

MANAGING TRANSLATION AND LOCALISATION PROJECTS WITH LTC ORGANISER

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Abstract

Using an invented case study, the paper describes how multilingual translation projects can be managed efficiently with an enterprise resource management tool called “LTC Organiser”, which was developed specifically for the particular requirements of the language industry. The talk will describe the most important aspects of the integrated solution, such as client and supplier management, project and finance management, managing tools used in the translation process, reporting facilities, security and user management, directory management, sort and search facilities as well as web functionality available at several levels.

Keywords

language industry, translation process, enterprise resource management

Organising multilingual 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, establishing deadlines and generating quotes are integral parts of project management.

Therefore, the language industry is 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.

Let us assume a new potential customer called COM.com registers with translation company ACME on their website, asking for a quote (figure1). COM.com want their website translated from English into French, German and Spanish, therefore COM.com’s marketing manager Bobby Busy enters the company details and URL of COM.com’s website, the language combination (s) required and the preferred start date and a deadline on the client web form in ACME’s website.

This information is automatically transferred from the web form to the Quotation module of LTC Organiser (figure2).

ACME’s project manager Freeda Friendly is notified, analyses the website, determines a price for each language and returns the quote to Bobby Busy by email (figure3).

Bobby Busy accepts the quote. Now Freeda Friendly simply presses the Create Project button in the Quotation module: the system automatically generates the project structure in the Project management module (figure 4).

Freeda Friendly needs to put together an appropriate team. First she needs a technical expert preparing the HTML files for translation. She also needs a team of French, German and Spanish translators, three for each language, etc., and she checks availability of appropriate resources in the supplier database (figure 5).

Freeda Friendly realises that the in-house translators are quite busy, and only one employed translator can be allocated to the German project, she therefore sends an email to all other possible freelance candidates. Meanwhile the in-house technical expert prepares the files and copies them to the appropriate directories (figure 6).

Freeda Friendly has allocated all her resources (technical experts, translators, revisers, etc), including delivery dates for each individual involved in the project (figure 7).

In addition, one of the external translators does not have Quickbench 4, the translation tool she decided to use for the project, and she makes this tool available on loan to the translator. Now she needs to prepare purchase orders for all freelance members of her team (figure 8).


Then she sends the P.O.s out to the team members, together with the files each member needs to translate. The corresponding directories are automatically generated.

Every two days the translators deliver a status report of their work, using ACME’s web form for suppliers (figure 9). Bobby Busy from Com.com also has access to status information, thus minimising the number of phone calls he would otherwise make to Freeda Friendly (figure 10).

Freeda Friendly checks progress via the LTC Organiser scheduler and via the status screen within the supplier task screen (figure 11-12).

Once the project is completed, including quality assurance, Freeda Friendly returns all the files to Bobby Busy at COM.com and prepares the relevant invoices (figure 13).

As Simon Success, owner of ACME, is negotiating a merger with another company, he is preparing a presentation to give an overview of ACME’s overall activities and profitability. He generates the relevant up-to-date information via the report module available in the integrated project management environment (figure 14).



ASK FOR A QUOTE

Organization: COM.com
 Department: Marketing Department

Contact

Surname: Busy First name: Bobby

Request Details:

Please enter a reference code for this request: Bob's reference
 Preferred Currency?: £ British Pound
 Contact by phone: [Text Area]
 Use this space to include any special instructions or details relating to the proposed task: [Text Area]

Source Language: [Dropdown: Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian]
 Target Languages: (Press and hold the Ctrl Key to make multiple selections) [Dropdown: Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hebrew]

Please complete one of the following

Document(s) Quote

Task	Workload		Turnaround Time		Document name & type
	Qty	Unit	Qty	Unit	
Selection 1 Translation	3	1000 W	1.5	Day(s)	Presentation
Selection 2 Testing/Bugfixing	20	Hour	3	Day(s)	Website
Selection 3 None	0	1000 W	0	Day(s)	
Selection 4 None	0	1000 W	0	Day(s)	
Selection 5 None	0	1000 W	0	Month(s)	

