The translation market in ten years’ time – a forecast

How companies can prepare themselves for the increasing demand for translations

Intercultural management at Škoda Auto

How the tradition-based car manufacturer maintained its local values while going global

Overcoming the global downturn

Why the technical communication and language sectors buck the trend
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These days the historic city of Wielsbaden will once again become the arena of an international gathering of technical communicators, localization experts and information managers. The growing number of participants at the tekom Annual Conference and tcworld conference reflects the health of the industries they represent. While many sectors have been affected by the downturn of the global economy, three industry sectors represented at the conferences have been spared from any loss: the technical communication, localization and translation industries. Ironically, these three sectors might have even been fueled by the recession in other industries: The worldwide economic downturn has proven to many companies how important professional and tailor-made communication really is. However, while thriving on the abundance of work, these sectors are facing a different challenge: The lack of skilled workers.

Featuring new industry research, this issue of our magazine focuses on the economic developments of localization, translation and technical communication (page 10). On the translation market the workload will become even bigger over the next years, predicts Astrid Hager in her article (page 14).

Organizations will be confronted with an increased amount of documents for translation as well as a greater number of languages. To avoid bottlenecks the author advises companies to get prepared early on for the challenges of the future. As the creation and translation of technical documents are usually not part of a company’s core business, they have become typical areas for outsourcing. However, a successful outsourcing experience requires thorough planning and support. Rob Heemels and Sabine Grosser give an overview (page 17).

José Gambín and Igor Zubicaray elucidate the differences between US Spanish, Latin American Spanish and the so-called International and Neutral Spanish (page 24).

Lenka Bílá gives an interesting insight into the successful management of Škoda Auto. The Joint Venture partner of German Volkswagen AG has maintained its Czech values and traditions much to the approval of its employees and customers (page 20).

For more information regarding the tcworld conference, please refer to our conference preview on page 29. We wish you an enjoyable and successful conference!

Corinna Ritter
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Overcoming the global downturn

While many industries have suffered severe losses in earnings and staff members, the localization and translation industry as well as the technical communications sector have marked significant growth. New research reveals interesting facts and figures.

page 10

The translation market in ten years’ time – a forecast

The expansion of the EU contributes to the rising volume of documents for translation. How can companies prepare themselves to avoid bottlenecks?

page 14

Intercultural management at Škoda Auto

The merger with VW AG confronted Škoda Auto with the challenges of globalization. Today the Czech company has become a global player while maintaining its local values.

page 20

news

focus

Overcoming the global downturn

Language and localization industry shows robust growth

Technical communication sector faces new challenges

strategy

The translation market in ten years’ time – a forecast

Change Management – an underestimated success factor

solutions

Intercultural management at Škoda Auto

business culture

Spanish for local and global markets

Localizing for different Spanish target groups

community

International information management – a sector with a promising future

A preview of the tcworld conference 2008

tcworld calendar

directory

editorial

imprint
Impact of economic downturn on tech spending varies by region and sector

More than 40 percent of large businesses have cut their IT budgets this year due to the global economic slowdown, according to a new survey by independent research firm Forrester Research, Inc.. The Forrester Business Data Services report “The State of Enterprise IT Services: 2008” surveyed nearly 950 senior IT managers across North America and Europe regarding their IT services spending and overall services strategies and priorities.

The economy’s effect on IT spending is evident in some specific data points contained in the report: Forty-three percent of firms have already cut their overall IT budgets in 2008 in reaction to the slowdown in the global economy, while 24 percent of firms have put discretionary spending on hold. Twenty-eight percent of respondents said they have already cut their IT services spending. IT departments in the financial services industry were hit hardest – 49 percent of IT shops in the financial services sector have cut their budgets. At the other end of the spectrum is the media, entertainment, and leisure industry, where only 39 percent of respondents said they have had to reduce spending. IT departments in North America have been affected by the economy more than their European counterparts: 49 percent of North American firms have cut their IT budgets compared with 31 percent of respondents in Europe; although it should be noted that the Forrester survey was fielded in Q2 2008 prior to the deteriorating economic conditions in Europe.

“IT departments in North America have been affected by the economy more than their European counterparts: 49 percent of North American firms have cut their IT budgets compared with 31 percent of respondents in Europe; although it should be noted that the Forrester survey was fielded in Q2 2008 prior to the deteriorating economic conditions in Europe.”

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IT budgets in US more likely to be cut than those in Europe

President and Principal Analyst John C. McCarthy. “With regard to the services sector, the slowdown has firms renegotiating rates, being more selective in choosing vendors, and examining spending plans more thoroughly, but they are still expecting to pay more for services. The demand for enterprise IT services has not dropped significantly.” The report also illustrates a number of trends regarding the state of spending on enterprise IT services. “The State Of Enterprise IT Services: 2008” is currently available to Forrester RoleView™ clients and can be purchased directly at www.forrester.com.
Automated translation becomes key strategic enabler

SDL, provider of Global Information Management (GIM) solutions, has announced the results of a survey on trends in automated translation. Completed by over 385 individuals in global businesses – of which over 71 percent were of managerial level and above – the survey highlights a stark increase not just in the motivation of businesses to use automated translation compared to two years ago, but also in the actual deployment of the technology. SDL conducted the research in conjunction with the International Association for Machine Translation (IAMT) and Association for Machine Translation Americas (AMTA).

Most respondents were familiar with the concept of automated translation, with nearly 25 percent either using it or planning to use it. Furthermore, 40 percent of companies said they were more likely to utilize it now. These two statistics alone point to a substantial industry shift in perception, as interest and trust in this technology and its uses increase.

Over half of the respondents – 55 percent – wanted to use automated translation for producing general foreign language versions of company content. Reflecting modern business practices, particularly where instant communication is required, the other areas of potential usage were fairly evenly distributed between integration with chat tools, in e-mail, Microsoft Word documents, on wikis and blogs, integrated into a web page and for conducting research on foreign language documents.

“We conducted the survey on a global scale so that we could gain a worldwide perspective of automated translation in business, and to also identify its role within the current business cli-

mate,” said Laurie Gerber, President of the International Association for Machine Translation. “Expectations and demands concerning quality remain high, with a large number of participants requiring high-quality output from automated translation. This is understandable as the majority see it as part of a human translation process, to improve productivity and reduce costs without sacrificing quality.”

Technical documentation was the main anticipated usage of automated translation (62 percent), followed by support and knowledge-based content (49 percent).

Over 70 percent of respondents named French, Italian, German and Spanish (FIGS) as their main target for usage. Asian languages accounted for just over 50 percent and Eastern European languages accrued 42 percent. The full details of the research can be read at www.sdl.com/atsurvey.

WORDFAST AND TRANSLATIONS.COM EXPAND ALLIANCE

Wordfast LLC, provider of translation memory software, and Translations.com, a provider of translation workflow solutions, have expanded their existing alliance. Under the new agreement, the two companies will cooperate with regard to joint marketing programs, a tighter integration of products, and collaboration with Alchemy Software Development.

WELOCALIZE STARTS GLOBALSIGHT OPEN SOURCE INITIATIVE

Welocalize, Inc., a provider of integrated globalization services, and twelve industry thought leaders have joined together to spearhead the GlobalSight Open Source Initiative. The GlobalSight Steering Committee is promoting collaboration to create a competitive enterprise-class, open source Translation Management System (TMS). Representatives from AOL; Autodesk Inc.; Cisco Systems; EMC; NetApp; Sun Microsystems and TIBCO are participating.

