



CASE STUDY



Growth with Boostlingo

When Hector Vasquez started iTek Interpreting in 2017, he was an underdog competing with the biggest language service providers. By partnering with Boostlingo, iTek's technology allowed the business to grow to be the #1 provider in the Quad Cities metro area.

“With the right partners and the right technology, the sky really is the limit.”

- Hector Vasquez, iTek Founder

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BOOSTLINGO + ITEK CASE STUDY

The Boostlingo interpretation management and virtual interpretation delivery platform helped iTek Interpreting Solutions grow to be the #1 language service provider in their metro area.



OBJECTIVE

When Hector Vasquez started iTek Interpreting Solutions in 2017, he was an underdog in his market going against the largest global providers for interpreting clients. He needed an affordable option for interpretation management that would help him scale his business from a one man shop to a dynamic competitor in his marketplace. This case study seeks to demonstrate how Boostlingo helped accomplish iTek's goals in their language service market.

Learn more about iTek

3 Read about Hector and why he's passionate about providing better interpretation to more of his community. Also understand the demographic shifts in the Quad Cities Region and growing language needs.

Davenport Community Schools

5 Learn how iTek's custom interpretation management and virtual interpretation delivery software helped Hector and his team serve Davenport's school system.

Virtual interpretation in the future

10 Understand the changing global interpretation market and how virtual is becoming a mainstay of language service offerings. Learn how Boostlingo can help your language service company compete in the new landscape.

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

Boostlingo was able to build a custom interpretation technology solution for iTek Interpreting to meet the needs of the Quad Cities growing, diverse immigrant and limited English speaking community.

With virtual solutions and the ability to tap into the Boostlingo Professional Interpreter Network, iTek could offer affordable prices, manage existing interpreters, and quickly add appointments without staffing full-time interpreters for rarer languages.

Challenges

- Diverse, changing mix of languages
- Remote needs for pandemic and beyond
- Multiple industry/specialty appointments
- Scaling affordably

Solutions

- Remote interpreters
- Global workforce
- Scheduling solutions
- Customized technology & subscription



IN A MARKET DOMINATED BY THE LEADING GLOBAL PROVIDERS, ITEK INTERPRETING SOLUTIONS WAS ABLE TO COMPETE WITH AND BEAT OUT THEIR COMPETITORS.

HOW ITEK USED BOOSTLINGO'S PLATFORM TO WIN THE QUAD CITIES

Five years ago, Hector Vasquez realized the time had come to leave his employment with a language service company and forge a fresh new approach and offering as an interpreter and independent interpreting agency.

As an interpreter, he loved working with his clients. As an employee, he understood the mismatch in values between himself and his employers was a deal breaker. Hector is a driven worker with a good head for business; he decided to take his dedication to providing quality interpretation and start his own company.

As a longtime resident of the Quad Cities area in Illinois and Iowa, Hector understands the people who use his interpreting services better than anyone else. Hector and his parents emigrated from Mexico when he was just a toddler to the area that is still home today.

As the child of immigrants with limited English speaking capabilities, by the age of eight Hector was enmeshed into the worries of adulthood because there were no interpreters available at the time.



“In my way, I was forced at a very young age to become an adult,” Hector recalls from his childhood. The daily challenges of being a third grader helping his parents pay bills, get medical care and generally navigate their new life in the United States informed the way he sees and conducts interpretation as a business today.

Now, as the owner of iTek Interpreting Solutions, Hector understands the doors that are opened when quality interpretation is widely available.



We're able to offer the lowest prices and far more options, all with the love of Mom and Pop.



When he left his former employer in 2017, there were many who were skeptical about Hector's ability to grow his own company from the ground up.

For Hector, it was easy to set aside doubts. As someone with deep roots in the interpretation market, he had long been tracking technology growth and developments in the remote interpreting space. He partnered with his wife and business partner, Denise, to capitalize on the changing market.

When he opened the doors at iTek, a new offering was emerging in the interpretation industry: Video & Telephonic Remote Interpreting. With a diverse community to serve, Hector understood that the technology could significantly expand his reach and set him apart in his market.

Boostlingo at the time emerged as a leader in this new space, and Hector began a partnership with the technology platform from the earliest days of his company.

Since starting iTek, Hector has seen a surge in demand stemming from shifting demographics in the Quad Cities. As several limited English communities move into the area, the ripple effects of the demographic shift create new interpretation needs. Medical interpretation, business interpretation, legal interpretation, and interpretation within the school systems are all natural outflows of groups with limited English capacity moving into a region.

