

# Computer Assisted Business Process Management

## in translation and localisation companies

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*Currently, many businesses use several pieces of software to manage their translation and localisation projects: will a complete solution really change the work of management in translation companies, and in which way?*

Organising translation and localisation work is time consuming and expensive. Errors can occur at many levels, and the human memory is limited. A typical localisation, translation (or interpreting) manager is responsible for a broad range of very time consuming tasks. Tasks like budgeting, project co-ordination, client contact, resource management, establishment of deadlines and generation of quotes are integral parts of project management.

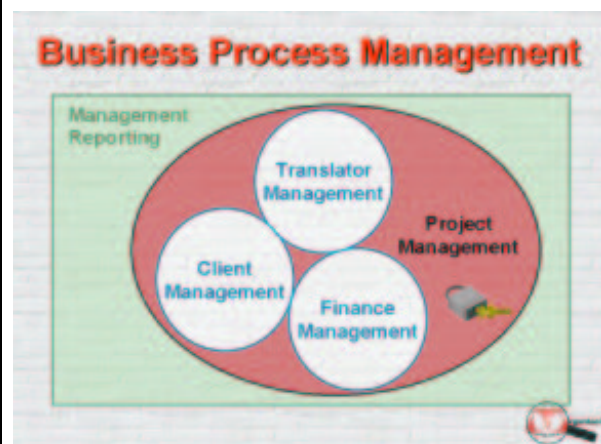
Therefore, localisation companies are in need of automating the relevant business processes as far as possible, making them transparent within the organisation, and providing as much information as viable and sensible to the customers and suppliers in the outside world. It is necessary to manage a human resources database with employees and subcontractors as well as a client database with addresses and a considerable amount of valuable additional information for efficient customer relationship and supplier relationship management. Currently, many translation and software localisation companies use several pieces of software to manage their business processes. However, suppliers and customers should be combined in an integral environment and matched in a project tracking system which contains all relevant project information, all deadlines of all parties concerned, and all financial information. This then allows management to check at any given time what progress is being made by whom involved at any point in the production chain, what the status of any given project might be, what cost

benefit relationships can be obtained, and where the company is going in general.

A tool that can make any or all of these tasks even slightly more manageable should be welcomed by any translation and localisation company, and we will examine possible solutions below.

The Language Technology Centre is based in Kingston, Surrey, in Britain. The company was founded in 1992 to provide language technology solutions to a wide variety of potential applications. The LTC has developed a tool called LTC Organiser that could possibly revolutionise business process management of translation and localisation companies. LTC Organiser is an innovative business process management and workflow control software tool that supports and enables multilingual translation projects.

The current version of the tool covers translator, client, software and project



management databases. The tool, which also contains import and export facilities, a finance module, a report module and a quick wizard, succeeds in consolidating all the integral elements of the management of multilingual projects.

LTC Organiser is designed to reduce translation and localisation management costs, decrease the time to market, and maximise the benefits derived from human and technical resources.

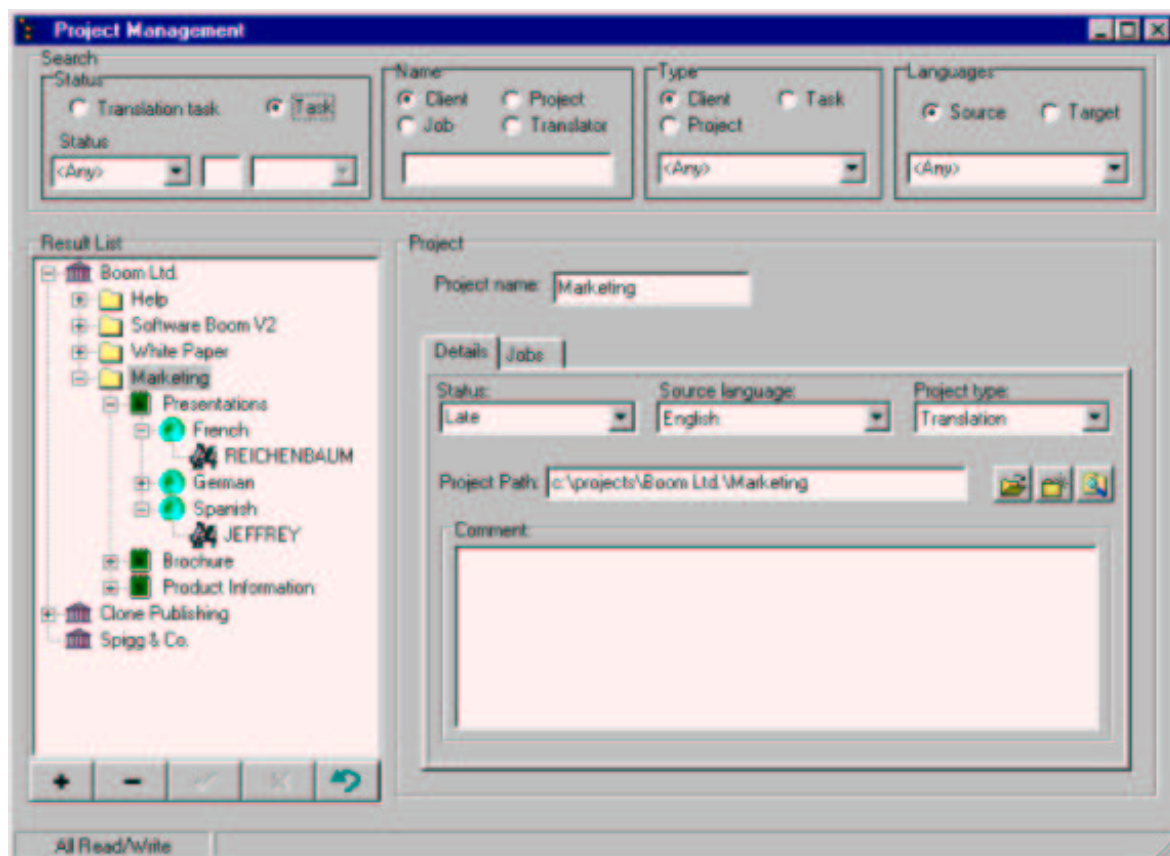
The Project management feature of this product is the most sophisticated element of the tool. This module integrates all the information stored in your database: combining all modules to maximise your control and awareness of client, employed and freelance translators, project and financial information. It enables the project manager to monitor individual projects by keeping track of the status of the various versions of the source and target texts, instructions for translators, delivery dates and costs.

