

MT within a productive translation workflow

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CLS Corporate Language Services is a translation company which arose from the outsourcing in July 1997 of the internal translation departments of Swiss Bank Corporation (now UBS) and Zurich Financial Services. The initial crew of 40 staff has in the meantime grown to 130 employees plus an extensive international network of translators. It has offices in Basel, Zurich, Lausanne and Chiasso and expansion into Europe is planned for the near future. CLS uses the Trados range of products (Workbench, MultiTerm, etc) extensively throughout its organisation.

CLS' experience with MT in a productive environment has so far been restricted to sporadic use of Systran, T1 and Reverso for specific jobs. More recently, CLS has been testing the Alis Gist-in-Time solution, which aims to provide users with a simple, easy to use MT platform, where documents can be sent to a dedicated server by e-mail (Gist-Mail). A 'gisted' document (not a translation) is then returned within minutes to the sender, who can then decide on the basis of this document whether to have the document processed further (postedited) or even translated by a human translator (Figure 1).

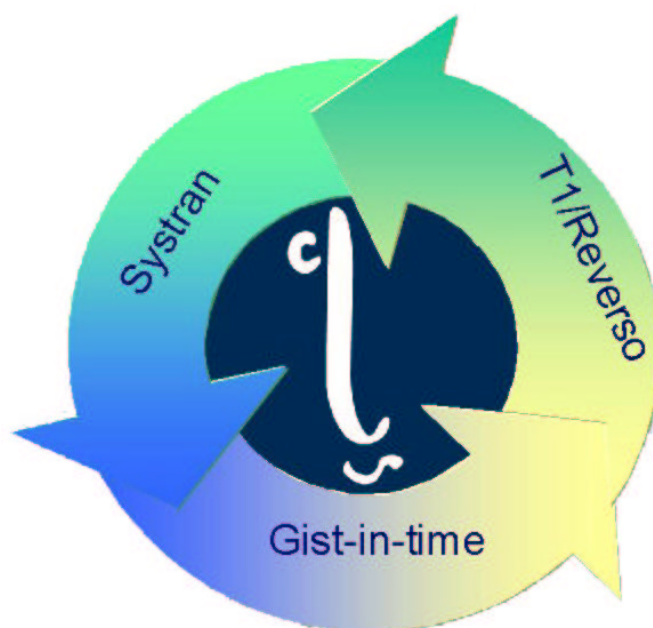


Figure 1: MT Experience

CLS has opted for this solution because of the difficulties with the quality of machine translation. As a professional translation provider, especially in Switzerland with its four national languages, CLS is only too aware of the false expectations that customers have in respect of machine translation. The idea of selling an MT service as a complement to its range of 'normal' translation services has a definite appeal - it can be dealt with separately in terms of quality.

After the current pilot phase has been completed with a group of French users at UBS, it is planned to offer additional language pairs for a wider group of users. If the service proves to

be valuable to users, it is planned to integrate it into the CLS Web Portal, which is currently under construction. The web portal will be designed to offer customers access to a variety of products and services, one of which will be machine translation or gisting (or both).

For CLS as a translation agency in the banking and finance sector, the main consideration for the portal is security and also the setting up of dedicated connections to our customers. This has the added advantage that the mail connection (Gist-Mail) would also function in a protected environment (Figure 2). However, when dealing with very large institutions such as banks, getting such a dedicated connection (i.e. secure) is not always easy because the bank again puts its own security issues above anything else.

