



A Proven Globalization Strategy

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Transforming challenges to opportunities with the right technology to your advantage

If you are in the localization services industry, one of the few things you can count on is that global enterprise customers will never let up their demands for faster, better and cheaper service. And while demands such as these put pressure on you, they are justified. Because when it comes to getting ahead on a global scale, timely and cost-effective delivery of locally relevant, language-specific information is critical.

For localization services providers, this creates an opportunity: address the escalating demands of the global enterprise with greater ease and efficiency than the competition. Idiom® Technologies can help vendors meet this challenge with technology and strategies for executing high quality localization projects faster and at a lower cost.

This article highlights the complexities global enterprises face when it comes to the delivery of multilingual content worldwide. It also examines the impact on revenue and brand image caused by delays between the availability of information published in the communicator's source language and the different target languages. Finally, it addresses the associated implications for localization services providers, and more specifically, how one can turn challenges into opportunities by using proven globalization best practices and technology to improve project timeliness, quality and cost.

The Case for Globalization

To get an idea of what global enterprise customers are up against in the race to deliver translated content around the world, consider the example of one US-based global software company. A \$1 billion company, it typically suffered delays of 3 to 6 months to deliver localized products and documentation to Europe and Asia. The implications were significant and included:

- Purchase delays by approximately 10% of international prospects
- Defections to competitors' products by at least 1% of global prospects
- Revenue losses or delays of an estimated \$11 million over a 3-year period
- Administrative waste totaling more than \$8 million over a 3-year period

Results such as these can typically be traced to serial globalization practices, which delay translations into target languages until the original content is finalized in its source language. Serial translation practices are typically executed with mostly manual activities and are fraught with complexities. Among the most significant are Administration, Quality management and Brand management.



Administration

Translating content from a source language into multiple target languages requires a great deal of costly and time-consuming administrative steps. This includes preparing content for translation, tracking it, and packaging, transferring and reviewing content translated by external vendors. Add the complexities of synchronizing the deployment of translated and source content and it is easy to see how bottlenecks can form.

Quality management

Translator and writer Umberto Eco once wrote, "Translation involves negotiation." He was right. Any one sentence or paragraph can be translated in a number of different, yet grammatically correct translations. However, context is everything. And if a translator lacks the tools and information to deliver culturally relevant translations, a technically-correct yet out-of-context message could be lost on its intended audience.

Problems such as these can be avoided with the use of technology-enabled terminology databases, style guides, reference translations and Translation Memory technology. Available with modern globalization management systems, such as Idiom WorldServer™, these tools ensure a corporate identity that balances brand consistency and local relevance.

Brand management

Businesses that spend hundreds of millions annually to manage and refine their brand want to stretch their dollars far beyond headquarters. The challenge: ensuring that brand attributes are accurately and consistently represented in target markets.

Many companies default to local brand management to achieve this objective, where country brand managers adjust each brand for that individual market. While on the surface this may look like an efficient delegation strategy, it is often far from it. Inconsistencies in brand message are a common outcome when disparate corporate outposts reinvent themselves for their local market. Other inefficiencies result from duplicative spending, staffing, messaging, processes and technologies.

While well intentioned, the overzealous efforts of in-country employees to address specific market characteristics are problematic from a global brand perspective. Lack of compliance with graphic and messaging standards often results in the deployment of rogue websites and out-of-character marketing communications. To prevent this level of damage to their brands, companies need to implement a centralized system for capturing translated material and making it available for reuse across websites, collateral, advertisements and other identify-forming communications.

A Strategy for Successful Globalization

Globalization involves expanding your reach into worldwide markets. A strategic, well-implemented globalization initiative ensures that customers around the world enjoy appropriate and useful experiences when communicating, collaborating and transacting



business with your company. With an effective globalization solution, the quality of this experience is never altered by location, language, culture or business practices. To execute such a strategy, global businesses need to leverage corporate data and content sources across the enterprise. They also need to invest in technologies that can improve processes, interactions and transactions with customers, employees and partners. Here are some guidelines:

- **Start with people**

Project managers, translators and reviewers are fundamental for the translation process. Your use of technology should enhance and support what they do.