COMMON SENSE ADVISORY RESEARCH LEADS TO TOOL DEVELOPMENT

In Common Sense Advisory’s recent sizing exercise for the worldwide interpreting market, the research firm surveyed 17 US hospitals to obtain information regarding annual spending on both outsourced and in-house interpreting services. Based on this research and experience with language and business-related measurements, Common Sense Advisory has developed a new tool – the language access ratio - to enable hospitals to see how their spending compares to that of their peers.
Report illuminates buyers’ views of translation quality

For Global 2000 companies, it’s no longer enough to just convert information into another language – large-scale buyers of translation services are becoming more ambitious with their globalization plans and demanding a higher quality of service. This finding is highlighted in the recent report “Buyer-Defined Translation Quality”, published by research firm Common Sense Advisory (CSA). The publication zeroes in on quality from the perspective of large-scale buyers of translation services.

CSA conducted interviews with 28 companies that pay to translate hundreds of millions of words into an average of 30 languages. It also surveyed 55 major buyers of translation services – 70 percent work in companies that employ 500 individuals or more, and 60 percent spend in excess of one million US dollars on translation services annually. The report captures the results of interviews from high-profile global brands across seven industries: automotive, life sciences, high-tech, retail, travel and leisure, consumer manufacturing, and heavy manufacturing.

Key findings include:
- Buyers cite six major themes in their definitions of quality – and the elements buyers deem most critical often differ from what vendors believe is important to their customers.
- Global brands that frequently translate their marketing, technical data sheets, materials, software products, and websites reveal their most common sources of frustration regarding quality.
- The two most important elements of quality – technical accuracy and a vendor’s willingness to implement feedback – are even more important to buyers than linguistic quality.
- Global firms follow seven key practices for developing and implementing translation quality metrics.
- Broad consensus exists across interviewees on having in-country reviewers participate in the quality evaluation process.

www.commonsenseadvisory.com
Localization
e-learning course

Imperial College London has announced a new 11-week e-learning program for professional translators on software and games localization. The course will be held from January 12, 2009, through March 30, 2009. It is geared toward those who want to further their career in the translation industry and are also considering software localization.

www3.imperial.ac.uk/humanities/languageservices

IAOP announces The 2009 Global Outsourcing 100™

The International Association of Outsourcing Professionals™ (IAOP™) has announced the launch of The 2009 Global Outsourcing 100™, its fourth annual ranking of the world’s best outsourcing service providers. As part of The Global Outsourcing 100, IAOP is also introducing a new list, the World’s Best Outsourcing Advisors. The Global Outsourcing 100 and its select sub-lists are references for companies seeking new and expanded relationships with companies in the industry. The lists include service provider and advisory companies from around the world that provide the full spectrum of outsourcing services.

The World’s Best Outsourcing Advisors, new for 2009, is geared specifically at companies that are outstanding global outsourcing advisors and consultants. In addition to being part of The Global Outsourcing 100 main list and sub-lists of service providers, the new list of advisors will rank the top consultant, legal, and related advisory firms globally, and will be a valuable reference tool for companies needing expert advice and guidance on their outsourcing projects.

The independently judged evaluation process mirrors the Request for Proposal process employed by many top customers and considers four key criteria: size and growth, customer experience, depth and breadth of competencies, and management capabilities. Companies are ranked on quality based on the information provided by each company in its application in combination with independent research and customer references.

The 2009 Global Outsourcing 100 and select sub-lists and the World’s Best Outsourcing Advisors will be published by IAOP and recognized in a special advertising feature in FORTUNE® magazine’s 2009 FORTUNE 500 issue.

www.outsourcingprofessionals.org
Overcoming the global downturn

Translation, localization and technical communication – three sectors weathering the storm caused by the international economic depression
Language and localization industry shows robust growth

As the 2008 tcworld conference and Trade Fair gets underway in Wiesbaden, fear and uncertainty cloud the global economy. But one industry heavily represented at the conference is bucking the trend, showing signs of strong growth that is expected to continue for years to come.

By James Hollan

The language services and technology industry is seeing increases in work volume and jobs. The positive outlook is expected to continue as more companies see the importance of communicating locally in the worldwide marketplace. Recent news of growth comes from the Globalization and Localization Association (GALA), an international non-profit association that encourages local communication as an indispensable component to a global strategy. In September, GALA released results of a survey of its 300 member companies that showed major growth in work volume. Over 85 percent of the respondents have seen work volume increase in the past year, and more than half have had increases of 20 percent or more.

Not surprisingly, employee growth is also very strong. More than 75 percent of GALA members who responded to the survey indicated employee growth; one fourth have had employee growth of more than 20 percent. Among those GALA members who responded, TransPerfect/Translations.com of New York has experienced 38 percent growth and is hiring in many areas. Another major language service provider, thebigword, based in the U.K., added 25 new positions in China last year and is adding another 25 positions in New York this year.

Economic downturn increases the need to communicate successfully

“The downturn in the global economy means that it is that much more important to communicate to customers – wherever they are in the world – effectively and in their native language,” said Bob Donaldson of McElroy Translation, a GALA member that has also seen a boost in work volume and employee numbers. At tcworld, Donaldson will present a case study highlighting how a major accounting firm used software localization strategically to gain competitive advantage of its software suite. In all, 46 GALA members will exhibit at the tcworld conference, which will accompany the tekom Trade Fair, which will accompany the conference along with a group exhibit featuring twelve member companies and a new initiative.
Global Locations
Since the early 1990s, we pioneered centralizing back-office functions in hubs in cost attractive regions, supported by worldwide offices located close to our customers. Today we have large production centers in Argentina, China and the Czech Republic, and supporting locations throughout North America, Europe and Asia. Our clients get the best of both worlds: optimum outsourcing locations with same time-zone support. We can take you there – wherever there is for you.

Technology spendings continue to increase
Some of the members exhibiting at the Trade Fair took part in the GALA member survey, which asked the association’s 300 members to provide information on their business growth and technology use. Surveys were completed by 44 percent of GALA members. In addition to the growth statistics, the survey revealed other interesting findings:
- Technology budgets have increased over last year for 39 percent of the respondents (by more than ten percent for almost a quarter of the group).
- Seventy percent of respondents said they do not currently provide a machine translation (MT) offering for their customers; twenty percent said they plan to provide an MT offering in the near future.
- Over 60 percent of the companies that responded have been in business for more than ten years and operate in an average of four offices (including headquarters).
“GALA has made a point of getting a pulse on the industry by surveying its extensive membership regularly,” said Kim Harris, board chairperson. “These latest figures are significant in that they show overall growth in the industry despite a worldwide downturn in the economy.”
In fact, GALA member growth has tracked with growth numbers for the industry. Common Sense Advisory, a market research firm specializing in business globalization, estimated the market for outsourced language services to be US $12 billion worldwide in 2007. Based on the trendline over the last five years, Common Sense Advisory’s analysts predict that the market will reach US$24 billion by 2012, equating to a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 14.6 percent over the next five years. The firm also reports that in 2007, the average year-over-year growth rate of the top 20 language service providers was 26.68 percent.

Service providers add more languages to their portfolio
While survey respondents were not asked to provide reasons for the growth, results from another GALA survey earlier in the year indicated a significant boost in the number of language pairs being handled by language service providers. In that survey, language pairs handled by respondents increased by 43 percent in two years, and 42 percent of respondents had worked on a language pair never handled by them before.
Additionally, recent research indicates a growing understanding that multilingual communications should be a strategic factor in global growth. In August, the Gilbane Group completed a survey of multinational companies from around the world in which more than 89 percent of respondents believe that multinational communications is a factor in corporate business initiatives.