As the demand increased, Hector was able to scale quickly with Boostlingo's remote interpretation technology. Rather than hiring several interpreters to meet the demand for the area's languages, which range from the more common like Spanish and Vietnamese, to harder to staff languages like Ixil

and Swahili, iTek was able to scale up overnight by tapping into the Boostlingo Professional Interpreter Network (BPIN).

The BPIN is made up of several language service providers and incorporates 10,000 interpreters for 300 languages. With remote interpretation, iTek is able to bring interpreters in virtually for every appointment they can't cover locally. The cost-savings of virtual interpreters also allowed iTek to offer lower prices than even the very largest competitors.

Another feature of Boostlingo's interpretation platform set iTek apart from competitors. As part of Boostlingo's suite of interpreter management features, iTek could now offer direct access to interpreters on demand. With on-demand interpretation, iTek was able to meet emerging interpretation needs and book clients who could then pull up the white label iTek app to get connected to an interpreter right away. The ability to start an interpretation session right away is especially crucial to healthcare and education clients, who would come to make up the majority of iTek's customer base.

Boostlingo built the platform, but iTek's clients only ever interact with the iTek brand when they're booking an appointment in their customer portal, requesting an on-demand interpretation appointment, or talking with an interpreter. Over time, this branding and name recognition allowed iTek to build trust in the community.

Five years down the road, iTek is now the #1 provider to the 400,000 people who live in the Quad Cities region. Hector ascribes his success to a simple truth: "We are able to offer the lowest price and far more options, all with the love of Mom and Pop."



ITEK + BOOSTLINGO USE CASE: DAVENPORT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

**35
different
languages
are spoken
in the
Moline,
Illinois
area.**

Over the decades since Hector's family arrived in the area, the makeup of the population in the Quad Cities has shifted dramatically as jobs in the area attract immigrant workers. Between the working families employed by jobs like manufacturing and meatpacking, 35 different languages are spoken in homes all over the Moline, Illinois area. The diversity has led to increased demand in healthcare interpretation, legal interpretation, general interpretation, and crucially for iTek: educational interpretation.

As someone with a history as an adolescent interpreter, Hector is intrinsically tuned in to the need for quality language support for children of immigrants. Since 2016, iTek has earned contracts from most of the school systems throughout the Quad Cities area, including many of the regions largest School Districts.

In 2019, the Davenport Community School District, the largest in this region, reached out to iTek Interpreting Solutions for help determining the best roadmap for language access in the classroom.

The Davenport Community School District (DCSD) is located in East Central Iowa, stretching across a vast 109 square miles. The school district traces its roots back to 1858 and holds historic significance as the founding district for one of the first publicly funded high schools in the United States.

Today, DCSD serves over 15,000 students from Pre-K through high school. DCSD is proportionally typical to most US school districts where 1 in 10 students in the United States are currently learning English. Like the rest of the country, many DCSD students are from non-English speaking families, and teachers increasingly experience difficulty in keeping parents informed about their child's education. Finding a cost-effective solution to try and engage directly with English Language Learner parents had been a long-standing issue for administrators.

Solving the issue fell to Dawn Anderson-Rascher, who met with Itek in 2017 during her tenure as the Program Director of Assessments for English Language Learners at DCSD.

"I oversaw the ESL program," explained Anderson-Rascher, who retired during the pandemic. "In my role I needed to factor in the students, the staff, and the curriculum to provide the scaffold that students need to succeed in the classroom."

When thinking of the future for Davenport ISD, Anders-Rascher believed the scaffold for DCSD required the right combination of human resources and technology solutions to help teachers keep parents engaged with their children's educational development and growth.



Resources stretched too thin

Like most school systems, the Davenport Community School District previously relied on a mix-and-match approach to meet their interpreting needs. Vietnamese and Spanish speaking families make up the largest chunk of the non-English speaking households in the area (languages typically easier to support because of their prevalence in the States), but the district also had over 30 additional languages they needed to include in their language access plan.

Other less widely spoken languages, such as French and Swahili, are a part of the language mix in Davenport's area as well as some very rare languages stateside. Ixil for example, one of the 21 different Mayan-based languages spoken in Guatemala, is uniquely prevalent in the Quad City region. Without access to a global interpreter base, finding an in-person certified professional Ixil interpreter in the middle of Iowa proved a nearly impossible task for Davenport's language access team.

