Clear Boundaries and Ideal Integration

The Acrolinx content optimization platform works in perfect harmony with the ONTRAM translation management system – and with good reason.

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THE PROBLEM

It's the source that matters. Working with a translation memory system like ONTRAM can save an enormous amount of time and money if the source text for the translation is clear. ONTRAM also contains a simple terminology checking tool, but – based on a number of customer requests – Andrä Solutions began searching for a way to provide more comprehensive improvements to the source text, including style and terminology checking tools, variant management, synonym recognition, and linguistic intelligence.

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THE SOLUTION

Andrä Solution selected Acrolinx as its software partner for language checking because the company's platform for corporate language offers the most comprehensive range of functions available on the market. Additionally, both Acrolinx and ONTRAM are web-based server solutions, which makes it easier to connect them to one another. There is no overlap between the two systems; rather, there is a clear boundary at which the project is handed off from one system to the other. What's more, unlike other terminology management solutions, Acrolinx is also designed as an open system that provides easy access to terms.

Ontram
hello world

Whenever our customers need a serious terminology management solution that goes beyond Excel spreadsheets, we recommend Acrolinx.

Annika Neumann,
Business Development Department, Andrä Solutions GmbH & Co. KG

We use Acrolinx to test our solution's user interface. ONTRAM is an enterprise product; punctuation and spelling issues are unacceptable in that context.

Frederic Klane
Quality Manager, Andrä Solutions GmbH & Co. KG

Berlin-based Andrä Solutions was founded in 1999 and has been developing translation management software since 2001. The best foundation for an efficient translation is a source language with clear terminology. That's why for its projects, Andrä Solutions relies on the Acrolinx content optimization platform and recommends it to its customers as a preferred product when it comes to improving and standardizing technical documents and marketing copy. This partnership between the two companies has meant that Andrä Solutions now uses Acrolinx for its own product development processes and the creation of its handbooks and marketing materials.

It all began with a project for Daimler AG. Based on its experience in that project, Andrä Solutions developed the ONTRAM translation management system (TMS) in 2008, which is now publicly available for purchase. Over the years, the company acquired a number of renowned major companies as clients, including CLAAS, Metabo, and Travian Games. Unlike competing products, ONTRAM was developed as an open system, which means that it

is completely independent of any translation agency. It also offers the option of offline packages, which are known as translator packages. They allow a translator who is assigned a project in ONTRAM to decide which tool to use: ONTRAM's web-based editor, or another translation system via an exported offline package.

"With its numerous project management options, ONTRAM is extremely well suited for large volumes of data and complex translation projects," explains Annika Neumann of the Business Development Department at Andrä Solutions. "Automation helps to increase the efficiency of translation processes." The marketing department at agricultural machinery manufacturer CLAAS works with the software, for instance. CLAAS produces brochures in up to 30 languages. Today, the company uploads Adobe InDesign, Office, or document files from the content management system to ONTRAM, and the software independently extracts the texts, including generating a preview for viewing contextual information.

Integrated Checking and Translation Process for Shared Customer CLAAS

Terminological consistency in the source language is crucial for correct translations; it improves the quality of the services provided and helps to increase customer satisfaction. "Acrolinx handles all aspects of the source language, and ONTRAM takes care of the translation," Annika Neumann says. "That's why the two solutions work so well together; the complementary concepts make a lot of sense. The motto 'It's the source that matters' really applies here." And Neumann, a computer linguist, repeatedly preaches this mantra to her customers: They need to provide clear, well-structured source files. Taking five hours to properly prepare an Adobe InDesign file in terms of language, format, and character styles will save five hours of work each of the twenty times that file is translated later on.

Acrolinx Provides Comprehensive Source Text Improvements

ONTRAM also contains a simple terminology checking tool; for example, users can upload an Excel spreadsheet to the TMS and use it for the translation process. However, this simple tool is no substitute for one that can offer comprehensive improvements to the source text, including style and terminology checking tools, variant management, synonym recognition, and linguistic intelligence. "That's why whenever our customers need a serious terminology management solution that goes beyond Excel spreadsheets, we recommend Acrolinx," Annika Neumann says.

