

Terminology Matters

Reliable, accurate, and high-quality terminology is the spearhead of a successful Global Information Management strategy. Centralized terminology management saves time and costs by enabling the efficient production and distribution of multilingual content. It is a catalyst in driving more visitors to global websites, bringing products to market faster, driving customer loyalty, and reducing queries to Customer Support, all of which ensure the stability and growth of future enterprise revenue streams.

1.0 Global Information Management—Spearheading Global Corporate Performance

The challenges facing global organizations can be measured on a global scale. Changing customer preferences, regional cultures, political dynamics and intensive global competition are intensifying the struggle to win the loyalty—as well as the euros, yen, dollars, and pounds—of international customers. It is a cause worth fighting for though, and a Global Information Management strategy can help organizations meet the challenges of global market penetration head on, delivering superior international market performance, brand recognition, customer adoption rates, and lifetime customer value.

Global Information Management (GIM) is at the forefront of global corporate performance. It unifies and enhances the end-to-end process of producing global information—from content creation through acquisition, management, localization, and provisioning, to publication of global content. By unifying and automating their disparate and diverse processes under a GIM strategy, visionary organizations are:

- Driving more qualified visitors to local language websites by managing their search engine marketing keywords
- Accelerating time-to-market by eliminating delays between domestic and international product launches
- Improving the quality of customer interactions with accurate, targeted, and consistent global content
- Opening new revenue streams by speeding the creation, localization, and launch of products and marketing campaigns
- Strengthening global brand by speaking with one voice worldwide while supporting local cultural requirements
- Reducing costs through process automation and extension of multilingual assets into every stage of the content lifecycle
- Meeting regional and industry regulatory requirements with the content and process control needed to enforce standards in local languages

It is a view shared by respected commentators. For example, Content Management Research Analyst Alison Crawford from IDC comments, “IDC believes that interest in Global Information Management solutions will accelerate as companies recognize the opportunities to increase the international strength of their brand, gain untouched mindshare with new foreign consumers, maintain a strong internal corporate image, and shorten time-to-market for new products and services. All of which will lead to increased brand awareness, improved customer satisfaction and accelerated global revenues.”¹

¹ Alison Crawford, IDC Executive Brief [Getting from Yes to Ja: How Companies can Succeed by Managing Global Information](#), August 2005

2.0 Terminology Matters

A strong component of the global brand for an organization is the words or ‘terms’ which position their brand, company and products to the market. As part of a coordinated Global Information Management strategy, enterprise organizations are devoting a significant amount of time and resources to creating corporate terms which position them within the market, and evoke a particular response from their target customer audience. Think of Sony and the *PlayStation 3*; BMW and the *iDrive* in-car multi-function system; *Vodafone Live!*; or the HSBC brand tagline, ‘*The World’s Local Bank.*’

Creating corporate terminology is only the first step, however. The true test is the maintenance of terms, as they are ‘living’ assets: terms go out of fashion, technology changes, and companies diversify. The terms must be managed to allow for changes in these conditions. Since they also perform a vital function of positioning the company in the market, they must also be properly used throughout every communication in order to support the business. With multiple internal and external sources producing information using this terminology, it becomes more difficult to monitor the accuracy of the material published, and to fight the rising tide of complexity that inevitably results from duplicated effort.

There is an additional element which brings a further challenge to a company with respect to managing terminology. With many organizations structured into business silos, there is an absence of a central contact point for global information, including terminology, leading to the development of ‘island solutions.’ In a recent survey conducted by the independent body Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA), it was found that the authoring and translation/localization functions often do not report into the same executive. LISA comments: “There is often a serious disconnect between these functions, with little interface between them. Only 12% of respondents reported that content creators, terminologists and T&L [translation and localization] staff were stakeholders in each other's work. Without integration of these functions, [terminology] work tends to be treated as discrete tasks rather than as components that impact one another.” This lack of centralization leads to each division or department creating lists of terminology to suit their own needs. The accuracy and meaning of the terms begins to be lost as each term is translated several times, and also creates an unnecessarily high and replicated workload across departments.

Further, the LISA survey found that although respondents recognized the importance of terminology as being a critical component of being able to deliver consistent branding in all markets, any management that exists tends to be ad hoc, non-standardized, and driven largely by individuals, rather than through any consistent business process. LISA also reported that, “Upper management is seldom involved with terminology management at any level.”