Contact
James Hollan is Executive Director at the Globalization and Localization Association (GALA).

jhollan@gala-global.org
www.gala-global.org
Technical communication sector faces new challenges

With topics at the tekom Annual Conference and tcworld conference becoming more and more diversified, the image of the technical editor is also changing. Research reveals that today’s technical editors not only have to know their business, they also need to have intercultural competencies. Those who are proficient in both are entering into a prosperous field with a promising future.

By Corinna Ritter

For decades, tekom has promoted the occupational image of technical communicators and supported their education and training. With ongoing research and periodically conducted studies, the association captures trends and developments shaping the occupational image and adjusts its services and topics accordingly. The latest developments in the fields of technical communication and information management are reflected in the program of the upcoming tekom Annual Conference and tcworld conference. Speakers offer a comprehensive look not only at topics related with the mere production of technical documents, but also provide a global vision and aspects of international collaboration.

An increased need for foreign languages

A study conducted by the University of Applied Sciences in Hannover (Germany) in 2007 found that almost half of the surveyed German technical editors have already worked in an international team. German remains the most commonly used language in technical communication departments in Germany; however, only 40 percent of German technical editors communicate solely in their mother language. Around 60 percent use at least one foreign language to correspond with partners, customers or colleagues – in most cases English. This shows how important foreign language skills are for technical editors in German companies. The survey also revealed that intercultural competencies, such as the ability to communicate with people from other cultures, are very important to technical editors. If cultural differences are not accounted for, entire projects might fail due to so-called cultural incidents. Despite these increased demands within their job as technical editors, almost all survey participants predicted a positive future regarding their job.

A growing demand for skilled workers

Judging from the latest figures, technical editors have every reason to see the future of their profession in a positive light. In spring 2008 tekom marked a minimum of 84,571 employees holding a position in the field of technical communication. A study conducted in 2002 only calculated around 67,000 workers spending more than 75 percent of their work time on topics related to technical communication. This indicates a rise of 26 percent over the past six years. Service providers offering technical communication services marked the strongest increase in their demand for skilled personnel. Forty-two percent of service providers had added at least one new team member over the past year. Thirty-three percent of the surveyed technical communication departments in enterprises had marked an increase in employees. According to tekom, this increase is mainly due to the fact that the technical communication sector has become a specialized corporate division: A couple of years ago, technical documentation was left in the hands of the product developers. Nowadays most companies employ staff with specialized skills in technical communication. Specialists in the field of technical communication are rare. tekom found out that there are currently up to 4,000 job vacancies on the German market. However, there is a dramatic shortage of qualified people. There are no exact figures showing the demand for skilled workers in developing markets around the world. But there is one thing that’s for sure: there is no quality communication without qualified staff.
How can companies prepare themselves for the changing market?

The translation market in ten years’ time – a forecast

Photo: Elena Elisseeva
By Astrid Hager

The analysts agree: the volume of documents for translation will increase within the next ten years, even if opinions differ as to the extent to which this will happen. The language variety created by the expansion of the EU, for example, not only leads to a larger translation volume within the European institutions like the translation of minutes from meetings or legal drafts. It also increases the demand for translations at commercial firms and manufacturing companies, as the EU dictates that all technical documents are to be translated into the national languages (RL 79/112/EWG). Globalization and the associated growth will provide the GILT sectors (Globalization, Internationalization, Localization and Translation) with an enormous boom. The European Union of Associations of Translations Companies (EUATC) assumes that the translation market will observe an annual growth of approximately five percent during the next few years. Irrespective of the use of the English language as lingua franca, a further development is also becoming apparent – the protection of cultures and languages. The translation market will without a doubt profit from this tendency. In addition, the growing recognition of an ever more multilingual population in the US and elsewhere will further increase the demand for language services. Apart from these developments, technological innovations and a continuously increasing product portfolio require a better quality of translations as well as more flexible translators and translation agencies.

Preparing for the lack of translators

The rising demand for translations in the near future is intensified by an existing lack of translators for numerous specialized fields and particular language combinations. International companies making use of translation services must therefore be ready to adjust to these developments or take adequate measures to avoid any shortages. Within the scope of its strategic alignment for the future, a company should first determine which texts will require translation within the next five to ten years and which languages are required. Some written material like advertising texts, presentations or even operating instructions for globally sold products are already only distributed in English, if the legislation permits it. This is due to the fact that today recipients and consumers worldwide have an improved knowledge of the English language. English will continue to assert itself as the common language in science and internal corporate communications. However, a well-considered selection of texts intended for translation will by itself not be sufficient to successfully face the expected lack of translators.

With languages spoken only by a relatively small population like e.g. Estonian, it will be rather difficult to counter the lack of translators, as the number of people who call this their native language will probably not increase at an explosive rate. Supporting better and more consistent training opportunities for translators, is one way to help bridging the gap. Translators and translation agencies offering language training are strongly dependent on the support of companies with their practical orientation and concrete product materials. Also, companies buying translation services will be required to display a higher degree of transparency towards the translators in the future. This will enable translators to gain an overview of the processes and the corporate language. Companies should regard translation services as an investment and not merely as costs. A further option for countering the lack of translators is outsourcing. For example, numerous translations into English are produced in India today. However – even if we are mostly satisfied with the quality of these translations – we should question if cultural specifics, for example from the American cultural area, could be accommodated in translations done offshore. Furthermore, outsourcing is mainly an option for translations into English.

In light of the rapid increase of language combinations required for translation and the ever shorter delivery deadlines, professional project and quality management will become more significant in future. With the use of the latest technologies, translations will be performed directly in the client’s CMS system. Translation agencies could directly adopt a part of project management tasks, which currently are performed by the companies. This will probably decrease the cooperation between companies and freelancers, and increase the cooperation with translation agencies, as only the latter can bring in the technological and organizational requirements for major projects. In the future, it will therefore be decisive for companies to work with a translation agency that is able to cover the broadest possible language and technology spectrum.

Technological developments

Many companies may be concerned with regard to the increasing volume of translations and documents for translations, but the large amount could also be regarded as an advantage. A high number of repetitive text blocks will result from the large quantities of translations. It will therefore become increasingly significant to prepare documentation in such a way, that existing text elements are available not only for further documentation but also for translations and thus do not require repetitive translations. An efficient Data Management System (DMS) and Content Management System (CMS) are the basic prerequisites to enable cost-saving and terminologically consistent translations. This is the only way to fulfill the growing demand for quality in the future.

The application of CAT tools will become imperative to create terminology databases, glossaries and the like. Although terminology management may initially seem an enormous time-consuming effort, the advantages for both translators and companies are obvious: While translators are able to manage a higher translation volume faster and...
with less effort, the client gains more control over the quality of the translation into a language of which he usually has no command. The CAT tool market has changed rapidly over the last years. A few large providers are now dominating the market. Does this give rise to the assumption that companies will have to decide on a CAT tool from a large manufacturer to ensure that it will still be used in ten years’ time? Many forecast that the few larger providers such as SDL, software manufacturer of the leading software SDLX-Trados, will have to face competition from smaller companies such as Alchemy, Multicorpora and Lingotek in the next few years. Recent software developments provide good alternatives to the established programs, some of which exist on account of their high technological standards. Thanks to the spread of standards for projects (TTX, XLIFF), Translation Memories (TMX) or dictionaries (TBX), the choice of a translation program is less significant today than it used to be. XML went through a similar development several years ago. The program used to process XML files no longer plays a crucial role. When choosing a CAT tool, companies should therefore place more emphasis on their specific demands regarding the functionality of the tool and less on its compatibility.

**Common terminology pools**

To ensure terminological consistency and to simplify terminology work companies are now making their translation databases accessible to other companies. Skrivanek, together with 42 other leading companies, recently founded the so-called TAUS Data Association (TDA), which enables its members to share translation files. All members load their language combinations onto a server in the form of Translation Memories or multilingual glossaries and can in return download the language pairs of other members. This creates an immense volume of linguistic data.