OR

Web Site Quote

Web site URL: http:// [Text Field]

SEND RESET
 BACK
 LOGOUT

Figure 1: Web form

Quotation Management

Search Quotation: Quotation No: [Text], Status: <Any> [Dropdown], Client: <Any> [Dropdown]

Result List

No	Date	Status	Client
111	04/01/200	Accepted	COM.com
112	06/01/200	Waiting	COM.com
113	10/01/200	Waiting	COM.com
156	10/01/200	Waiting	COM.com
360	04/05/200	Waiting	Clone Publishing
555	08/01/200	Waiting	COM.com
559	09/01/200	Accepted	company 1
58	04/01/200	Refused	Boom Ltd.
66	04/01/200	Accepted	Boom Ltd.

Sort by: Quotation No [Dropdown]

Quotation No: 555, Quotation Name: 08.01.01, Status: Waiting [Dropdown]
 Date: 08/01/01, Client: COM.com [Dropdown]

Details Quote End note Contacts Perso Files

Task	Target	Document	Unit	Unit Qty	Quote Type	P
Translation	French	Website	1000 W	9	Normal	Lc
Translation	Spanish	Website	1000 W	9	Normal	Lc
Translation	German	Website	1000 W	9	Normal	Lc
Preparation	All Languages	Website	Day	2	Normal	Lc

Price List

Preview Print Save Email Create Project Delete Project

Figure 2: Quotation management

Price list	Estimated Fee	Calc. Fee	Turnaround	Time Unit
Localisation		1350	5-6	Day Business
Localisation		1440	5-6	Day Business
Localisation	1350	1350	5-6	Day Business
Localisation	300	300	2	Day Business