Without executive support for managing terminology, there is a corresponding lack of budget for tools. Therefore, many organizations rely on spreadsheets and word lists to track and manage terminology. These flat files are not linguistically powerful, and cannot handle the breadth and depth of functionality required to truly manage the complexity of terminology. A solution which is scalable, embeddable and powerful is required to truly manage a large glossary for multiple authors and translators in a distributed environment.

One of the greatest challenges with managing terminology in a flat file is the method of access. With the user directly accessing data from his local hard disk or network server, significant traffic results on the network. Further, he cannot be assured of the validity of the terms contained within a spreadsheet, because there is no built-in audit tracking, administrative security, historic workflow management, or user rights management. Worse still, because the terminology data is not centralized on a single server, he cannot share terms without physically moving them from one place to another (perhaps via email), or by copying and pasting.

Successful global organizations need to focus on providing real-time, centralized access to their terminology – a shared environment where corporate terms are available to anyone, no matter the location. A consistent, centralized corporate terminology strategy provides crucial benefits in terms of:

- Improving publication quality and customer experience – ensuring that every communication uses approved terminology, increasing customer satisfaction
- Securing the corporate global brand – maintaining consistent global brand identity in any market, encouraging faster local market adoption
- Increasing speed-to-market and business agility – enabling rapid content creation across multiple languages and delivery channels for faster new market entry and response
- Delivering effective translation management – providing accurate and approved terminology with real-time verification during the translation process
- Creating corporate glossaries – automatically extracting terminology from existing and new content to rapidly create a comprehensive dictionary

According to Kara Warburton, responsible for defining the IBM terminology strategy and the chair of the Terminology Special Interest Group for LISA, too many organizations remain unaware of the need to invest in terminology development and active management. And, as she reports in the article *The Terms of Business*, organizations that choose to ignore terminology management do so at their peril. “The message is simple....managing terminology supports your corporate brand image, and makes your products easier to use, easier to translate, and easier to adapt to global markets,” she says. “Yet getting enterprises to focus resources on this activity continues to be a challenge. Maybe they should consider what happens when you don’t manage terminology. Without controls, terminology can cause problems that will cost your company money and customer satisfaction. We are talking about increased support calls, escalating translation costs, increased time-to-market, and sometimes even product failure. Could you afford to ignore these effects on your bottom line?”²

2.1 Hewlett-Packard is on Terms with Terminology

Caroline Neri works for the Translation and Localization Team in the Global Content Acquisition organization of HP. Through its Global Information Management system -- featuring centralized and managed terminology – the worldwide and highly respected technology provider is able to process approximately 102 million words each year and receives numerous benefits from doing so. She says, “Terminology management is very important for HP to maintain a strong brand. Through terminology management, we ensure that the same quality standards (‘one voice’) are enforced across all the languages where HP does business. Also terminology management helps HP to deliver high-quality translations and creates a means to quickly communicate changes that occur.”

Currently, the termbase at HP has approximately 25,000 entries in English and 30 other languages. New glossaries and terminology data are constantly being fed to the termbase. “The termbase will definitely grow as HP continues to consolidate more projects into the Workflow system,” says Caroline. “All projects processed through the system are required to have a termbase reference in the project template; this ensures that the translators always have access to the latest terminology.” She continues, “Using other methods for terminology management – such as Microsoft Excel or Word – is simply not sufficient, not scalable, and leaves margins for errors and miscommunication. By centralizing our processes and

²Kara Warburton, Chair, LISA Terminology SIG. *The Terms of Business*, LISA Newsletter, November 2003

terminology data, HP makes important information, such as product names, brand names, and other technical terminology and web headings, available to the vast audience using the Global Information Management system. This means that translators, reviewers, project managers and others all have access to the same information. Updates are made to the central termbase and are automatically sent out with the newest projects. This of course also requires some centralized update and maintenance processes.”

The net result is that HP is now translating documents at a faster rate and to a higher standard of quality. The single, unified view of information enables the project teams to work collaboratively and adapt to changes in a highly efficient environment.

2.2 SAS Takes Terminology Seriously

Terminology is equally important for the global leader in business intelligence software and services, SAS. The company has 31 years of experience and 43,000 customer sites worldwide, and—by partnering with SDL—is well on the way to providing a better customer experience by developing standards and processes for defining how the company uses its language assets.