**Machine translation**

Another solution for managing the growing translation volume is the further development of machine translations (MT). MT, developed and used since the late 1940s, suffers from a rather doubtful reputation: The often fragmentary translation attempts by some freeware tools available on the internet are all too often devoid of any meaning and may only bring tears of laughter to our eyes. However, large companies such as IBM, Sun, SAP etc. are already achieving considerable results with more sophisticated MTs, which - of course - only become printable after human post-editing.

We basically distinguish between two types of MTs: rule-based systems and statistical systems. The latter use predominantly word alignment techniques to receive matching pairs. The basic requirement for statistical systems is the availability of a sufficient volume of bilingual documents. Large companies are especially predestined for statistical translation systems due to the enormous data volumes in different language pairs and the documents’ often purely technical, simplified style.

The common platform TDA can also contribute significantly to improve statistical translation systems, as it is able to deliver the enormous volume of topic related text with which the developed MT system is “fed”.

The rule-based systems are generally based on bilingual word lists and language transfer rules. The basic components with which these systems work are words and rules on their combinability to sentences, sections and entire texts. Every document to be translated must therefore be dissected into words, figures and punctuation. Many machine translation systems, however, fail in rebuilding the target language structure due to the strongly varying syntax and grammar between source and target language. The so-called “controlled language” could solve these obstacles. The main characteristics of “controlled language” are simplified grammar with repetitive, recognizable structures and a vocabulary, which only contains a fraction of the words from the entire vocabulary. Language providers are already developing regulations to achieve significantly better results in MTs. Anyhow, we would advise companies, who will not work with MT in the near future, to still collect information today on how data, texts and documents could be prepared in such a way as to enable rapid processing from the MT technology at some stage.

Even in the future the human being will still be required as the controlling instance. With regard to MT, the task of a translator will comprise far more post-editing. Specially trained post-editors are already working with MT, their work differing fundamentally from pure translation or editing. This, however, can only be successful if it is approved and recognized by all sides, not only by the translators but also by the clients.
Change Management – an underestimated success factor

Although the creation and translation of technical documents are essential parts of the product lifecycle they still play a subordinate role in most international organizations. Many companies are therefore leaving these tasks to an outsourcing provider. To ensure a smooth collaboration and guarantee high quality technical documents, the outsourcing process needs to be planned and supported thoroughly.
Globalization is understood as the process of increasing international activities. Many medium-sized businesses have first-class technological know-how and high-quality products, which are sold in more and more markets. Although the creation, translation and production of the technical documents for these products are essential, they are often not very popular tasks. Every new market entry requires the support of another language, causes faster product development cycles and increased process complexity. Although the lifecycle of technical documentation is closely interlinked with the product development process, it is not part of the core business of a manufacturing company. Many organizations are therefore leaving their technical documentations and translations to the hands of an outsourcing provider.

Transferring staff

However, simply giving the work to a professional provider will not necessarily deliver the desired results. Outsourcing projects often fail due to insufficient preparation and support during the transition process. Even more diligence is required if the outsourcing process involves the transfer of staff. If the service provider, whose core business is the technical documentation process, takes over all the employees involved (authors, translators and production staff) under TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings Protection of Employment Regulations), high-quality change management is becoming a necessity. In such an outsourcing project the goal of the change management process is to steer the complex integration of two company cultures – the one of the customer and the one of the service provider. However, how can we reach the agreed business goals and fulfill the obligations towards the acquired staff?

Companies thinking of outsourcing a part of their business aim at long-standing commercial relations with their service providers. In order to reach the expected advantages and cost reductions, contract terms of five to seven years are no rarity. An essential and often underestimated success factor for long-term and satisfying business relations is how the staff has been coached during the transition into the new service provider’s company. Océ Business Services as an experienced outsourcing service provider in the document area, has intensely dealt with the question of what values are important to staff that will be transferred into a new company culture and how to take these into consideration during the transition.

In a continuous effort to increase customer satisfaction as well as the satisfaction of its own staff working at customer locations, Océ Business Services has studied the value systems of customers and of individual staff to answer questions like:

- Why do two organizations behave so differently in a similar situation?
- What are the requirements for success in change situations?
- What are the values and drivers of individuals in an organization?

Plan carefully

There are many sad examples of failed change processes, mergers or outsourcing projects. Even if all conditions appear excellent for outsourcing during the due diligence phase, reality might still prove disappointing: As soon as the integration of the acquired departments and staff starts, executives are very much occupied with themselves and the staff and the business are neglected in their new surroundings. The expected business upswing is not setting in. The meaning of a carefully planned change management process becomes clear with the transition of long-term employees from the buying company to the outsourcing service provider: They might still feel obliged to their former employer, who has now turned into their customer. The new values of the outsourcing provider cannot simply be prescribed to the new employees. They can only be incorporated during a well-accompanied learning process.

Protecting the interests of staff and service provider – a contradiction?

A company’s prime interest when taking over staff is to reach certain business goals through cost savings while at the same time increasing service levels. The staff might be primarily interested in aspects like job security and being able to rely on their employer. Other interests include...
personal success and independence at the workplace. Values, thinking and behavioral patterns also vary within different work environments. For example, certain values might be lived and also communicated more strongly in different work environments. It is therefore essential to find out which values were strongly communicated at the old employer and how the value system differs from the one at the new employer. Company culture influences how people behave: Does the old employer have a rather informal, cooperative style or does it practice an authoritarian management? What are the differences in the companies’ policies – which written laws and rules are lived in the companies? How are the companies structured? Check collaboration models and find out how added value is achieved and how well developed their processes are.

If the values do not match and this is not accounted for during the change process, you might experience resistance from the acquired staff.

**Easing resistance**

To enable a smooth integration of the acquired staff, it is important to make all parties involved aware of the different value systems. Gaining the acceptance of the new staff can only be achieved by choosing the right kind of communication. Lacking or false communication will enforce employees’ resistance and lead to anger and resignation. Emotional and cultural factors play an important role in the transition stage. Especially in international projects where opposing cultures often collide enough time must be planned for this stage of raising consciousness.

Personal communication with the new staff will clarify goals and values. Common gatherings e.g. location visits will contribute to acceptance. Clear workplace and job descriptions and a transparent integration of the staff into the new organization are important to gain understanding and acceptance from the transferred staff.

**The right change management strategy**

An effective change management program should at least include the following components:

1. Creation of a change climate: Establish a clear entrepreneurial vision and set up a strong team to be able to carry out an effective staff transfer.
2. Preparing the organization for change: Identify and address all stakeholder groups in the company (internal and external) to get broad support for the staff transition. Create a widely accepted communication strategy for each key stakeholder group in the organization including not only human resources but also executives, managers, and employees. Clearly communicate roles and responsibilities to any employees, whose positions are affected by the change.
3. Stabilizing the new situation: Create a training program to help employees, managers, and the organization understand how to deal with the new situation.

**Conclusion**

The key to success is to identify the values of the staff at an early stage and to accompany the new employees actively throughout the change process. An outsourcing project is not successful if only the business goals of the customer are achieved. Establishing long-term relations with the new staff and motivating them is also part of the success.

As result of the thorough support of projects at Océ Business Services, the attrition rate of transferred staff is significantly lower than the industry standard. In the course of the affiliation the employees recognize that they belong to the core business of the new employer with all advantages that come with it, like job security, possibilities for advanced training, new tasks and responsibilities and recognition of their achievements through variable reimbursement components.