Figure 3: Quotation management

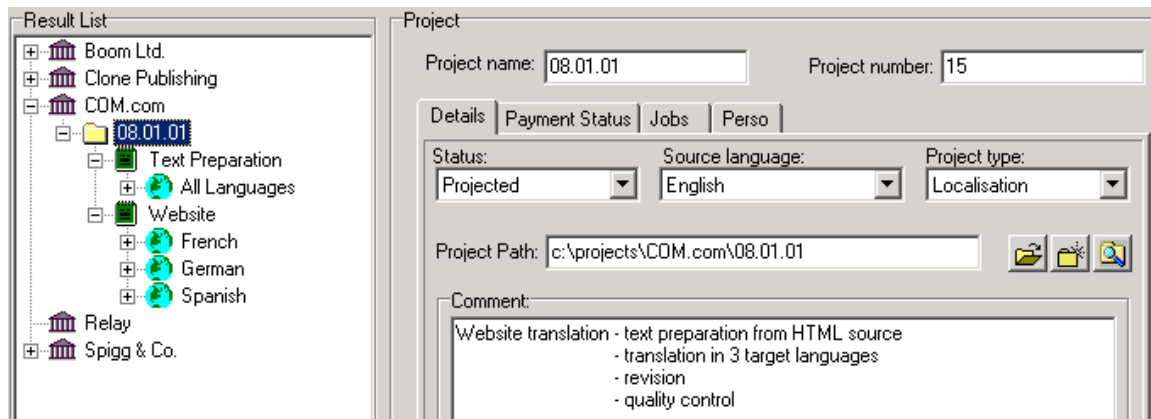


Figure 4: Project management

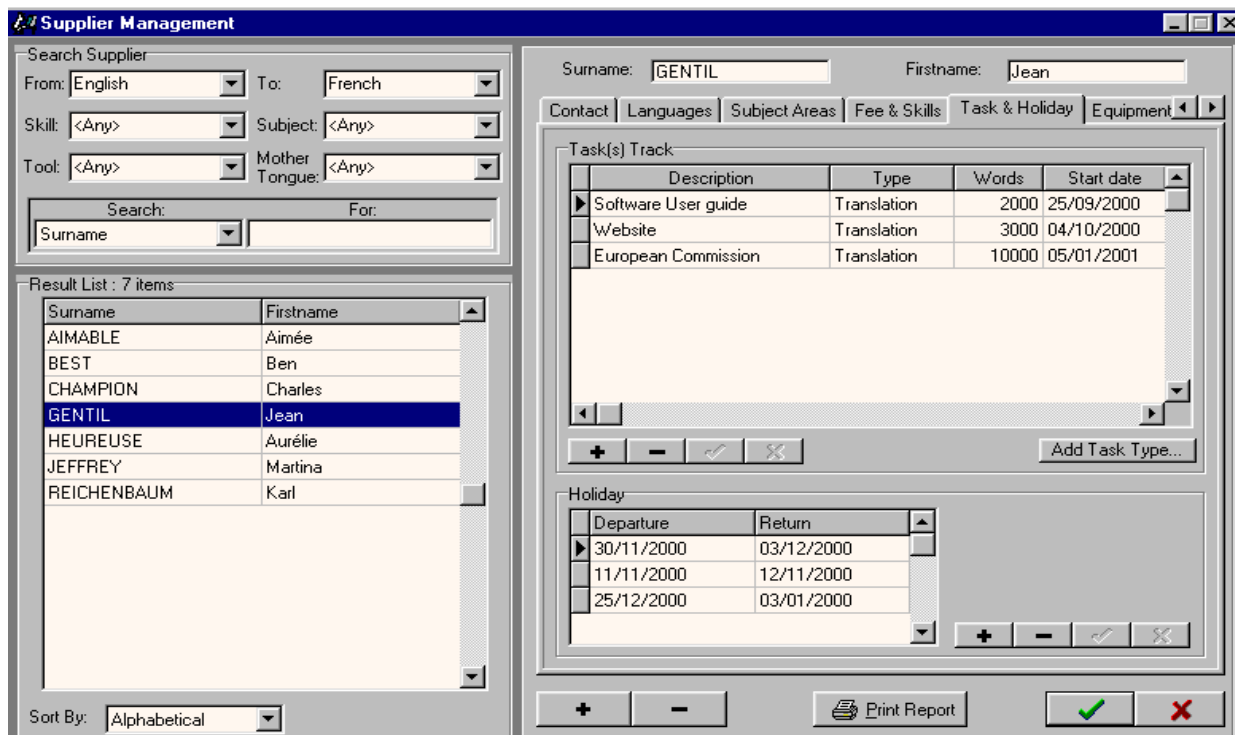


Figure 5: Supplier Management

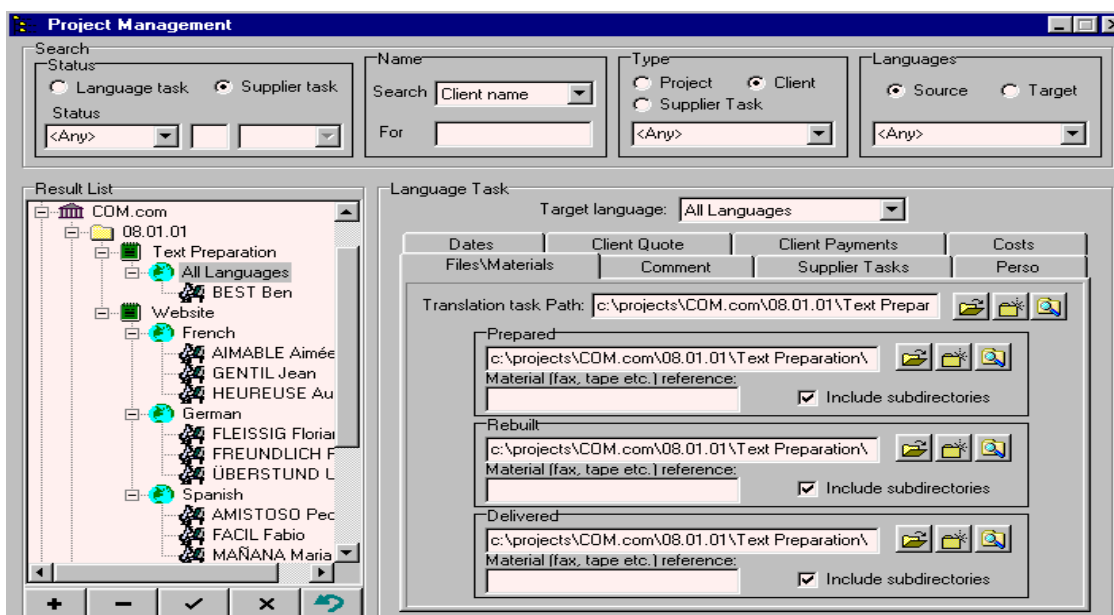


Figure 6: Project management, Files

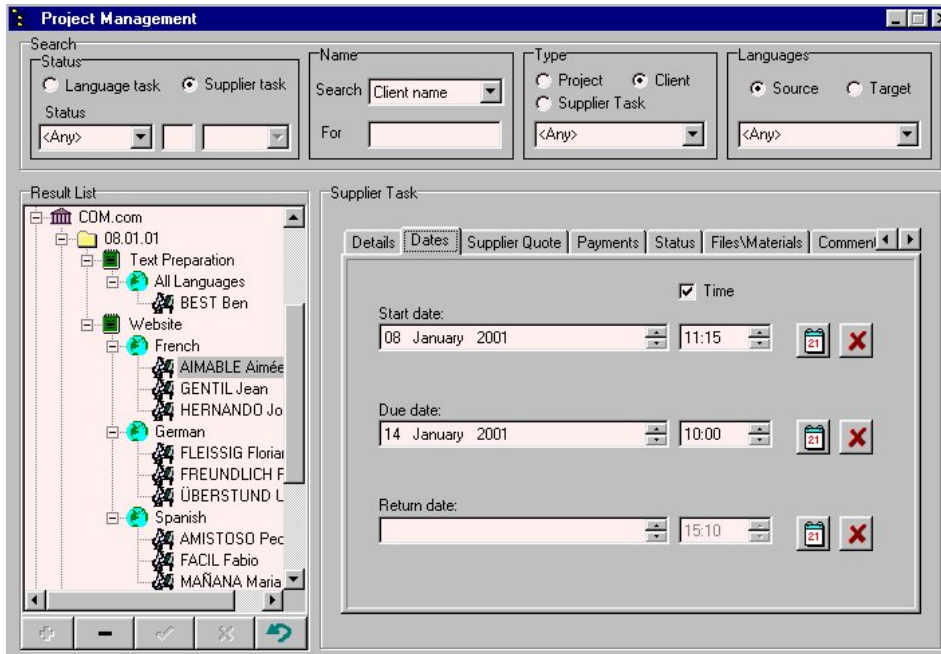


Figure 7: Project management, Dates

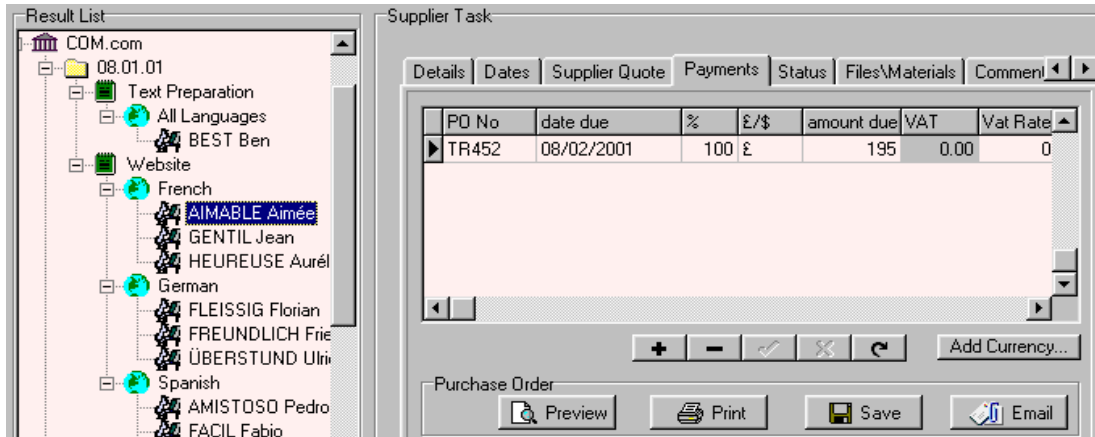


Figure 8: Project management

Figure 9: Supplier web form

Figure 10: Client web form

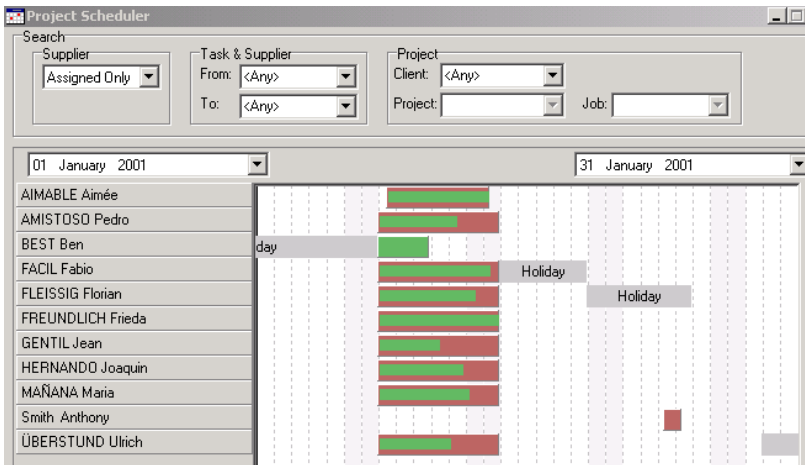


Figure 11: Scheduler

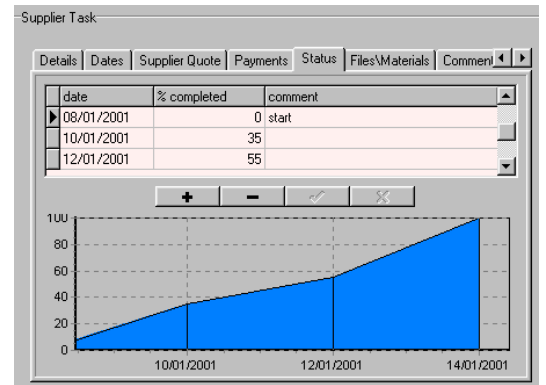


Figure 12: Task status

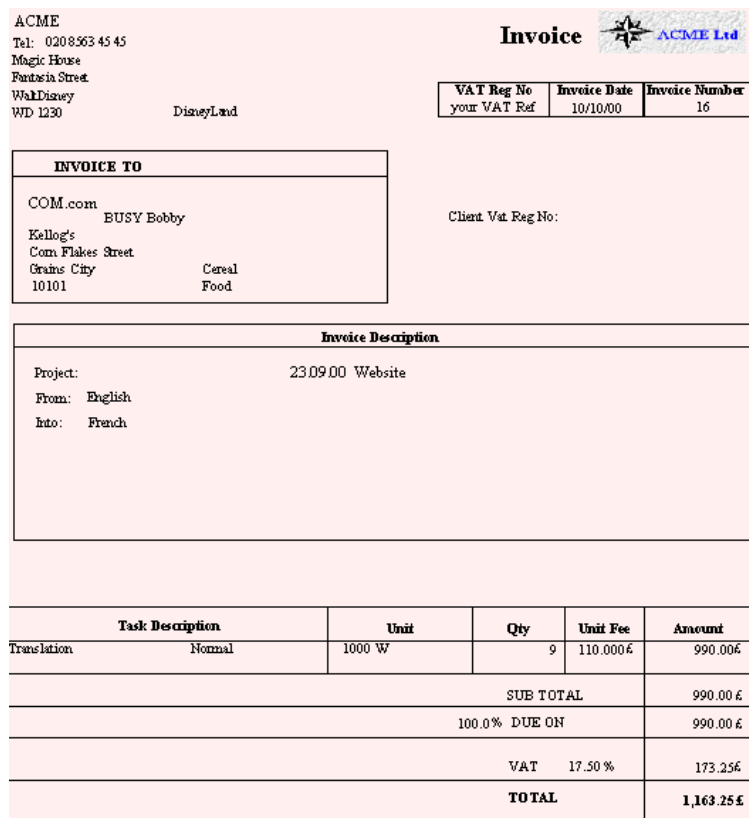
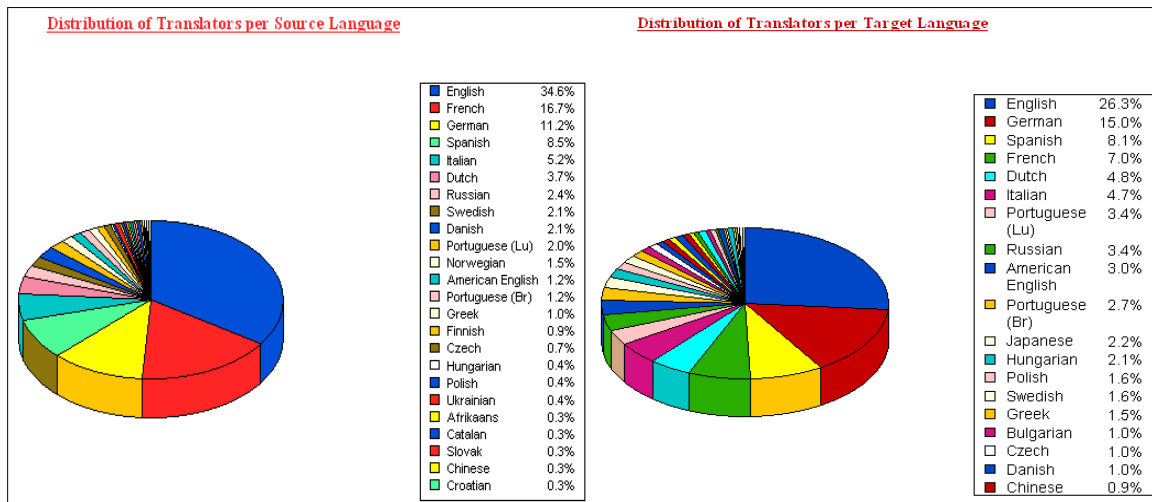


Figure 13: Invoice sample



Paid Invoices