Finding a better solution

That's when Anderson-Rascher decided to explore a better approach to the school district's interpreting program. Knowing their reputation in the area's schools, she began working with Hector and the team at iTek Interpreting Solutions. iTek was contracted to pilot an exploratory remote interpreting technology program with Anderson-Rascher to see if iTek and the Davenport team could effectively enable DCSD teachers to connect with interpreters on demand.

Before piloting remote options, DCSD staff worried about interpreters availability and if those available

These varied and diverse linguistic demands and budget constraints made the challenge for complete coverage of all requisite language services a constant uphill battle for Anderson-Rascher and her staff. As a stopgap while they found longer-term solutions, the team relied on cultural liaisons, as well as Spanish-speaking parents. When urgently required, they would bring in Vietnamese interpreters on an as-needed basis.

However, these linguistic resources provided only temporary solutions to a growing concern. The U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education require qualified interpreters that are not merely bilingual, but are also certified interpreters. To meet this demand, the school district would schedule all student conferences from Pre-K to high school in the same two hour period on the same day.

"We just didn't have the interpreters and resources needed," Anderson-Rascher said.

interpreters would even be sufficiently skilled to provide support in educational settings. An interpreter with courtroom interpreting expertise or medical interpreting experience can certainly translate a parent-teacher conference, but a non-educational background is not always the most ideal fit for an interpreter. If an interpreter has experience in educational environments — and ideally has some professional training and certification in educational interpreting — language support is much more likely to be compatible with community needs.

iTek proposed that with on-demand interpretation

In the US, one in ten students is currently learning English on top of their standard curriculum. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is the basis for a nationwide requirement of language support as a means of equal access to education.

services, teachers could readily find interpreters, even for more rare languages, and most importantly, for urgent situations or emergencies. iTek brought this on-demand capability to Davenport through the use of a Boostlingo-built interpretation delivery platform capable of being used on any device in DCSD schools.

Once they deployed the iTek platform, Davenport School District consolidated their interpretation services into one easy-to-use system. This white-labeled iTek version of

the Boostlingo interpretation management platform allowed users to login into a custom iTek application to start remote sessions.

“Once we had the video interpretation conferencing option, we could set things up that way,” Anderson-Rascher said. “We discovered at the secondary school level, having parent conferences wasn’t the most efficient use of our onsite interpreters’ time. As kids get older, parents stop physically coming to the parent-teacher conference.”

Keeping parents engaged

With iTek’s interpreting platform, teachers can schedule conferences with parents at any time, making it much easier for parents to receive direct feedback about their children.

With interpreters on demand, Anderson-Rascher and her staff were able to spend less time managing language support logistics and spend more time focusing on the students’ educational needs.

“It’s tough to look for interpreters locally. We’ve been pretty good at leveraging iTek’s services,” Anderson-Rascher said. “At one point we had tested 55 kids that were new to the district for ESL services in just 3 weeks. The increasing demand also

informed our future need for interpreters for parent conferences. Before, we would have had to pull our Spanish teachers out of teaching activities to help and try and do our best. But now there was a much better and more flexible way to support these language needs.”

On-demand interpreting through Itek has since proven to be so reliable and cost-effective that the school district no longer relies on on-site interpreters for support. With on-demand interpreting access, parent-teacher conferences no longer have to be in a specific, overly crowded time block. The school is compliant and providing higher quality, easier-to-use language support.

ON-DEMAND INTERPRETING THROUGH ITEK HAS PROVEN TO BE SO RELIABLE AND SO COST-EFFECTIVE THAT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT NO LONGER RELIES ON ONSITE INTERPRETERS FOR SUPPORT.



Access to schools during COVID-19

During the pandemic, remote interpretation became a necessity for even routine interpretation needs. Campuses were shut down. Students, teachers and parents weren't able to meet in the same room. Uniquely, iTek was able to rise to the occasion because of their existing virtual capabilities. They experienced no downtime or learning curve when schools and families needed remote services. Their longstanding relationship with Boostlingo prepared them to offer virtual interpretation on day one.

So many parents and teachers have experienced the benefit over the last two years with DCSD that remote interpreting will remain an important part of the language access plan for years to come. Parents with limited English skills now have a direct line of contact into the schools, making it easy for them to receive feedback and updates about their student's in-class work and progress.