A structured and people-oriented change management strategy is advantageous to all parties: the outsourcing company, the absorbing company and the staff in their new environment.
Intercultural management at Škoda Auto

The merger of Škoda Auto and Volkswagen AG in 1991 compelled the tradition-bound Czech company for the first time to face the challenges of internationalization. Today Škoda is the largest industrial undertaking in the Czech Republic as the company sells its products in 100 countries worldwide. The Joint Venture with VW is regarded by the company as a successful marriage between the systematic, methodical and dependable approach of the Germans and the creative, improvising and proficient disposition of the Czechs.
A tradition of more than 113 years

In 1895, when Vaclav Laurin and Vaclav Klement set up a bicycle repair workshop in the outskirts of Mlada Boleslav in Central Bohemia, people in the neighboring places thought it to be just another small event in their lives. A few years later the mechanics graduated to bicycle and motorcycle construction and, by 1905, they presented their first automobile, the Voiturette. In 1925 a merger of sorts took place with Škoda Pilsen and between 1946 and 1949 the main works in Mlada Boleslav was extended to the ancillary units in Vrchlabí and Kvasiny.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union the Czech government looked for a strategic partner so as to secure Škoda a short and medium-term expansion of its automobile market in Central and Eastern Europe. The decision to establish a Joint Venture with Volkswagen in 1991 is regarded by insiders as a very successful match between the two parties. The 100 percent ownership of Škoda Auto by VW AG since 2000 notwithstanding, the company’s management continues to uphold its tradition of more than 100 years, which in fact has a positive influence both on the Czech customers and on the Czech workers’ motivation.

Since 1991 Škoda Auto has transformed itself from a “brand with tradition without future” into a “brand of the future with tradition”.

Foundation of intercultural coalescence

In order to achieve innovations through the fusion of both cultures – but without falling into the trap of overstated dominance of the one or excessive assimilation of the other culture – highly motivated German experts were present right from the start of the Joint Venture. Their number increased from 20 in 1991 to 146 in 1994. Following the successful implementation of the Tandem Management and due to the introduction of a strong endorsement program for a younger generation management as well as talent management the number of the German experts was cut down gradually to 52 in 2007.

Since 1991 these experts included a team of human resources specialists who had a track record of international experience, modern know-how in the field of human resources, a visionary outlook and a distinct performance and target orientation. Thanks to a methodical approach and an exemplary and humane dimension of all members of the team, the team had a favorable effect on the Czechs. Thus, it was able to impart enthusiasm, vision and knowledge to the Czech workers.

A valuable initiative came also from the involvement of Czech emigrants living in Germany. During the first few years of the Joint Venture it was these people in particular who helped to develop suitable and feasible concepts and to build a well-balanced bridge between the German experts and the Czech managers and workers.

The team had the necessary instruments which often proved to be truly ground-breaking and their beneficial effects are still deeply felt today.

Cultural differences between Czechs and Germans

A Czech-German partnership can profit from two important pieces of information:

First of all, the Czech likes improvisation: he is mostly averse to universal rules, formalized procedures and standards; he wants to have free space for creativity to let out his inventive abilities. And yet, or just for that very reason, he is capable of adjusting to circumstances, willing to learn, is broad-minded and considerate – which may sometimes make him appear phlegmatic or disorganized. Maximum risk prevention and organization, systematic approach, detailed thinking and accept-

Tandem management and talent management

Tandem management is a practical instrument based on intercultural sensitivity that is used for the integration of foreign experts and local partners. It was employed at Škoda Auto in order to prepare the local managers for accepting the help from the German experts aimed at enabling them to better cope with their new technical and managerial tasks. In Tandem everyone is expected to manage jointly a domain or a department for a period of one to three years. Initially the German experts played a dominant role. In a phased manner of transferring the know-how they gradually allowed the Czech managers to take on the reins. The Tandem was regarded as a bicycle for two that requires mutual acceptance, willingness to learn and intercultural awareness.

Today talent management is employed in the international facilities of Škoda Auto. This time the Czech unit assumes the role of an expert. The success of its local partner depends on its aptness and, consequently, also on Škoda Auto abroad.

By Lenka Bila

Facts & figures

Today Škoda Auto is the largest industrial undertaking in the Czech Republic and on 31.12.2007 it recorded 23,559 regular and 4,194 contract workers.

The annual vehicle production has increased steadily from 172,000 p.a. in 1991 to 630,000 p.a. in 2007. In 2007 the products were sold in 100 markets – as opposed to a mere 30 in 1991. In 2007 the export share of Škoda Auto accounted for 7.5 percent of the national total. The company is not only a prestigious forerunner of the Czech industry but it is regarded as the role model in the socio-cultural arena as well. The international product portfolio is fittingly complemented by the company’s policy of Corporate Social Responsibility & Corporate Governance.

Contact

Lenka Bila has worked for Škoda Auto since 1992. After holding an expert position at Volkswagen Slovakia from 2000 to 2006, she is now back in the parent company in the Czech Republic where she has headed the education department since 2006.

lenka.bila@skoda-auto.cz
www.skoda-auto.com
Conditions for success

Three important aspects are considered absolutely essential for success:

1. The expert must possess the ability and willingness to gradually recede into the background and let his local colleagues have the precedence.

2. The local manager must have the necessary potential and ability to widen his know-how, be willing to learn, cooperate and gradually assume responsibilities.

3. Common goals, solutions, implementation and reflection on what was accomplished every day.

The following typical errors may hinder a successful process:

- Faulty selection of personnel or faulty assessment of potential
- Non-cooperation by one of the tandem partners
- Unclear roles
- The expert wants to be in the limelight.
- The local partner is reluctant to assume responsibility.
- Vertical division of functions
- No systematic human resources development
- No objective agreement on tandem development
- No counseling or coaching
- Impatience
- "Old boys" network: conservative structures refuse to be changed.

Today’s challenges

Internationalization in foreign plants

Today Škoda Auto is an example of the successful transformation and consolidation of a brand from a local manufacturer to an international player, which, in the course of its growth, expanded its vehicle assemblies to international facilities in China, India, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Bosnia & Herzegovina.

For this reason, competent, flexible, mobile and cosmopolitan-conditioned Czech managers are selected and prepared for short, medium or long-term overseas appointments. At present there are about 80 experts working at Škoda Auto facilities in other countries.

The local managerial and technical personnel are hired, motivated and trained at Škoda Auto for short and medium-term tenures. Currently 30 managers assigned to plants in India and Russia receive training at Škoda Auto.

Internationalization in local plants

Whereas the demographic curve was not truly reassuring, the rapid increase in the number of investors and the opening of Czech borders made it difficult to find adequately qualified domestic workers.

Photo: The Czech project team WE are Škoda is implementing Volkswagen’s indicator of the work atmosphere (Stimmungsbarometer) in the Czech Škoda locations. Photos: Škoda
Škoda Auto is, therefore, happy whenever foreign workers show interest in working in Czech industries. At present, there are 28 nationalities represented at Škoda Auto, on average amounting to nearly 20 per cent of the total workforce.

For Škoda Auto itself, internationalization has enormous influence on the sentiment and lifestyle of people in the small town of Mlada Boleslav, as almost half of its population is working for Škoda Auto and the foreign workers too are expected to be integrated into the society there.

**Sensitization of Czech workers**
In the process of integrating new foreign workers – whether on short, medium or long-term basis – the intercultural sensitivity of all workers plays an important role. However, if tradition is to be maintained the company must retain its integrity. This happens thanks to the awareness creating efforts by the superiors:

- through target-group-specific intercultural Training & Coaching: with general orientation, specifically GERMAN-CZECH, and tailor-made for a particular country,
- through promoting international rotations,
- through instruments of internal communication like work newsletter, work committee newsletter, weekly newsletter, info center, the behavioral code of Škoda Auto,
- through innovative future-oriented projects like WE are Škoda, the promotion of corporate culture, respect for foreign cultures,
- and through language training: one-to-one or in groups, within the country, abroad or by e-Learning; in 2007, 55.1 percent of the management, 66.2 percent of the high potentials and 12.4 percent of other regular employees participated in language courses. More than half of the workforce is learning German, about 40 percent English and the rest Russian, Spanish, Czech, French or other languages.

