

BETTER, FASTER, CHEAPER AND EASIER TRANSLATION IN 6 MONTHS

HOW ONE TEAM CHANGED INEFFICIENT TRANSLATION MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
COMPANY-WIDE WITHOUT FORMAL AUTHORITY OVER STAKEHOLDERS

Challenge

Team overwhelmed with negative feedback from internal stakeholders who spend too much time correcting translations, delaying the team's efforts as a result

Solution

Hire Grow-thru to develop and facilitate transition to a better translation management model, getting the stakeholders to agree to be removed from the process

Results

- Translation quality improved at least 4x in 6 out of 7 languages
- No more need to review translations
- No more project delays
- Estimated savings \$1M/year



"It sounds like our brand now and just how we speak in our language"

"I don't have to change anything anymore, I just read it and enjoy it!"

Translation reviewers 6 months after we implemented the new translation model

"HOW CAN WE CHANGE OUR TRANSLATION MODEL WHICH DOESN'T SEEM TO WORK FOR ANYONE?"

... were asking themselves the EMEA Marketing team of a global business solutions provider in 2020, after several Localisation Managers had been laid off and their workload redistributed among other teams.

"OUR COLLEAGUES IN THE REGIONS KEEP COMPLAINING ABOUT TRANSLATION QUALITY."

"The Localisation team who now support the product only don't want to help us, so we have to rely on translation vendors whom they chose but we hate," shared the Head of Growth in our first conversation with the EMEA team.

LESS THAN A YEAR LATER...

... they were in charge of marketing in APAC in addition to EMEA, with their colleagues no longer correcting translations, their Localisation team proactively proposing solutions, and service providers delivering on the team's expectations.

They were getting transcreation-quality translations without paying more for the service and saving an estimated \$1,000,000 per year in the process.

WHY CHANGE?

The Head of Creative explained why the EMEA Marketing team wanted to change their translation management process and implement a new model.

"WE HAPPENED TO WORK ON A CAMPAIGN WITH A DIFFERENT AGENCY WHO PROVIDED TRANSCREATION.

We didn't receive the usual negative feedback from the regions. How can we achieve that level of quality across all our marketing and sales comms?

THE CHALLENGE IS THAT WE CAN'T JUST REPLACE OUR CURRENT TRANSLATION VENDORS.

They were chosen by the Localisation team who seem to be happily working with them and don't see a reason for replacing them. What can we do?"

TRANSLATION MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

The Project Manager shared more about the team's translation process and challenges.

"FOR PROJECT AND VENDOR COORDINATION, WE HAVE TO RELY ON A TRANSLATION MANAGER APPOINTED BY OUR TRANSLATION MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE PROVIDER.

We'd like her to be more proactive in solving issues, but she just reports them to us, which is more annoying than helpful. We don't really know what to do with them – she is supposed to be the expert who knows how to deal with those issues.

WE HAVE A 2-STEP PROCESS TO REVIEW TRANSLATIONS WHICH WE IDEALLY WANT TO ELIMINATE. OUR COLLEAGUES SPEND TOO MUCH TIME ON WHAT ISN'T THEIR JOB.

Our regional managers review translations corrected by brand ambassadors – other employees who speak the languages. Given the quality of translations we're getting, they're obviously not willing to step back, but too often our projects are delayed because the reviewers don't finish reviewing on time."

THE CHALLENGE

The brief we received from the team listed the reasons for changing the way translation was managed.

OBJECTIVES

1. Transition to transcreation as main translation management model
2. Improve quality of translation output, with focus being on content sounding native to a specific region (How do we align on what we expect and how do we set our vendors up for success?)
3. Align on vendors (Do we use one global vendor, multiple global vendors or freelancers, or a mixture of them?)
4. Align on process (Is it the same for every language?)
5. (How do we scale this globally?)

MAIN PAIN POINTS

1. Quality of translation
2. Managing stakeholder feedback (+ inconsistent feedback)
3. Time spent on localisation (both on vendor side and internally)
4. Scalability (inconsistent methods adopted regionally vs globally mean we are lacking a clear stance on localisation as a brand)
5. Measuring success (this is often quite subjective)

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. How do we scale our model to other areas of the business?
 2. How do we best implement a feedback loop?
 3. How do we balance quality and cost efficiencies?
 4. How do we best resource for the new model?
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WHAT IT WAS LIKE

Regional Manager:

"IT SOUNDS WAY TOO PROMOTIONAL TO ME AND STILL TOO TRANSLATED FROM ENGLISH..."