Dee Stribling, Project Manager at SAS says, “The SAS Publications Division has worked with SDL over the past three years in developing and deploying a terminology management system. While SDL MultiTerm is the technology linchpin of this system, the overall terminology management initiative at SAS is much broader. SAS is in the process of improving software messages, integrating term management with localization processes, and increasing an overall corporate awareness of the importance of terminology in a global business environment. Working with SDL experts has been central to SAS success so far. In addition, key elements have also been Executive Management support, phased deployment, and recognition that process definition must be front and center for integrating term management with business activities.”

2.3 SAP Sees More to Terminology ROI than Just Dollars

It is a similar story at SAP, the world’s third largest software company. Mark Childress of the SAP Language Services Department writes in Multilingual Magazine that, “A well-maintained collection of terms is the central conceptual pillar supporting the information produced by employees. Terminology collections provide guiding principles for further development and integration of knowledge, and smooth communication among people within the organization and with people in other organizations. Standardized terminology thereby helps organizations master the explosive growth of and constant change in information and can serve as a key resource in an overall knowledge management strategy.” Mark goes on further to explain that the lack of a solid ROI model for managing terminology may be held up as a reason to jettison a terminology project. “And this is a mistake,” he says. “The costs are visible and the benefits veiled; yet in the same way an immunization jab may hurt a bit but prevents disease in the long run, standardizing terminology at the start of a project may cost a bit but will help keep the project healthy in all stages, from initial product specification to customer support.”

Further, he states that the profit of a terminology management system can be measured in different ways: external income, internal cost savings and "soft" measurements such as customer satisfaction. Mark summarizes by stating, “Increasing the leverage of terminology work allows more knowledge-based work to be completed with less effort.”

2.4 Terminology Management in Action at Bosch

German industrial giant Bosch is just one example of the thousands of organizations worldwide that have adopted this type of best practice terminology management solution. Inspired by the need to replace disparate, departmental forms of terminology management, Bosch required a web-based portal which all employees could access via the intranet to look for terms in several different languages. In other words, Bosch required the deployment of an online dictionary containing company-specific data.

The company selected SDL MultiTerm to support corporate terminology in 23 languages. Now, when users search for a term, they are presented with a definition, along with other relevant information such as the source of the term. The user can search for this term in his native language, thereby not requiring the knowledge of translation. When he makes an inquiry, he immediately receives a clearly-arranged, easy-to-understand reply: a single record containing every piece of information and translations available for that term. Moreover, he always receives the most up-to-date entries and information wherever — and whenever -- the inquiry is made.

The resounding success of the Bosch terminology portal is reflected in the user statistics. At the start of the project, the portal was accessed around 20,000 times a month. Twelve months on, this figure had risen to almost 500,000 — an increase of over 2000%. The SDL terminology portal ends the era when the same terms were translated over and over again due to disconnected business units: each new term now only has to be translated once and is then made available to all departments. This centralized and always up-to-date terminology ensures the consistent and accurate use of information in all business divisions and departments, saving both time and money.

3.0 Terminology Management Prerequisites

Terminology management systems have established themselves as an indispensable method of delivering consistent and high-quality documentation — for everything from the user manual accompanying a microwave oven, to the packaging encasing a headache tablet, or the safety card sitting in the seatback on an aircraft. But any organization considering a terminology management system needs to consider several fundamental prerequisites as outlined below:

3.1 Distributed Design

Distributed terminology management enables all contributors to work simultaneously on one centralized data pool. This ensures that no one is working with outdated data, and that everyone — from engineers, linguists and translators, to writers, sales people and marketing staff — shares the same language data knowledge.

3.2 Powerful and Flexible Architecture

A terminology management system must be powerful enough to manage any language. By managing terms in all languages, organizations can standardize on one workflow/technology. One single multilingual database eliminates the need to maintain a separate database for each language combination (English|Spanish, English|French, and French|Spanish), which consequently removes the need to duplicate translations. Flexibility ensures that users can search in any direction, with any language being used as the source, and can cater for alternatives and word changes, such as synonyms, abbreviations or regional variations, as well as indicate preferred versus forbidden, outdated or alternative terms.