**Concluding remark**
The complexity of intercultural awareness is steadily increasing. It is not only about awareness of other nationalities but also of genders, religions, industrial segments, departments, teams and finally of the individual. At Škoda Auto the steady internationalization process is endorsed with a simple formula: "Any ignorance about the foreign mentality can be counterbalanced with acceptance, respect and responsiveness while continuing to learn something new".
Spanish for local and global markets

In the translation and localization business we often come across the terms US Spanish and Latin American Spanish. Are there any differences between them? In what way do they differ from International Spanish and Neutral Spanish? Despite the slight variations that may occur in US Spanish, Latin American (LA) Spanish, International Spanish and Neutral Spanish, they all have one thing in common: none of them actually exist.

By José Gambín & Igor Zubicaray

Many will argue that Spanish is essentially the same all over the Spanish-speaking world and that the main differences can be found in casual speech and not in written formal speech. It is true that as the register becomes more formal, Spanish tends to become more uniform. Everyday words, however, which are the most prone to experience variations due to the constant use we make of them, can also be widely found in written texts.

Translations should sound natural, as though there were no source text. Setting aside certain types of translations (literary, sworn and under certain circumstances, legal translations), the ideal translation should sound as if it were indeed an original text, written by the audience to which it is addressed, and thus containing no “alien” terms. Is it then possible to produce good-quality translations when translating into US, LA, International or Neutral Spanish? In the end, isn’t translation about choosing the right word?

LA Spanish: too good to be true

Anyone asked to translate a text into LA Spanish would be happy as a pig in mud if there were such a thing as a standard LA Spanish. Unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth.

The idea of LA Spanish comes from the popular misconception of Spanish as a unity in every Spanish-speaking country in the Americas, as opposed to European (Castilian) Spanish. However, even within the same country, the Spanish spoken in Central and South America is a medley, showing as many differences among them as can be found between Castilian Spanish and any of these American variants.

According to Professor John Lipski in an invited lecture at the University of Chicago (2007), three main factors explain this diversification: the varieties spoken by Spanish settlers; contact with other languages, namely indigenous languages, African languages spoken by slaves and languages spoken by immigrants of the latest centuries; and the catalytic effect that emerging cities in Spanish America exerted on regional varieties of Spanish.

It never rains but it pours

The misconception underlying the idea of LA Spanish has spread beyond the Mexican border, propagating from Maine to Washington.

With a population of 44 million, which accounts for almost 14.8% of the total US population (data from the American Community Survey 2006 of the US Census Bureau), and a growing purchasing power, US Hispanics — and sometimes by extension larger Hispanic markets — have become a target for an increasing number of companies that now see them as potential buyers. As a result, these companies ask for translations of their advertising material and their product documentation. But these translations are usually demanded in US Spanish.

Like LA Spanish, US Spanish is not a reality; it is only the reflection of businesses’ needs to reduce costs. Hispanics in the United States represent a very heterogeneous group made up on the one hand of Spanish speakers born in the United States, who use different Spanish varieties according to the variant of the Spanish language spoken in the country of origin of their parents or other ancestors and whose Spanish is influenced by English to a greater or lesser extent. On the other hand, there is always ongoing immigration of people from different countries and backgrounds, who also use different Spanish varieties and are not aware of new words created by American-born Hispanics. It must certainly be hard for many of these newcomers to understand: “Voy a vacunar la carpeto” as the Spanglishized “I am going to vacuum the carpet.” That sentence will just have the ludicrous old-country meaning “I am going to vaccinate the folder.”

In the middle of this confusion one question still remains: How can one tackle a translation into US Spanish or LA Spanish?

Solutions for translations into US and LA Spanish

The first thing that should be considered before beginning a translation is its purpose (skopos) and the target audience, which depends, among other things, on the type of text and target market.

For instance, when translating a user manual, it is important to take into account whether the product will be used by specialized technicians (as in the case of a milling machine) or by ordinary people (as in the case of the user manual of an inkjet printer).

As a rule, specialized technical terminology is more unlikely to deviate from a standard version of Spanish. It may be accompanied in the same text, how-
The Hispanic population has grown dramatically in the United States over the last 20 years. According to the US Census 1990 and 2000, the number of Hispanic population rose from 22 million in 1990 to 35 million in 2000, an increase of 57.9%. The data gathered in the American Community Survey 2006 showed that the Hispanic or Latino population had reached 44 million, representing almost 14.8% of the total US population. Of these, 34 million declared speaking Spanish at home, of which 16 million declared speaking English less than “very well.”

Data from the American Community Survey 2006 also revealed that the main country of origin of Hispanics in the United States is Mexico (28 million), followed by Puerto Rico (nearly 4 million) and Cuba (1.5 million). The remaining 10 million come from different origins. The map in Figure 1 is a simplified version of this data.

When facing a translation into US Spanish, this variety of backgrounds certainly poses a problem in terms of choice of the most appropriate vocabulary. In other words, imagine you sell car trunks to the Hispanic market in the United States: Is it a better choice to use Puerto Rican baúl for the car trunk or Mexican cajuela? Given the overwhelming majority of Hispanics of Mexican origin, it seems logical that Mexican Spanish should be used as the default variant for translations into US Spanish. However, two things should also be taken into account: the operating area of the company that orders the translation and the target audience of the translation.

The first approach lies in the locale where the company plans to offer its products. If we take a look at the map (Figure 1), the population of Mexican origin is clearly predominant in some states. For instance, in Arizona it represents up to 88.8% of the total Hispanic population. Accordingly, one could think that hiring a Mexican translator would be the preferable decision if the company desired to market its products in the Western region. On the other hand, a Puerto Rican would best suit the needs of a company operating in the Northeastern region. It goes without saying that the translator should try to avoid words that are too local, mainly in those cases where there is no highly-predominant minority in the region.

Although this approach could be enough in many cases, especially when translating texts not related to specific companies, a second, more restrictive, approach should also be considered. Taking the potential buyers of a given product into account represents a more specific approach to solving the problem of this sort of translations into US Spanish. Sometimes, the origin of the potential buyers does not match the origin of the main minority, as can happen, for example, with luxury items such as an expensive sports car. In such cases, the most advisable solution would consist of hiring a translator with the same origin as the targeted community, regardless of what type of product.

**A demographic approach to US Spanish**

The Hispanic population has grown dramatically in the United States. The main minority, as can happen, for example, with luxury items such as an expensive sports car. In such cases, the most advisable solution would consist of hiring a translator with the same origin as the targeted community, regardless of what type of product.
Software localization: Microsoft approach

Most software is originally developed in English, so over the years different Spanish-speaking countries have provided different translations for new terms. Microsoft's approach to this situation has been quite the opposite. Through its Spanish Style Guide and terminology database (TRES), the company has aimed to provide a single translation for each new term that arises as well as to unify already existing terminology across the Spanish-speaking world. It has also tried to follow a Neutral Spanish — a Spanish that can be understandable everywhere and is not offensive to any Spanish speaker. This includes choosing a term or expression not used anywhere but understandable in every country (equipo for computer), choosing the most widespread expression or term (mouse instead of ratón, this last term being used exclusively in Spain) or prohibiting the use of certain words or expressions (such as coger, a tabooed word in many Latin American countries, where it has a sexual connotation, although perfectly normal and used every day in Spain, where it innocently means to take).