Has this has been reviewed? We wouldn't write like this when addressing someone directly. Could we have a second look please before I review it?"

Translation Manager:

"THIS WAS TRANSLATED, EDITED AND REVIEWED BEFORE IT REACHED YOU. I WILL REJECT THIS JOB TO BE RE-TRANSLATED."

2 hours later

"WE'VE RECEIVED SOME FEEDBACK FROM THE TRANSLATOR WHO IS CURRENTLY RE-TRANSLATING THIS JOB:"

*I've already taken out what seemed too "passive aggressive" and tried to make it sound more natural. These are however difficult copies, which lies in the nature of these emails – they ARE promotional, hard-selling emails. I can take another look but I can't rework the sentence about retail rates as I'm missing the knowledge about how this is handled in the region. **Maybe this one is better redone by the Regional Manager.***

If you have any ideas about how to handle this one, please let me know and I'll relay that back to the translator."

2 days later

"THE JOB HAS BEEN RESUBMITTED FOR EDITING. WE'VE ASKED THE TRANSLATOR TO USE A MORE LIBERAL TRANSCREATION APPROACH WHERE NEEDED:"

I've reworked the copy trying to shorten it and make it sound more natural, but I really think due to the nature of these emails' topic it will always sound a bit weird. You are basically trying to pressure the customer into renewing the contract while sounding polite and amicable. I also think the style of these particular emails is too American.

@Project Manager: This might be a good point to add to our list of points to optimize. It might be good to make it clear to the translators how direct they can be when addressing the reader."

OUR PROPOSAL

These were our consultancy work objectives and scope as agreed with the team.

1. IMPROVE QUALITY OF TRANSLATION OUTPUT BY MOVING TO TRANSCREATION MODEL

- Ensure alignment on quality expectations
- Develop comprehensive documentation to close information and knowledge gaps
- Develop mechanisms and capabilities to prevent quality issues from reoccurring

2. REDUCE INTERNAL TIME SPENT ON LOCALISATION

- Eliminate the need for internal reviews
- Minimise the need for back-and-forths between stakeholders

3. REFINE WAYS OF WORKING WITH TRANSLATION MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE (TMS) PROVIDER

- Leverage their technology and translation management service to address translation process challenges
 - Facilitate and increase communication between TMS provider and linguists
 - Increase accountability for outcome amongst linguists by changing their perceived role from vendors to brand communicators
 - Enable translation manager and linguists to make the right decisions independently
 - Empower linguists to collaboratively solve translation issues across languages
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RESULTS AFTER 6 MONTHS

The team updated the management on their progress 6 months after implementing the new model.

1. IMPROVED QUALITY OF TRANSLATION OUTPUT BY MOVING TO TRANSCREATION MODEL

- Since the brand induction with linguists and the introduction of guidelines and new workflows, quality improved at least 4x across all languages but one (based on the amount of changes made by reviewers)

2. REDUCED INTERNAL TIME SPENT ON LOCALISATION

- No internal reviews of content in 2 core languages
- Internal reviews limited to spot checks on 2 other core languages (aiming to remove all reviews in 2 months)
- One-step review on 3 non-core languages (aiming to remove in 2 months)

3. REFINED WAYS OF WORKING WITH TRANSLATION MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE (TMS) PROVIDER

- New model (skill- and content type-based workflows) and TMS data reports allow for more granular insights and optimisation
- Leveraged string changes reports to increase alignment and provide feedback
- New, translators-led way to update glossary enabled by TMS provider
- Translators' queries are answered 7x faster

WHAT IT IS LIKE TODAY

The team has full control over its translation process and is in a position of authority over internal and external stakeholders, including the previously unsupportive translation manager and Localisation team. They have changed their translation vendors and are responsible for more markets. Their translation manager and vendors proactively resolve issues instead of reporting or creating them. Translation is no longer a pain to manage – it is done better, faster and cheaper.

Having a similar challenge or want the same results? We can help you and your team bring your vision of localisation to life. www.grow-thru.com