3.3 Multiple User Access

The terminology management system must adapt and grow according to the needs of the organization. As a business grows, so too should the solution: scaling from one single desktop user to large-scale deployments in multi-national organizations. Connecting many users to the same data repository in real-time reduces data replication costs and eliminates the erroneous use of outdated data. A modular, scalable architecture also ensures optimal network performance, regardless of the volume of simultaneous users.

Best practice demands that terminology from all languages is combined into a limitless dictionary with powerful searching capabilities. Specific functions are required to allow terms to be easily managed and shared across the organization. Further, the ability to extract terms from existing documentation should exist, enabling organizations to rapidly and easily create and maintain their corporate glossary.

4.0 Terminology Management across the Content Lifecycle

It is important to recognize the importance of terminology outside the narrow context of the translation process. Indeed, terminology management is an intrinsic element of both internal and external knowledge management; and it is present at all the stages of the content lifecycle.

This is a view shared by Kara Warburton of IBM³. “The focus of terminology work is beginning to shift away from translation into other domains such as content authoring and search technologies,” she says. This viewpoint is one shared by Raphael Prono of Xerox, who says, “Terminology management is a waste of time if it is solely performed by the localization vendor/translation department. Translators and terminologists facing erroneous or inconsistent source terms have to solve authoring problems with no hope of stopping them from reappearing. Our goal is to educate our customers so they understand the benefits of managing terminology from the source down. When we put a process in place with our customers where both authors and translators can openly communicate and contribute to a common terminology database, our customers benefit from improved authoring and translation quality through consistent terminology reuse, and translation cost reduction through higher reuse of legacy source material.”

In Raphael Prono’s scenario, the reuse of globalized terminology across documents, projects and development teams can save weeks of authoring, localization, and QA work. It can accelerate research dissemination, regulatory compliance, and product rollouts; help optimize the consistency of product-related information across all languages; and prevent errors, simplify engineering, and increase quality. Further, as Kara Warburton points out, managing terminology for Search Engine Marketing is a further benefit if utilized by the Marketing department.

4.1 The Content Conveyor Belt

Global enterprises may not manufacture the same thing or have a similar corporate structure, but they do share one fundamental thing: every department creates some type of content — including Human Resources, Engineering, Quality Assurance, Sales, Marketing, Customer Support, Technical Writing, etc. Every one of these departments uses a similar process to create global content:

- Create — write the content
- Store and Manage — using a Content Management System or other internal storage system
- Translate/Localize — prepare the information for a local market
- Publish — deliver the information over a variety of customer touchpoints, including web, email, mobile and print

Once the information is created by a department, it is passed to another department as reference material; for example, Product Development delivers content, such as a Product Requirements Document, to Technical Writing. The Technical Writing team creates new information from this source, such as a User Guide. The User Guide is used by the Marketing team to create a product brief, and so on. This “Content Conveyor Belt” approach is one utilized by many global organizations, and although practical in nature, it is the reason that inconsistencies can easily develop. Because there is no one single body in charge of the information produced by the organization as a whole, it is perfectly within a department’s right to change the content. For example, when presented with feature names from Engineering, Marketing may discover that corporate branding guidelines have not been met,

³Kara Warburton, Chair, LISA Terminology SIG. *The Terms of Business*. LISA Newsletter, November 2003

and modify this information. However, this change is rarely communicated back to the Engineering or Technical Writing departments, meaning these other areas:

- a) Will continue to make these same types of ‘mistakes’
- b) Are unaware of both the branding guideline and the change that was made
- c) Subsequently confused when these ‘new’ terms are presented to them



Figure 1: Terminology is passed along the Content Conveyor Belt to be used in different document types

This example illustrates how one change by a department further up the Content Conveyor Belt can result in internal confusion and frustration; however, external problems also arise. Customers may see these inconsistencies within documents, and call Customer Support for clarification. This has produced an additional burden on the call center, confused the customer, and increased costs to the company’s bottom line. This example becomes a frightening prospect indeed when multiple languages are brought into the mix. This is shown in the following graphic: a single inconsistency produced in a source document can easily be replicated into 6 other reference documents. When sent to translation into 3 further languages, the one inconsistency has now resulted in 18 incorrect documents. It has now become an incredibly expensive mistake.

