

➔ INTRODUCTION TO TERMINOLOGY MANAGEMENT



Now more than ever, company-wide terminology management is essential for consistent and correct communication of products and services.

With each new advance in technology, more and more companies are seeking to expand into new markets without established norms to base their terminology and translations on.

In the IT industry alone, new products, features, and services are developed on a weekly basis, and these must be communicated to international audiences in a timely and cost-effective manner in order to maintain brand awareness. Often, there will be no officially 'correct' translations or established norms for these concepts. Yet, content creators, technical writers, and translators need clear and precise terminology in order to optimize the user experience across all languages and gain market penetration for these products.

The same applies for the industrial manufacturing and engineering domains, where incorrect application or use due to inconsistent or inaccurate documentation could result in errors with serious consequences.

UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY MANAGEMENT

'Terms' are defined as the words and phrases that make up the jargon, or 'terminology', of a particular industry. Terminology management, then, is the process of creating and maintaining a standardized vocabulary for all concepts and requirements relevant to a particular project.

Consider the word 'drivetrain', which is an auto-motive industry term. In everyday English, this compound noun has no significance, yet in the automotive context it refers to a part of a vehicle. Consider also that a literal translation of the words 'drive' and 'train' would probably not carry the same meaning in, say, Spanish or Japanese.

In order to successfully translate a term such as 'drivetrain' into these languages, you would need to find an equivalent term that makes sense in the local market. Terminology management increases the efficiency of translation projects by reducing the need for second-level editing and ensures the consistent representation of concepts and ideas across multiple languages. This is crucial

to building an international brand, as would be the case with the word 'popcorn', for example, which has over 40 different translations in Spanish alone. A popcorn company expanding into Latin America would need to choose the most appropriate of these translations for its marketing purposes and apply that term consistently.

APPLYING TERMINOLOGY MANAGEMENT

Successful terminology management begins at the product development stage and involves developers, writers, reviewers, sub-contractors, and last, but certainly not least, your translation agency and its linguists. Terminology management is therefore ideally implemented as a centralized, team-centered workflow.

HIGH-QUALITY COMMUNICATION FOR GLOBAL TEAMS

Take, for example, an entrepreneur in the relatively new online sports betting industry attempting to enter Asian and Eastern European markets by having all materials translated. Without recourse to the client's local specialist, it is practically impossible for linguists to research the appropriate terminology. A similar situation arises with software developer acquisitions.

As new companies are acquired, team members from all over the world are authoring content for new products in various languages. Without set standards, there will be inconsistencies in the software strings, technical documentation, marketing materials, user interfaces, etc. In both cases, errors multiply and corporate identity suffers. Consider this hypothetical scenario:

- ➔ During a product development cycle, a single term is introduced that is inconsistent with your vocabulary.

- ➔ Seven different models of the product are eventually released, each with its own documentation. The unsuitable term is multiplied seven times.
- ➔ Each product model needs three versions of the documentation: for end-users, installers, and administrators. You now have 21 documents with a terminology error.
- ➔ Your documents are rendered in four different formats: web, CD, audio, and print. The error now appears 84 times.
- ➔ Finally, your content is translated into 17 different languages. The error is distributed globally and appears over 1,400 times throughout your product line.

Individual proofreading then becomes an overwhelming task, localization costs increase, and, alongside a growing user base, support costs increase exponentially. Through terminology management, however, everyone works from a multilingual term base developed by local Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), which can be integrated into the company knowledge base and is readily incorporated into an automated localization process by the translation provider.

Here, an effective workflow globally connects all project participants with the translation provider for streamlined creation of consistent source content and reusable translations, thereby turning quality assurance into a process that is preventative, scalable, and not dependent on a particular individual.

FOR SYNERGISTIC TRANSLATIONS

Given the suite of information pertaining to a project, content quickly accumulates, leading to concurrent translation efforts on a tight

deadline. This means your content may not always be handled by the same translators or the same agency.

By working from multilingual term bases, linking into the translation provider's translation memories can be automated for efficiency and higher quality assurance rates than individual proofreaders can provide.

A terminology management provider should act as a communication hub between experts during content creation and be responsible for collecting terms, defining concepts (with the help of the client's experts or third-party specialists), identifying suitable equivalents for the target locale, and then registering these terms in a centralized database that is available to all parties involved. Additionally, if the client lacks native-speaking experts for a target locale, the provider can supply its own SMEs.

FOR INTERNAL REVIEW MANAGEMENT

Once a term base specific to your product is created, it must be recreated and again reviewed in all target languages. Subsequent translations

of company materials should be checked by in-country reviewers and the results fed back to your translation provider for immediate corrections and revisions of associated translation memories.

Keeping the translation provider handling your localization connected to the in-country review process through an efficient, company-wide terminology management workflow avoids expensive retroactive changes to your documentation and improves the quality assurance process, making the cost worthwhile.

FOR AUTOMATED QUALITY ASSURANCE

Best of all, well-executed terminology management allows for automated review with reliable software tools, no matter how often your multilingual term base is updated or expanded to incorporate new ideas or to stay up-to-date with the evolution of modern language. When using terminology management software, such as qTerm, you can request the quality assurance report as part of the delivery package from your translation provider.

ABOUT MILENGO

Milengo is a technical translation and localization agency that supports international enterprises to do business in over 70 different languages.

Milengo's team of over 700 subject matter experts in project management, translation and engineering work alongside global customers from our service centers in the Americas, Europe and Asia.



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