

Managing translation projects using Project Manager Workbench

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

The idea of using a computer to help with managing projects has been around for 15 years; initially in areas like the construction industry, using very formal methods on large mainframe computers. But as in so many areas, the arrival of powerful personal computers and easy-to-use software has caused many people to see how these ideas can be applied to their own particular field of activity. The mystique has now gone – no longer do you need to be expert in traditional project management jargon to find project management tools useful. Today, there are thousands of users of PC-based project planning software in the UK, using it in a variety of applications – engineering, systems development, research, consultancy, telecoms, marketing and new product development. I want to suggest to you that it is equally applicable to managing translation projects.

TRANSLATION PROJECTS

Translation projects have much in common with other projects:

- they are managed to tight deadlines
- resources are limited and there are many competing demands for their time
- subcontractors have to be coordinated
- costs have to be predicted and controlled
- there needs to be frequent, up-to-date and accurate communication with the project team, management and client.

That is a tall order; but a good PC-based project management tool can help with all of this, allowing project managers to concentrate on delivering quality, and making them and their teams more productive.

CHOOSING A PRODUCT

There are several PC-based project management tools on the market. Let me suggest some criteria for choosing the appropriate one:

- It must be easy and quick to learn initially, easy to use, and should have enough capability to satisfy you as your demands on it grow
- it must be extremely strong in handling resources (especially people), and in scheduling within limited resources
- it should be powerful and responsive, giving you immediate feedback as you develop or change your plans
- you should be able to capture actuals against plan accurately in each period and see the implications for the remainder of the project
- you should be able to replan effectively to cope with changed priorities or problems. In other words, the product should help you stay in control throughout the project
- you should be able to produce concise and relevant reports to all parties
 - team, client, management
- it should give you direct help in managing multiple projects competing for common resources.

Above all, the product should leave you, the project manager, in control; it should not take control away; and it should already be very well established, with a large and varied user-base.

CHOOSING A SUPPLIER

Choosing the right supplier is equally important. A suitable supplier should be able to demonstrate:

- financial and business stability
- the resources and motivation to remain in the forefront of project management developments
- a good track record over many years in providing practical project management services and products
- a large client base using these project management aids successfully, covering many business and industry sectors
- quality and breadth of support, including: specialist expertise of sales and support staff; training options; direct help-desk service; and business project management consultancy

- willingness and ability to provide specially tailored support to clients choosing one of its products as a corporate standard
- direct and influential links to the product developer
- availability of nationwide, multi-location support, plus international connections if required
- effective products and services in related activities
- commitment to improving client project management expertise by providing comprehensive advice, training and consultancy support, not merely products.

Also, the supplier should be willing to let you try the full product before you buy.

PROJECT MANAGER WORKBENCH (PMW)

It is my belief that PMW from Hoskyns:

- is directly applicable to translation projects
- meets the criteria for product selection
- meets the criteria for supplier selection.

I hope this brief account will give you a feel for PMW's capability and relevance to your particular issues in managing projects with limited resources, and I hope I have convinced you that it is worth your serious consideration.

Hoskyns runs regular two-hour demonstrations of PMW every Thursday in London, Tuesday in Manchester, and Wednesday in Birmingham after which you can take PMW on trial for a month to investigate how it will work for you in *your* projects in your environment.

To book at such a demonstration, call the following and ask for 'PMW demo Bookings':

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Manchester	061-9693611
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