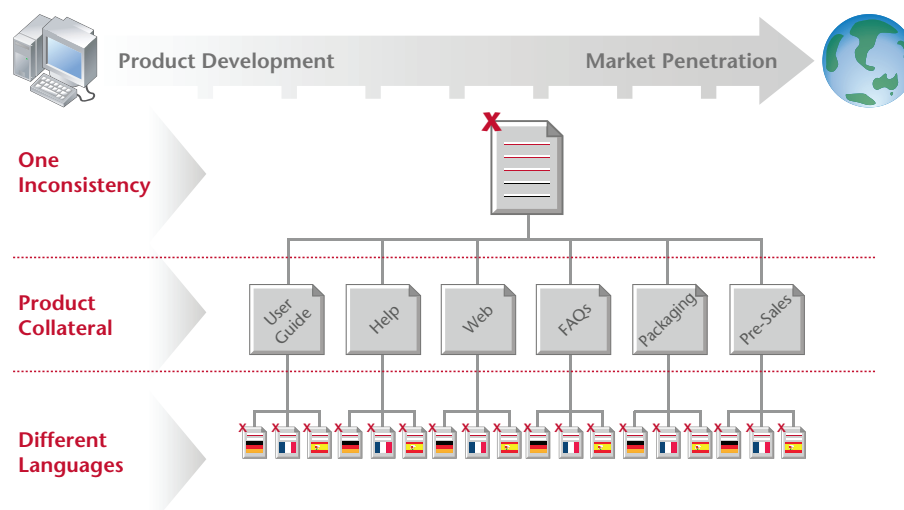



Figure 2: A single inconsistency easily becomes 18 mistakes



By default, creating and managing global information is a complex process because information can be created simultaneously in multiple languages in multiple locations. Although this information crosses linguistic and cultural boundaries, departmental and divisional boundaries, and geographical and organizational boundaries, it must be managed centrally. A global information strategy manages these complexities at each phase of the information lifecycle.

4.2 A Best Practice Terminology Management Example

The hypothetical example of a cell phone manufacturer provides context to the value of terminology management across all stages of the content lifecycle.

The fictitious company is MobiFon — a global manufacturer of cell phones. This company is developing a new range of converged mobile communication devices which link mobile telephony, video streaming and video downloading. The innovative solutions will be marketed in more than 60 countries worldwide and the success of the Global Information Management strategy will be a determining factor in the subsequent success of the new products.

As part of the Global Information Management strategy, MobiFon plans to implement a centralized Terminology Management system. This will be used to create, control and coordinate all of the languages used in the internal and external communications for the new converged devices. MobiFon's aim is to influence — and ultimately take ownership of — the language used within the new market for such devices, generating an automatic brand association. To this end, the company has invented new terms to explain the features of the devices — terms which have never been used before on a mobile device, and these terms will feature in their worldwide Search Engine Marketing campaign. MobiFon deploys a best practice terminology management solution — SDL MultiTerm — to provide intelligent management of and centralized access to all the new and existing terminology associated with the products. The solution combines terminology from all languages into a limitless dictionary with powerful searching capabilities. Terms can now be easily managed and shared across the organization. Additionally, terms can be extracted from existing documentation, enabling MobiFon to rapidly and easily generate an internal dictionary. The net result is that the appropriate terminology is available to every content creator in the content supply chain — not merely to manage the translation process, but as the gateway to integrated Global Information Management. MobiFon is also able to leverage accurate terminology during the content creation stage by using SDL AuthorAssistant. This solution prompts and highlights inconsistent or incorrect terminology to authors in such diverse departments as Marketing, Sales and Customer Support, ensuring the production of accurate content.

The effective management of MobiFon's terminology provides invaluable benefits at every stage of the content lifecycle. This example provides a powerful illustration to the true nature of the Content Conveyor Belt.