- **Know your process**

If you are not able to define your processes manually, technology will not improve them. Your process should be as simple as possible while delivering the quality and efficiency that you need. Identify your localization process now, and then leverage technology to simplify the steps.

- **Control technology**

Technology control is crucial. You need to have a clear understanding of what you want to do, what the technology is capable of and how you can take advantage of it. Begin with a clear understanding of how these tools will help you automate the translation process.

Technology

Idiom WorldServer™ is a solution that combines sophisticated and centralized Translation Memory (TM), workflow and linguistic asset management technologies to automate translation and localization processes. Combined with a clear strategy and allowing for significant gains in productivity, efficiencies, translation accuracy and consistency, WorldServer provides a full-featured enterprise solution with the following features:

- **Centralized globalization platform**

A centralized TM platform is a particularly valuable asset for any company. A server-based TM provides a centralized point of access for compiled words and phrases that are frequently used in corporate translations. These words and phrases can be translated once, stored in the TM and then easily reused for future projects. As a result, one can accelerate the time-to-market with business-essential translated content while lowering localization costs.

Another feature of WorldServer is that it allows for the use of many TMs for a single job. For example, one TM may deal with marketing, while another is used for the help system and yet another, for software. These TMs can be grouped together and the TM that will be used for a particular project can be specified.

The WorldServer™ is supported by a menu of powerful matching features. These include In-context Exact (ICE™) matching and Segment Preferred In-context Exact (SPICE™) matching. These context-aware matching technologies eliminate the costly review effort typically required to preserve quality within the unchanged portions of previously translated content. To identify the context of a segment, WorldServer uses surrounding text (ICE matching) for paragraph-based content (such as documentation, web pages, etc.), and associated identifiers (SPICE matching) for ID-based content (such as software strings and database records).

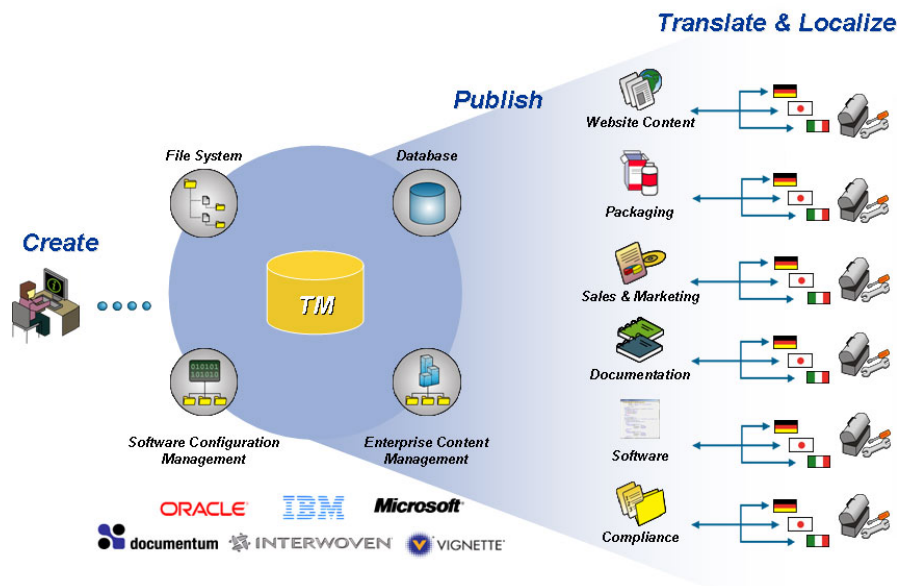


Figure 1: Centralized globalization platform

- **Leveraging of existing investments**

In many organizations, no one source exists for all content requiring translation. Idiom WorldServer connects with an enterprise's network of disparate content repositories to ensure that existing technologies and processes are leveraged during the translation process. WorldServer can also upload existing TMs that were created with past localization projects using TMX, an industry standard whose acronym stands for Translation Memory Exchange.