10/10/00

Invoice No	Due Date	Currency	Due Value	Paid Date	Paid Value	Client
	15/03/99	£	3,999.00	30/03/99	3,999.00	Clone Publishing
11	31/01/00	FF	1,200.00	15/02/00	1,200.00	Boom Ltd.
10	31/01/00	£	4,400.00	21/01/00	4,400.00	Boom Ltd.
13	31/01/00	\$	2,492.26	15/02/00	2,492.26	Boom Ltd.
12	28/02/00	FF	3,043.00	10/03/00	3,043.00	Boom Ltd.

Figure 14: Reports

Summary

The above is a case study of the possible use of an integrated management tool for the language industry – the LTC Organiser. All management staff in a given organisation work from an integrated environment, which allows for transparency of all processes throughout the organisation. It is estimated that savings in terms of time and cost for project managers are in the region of 50%, and management levels can be kept lean and efficient. By checking information entered in the system on a regular basis, the success of projects can be maximised.

This powerful tool allows, for example, the sales force to concentrate on customer relationship management via the client database and the quotation module, the project managers to take advantage of the supplier and project management database facilities, the accountant to import LTC Organiser purchase orders, invoices and quotations into the accountancy environment, and the directors to assess global trends and statistics, arranged in reports

which can be generated from any combination of data in the database.

A web version of LTC Organiser is released in April 2001. This allows organisations to collaborate from distributed sites. A web server with Microsoft SQL Server and the LTC Organiser Application Server needs to be installed in one office, and then all other offices have access to the same database. An ASP solution is planned for companies who do not wish to install a web server on site.

Some of the most pleasant comments on LTC Organiser users have been:

- "We expect to save 50% of our costs. " (Bowne Translation Services)
- "You don't know what you are missing until you have implemented LTC Organiser in your organisation." (Praetorius)
- "Our processes have become much more streamlined and transparent." (Deutsche Post)