4.2.1 Content Creation

MobiFon's product specialists, such as engineers, application managers, interface analysts and others, access proprietary terms contained within SDL MultiTerm from within their native business applications to determine product specifications, functions and fixes. This integration means that these communities do not need a further desktop installation, nor do they have to visit the intranet to see the company's terminology. Instead, the terms are available to them from within applications they use on a daily basis; for example:

- Borland CalibreRM™ is used by the product managers to track application requirements. The corporate terms have been loaded into the system's Glossary function, ensuring that product managers can see features which have gone into previous product iterations.
- The Remedy® Quality Management System is used by the developers to review quality issues escalated to them from Customer Support. Terms appear highlighted so that engineers and Support staff both know the technology being discussed, even if they are using different terms.
- Microsoft® Word is used by the technical writers to create product documentation. Terms are available to the writers during the content creation process, ensuring that product and marketing documentation, such as the cell phone user guide and packaging, is accurate. Further, the writers automatically check their work using SDL AuthorAssistant to ensure the content matches as closely as possible with existing translation assets. This helps MobiFon ensure that translated content can be reused and the correct terminology applied before the text is sent for translation, resulting in more accurate translations for a lower cost. These groups all have the ability to submit new terms for consideration by the approver, and also to submit feedback on existing terms.


As terminology is shared among these groups, accurate content is consistently produced, thereby removing the possibility of mistakes occurring along the Content Conveyor Belt. Achieving a higher level of quality and accuracy at the point of creation significantly reduces the review cycle, resulting in faster market penetration, earlier local market adoption, and rapid return on investment.

4.2.2 Translation

With multiple MobiFon translators working worldwide into many languages, accessing approved, accurate and updated corporate terminology during the translation process is critical. A seamless integration of the terminology database with the translation software enables *Active Term Recognition*: terms are automatically recognized, approved translations are suggested, and incorrect use is flagged, all without manual intervention by the translator.

SDL MultiTerm provides several methods of sharing terms so that translators can continue working in their preferred method: access via server or any standard Internet browser, as well as a built-in import and export function. Users can quickly and easily find terms using a variety of powerful search methods:

- Simple searches, to locate specific terms
- Fuzzy searches, to locate terms that are similar or contain part of the search text
- Wildcard searches, to locate all terms that contain a specific string of characters
- Full text searches, to locate any instance of a term appearing anywhere within the database
- Multi-termbase search, to locate a term that may exist in multiple terminology databases



Third-party organizations have simultaneous, browser-based access to the same terminology repository for translation. This may include the advertising agency planning the copy for the advertising campaign; the Search Engine Optimization consultancy; the distributor or reseller preparing their local website to support the launch; or simply the freelance translator localizing the website for the launch in China, France or wherever.

The definition of corporate terms is also important for large-scale machine translation projects. Terminology is utilized by the SDL Knowledge-based Translation System™ to ensure a greater level of accuracy of the translations that the machine automatically performs.

4.2.3 Publication

Terminology Management is an indispensable asset for MobiFon's external communications. It enables shared access to approved terminology for product and part names, technical information, marketing messages, brands, and more to all content creators, including internal departments and external agencies which provide content for MobiFon, such as public relations vendors. Centralized access may be enabled via network server or the Internet, providing complete flexibility. User-defined security administration ensures that only specified users can edit terms, while others can perform smart searching and simply view the results. This ensures MobiFon's approved terms are protected, while empowering its authors to create accurate content using the right terminology.

External communications also include the MobiFon corporate website. The company's compiled terminology can be applied to keyword searching, ensuring that customers find the information they are looking for the first time. MobiFon can take further advantage of their terminology from within their web Content Management System, ensuring that the information across their extended site is as accurate as possible.

4.2.4 Brand Management

The shared terminology environment protects the MobiFon corporate and product brands via intelligent management, maintenance and delivery of the approved corporate terminology. Features include unlimited term entry, powerful search capabilities, and real-time integration into content creation tools, such as SDL AuthorAssistant and Microsoft Word. Writers therefore have embedded access to the corporate-approved terminology for the new phones, as well as to the internal editorial style guide from within their authoring environment. Term alternatives are automatically supplied to the author regarding incorrect usage, so that out-of-date and forbidden terminology can be replaced as an author works.

This proves particularly valuable for the MobiFon Marketing Department, who rely on the terminology management solution's central repository to determine which existing product terminology can be used for the new products. These terms are incorporated into the MobiFon website via the Content Management System, into their Search Engine Marketing strategies, product literature, handset packaging, point-of-sale displays and other sales collateral.

