

Simultaneous interpreters for any language

German, French, English, Italian, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Russian, Portuguese etc.

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Blog post: Conference interpreter and home office - a contradiction?

The long-term consequences of the COVID 19 pandemic are not yet foreseeable and speculation in this regard is futile. Nevertheless, as representatives of an industry affected at an early stage by the ban on events, we would like to indulge in a small thought experiment: **What if conferences, meetings and assemblies no longer took place live at a central location, but were instead held virtually and in all our homes?** The possibility of social distancing continuing to shape our everyday lives for some time to come must be taken into account - or perhaps we are simply getting used to the advantages offered by the office in our own four walls, something that is becoming more established with every passing day. Whether it's because of official regulations or because of the appeal of a shorter commute, **avl interpreters** are already preparing for a future in the home office. And of course we don't want to imagine this future without multilingual communication!

But which tools are available to us for this?

Sure, communication platforms are booming. However, not all of them are equally suitable for simultaneous interpretation. For this reason, we at **avl interpreters** have invested the last few days and weeks into analysing those platforms' applicability for the interpreting industry. The simplest option, which will work with any tool, is to run two conferences in parallel and have all participants choose one or the other group. In this setup, only the interpreters are present in both conferences, bridging the language barrier. The disadvantage is easily spotted: we have become accustomed to practical functions such as chatting or screen sharing within conferences and now we are reluctant to have to do without it again. So how about hosting a single conference and organising the interpretation via telephone conference? From our point of view, this is a perfectly feasible alternative, but on the other hand it requires two terminals from all participants. **This leads us to the ideal alternative: a platform already offering several channels.** This function is only offered sporadically today, which might, however, change quickly. Until then, there are the alternatives above.

You can either decide to use your usual platform and together we will find a workable way, or we can give you access to a platform adapted to the needs of simultaneous interpreting. The choice is yours.

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What about the **opportunities and risks of interpreting in the home office?**

The biggest advantage is obvious: to enable multilingual communication via video conferencing without exposing ourselves or anybody else to the risk of infection with the corona virus.

Furthermore, why not make use of the general advantages of video conferencing in our industry: no travel time, lower expenses, shorter appointment times, etc. On the other hand, one should not close one's eyes to the risks of a possible breakdown of the tools used or even intermittent internet access. To minimise this, we highly recommend carrying out prior tests. Should the interruption persist, do as you have been doing up until now: walk a few steps from the living room/office to the kitchen, get yourself a cup of coffee and in the meantime restart the programmes you are using - we also have no patent solution and rarely a redundant internet connection at home, but with a little patience most technical problems can be solved.

In short, we look forward to using these tools together - and at some point we look forward to meeting you again live at one or the other conference where personal contact is more important than the proximity to your own fridge!

Until then, stay well!

Sincerely,

avl interpreters llc