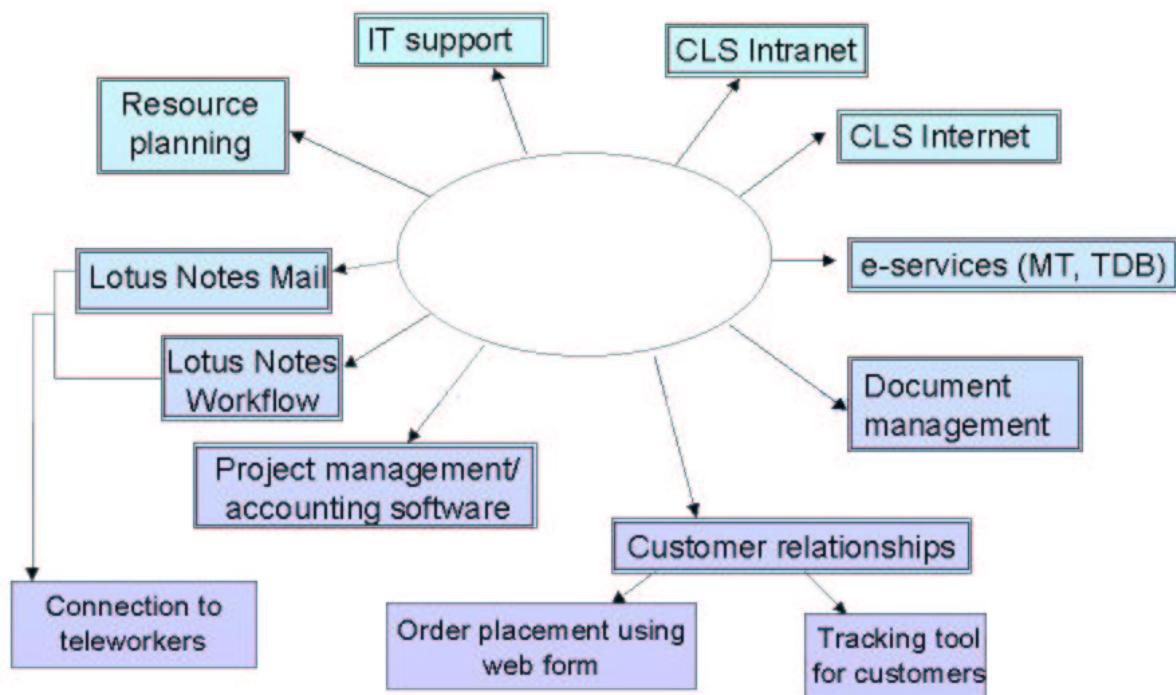


Figure 2: CLS Web Portal

The portal is also designed to facilitate the passage of translation jobs into the productive workflow and should also be a building block, on which CLS is able to build up a comprehensive e-services platform.

This should provide us with the tools to offer our customers better services which, when all is said and done, is our 'raison d'être'. Without customers, we don't need MT or human translation, so we must get this right from the outset.

So how will these things benefit our customers? (Figure 3) We believe that, by offering various levels of translation quality, we will be providing customers with tailor-made solutions for their translation needs. Pure machine translation or gisting at a low price for assimilation purposes, pre- or post-edited MT for slightly greater quality needs (internal reports, etc) and human translation of the top end of the range is what we plan to offer. It will be the test of our success to what extent we are able to provide such services and also to make

a clear distinction between each of them. To this purpose we will have to educate our customers, so as to channel their expectations of quality into the correct paths.

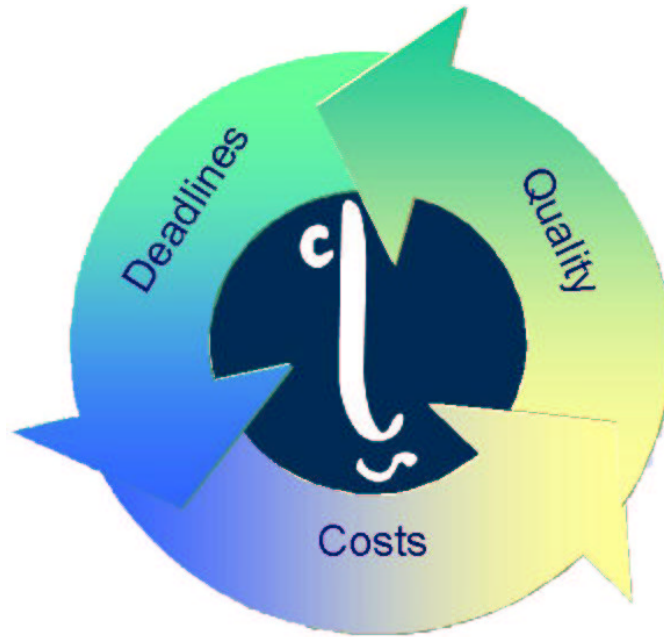


Figure 3: Benefits for clients