4.2.5 Search Engine Marketing Optimization

In order for MobiFon to achieve their ultimate goal of bringing qualified visitors to their website, it is critical that the right keywords are utilized on popular search engines in all languages in which the company operates. This ensures that searchers worldwide will see the company's website first in the list of returned results and Sponsored Links section, while experiencing consistent terminology and therefore strengthening customer perception of the company. As visitors can find information about MobiFon more easily, a higher number of site visits is achieved, leading to increased conversion rates. Further, individual customer types can be reached with specific keywords that are approved for use within that language, supporting specific marketing campaigns.

Managing these keywords within the centralized terminology repository ensures that consistent and approved terms are used across all languages, enabling deep comprehension for searchers. Further, keeping a watchful eye on keyword trends ensures the Marketing team stays current with market shifts, maintaining customer perception that the company is the thought leader in the telecommunications industry.

By tracking MobiFon's search engine keywords and their localized translations within SDL MultiTerm, the company can achieve optimum results across the world in any language. As a result, MobiFon's conversion rates are higher, increasing their worldwide sales.

4.2.6 Customer Management

Terminology management also has a pivotal role to play at every stage of the physical customer engagement. The Sales team uses the system to develop an assortment of sales support materials, such as Requests for Proposals (RFPs), presentations, overviews and their own internal 'cheat sheets.' The MobiFon Legal team reviews the terminology via a simple online interface to ensure compliance with local trading standards, competitive trademark infringements and other legal requirements. Customer Support depends on it to quickly develop accurate and timely materials for clients, such as Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), the Support Website, Issue Tracking and Quality Management.

A subset of the MobiFon termbase can also be exposed on the website for customers who want to read about the new features and technologies. The multilingual termbase is presented to these users as a set of monolingual glossaries depending on the client's language, with definitions and media files to illustrate the concepts. Further, by managing terminology and integrating the system with its internet, customers receive more relevant information when searching the MobiFon website.

4.2.7 Product End-of-Life Management

Terminology management even extends into product retirement, when MobiFon discontinues an older handset model or no longer supports it. All departments need to be aware of the retired product set and how it affects existing customers. How long will the old handset be supported? Where within existing corporate communications does the handset name appear: product briefs, website, presentations? How can the company be assured that the retired handset does not continue to appear in these places? Of course, internal education plays a large role here; however, the terminology management system provides further assistance by showing these older handset names as 'forbidden' when they are used.

5.0 Return on Investment—the Holy Grail of Terminology Management

As outlined earlier, organizations that rely on a loose ‘island solution’ for terminology management face increased support calls, escalating translation costs, increased time-to-market, and sometimes even product failure. But by how much? Often the benefits surrounding an intelligent, shared terminology management solution are more qualitative than quantitative: improving publication quality, enhancing the customer experience, securing the corporate global brand and delivering effective translation management. Many practitioners will testify that quantified, metric evidence of the success of a terminology management system can be hard to come by; however, this is not true in every case. Evidence of the return on investment companies are experiencing is illustrated in the following examples.

5.1 Agfa Healthcare

Part of the Agfa-Geveart Group, Agfa HealthCare provides advanced imaging and healthcare IT systems and services for clinical specialties and healthcare facility management. Agfa deployed the market-leading SDL MultiTerm solution to enable the intelligent management of the company’s centralized radiology and clinical information systems’ terms. With both English and German as the source languages, Agfa HealthCare is using it to store terms with their associated definitions, descriptions, and images, along with their language translations.

SDL MultiTerm has enhanced output quality while simultaneously transforming the speed and effectiveness of corporate terms management. Publication quality has increased significantly by presenting accurate, approved and standardized terms to the author, as well as highlighting forbidden terms to ensure they are not used. Terminology is highlighted during the translation process for translator acceptance, which speeds the review cycle as translations are more accurate and consistent. Previously taking 2.5 man days involving multiple departments to correct one wrong term in source language, the company was able to speed their time-to-market by 60%. Additionally, Agfa has increased their overall translation quality by 25%, achieving enhanced brand recognition and improved productivity.

5.2 Giesecke & Devrient

Giesecke & Devrient is a leading technology supplier to banks and governments. In the past, products were developed in separate business units, each with its own technical writing team. It was only when documentation was sent to the singular Translation Department that inconsistencies were noticed. “Each time we started working on a new document, we found a new name for something or a different way to describe it than before,” said DeAnn D. Coughler, Translation Manager. “As the inconsistencies increased, it became necessary to stop the translation work and consult with the project owner for the ‘correct’ name or wording. With eight other word lists owned by other departments, it was difficult to judge which contained the correct term. Our project delivery dates really began to suffer.”