- **Automation of globalization business processes**

The WorldServer workflow engine automates most steps in the translation process. By eliminating activities that do not require human interaction, WorldServer accelerates the entire translation and localization process while enabling huge gains in productivity and resource savings.

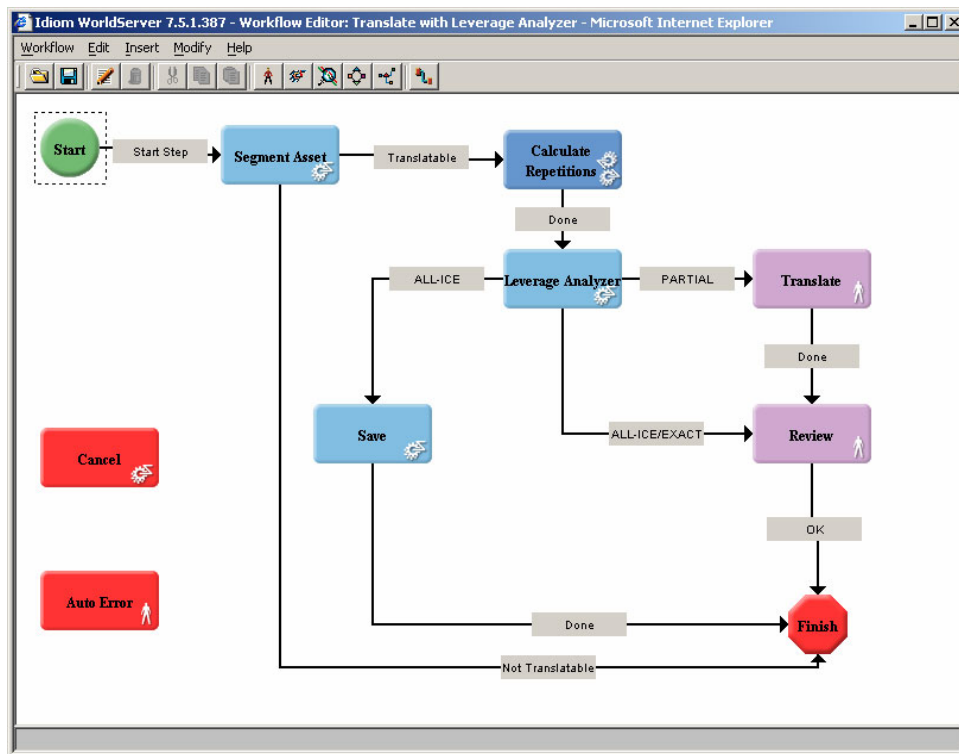


Figure 2: Idiom WorldServer – Workflow Editor

Idiom and Localization Companies

Last year, Idiom Technologies began to institute a partnership program with leading localization companies. Called the LSP (Localization Service Provider) Advantage Program, it creates a genuine partnership between Idiom and localization vendors. The program provides the participating companies an opportunity to work with an independent software vendor and license advanced translation and localization technologies free of charge to improve service quality and operational efficiencies.



Conclusion

For companies that serve multicultural, multilingual customers, the effective globalization of information and products is a strategic must. Yet it is a need that comes with a large set of challenges. Those involved in the localization industry can turn the challenges of enterprise clients into their own business opportunity with the support of proven globalization best practices and technology.

Peter Reynolds is Director of the LSP Advantage Program at Idiom. He previously worked for Lionbridge and comes from the Berlitz, Bowne Global Solutions tradition within that company. While at Lionbridge, Reynolds managed the Dublin development team responsible for BerlitzIT, Elcano, Freeway 2.0 and internal project and vendor management tools. He is also secretary of the XLIFF Technical Committee at OASIS and chair of the Translation Web Services Technical Committee.