However, Microsoft reckons in its Spanish Style Guide that this approach often entails rejection from users for whom the terminology is foreign, simply because it does not sound natural to any Spanish speaker. The idea behind this neutral Spanish is again commercial and not linguistic. As Microsoft products are marketed worldwide, it is cheaper to produce only one version of the product in Spanish.

What to consider when ‘neutralizing’ Spanish

One of the main problems and source of misunderstandings when translating into any kind of Neutral Spanish comes from the local use of polysemic words, that is, words with different meanings. For example, when Mexicans cook la comida, they cook lunch, whereas Peruvians or Colombians will be cooking dinner instead. A Mexican can take a camión (“bus” in Mexican Spanish) to go home for his comida, but a Colombian will never expect a camión (truck) to take him anywhere. If he decides to take the bus, he will coger el autobús. Here we come across the classic misunderstanding of the verb coger, harmless and used constantly in some countries to mean take, while tabooed in others, like Argentina or Uruguay, where it is a rude word for having sexual intercourse. So, while a Spaniard coge el autobús or a Cuban coge la guagua (be careful with this expression in Chile, where guagua means baby), an Argentinian toma el colectivo and a Mexican toma/agarra el camión.

When a word becomes taboo, usually due to sexual connotations, its use in its original meaning or meanings tries to be avoided and it is consigned to the sphere of the forbidden. For example, the word pico (peak or beak) represents one of the ways to designate the male sex organ in Chile. Therefore,

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José Gambín, managing director at AbroadLink, has worked as a freelance translator, in-house translator, desktop publisher and project manager.

Igor Zubicaray is Spanish senior translator at AbroadLink with a degree in law and a degree in translation and interpreting.
contrary to what happens in many Latin American countries, a Chilean will never say hora pico to refer to the peak hour, but hora punta or even hora peak. The film Dante’s Peak, whose dubbed version was titled El Pico de Dante in many Latin American countries, was, for obvious reasons, marketed in Chile under the name La Furia de la Montaña (The Anger of the Mountain). Continuing with misinterpretations, the word polla has different meanings in the Spanish-speaking world besides female chicken: bet in general, lottery in Chile, crip in Ecuador or gob (of spit) in El Salvador, to name a few; but it has become increasingly tabooed in Spain where it again refers to the male sex organ (so yes, we only have male chickens in our farms now). In Argentina, the word concha (shell) is a tabooed word used to refer to the female genitals. Therefore, it is not very advisable to say that you are going to the beach to coger conchas (gather shells) unless you want to provoke outright hilarity or be taken for a sex maniac. In other countries, though, it is even used as a nickname for Concepción. A last piece of advice: when asking for plastic bags in Ecuador or the Dominican Republic, do not ask a man if he tiene bolsas or you will be questioning his manliness. You’d better ask for fundas.

As we can see, words or expressions that are completely normal in some countries can lead to confusion or hilarity, or even be offensive in others depending on the context in which they are being used. This is one of the drawbacks of any artificial sort of Spanish such as LA or US Spanish: as these words need to be replaced by others, the result is a clumsy speech that can be understood by anyone but which nobody feels is theirs. Coger el autobús may sound odd or funny to Argentines, but it is the most common way to take the bus in Colombia.

Final word

Although Neutral Spanish, LA Spanish and US Spanish are sometimes unavoidable, in those cases where the company has a limited budget and is targeting a widespread market, companies should consider clearly defining their markets in order to request the translation that best fits their needs rather than automatically going for a translation into any of these artificial Spanish variants at the high expense of quality.

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When commonly used words in technical texts become a problem

Although specialized technical terminology does not usually show important variations among the different variants of Spanish, it goes without saying that some words usually found in technical texts are commonly used in everyday speech. As a result of this use in oral speech, the differences become greater. Let’s focus, for instance, on the automotive industry. Being products used across the world, not only do cars receive different names depending on the region (auto, carro, coche), but their main parts are also subject to significant variations, which may hinder communication and even lead to misunderstandings.

One of these sources of misunderstandings can be found in Table 1, which includes examples of some variations with their respective translations in English. The table only aims to illustrate the most commonly used terms in each of the countries chosen; but differences may be found among different regions within the same country. If we look at the terms tire and rim, we will see that the Spanish llanta designates the rim in Argentina and Spain, but Colombians, Mexicans or Peruvians will rather use this term to refer to the tire. In other words, the same term refers to different realities depending on the country, representing a major problem when trying to produce a translation into LA Spanish, US Spanish or any other one-size-fits-all version of Spanish.

Another source of problems is terms that would be hardly understandable in some countries although not misleading. For example, Mexican terms llanta de refacción (spare wheel) and cajuela (trunk) would be difficult to understand in Argentina or Spain, as well as the Puerto Rican terms guía (spare wheel) and tapabocinas (hubcap). Hypothetically, these sorts of terms could be avoided in a translation targeted at a wide Spanish-speaking public, but the terms chosen would almost certainly sound unnatural to the affected countries.

Finally, some terms specific to certain countries would probably be understandable in others, although they could sometimes represent an obstacle to communication or sound odd, to a greater or lesser extent.

Table 1 is only an example of the variations that may be found among the different variants of Spanish in the same field of knowledge. The automotive industry is not, however, the only field in which these differences are evident. For instance, another field in which differences are marked is the nutrition industry. As shown with the lima/limón example in the main Gambin/Zubicaray article, fruits and vegetables receive different names in different countries. What for a Mexican is a chicharo (green pea), for an Argentinean is an areveja and for a Spaniard a guisante. On the other hand, in Spain chicharo is a term unknown in some regions, whereas in some others it refers to a chickpea. Other differences include chabacano (Mex) vs. damasco (Arg, Chi, Peru) and albaricoque (Spain); toronja (Mex) vs. pomelo (Arg), aguacate (Mex) vs. palta (Arg); or fresa (Mex) vs. frutilla (Arg), to name a few.

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<th>Argentina</th>
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International information management – a sector with a promising future

With 2700 participants in 2007 and similar numbers expected this year, the tekom conference and tcworld conference 2008 promise to once again become a great success. The world’s biggest event in the field of technical communication and information management will take place from November 5th to 7th on the familiar premises of the Rhein-Main-Hallen in Wiesbaden, Germany.
Hardly any product can go without a comprehensive manual – self-explanatory appliances and user-interfaces still remain dreams of the future. In order to break into international markets, companies need to translate these manuals and other documents into a multitude of languages as well as to localize according to the legal and cultural requirements of the target market. The tcworld conference, held from November 5th to 7th in the Rhein-Main-Hallen in Wiesbaden, draws the attention to the wide spectrum of international information management.

A unique pool of knowledge

Whoever wants to compete in this rapidly growing market requires state-of-the-art and comprehensive information. This includes keeping up-to-date with regards to strategic, methodical and technological aspects. The tcworld conference and tekom annual conference offer a platform for experienced specialists as well as for young professionals to gain a broader perspective and draw from a unique pool of knowledge. In more than 100 presentations, workshops, tutorials and tool presentations of exhibiting companies all relevant fields of knowledge are discussed.

Guest of honor: Japan

The significance of cultural differences should not be underestimated, also with regard to technical communication. That is why tekom is placing more and more emphasis on international information management and intercultural communication. This year, the "guest of honor" Japan will take center stage during the conference. Representatives of tekom's sister organization JTCA (Japan Technical Communicators Association) give answers to your questions in two main podium discussions: "Localization for Japan" and "Legal aspects of exporting products to Japan". Furthermore, a member of JTCA's executive board will introduce the winner of the "Japan Manual Award". One highly interesting aspect here is the different use of visual communication: Comics are commonly used in Japanese manuals, while they remain a rarity in Europe.

