→ *Know-how*

# Multilingual annual reports from a single source

## Cost benefits from dovetailing highly automated editorial and translation processes

**CLS** COMMUNiCatiON

In Switzerland in particular, communications managers face the challenge of further automating the production of multilingual annual reports using computer-based tools and methods, with the aim of reducing production time and minimising costs. This challenge can be met using a future-oriented solution, developed by CLS Communication and Multimedia Solutions AG in the framework of their technology partnership.

The task of putting together multilingual documents can be divided into an editorial process and a translation process. The GMS systems (globalisation management systems) used for the translation process are distinguished by the following characteristics:

• All translators involved in a project have access to an online terminology database. This technology helps to ensure that the whole team uses the same terminology and therefore translates texts consistently (see the article: "Save costs and build a positive image with an online corporate dictionary," ns»publish› INSIDE, November 2009).

• GMS systems also contain translation memories that manage a customer's previous multilingual texts – in both the source language and each of the target languages. Using these translation memories, segments that have been previously translated, i. e. sentences, paragraphs or even entire portions of text, can be reused. In other words, the translations of such segments can be automatically extracted from the translation memory and integrated into the translation. This means that
  – portions of text that have appeared in previous (annual) reports do not have to be translated again;
  – repetitions that appear in the (annual) report currently being translated need only be translated once.
Translation memories therefore enable translation to be made significantly more efficient.

• Modern translation systems permit the processing of a wide variety of text formats from different manufacturers; in addition to the various formats in the Microsoft Office range, this includes documents in state-of-the-art formats such as InDesign. Such systems enable format-preserving translation and save the time and effort required to reformat the text in the target language.

- In addition to the formats mentioned above, these translation systems also support the processing of documents in XML, a group that includes XML-based reporting standards such as XBRL, which can be carried across into the target language without any additional effort (see this edition's article on XBRL).

Efficient production of multilingual annual reports presupposes that
- the advantages of editorial and translation systems can be utilised to their full extent;
- synergies between the two process steps can be realised to the benefit of the customer.
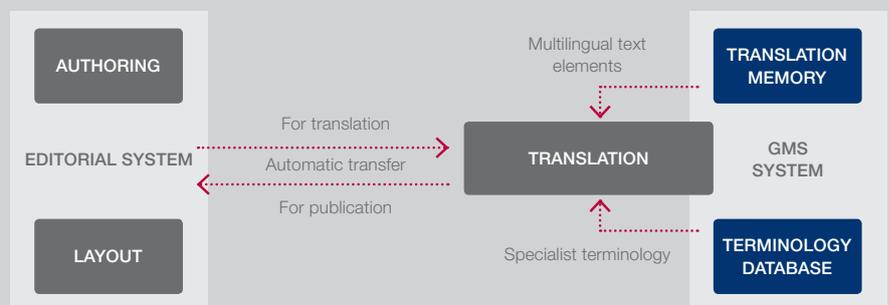
The close cooperation between Multimedia Solution AG and CLS Communication AG has facilitated the development of a solution that offers tangible benefits to the customer:

- Seamless automatic data transfer between ns»publish› (editing) and CLS Communication (translation):
  – manual intermediate stages (such as the project manager having to send the latest version) are rendered unnecessary;
  – data is transferred automatically so no time is lost;
  – the strict encoding of information flows reduces the probability of errors resulting from misuse almost to zero.
  This means that customers save on personnel costs in project management and production time is reduced.

- All documents produced in ns»publish› are transferred in a format that can be processed by CLS's translation systems with complete retention of the layout information. In contrast to most solutions, this means
  – there is no need to convert between different data formats (Word formats, proprietary layout system formats);
  – there is no need for time-consuming laying out of the translated documents in the various target languages.

Utilising this solution leads to a significant reduction in production costs and a massive improvement in the end product's time to market.

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