All Languages Ltd®
Since 1971

Translators & Interpreters

Terminology management.

Consistency, standards and cost efficiencies protect your brand and increase customer satisfaction.

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Introduction

In most organizations there are hundreds of terms i.e. words, phrases, and brand names, that are important to staff and customers. The need to manage these terms for <u>every language</u> in which the company conducts business is often overlooked.

When you consider that the amount of content that companies are creating is growing exponentially, proactive terminology management is more important than ever.

Terminology management is the umbrella name for the process and tools used to catalogue your terms using glossaries that maintain consistency by providing approved terminology and strict rules for usage.

Taking a proactive approach to terminology management lets you gain control, set higher standards, and empower translators to produce their best work with greater ease. Linguists will not have to struggle with the consistency of terms, keywords, acronyms, synonyms, abbreviations, etc.

This document was designed to improve your knowledge of terminology management and to help you stay ahead of the game as the volume of content grows. It explains what you can do, in practical terms, to start laying the groundwork for producing quality translations, quickly and cost efficiently, for all languages.

The need for consistency
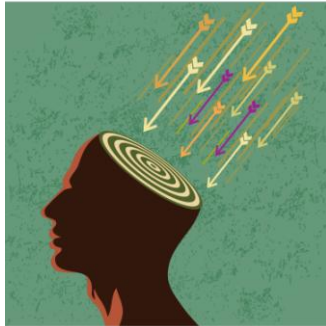
Your company's products, services and brand rely on consistent messaging and accuracy, which is impossible without terminology management.

Imagine receiving product documentation and/or instructions that contained errors or was confusing. You'd wonder about the quality of the product, develop a negative feeling towards the brand and possibly not buy products from that company again. Plus, there are likely hundreds of others who will have that same experience.

RISKY BUSINESS

From a company perspective, the cost of insufficient terminology management is very high. Inbound customer inquiries rise, returns and refunds rise, brand value drops, and negative comments in social media will proliferate.

In many industries such as pharmaceuticals, aerospace, national defence or atomic energy, incorrect terminologies and errors can be more than just costly... they can be disastrous.

Terminology management helps you avoid the risk of confusing your customers by letting you:

- Decide which terms need to be managed;
- Establish a system or process for keeping track of terms and their translations;
- Set some rules for usage and classify each term as "preferred" or "prohibited";
- Provide access to everyone who needs to look up terms.

CLIENTS AND TRANSLATION SERVICE PROVIDERS PLAY DIFFERENT ROLES

Authoring content and translating content are two very different tasks. Since authoring comes first, it is important to understand that consistency at the source reduces terminology related issues at the translation stage.

Consistency at the source

Most companies have a number of authors generating content who are not professional writers, or linguists, so they are unaware of the risks associated with using inconsistent terminology.

Some common terminology errors that authors make are:

- Over estimating their writing skills and knowledge of the English language;
- Forgetting the correct spacing and capitalization of important terms;
- Using a term that has become obsolete;
- Purposely varying terms to avoid sounding repetitive;
- Being unaware that a spreadsheet or other method of managing terminologies may exist, and not asking for same;
- Not being willing, or able, to kick start a process to build a basic term bank or automated database;
- Believing that their work does not require editing by a subject matter expert or other qualified party prior to being sent out for translation.

 Some form of terminology management should be applied at the authoring phase and integrate with terminology management systems of your translation service provider. Collaborating with your translation service provider to jointly develop a solution is the best course of action to ensure proper integration.

Terminology management

Terminology management is a process that structures a company's key terms, brand literature and industry jargon into a single terminology repository to ensure effective and consistent translations in multiple languages.

To develop and implement an effective terminology management solution, your translation service provider will need to perform the following services:

- Needs assessment
- Review of existing terminology resources and materials
- Specification of required terminology tools
- Preparing and importing existing terminology into term base
- Terminology extraction
- Validation of terms by client
- Term base update and ongoing maintenance