The project management module incorporates a search facility that enables the user to search for individual projects under multiple criteria

such as client, task, source and target languages, and also project status. The search results are arranged in an easy to read treelike structure. It is also easy to add a new project and to create all the relevant jobs, tasks and translators with the quick wizard. Another time saving detail is the directory management function which allows the user to create, access and manage directories from within the LTC Organiser. Other useful features available in the project management module include client information, job and project details, and translation tasks. An automatic calculation feature allows the user to access the costs and benefits of a job immediately while preparing a quote.

The Scheduler function then displays a profile of any project at any stage. The advantage of this function is that it allows the project manager to make adjustments to deadlines and to identify potential problem areas. The Scheduler now includes a time management facility for in-house translators.

The Translator database handles the individual translator's details. It identifies appropriate translators for high level needs and allocates translation tasks to expert translators in



specialised disciplines. This database also has search and sort facilities that allow the user to easily update and maintain data stored there such as fees, translator's skills, hours worked and updated deadlines. This is especially useful when translators are working off-site because the project manager can then easily print and send or email this pertinent information to all translators efficiently.

The Software database enables the project manager to store information about CAT tools and translation software such as terminology tools, machine translation systems and translation memories. This database enables storage of specific details such as the languages each tool covers, the file formats they support, general comments on how to use the tool, lists of tools providers and technical support outlets. This database also allows the storage of project relevant instructions for all stages of the translation process.

The Client database helps the project manager store all client specific information, enabling the entry of detailed notes on specific client requirements. This information is customisable for each user's requirements. The user can easily enter and access the details of recent contacts with clients, through a "To do" function that provides the user with a contact history.

The Finance Module allows to create, export, customise and print invoices, quotations and purchase orders for efficient payment management. The easily customisable Price list management provides a current and automatic fee reference for creating quotes in the Project management module.

The latest version provides a Security management facility which protects the access of each module and record on your network and it is able to limit access in detail record by record, such as a particular client, a contact name or a project, for example.

LTC Organiser can be used to store all information about multilingual project management. By using Crystal Reports, LTC Organiser makes information easily retrievable and conveniently displayed in text reports, bar and pie charts or printed out as required. For

instance, individual report modules will simply and clearly show the average translator fees per task completed or the profit distribution per project.

Porting your existing data to LTC Organiser is facilitated by the programme's import/export function. It allows to import or export XML or XLS files. The LTC Organiser runs on Windows 95, 98 and NT. The product is network compatible so that multiple users can access it. It requires an Intel Pentium, 32 Mb of RAM, 20 MB disk space (minimum specification).

The LTC Organiser's interface is very user friendly. It consists of easy to navigate pop-up directories, drop down menus, tabs, and wizards are available by right clicking. Other useful features include the ability to email purchase orders, invoices and quotations, and when changing the currency or price list in a quote, the system recalculates the quoted fee automatically. This innovative tool is certainly suitable for localisation, translation and interpreting service providers who are interested in reducing their project management costs, and decreasing the time their management teams spend on project co-ordination and obtaining management information.

According to the director of LTC, Dr Adriane Rinsche: "The LTC Organiser provides a complete solution — it's quick and easy to use and greatly reduces project management costs. I'm convinced it will be of great value to every-one in the sector."

*For more information about LTC Organiser, contact: The Language Technology Centre. Phone +44 208 549 2359 or visit the Centre's web site to download a free trial version of this product at <http://www.langtech.co.uk>.*