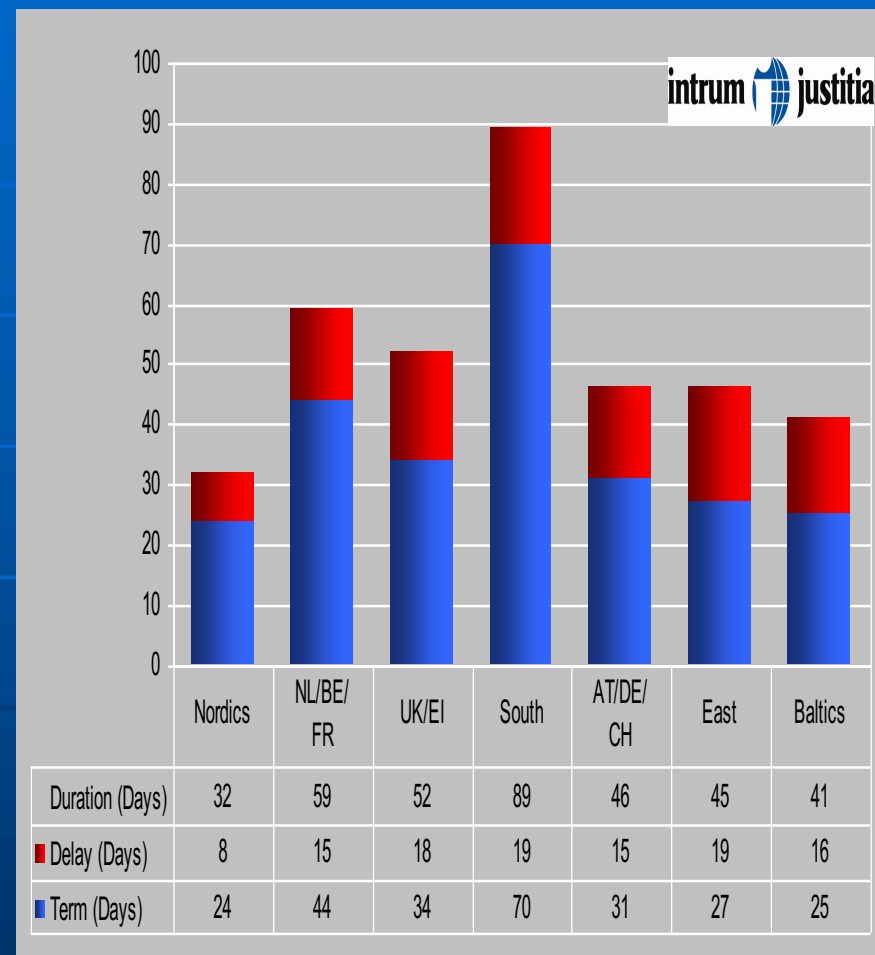
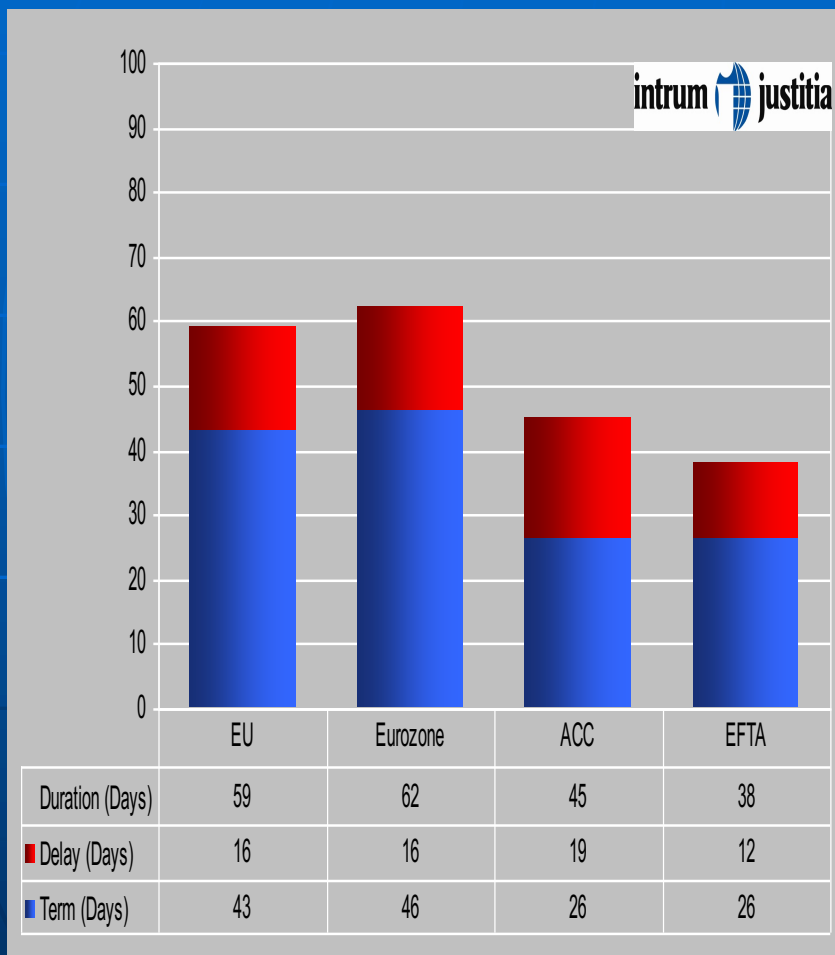
- Entered into force in August 2000
- Required national implementing legislation by August 08, 2002
- August 2004, verification of improvements
- Does **NOT** stipulate payment terms
- **Does not apply** if the parties agree to other terms