The degree of complexity and amount of work required to complete the above noted steps will vary depending on your situation. All Languages has expertise with a wide range of terminology

applications and standards, and can advise you on the most suitable processes and terminology choices. This includes Content management Systems (CMS) and Term Base eXchange (TBX) the ISO-approved, open XML-based standard for exchanging structured terminological data.
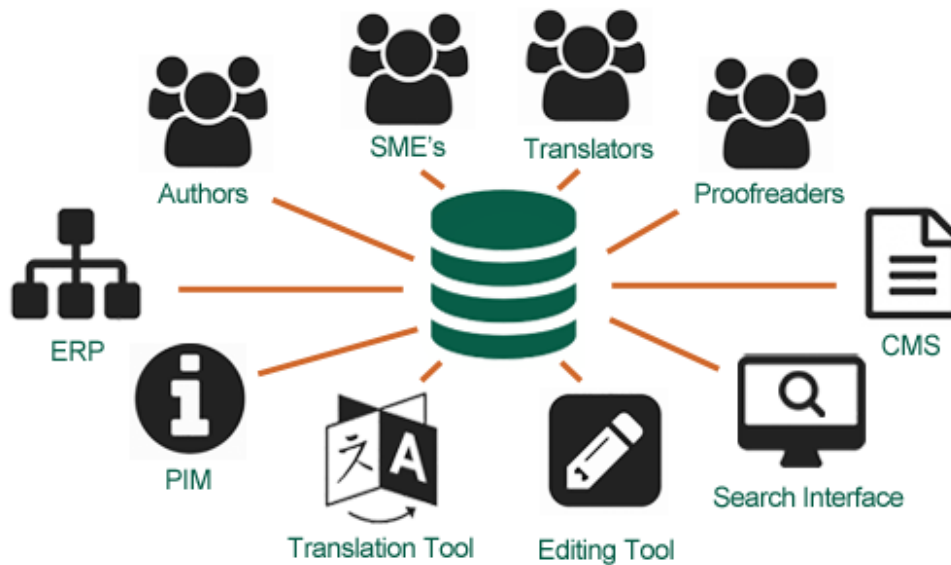
TERMINOLOGY DATABASE IS THE HEART OF THE SYSTEM

Your translation service provider uses a full suite of terminology management software that contains tools and a central repository to store and manage validated terminology.

The software allows your term base to be searchable in any direction, and is scalable to accommodate an almost unlimited number of terms and languages. This resource is shared by translators who can securely access the system as required.

The system also keeps track of "domains" of terminology (for example, for different product lines or business units) and can be programmed to prevent unapproved changes to terminology.

TERMINOLOGY EXTRACTION IS PERFORMED BY HUMANS

 Although advanced technologies are at the heart of a good system, experienced linguists are required to extract and align key terms. These professionals identify synonyms (when required) and translate terms into multiple languages using their own skills and knowledge.

To make the process more efficient, linguists use automated tools that automatically locate and extract terms from existing source text or bilingual documentation.

Benefits are easily recognized

Terminology extraction enables your in-house subject matter experts to identify the unique terms being used in existing content. They can then correct errors, inconsistencies, spelling, hyphenation, and so forth. Fixing these problems is essential early as down the road it saves time and money while reducing translation problems.

Types of terms to manage

The most common types of terms that need to be managed include homonyms, synonyms, new terms, and not-to-be-translated terms.

Homonyms are words that have more than one meaning which can make a message unclear or difficult to understand. When your audience has to decipher the meaning of a term, there is a chance the translator will not translate it correctly.

Synonyms are words that have the same meaning as another word. Synonyms affect product quality, usability, and translatability. Synonyms will accidentally appear when terms or names fall out of favor such as a 'fax' (which was originally a 'telecopy') or a "photo copy" which was once a "Xerox".

New terms appear are a result of natural language evolution as well as by impromptu creation. There is a temptation (especially in marketing) to create new, trendy words when equally effective well-established ones already exist.

Not-to-be-translated terms are just that. For example, product names are often legally trademarked and should not be translated. As part of the management process, you need to tell translators which words to utilize "as is".

Services that will help you

To help your company realize the benefits of effective terminology management, All Languages offers a full range of services:

- Consulting to develop a corporate terminology management solution;
- IT services and project management;
- Evaluation of existing glossaries;
- Creation of new glossaries or revisions to existing;
- Terminology extraction;
- Ongoing terminology management;
- Translation memory maintenance.

Summary

1. Content creation is growing exponentially.
2. Consistent use of terminologies is a challenge.
3. Inconsistency threatens your brand and reduces client satisfaction.
4. Proactive terminology management lets you gain control, set higher standards, and empower translators to produce their best work with greater ease.
5. Clients/authors and translation service providers play a different role in the process, so collaboration is important.
6. Advanced technologies are used to create efficiencies.
7. Human skills and knowledge are essential to the process.
8. Common types of terms to be managed include homonyms, synonyms, new terms, and not-to-be-translated terms.
9. All Languages offers the consulting, implementation and ongoing translation services you need.