Clear Hand-Offs, Open Architecture

Andrä Solutions had several reasons for selecting Acrolinx as its software partner for issues such as terminology, style, and spelling. First off, Acrolinx is the system with the broadest range of functions on the market. It offers terminology, spelling, and style checks from a single source and also boasts extraordinary linguistic capabilities. It also doesn't hurt that Andrä Solutions and Acrolinx are neighbors: Both companies are located in Berlin, just 300 meters apart as the crow flies. This makes quick, direct communication much easier. Additionally, both Acrolinx and ONTRAM are web-based server solutions, which naturally makes it easier to connect them to one another. However, it's very important to note that a distinct line is drawn between the two systems: Once the source language has been checked in Acrolinx, the translation can begin in ONTRAM. In that sense, there is no overlap between the two systems; rather, there is a clear boundary at which the project is handed off from one system to the other. Another advantage for the developers at Andrä Solutions is the fact that, unlike other terminology management solutions, Acrolinx is an open system that provides easy access to terms.

Closed Terminology Loop

There is an interface between the two systems; terminology entries are displayed during the translation process. For example, if the German term 'Reisebüro' appears in the source text, the correct

English translation, 'travel agency,' will be shown. This also works in reverse: If a translator realizes that a terminology entry is missing, but that one would be helpful, then he or she can mark that word. These terminology suggestions are then collected and forwarded to Acrolinx from ONTRAM if necessary. This closes the terminology loop. Terminology is created in the source language, and then ideally, the text undergoes a first round of translation, and the terminology will be used for subsequent translation processes.

Given this synergy, it made sense for Andrä Solutions to use the Acrolinx platform for its own purposes, as well. Frederic Klane, Quality Manager at Andrä Solutions, says: "Initially, we used Acrolinx to test our solution's user interface. We started with the little buttons that are supposed to contain short, intuitive labels that are easy to remember." That's why the 'Save' button in ONTRAM always says 'Save,' and not 'Send form' or 'Persist job,' as some developers like to label it. This incorrect, inconsistent labeling was a problem for ONTRAM in the past. The simultaneous use of terms such as 'Order management' and 'Order administration'

also inevitably caused confusion among users. In cases like this, users often can't even find the right section of the product.

Optimizing the ONTRAM Interface with Acrolinx

The ONTRAM software product texts are written and stored in what are known as properties files; these are then transferred to Microsoft Word to be checked by Acrolinx. Because Andrä Solutions utilizes the SCRUM development process in a two-week rhythm, an individual developer only ever checks small packets with Acrolinx. Release notes are created during the development process, and they are sent directly to the customer. Before Acrolinx was implemented, the problem was that these notes were written in 'developer-speak.' Consequently, customers often had problems understanding the notes and had to ask for clarification. "ONTRAM is an enterprise product," Frederic Klane explains. "Punctuation and spelling issues are unacceptable in that context." ONTRAM's graphical user interface (GUI) is available in six languages. Andrä Solutions uses ONTRAM to translate

fragments of text from German into English, Spanish, French, Italian, and Dutch; freelance translators are granted access to Andrä Solutions' web-based TMS in order to complete this work. The terminology, spelling, and style rule check is conducted before the translation process begins.

In addition to development, Andrä Solutions' technical documentation experts utilize Acrolinx's terminology checking tool to create ONTRAM documentation. The company's website editors and members of the marketing department, on the other hand, tend get more use out of the style checking tool. Andrä Solutions' website is hosted on WordPress, where the company has also integrated the Acrolinx Desktop Checker. When it comes to marketing copy, Andrä Solutions – like other companies – turns off a few of the style rules from the Acrolinx standard set in order to allow the copywriters the freedom to use the more flowery language common to the field. The marketing department uses Acrolinx to create case studies, white papers, and similar documents. In this way, Andrä Solutions' employees themselves benefit from all the advantages that the Acrolinx language check has to offer.

About the Company

Sven C. Andrä founded Andrä Solutions GmbH & Co. KG in 1999 with the goal of developing intelligent software solutions for companies based on modern Web technologies. The ONTRAM team has grown over the years; today, the experienced software developers, product managers, customer account managers, support specialists, and sales representatives still work to achieve this goal from the company's development headquarters in Berlin. In order to react quickly and flexibly to the wide range of challenges presented by customers, the company has been utilizing agile methods such as SCRUM and Kanban for years – to great success. In keeping with its principles of agility, Andrä Solutions' main focus is on people and a spirit of togetherness, on functional software, close cooperation with customers, and adaptability.

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