Historical payment periods in Europe



Source: European Payment Index – Spring Report 2004 © intrum justitia (Used by permission)

Historical payment periods in Europe



Other terms and conditions

Terms and conditions do not just cover payment terms.

They should also include the file format, method of delivery, additional services, "grace period" for changes, and any other areas where a dispute could arise.

During the project

- Follow instructions (glossaries, file format, etc.)
- Keep the client informed of any problems
- Keep records
- Ask for verification of receipt (and remind them about problems/changes)
- **MAKE THE DEADLINE**

After the project

- Send complete invoice with payment details (IBAN/BIC/SWIFT, bank fees, etc)
- Localize your invoice for your target country - your contact may know English but his bookkeeper/A-P clerk/accountant and tax office may not.
- Send the invoice promptly (with the files if possible) to the correct recipient

Handling complaints

- Remain professional! Stay calm.
- Ask for the revised file, name of proofreader.
- Wait a day before your review.
- Review the client's instructions.
- Defend your position firmly but remain professional. Everyone has a different style. Ask for justification of "unnecessary" changes.
- If there were "mistakes" or "needed" improvements, try to reach a compromise.

Adjusting the invoice

- It's your call.
- How much is involved?
- Will you ever be likely to work for this client again?
- Will an adjustment ensure payment or will you shoot yourself in the foot by "sticking to your guns"?

Dunning

- When to send a "friendly reminder"
- Friendly reminder or dunning letter first?
- 1st, 2nd, (3rd) and final dunning letters

Collection

- Collection agencies
- Small claims and other courts
- Local colleague

Inform us!

- Paid late or didn't pay at all
- Paid less than agreed amount
- What to report and when

What to report

- Agreed payment terms (e.g. net 30, 30 days end of month):
- Invoice(s) issued (date or date range):
- Was payment received on time? If not, how late was it?:
- Approximate amount involved:
- How long have you been working with this agency?
- If necessary, did the agency answer your inquiries about
- payment?:
- Would you work for this agency again?:

- Comments (if any):

- Your full name:
- Your city and country:

Learning Lessons

- Translator in Spain, agency in Taiwan

"I had the same experience described here by another user: Received a request for a small job. Communication with agency perfect till and including the reception of my work, since then I tried to get company details for my invoice sending e-mails to the addresses from which the order came - to no avail. They never paid, but they still send job proposals from time to time!!"

Learning Lessons

- Posted on March 04, 2004

"I've working for "Agency name" for more than I remember, they don't pay on time. You have to send several reminders. Right now, for example, they owe me \$52.50 since Jan 29th, 2004. I sent several emails but apparently the person who cuts the check will be back on March 8th!! \$52.50, I think it's a shame. But the PM are very nice, if you're patient..."

Less than helpful responses

"I have not actually worked with this company. I responded to an ad they posted on Proz.com. Ms. 'X' e-mailed me an unpaid translation test with over 600 English words. I wrote her back indicating that the number of words to be translated is way too much for an unpaid test. Haven't heard from her since. Hope it helps!"

Less than helpful responses

Email subject line: Warning – NO

Text of email:

"I wish to warn others from taking on any assignments from the following:"

[followed by the names and addresses of two agencies. No other information provided.]

Incomplete requests

"Dear Listmates,

I need updated information about the following agency:

The GEO Group
Sarah Foster

TIA"

Maybe the agency was right this time

In the comments to a response to enquiry indicating non-payment by an agency for a [presumably IT > EN translation], the freelancer stated:

"First they debated the text making a 41% reduction saying the text was made by non professional [sic] and poorly knowing English people. When I started asking for my payment they started to become aggressive and inpolite, very offensive to me and my solicitor."

Recap – Before the Project

- Get the contact data
- Beware of "freemail" addresses, PO Boxes
- Don't bow to pressure
- Get references
- Agree on the terms
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Recap - During the project

- Follow instructions (glossaries, file format, etc.)
- Keep the client informed of any problems
- Keep records
- Ask for verification of receipt (and remind them about problems/changes)
- **MAKE THE DEADLINE**

Recap – After the project

- Stay professional
- Handle complaints
- Friendly warnings/dunning letters
- Collection
- Report your experiences to the rest of us

Questions/comments