Giesecke & Devrient deployed SDL MultiTerm to manage its terminology. The concordant searching and filtering provided fast and specific results—and with a 30-40% increase in terminology reuse, the company noticed a significantly faster turnaround time from the Translation Department. “Using SDL MultiTerm, we have saved time on translation work by not having to continually double-check terminology. Thirty seconds per term in a 300-page manual with two or three questions per page can add up to another day’s work time booked to a project,” Coughler commented.

Translation costs were reduced by 15 to 20%. As an added benefit, the implementation enabled better communication between development and documentation. For example, engineers began checking for already-existing product names, and using appropriate naming conventions. With over 4,000 moveable parts being delivered, this saved considerable time and effort for both the engineers and the writers.

5.3 Siemens Medical Solutions

It is a similar story at Siemens Medical Solutions, a world leader in healthcare products and services. The company was challenged to improve access to critical product technical information for more than 4,000 customer service engineers (CSE) worldwide. Siemens also needed to reduce the time necessary to find the correct product technical information for CSEs and end consumers.

Residing within an over-arching SDL Global Information Management Solution, SDL MultiTerm provided a framework of terms in the source and destination languages that confirmed accurate and appropriate words and phrases to describe particular medical equipment. To improve operations, Siemens Medical Solutions used SDL statistics and reporting to monitor localization operations that were outsourced as well as those performed in-house.

As a result, more information is available to CSEs in their local language which meant more effective and faster problem resolution. There was also a reduction in printed manuals by 90% by migrating to digital media. Moreover, Siemens Medical Services generated localization cost savings of 30% and anticipated overall savings of US\$1.13 million per year. “Managing terminology is a critical aspect of our business,” said Uwe Danner, Principal Consultant of IT Processes and CMS Project Manager at Siemens Medical Solutions. “It is vital that we deliver accurate user information for our medical devices, as these tools are used to save lives. Managing our terminology with SDL MultiTerm has enabled us to produce consistent documentation in describing our medical equipment across multiple product lines. This ensures regulatory compliance, user-friendliness and makes our documentation easy to understand.”

6.0 Drawing it All Together

InterBrand, the leading brand consultancy, reports that successful global brands deliver a consistent visual, verbal, sonic and tactile identity to a worldwide audience. Organizations invest a significant amount into developing distinctive terminology which creates this identity. Equally important is applying the brand terminology across multiple languages for the global market.

Managing terminology enables approved corporate and industry terms to be used in every communication. It allows those crucial terms which distinguish the organization in a crowded marketplace to be managed, approved, defined, described and — most importantly — shared among all the contributors to the content creation process. By managing, centralizing and making terms accessible to every author and translator, costs dramatically decrease, markets can be reached faster, and the information produced is of a higher quality. This enables consistency of branding and messaging, which has an additional benefit of encouraging faster local market adoption.

The more users who are granted access to a centralized termbase, the higher the value of such a system. This is especially true when different departments — from development to translation to post-sales — can make changes and updates which are available simultaneously and in real-time. The integration into authoring tools, knowledge management, CAD systems or other business applications, as well as the support of various kinds of media handling, will return further benefits across the organization. Internal education and expertise will be enhanced, and published communications will greatly increase in quality and consistency.



SDL is the leader in Global Information Management (GIM) solutions that empower organizations to accelerate the delivery of high-quality multilingual content to global markets. Its enterprise software and services integrate with existing business systems to manage the delivery of global information from authoring to publication and throughout the distributed translation supply chain.

Global industry leaders rely on SDL to provide enterprise software or hosted services for their GIM processes, including ABN-Amro, Best Western, Bosch, Canon, Chrysler, CNH, Hewlett-Packard, Microsoft, Philips, SAP, Sony, SUN Microsystems and Virgin Atlantic.

SDL has implemented more than 400 enterprise GIM solutions, has deployed over 150,000 software licenses across the GIM ecosystem and provides access to on-demand translation portals for 10 million customers per month. Over 1,000 service professionals deliver consulting, implementation and language services through its global infrastructure of more than 50 offices in 30 countries.

For more information, visit www.sdl.com.