

Case Study: On-Demand Translation Outsourcing

The Challenge

Clerical Medical, part of the HBOS group, one of the biggest financial services groups in Europe, is specialized in the fields of life insurances, pension products as well as international capital investment for private and institutional investors.

As one of the major cross-border companies in Europe, HBOS frequently requires translation of internal and outbound communication. In view of a growing need for on-demand translation capacity, HBOS turned to XTRA to reduce the workload of their internal Language Services team.

Target Languages

Main language pair: English into German and German into English

Additional languages: English into French, Italian, Spanish or Dutch

The Solution

The first challenge to master was to find translators with a solid background in the fields of life insurances, pension products and capital investment and train them to meet HBOS's requirements. Potential candidates were selected based on domain experience and sample translations. By means of a continuous feedback process, involving both XTRA's Quality Assurance team and reviews by HBOS, a steep learning curve was achieved among the selected translators. As a result, after a short initial training period, more and more of the translations provided by XTRA could be passed on directly to the internal client without an additional review.

The second challenge was about simplifying the translation workflow. After some discussion about the requirements, XTRA came up with the idea to implement a self-service portal that would allow internal clients to submit translation requests. These requests should be forwarded to HBOS's internal Language Services team which could then decide on a case-by-case basis whether the translation should be done by Language Services or outsourced to XTRA. Since XTRA already had all the building blocks of the self-service portal, it was a matter of just two weeks until a portal named XTRA/net was implemented.

The Workflow

1. client ("Requester") submits translation request via self-service portal
2. Language Services ("Coordinator") decides upon order execution (internal or outsourcing)
3. translation agency ("Agency") receives notification via email, verifies feasibility and confirms order acceptance
4. depending on order settings, translation agency delivers translation to Language Services or client
5. Language Services reviews translation and delivers translation to client
6. client receives notification that translation is complete
7. project closing: overviews about project status, cost and purchase orders

Client Benefits

- no software installation required (fully browser-based solution)
- very easy to use
- dramatic increase in efficiency by standardizing recurring processes
- supports outsourcing "on demand"
- minimization of internal effort with a maximum of control
- tracking of project status and project archival
- integration of billing data