

## Translation Memory

Translation Memory (TM) is software that enables you to centralize previously translated content in a multilingual database and reuse it during future translations. TM enhances the translation process by helping produce faster and more consistent results. Through the use of TM you can drastically cut the amount of new translation that is required, thereby reducing costs.

TM works by comparing new content with previously translated content to determine which text segments can be reused and how much requires new translation. Depending upon your specific situation, TM can become a valuable asset over time, saving you money and maintaining the quality of your translations. Members of McElroy's Project Management Office have the experience and expertise to evaluate our customers' short- and long-term translation needs and make the right choice concerning TM.

### BENEFITS OF TRANSLATION MEMORY

#### Reduced costs

When previously translated text segments can be reused, they will not have to be retranslated. With less new text to translate, costs decrease.

#### Time-to-market

TM tools optimize translator productivity by displaying previously translated text, and allowing them to concentrate on new content.

#### Increased consistency

TM tools work in conjunction with terminology databases, which enforces the use of preferred terminology. By having access to previously translated material, the translator is better able to replicate the style used in previous translation efforts. These reference points are especially important in very large translation projects with a team of translators working simultaneously by enforcing consistent use of terminology and writing style.

#### Higher quality, greater approval

Translations need to be acceptable in local markets. The approval of your in-country teams is often a major milestone. The increased consistency achieved through the use of TM improves and expedites the approval process from in-country reviewers.

#### Better document preparation

TM can have an indirect, but positive impact on your authoring process by encouraging more consistent and disciplined document preparation. In other words, the more consistency and discipline your use in your document authoring process, the more leverage you gain from your existing translations, turning your TM into an asset.

#### Strategic benefits

Using well-managed TMs can be a tool for enterprise-wide integration of your product information, marketing materials, website, FAQ repositories, and departmental and corporate information.

### HOW TRANSLATION MEMORY WORKS

First-time translations begin with an empty Translation Memory. The TM is built as content is translated and stored as sentence pairs in a database where, for example, the English source content is paired with its translated equivalent. When this material is updated or new material requires translation, the TM tool compares the new text with the existing TM database and reports text segments that match. With each iteration (or new translation project) the volume of the database increases, thereby increasing the rate at which matching text segments can occur.

Text segments are typically sentences, but can also be chapter headings, error messages or items in a list.

Segment matches are reported in the following way:

- 100% matches—text segments that are identical
- Repetitions—identical text segments within a single document.
- Fuzzy matches—text segments that are similar, but require editing by the translator
- New words—text segments that do not match any other text.

Over time, the number of 100% matches and fuzzy matches generally increases, while “no match” or new word segments generally decrease.

Translation Memory works best with

- Technical documents that are large, repetitive, or both.
- Similar materials such as software UI, help systems, or websites.
- Documents that are frequently updated.
- Multiple products that have similar documentation.
- Controlled authoring

### TM FEES AND OWNERSHIP

In most cases the cost to create and maintain your TM are more than offset by the savings in translation costs. Costs include source file processing, interim processing fees for text updates, and post-processing activities to export translated text into the source format.

TM ownership policies can vary from vendor to vendor; however, it is generally accepted—and McElroy's policy—that the client owns the memory.