Experience the charms of Wiesbaden

Did you just have an exciting and successful day at the conference? Then it is time for a bit of relaxation. Check out some of Wiesbaden's many sites and attractions. For example, the Kaiser-Friedrich-Baths, a modern city spa on the site of an antique bath house. This hot spring with its curative water was discovered by the Romans some 2000 years ago but still remains a hot tip today. One among 26 hot water springs, it is an oasis of relaxation. Another place of retreat is the thermal spa at Aukammatal, which has re-established itself as a modern health spa, following intensive modernization.

tekom has also organized a number of tours and events for conference attendees. For more information, please visit the conference office in the Rhein-Main-Hallen.

THE MARKET CHURCH – SIGHTSEEING AND ORGAN RECITAL

Come and visit the city’s tallest building, which was built in the Neo-Gothic style. After the guided sightseeing tour enjoy musical delights of organ composition.

THE SPRINGS OF WIESBADEN – A GUIDED WALK

The Romans were the first to recognize Wiesbaden’s special qualities and knew very well how to use the thermal water for treatments and their well-being. Already in 120 AD the first Roman settlements were established under the name "Aquae Mattiacorum". Learn everything about the history, the origin and the use of the mineral springs during this guided tour.

VISIT OF THE MARMALADE AND MUSTARD FACTORY

Everybody is familiar with them, and most love them, but hardly anyone knows how marmalade and mustard are made. The "Wiesbadener Marmeladen- und Senfmanufaktur", also called "the princess revolution", offers groups a look behind the scene. After a home-made fruity vinegar aperitif you will be introduced to the art of marmalade and mustard cooking and preserving. You will learn how to recognize suitable fruits and how treats are created from standard fruit varieties by adding fresh herbs, spices or alcohol. The manufacture of mustard, vinegar, oil and even liquor is also demonstrated. A social gathering rounds off the visit during which unusual preserves, mustards, aperitif-digestive vinegars, special oils and liquors can be sampled. Try them out and discover which sorts of fruity preserves or mustard go best with meat, sausage or cheese.
Forums at tcworld

Localization Forum
Next to Japan, tekom also enters uncharted waters during the Localization Forum in cooperation with the Globalization and Localization Association (GALA): Experts give advice on how to find business partners in Asia and give an overview of the Latin American market. Further topics of this forum include strategic aspects of localization management and quality assurance, proofreading and editing, E-Learning, project management, automation and process optimization as well as basic skills like writing coherent and translatable English source documents.

Technical Authoring
This track imparts key knowledge for the daily business in technical authoring. Research and interview techniques, didactics of instructions, writing techniques and text comprehensibility are among the topics.

User Assistance
Here you will find information about the trends and techniques of online help tools and standards, including the latest test and evaluation procedures for user-friendly interfaces. User-centered engineering, rules for the design of user-friendly interfaces and analysis of user behavior will be discussed among other topics.

Terminology and Language Technology
Using consistent terminology is very important for the efficient creation of technical information. Renowned experts show how a company-wide terminology base can be created and managed, what software can be used and which organizational measures should be implemented. Among the topics are terminology extraction and research as well as language technology and methods for technical communication.

XML Applications, Automation
This forum provides a meeting point for all those who use XML in daily business or are planning to use it. You will learn about the application of this technology, basic principles of technical communication with XML as well as standards like DITA, S100 D, Office Open XML, DocBook and OASIS Open Document.

tekom-Trade Fair
The tcworld conference is accompanied by the tekom-Trade Fair, the biggest industry exhibition within the field of technical communication and information development. All the important technology suppliers and service providers are present at this international fair. More than 150 companies present software and services that help you cope with the production and management of documentation and information.

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Many viewers have more and more choice in what, when and where they watch, use and interact with audiovisual media. Others, however, are excluded for a variety of reasons, including language.

Cost, volume and quality can seem to be a contradiction in terms. Although programs are available globally, their accessibility is often restricted. What language reversioning is required to reach specific audiences? Is technology the only answer to reducing costs? What quality standards are adequate and acceptable for global, national and regional media distribution in order to reach diversified local audiences?

The media world is changing rapidly. The 7th International Conference and Exhibition on Languages and the Media is a chance for you to voice your opinion and join the discussion.

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<tr>
<td>October 24-25</td>
<td>International Conference on Translation Studies, Cross-cultural Communication and Chinese Pedagogy</td>
<td>Portland, USA</td>
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<td>October 27-30</td>
<td>CeBIT Asia 2008</td>
<td>Shanghai, China</td>
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<td>October 29-31</td>
<td>Languages &amp; The Media</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 3</td>
<td>The Global Customer Experience Colloquium</td>
<td>Barcelona, Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 5-7</td>
<td>tcworld conference</td>
<td>Wiesbaden, Germany</td>
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<td>November 17</td>
<td>Canadian Language Industry Showcase 2008</td>
<td>Gatineau, Canada</td>
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<td>November 20-21</td>
<td>International EUATC Conference 2008</td>
<td>Paris, France</td>
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<td>December 2-4</td>
<td>Gilbane Boston 2008</td>
<td>Boston, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2-4</td>
<td>Information Management Solutions 2008 and Online Information Conference</td>
<td>London, Great Britain</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 8-11</td>
<td>LISA Forum Europe</td>
<td>Dublin, Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 8-13</td>
<td>World Congress on Specialized Translation: Languages and Intercultural Dialogue in a Globalizing World</td>
<td>Havana, Cuba</td>
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<td>December 9</td>
<td>International Conference on Intercultural Studies</td>
<td>S. Mamede Infesta, Portugal</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 15-16</td>
<td>2nd International Symposium on Universal Communication</td>
<td>Osaka, Japan</td>
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The Online Information Conference runs in the Olympia Conference Centre alongside the Information Management Solutions 2008 exhibition covering all aspects of the information industry including:

- Understanding enterprise 2.0
- Impact of web 2.0 in organizations
- Improved service delivery in the digital age
- Information dynamics and information logistics
- eDiscovery the new search
- Information structuring for improved sharing, management and access

The LISA Forum Europe will be concentrating on the business impact in the globalization industry of operating without standards. Multiple tracks, case studies and end-user presentations will focus attention on the executive issues, skill sets and business challenges associated with implementing standards to meet worldwide customer requirements.

Key topics include:

- Concrete steps for incorporating standards into enterprise Content Management Systems
- Benchmarking your globalization engineering and workflow processes
- Translation Automation standards: what is feasible today and what will it take to implement?
- How can standard methods (best practice) enable more companies to use MT more efficiently?
- Content creation standards: current practices for product globalization
GALA is an international non-profit association that promotes translation services, language technology and language management solutions. The 200+ member companies worldwide include translation agencies, localization service providers, globalization consultants and technology developers. GALA companies share a commitment to quality, service and innovation in helping clients reach global markets.

www.gala-global.org
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tekom Gesellschaft für technische Kommunikation e.V. is the largest association in Europe representing technical communicators, illustrators and translators. tekom is a neutral platform for the exchange of information, knowledge and expertise and promotes professional education and training in the field of technical communication. Founded in 1978, tekom currently represents around 6000 members in all industrial branches. tekom cooperates with associations of related professions, educational institutions, industry organizations and standards bodies worldwide.

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Technical Communication in Europe

With the foundation of TCeurope nine European associations of technical writers promote the quality of technical communication across borders, popularize the occupational image, advance educational opportunities and support the interests of their members all across Europe.

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Martina Tomaschowski, empolis GmbH