One important feature of the remote interpreting model at DCSD is the customer portal built for iTek that creates a continuity of service. Parents can request the same interpreter to build up a rapport over time. Choosing their interpreter also allows them to know they have an interpreter up-to-date on the latest needs for educational interpretation.

"The thing that I like about iTek is that

their interpreters are not just professional linguists but also have specific expertise in community and educational language support," Anderson-Rascher said. "We have our own jargon and acronyms, processes and methodologies, and it's nice having an experienced interpreter present who's already familiar with the educational setting."

As for the long-term adoption of virtual interpretation, Anderson Rascher and her team noted that the minutes used by the district have trended upward with new areas of adoption and usage added each year.

"We've been using iTek's OPI services with my EL teachers," Anderson-Rascher said. "We want secretaries to use it, counselors to use it, and school nurses to use it. It's my expectation that everyone in the school district may find ways to use it."

For iTek, customer adoption of the technology on a larger scale means more minutes and more revenue and business growth. Widespread use within a large, time-bound organization will only happen if administrators and users find the platform easy to learn, easy to use, and worth the effort. Choosing an interpretation platform that meets customer needs is an essential part of long-term strategy for iTek and any language service provider developing a stable client base.

The technology behind the success

The interpreter management and interpretation delivery system iTek developed with Boostlingo provides remote video interpretation, over-the-phone interpretation, and a scheduling module for onsite interpretation covered by a team of iTek interpreters. Because of their integration with the larger Boostlingo Professional Interpreter Network, iTek covers over 300+ languages instantly.

No matter if teachers and administrators are using a

desktop, a laptop, a landline phone, a tablet, or even their mobile phone, they can connect to a qualified interpreter at the touch of their fingertips 24/7/365 days a year. Even American Sign Language (ASL) is covered 24/7.

The white-labeled platform (meaning iTek, not Boostlingo, branded) is an all-in-one interpretation technology solution that allows iTek to cover every aspect of interpretation for all of their clients in the Quad Cities area and beyond.

THE FUTURE FOR ITEK AND THE VIRTUAL INTERPRETATION MARKET



Up next for iTek

For Hector, these interpretation technology solutions are all about helping more people get access to better interpretation. His roots in the area and his family's own immigration story color every aspect of his growing business.

"Our mission is helping people," Vazquez said. "We want to provide a service for families that help the community and offer a reliable and user-friendly solution for a very common, but very solvable challenge." Hector, a trained interpreter with decades of experience, still goes out into the field to keep in touch with his customers even as he runs iTek's day to day.

Since its beginning in 2017, revenue at iTek has grown between 25% to 50% year over year. A large healthcare system in the region is the latest to partner with iTek to provide interpretation in ambulatory facilities throughout the metro area. Hector adds, "The interpreting technology has definitely been integral in this process; it has enabled us to shift focus back onto the things that really set us apart and show our value in the community."

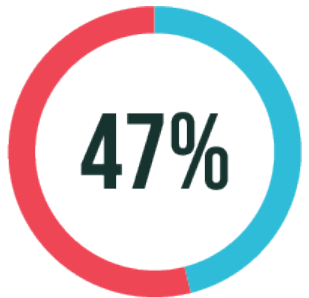
Hector and his team have developed a reputation of quality, hands-on service without sacrificing their ability to compete with bigger, multinational language service providers. With remote solutions, iTek is able to position itself as a modern interpretation solution while maintaining affordable prices for customers like school and health systems. On what comes next as iTek Interpreting Solutions rapidly expands in the Midwest, Hector had one thing to say:

"With the right partners and the right technology, the sky really is the limit."

GLOBAL MARKET BY THE NUMBERS*



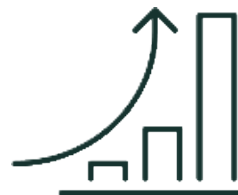
share of the global interpreting market taken up by virtual remote interpreting (VRI) and Over the Phone Interpreting (OPI) before the pandemic



share of the global interpreting market taken up by virtual remote interpreting (VRI) and Over the Phone Interpreting (OPI) during the pandemic



predicted share of the global interpreting market taken up by virtual remote interpreting (VRI) and Over the Phone Interpreting (OPI) post-pandemic



\$8.8 billion

total estimated market value for the interpretation industry in 2021

\$9.3 billion

total estimated market value for the interpretation industry in 2022

**Figures and percentages from the 2021 Nimdzi Interpreting Index*

Interested in learning more?

Head to boostlingo.com/multilingual
to get in contact with our team.

boostlingo

The unified interpretation platform

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