

Success, in any language

Transl8 in Plano provides a range of services; revenue has tripled from a year ago

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When Olena Ingram and Olga Tenyakova met several years ago, they hit it off.

Ingram had moved to the Dallas area from her native Odessa, Ukraine, in 1999. Tenyakova moved here from Vladivostok, Russia, in 2002.

In 2009, they started Transl8 Language Solutions to provide a full range of services in more than 60 languages — from Afrikaans and Farsi to Urdu and Yiddish. The six-employee business is profitable, and revenue has tripled from a year ago, Tenyakova said.

"You want to venture out and explore your own opportunities," said Ingram, who was a translator for another company for eight years. She's in charge of operations.

Tenyakova, who was a project manager at an IT company and created multilanguage marketing campaigns for a marketing agency, focuses on business development.

How did you get the idea?

Ingram: We often talked over jasmine tea about our desire to be creative in business. In mid-2009, Transl8 came to mind. I have the professional linguistics training, and Olga has more than 15 years of international business experience. Since we had to adjust to a new market coming from different countries, we understand the nuances of other cultures. We see our company as a bridge between worlds and words — the binding glue that builds a stronger foundation.

What makes the company distinctive?

Ingram: We decided to look beyond the typical language services to also offer transcription, sign language, Web and software localization, cross-cultural training, voice-overs, multilingual desktop publishing and guided VIP tours.

Tenyakova: A client needed someone who spoke Wolaita, an Ethiopian dialect. We found someone. I can't tell you how; that's a trade secret.

How did you fund the business?

Ingram and Tenyakova: We used our personal savings to start the business.

Is this your first company?

Ingram: This is our first joint ven-



Tom Fox/Staff Photographer

Olena Ingram (left) and Olga Tenyakova started Transl8 Language Solutions of Plano in 2009. The business employs six. Ingram sees the company "as a bridge between worlds and words."

ture. I started a language business in 1999.

Tenyakova: I owned a marketing firm in Russia for two years.

What languages do you speak?

Ingram: Russian, Ukrainian, Latin and English.

Tenyakova: Russian and English, and I can get by in Chinese.

What is your education?

Ingram: I graduated from the Odessa State Art School and earned a master's in linguistics from Odessa University.

Tenyakova: I have an associate degree in fine arts from Primorskaya

School of Arts and an MBA from the Far Eastern State Academy of Economics and Management [both in Russia].

What do you like to do when not working?

Ingram: I enjoy swimming and writing. We're both artists.

Tenyakova: I like extreme sports, such as mountain climbing and scuba diving.

What's next?

Ingram: We plan to open the Deaf Service Center to provide 24-hour video relay service by September. We're also fine-tuning a model to franchise the business.