MANAGING THE MANAGMENT TOOLS

LTC Organiser Multilingual Management and Workflow Control Software System

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Multilingual projects are becoming increasingly more complex and are placing even more stringent demands on project resources and management.

To support and manage several different software programs at various stages and to control nearly all aspects of multilingual projects, LTC Organiser offers a multilingual job management package developed to meet the specific needs of specialists in the language industry. LTC has now come out with a 3.50 version, adding automatic remote support and log file for quicker troubleshooting, email merging capability and other options to the already elaborated suite.
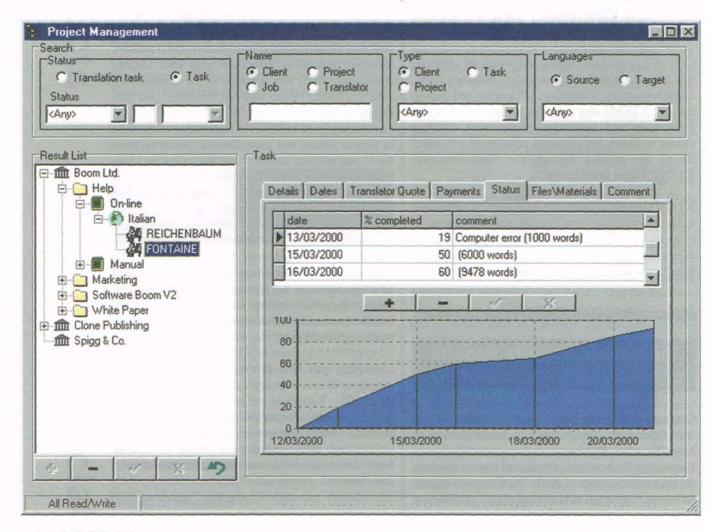
With the LTC Organiser appropriate translators can be identified for specific level needs. Translation tasks can be allocated quickly and effectively to experts in highly specific subject areas. The status, the progress and the cost of translation projects as well as actions required and taken can be controlled via the LTC Organiser. The client database is another feature of the LTC Organiser. It enables you to store all relevant client information, including client specific information.

The Project Management feature keeps track of projects, and documents within projects, at the different stages of development. This is achieved by recording the status, and various versions of source and target texts, during each phase up to completion of the target language product.

Translation Software Management

The Software Management page is activated through

the main menu bar, or via the Supplier Management, by clicking on the Managing Translation Software button on the Translation Software tab. This feature allows the project manager to record all information about translation software, terminology tools, machine tools etc. It is designed to allow access to information about current software status. The user specifies a particular translation software package. Once specified, details on status, version, purchase date, cost, languages, contacts, installation instructions, and support type can be viewed or entered.

Licence Management

The licence page is designed to let the user keep track of the translation tools lent to various suppliers. It gives access to a complete overview of on-loan, free, or overdue translation tools. This page is accessed through either the command Software – Licence overview on the main menu bar or via the Supplier Management, by clicking on the Managing Licences button on the Licences page.

Supplier and Client Management

This module provides access to the client and supplier databases. The supplier database includes contact details, areas of expertise, fees, etc. The user can identify and match the specialist expertise of a supplier (translator, interpreter, technical author, DTP specialist, teacher, etc.) with the requirements of a task for a specific client. This database also has search and sort facilities that enable data (e.g. fees, skills, hours worked, deadlines) to be updated. The Client function allows the user to store all relevant client contact details. Clients are classified by organisation. Information on contact people within the organisation and project details can be viewed and edited. The function is accessed via the main menu bar by clicking on Client, or by pressing Alt C.

Contact Management and
managing the To Do lists

The Contact function is designed to access all supplier or contact addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. The user is also able to add new people into the database. From this Contacts Management page, it is possible to view and edit information on the To Do List display and to print reports. The To Do list is designed to record, for example, the date of the documents sent, payments, actions to take etc. Activating the To Do function will open the To Do List window. This function is designed to give a quick and easy overview of all correspondence with suppliers and other contacts in the database.

Projects Management

The most sophisticated feature of the LTC Organiser, is the project management function. It enables the project manager to keep track of a project at its various stages. Stages such as the documents within the project, as well as the specialists working on each document. From text preparation through target text layout processing, to quality control and post processing, this tool will support the management of each step in a systematic and disciplined fashion. All relevant data (including the intermediate and final delivery dates agreed between the client, the translation agency's project manager, technical support staff, translators, and revisers), can be stored, regularly updated, exported, retrieved and searched for within the software.

The Project Management Module itself contains all data relating to a project, including instructions for suppliers, costs and delivery dates. With the help of a Quick Wizard, the user can instantly create projects, jobs and language tasks. The interactive Scheduler feature enables a project manager to monitor the progress of each stage of a task or each phase of a project, and to quickly identify any potential problem areas. If necessary, by simply dragging the mouse, the project manager can also adjust deadlines and reschedule the allocated tasks in order to achieve an optimal workflow.

Moreover, files and directories for each job or project can be directly accessed from within LTC Organiser. A search facility also enables you to locate individual projects on the basis of certain search criteria (e.g. client, task, source language, target language). The structure of the Project management is as follows: Client Company 1 -> Project 1 -> Job1 -> Target Language /Translation task 1 -> Supplier/Task 1. The Project management content – a tree- can be navigated plusses and minuses. A '+' means that these are further levels below in the tree. A '-' means that the branch of the tree is fully expanded, and all immediate levels below are shown. When there is neither a '+' or '-' next to a branch, there are no further levels below. The Project Scheduler supplies the user with a comprehensive graphic display of information within the Project Management database. The Project Scheduler window displays the available search facilities and an interactive bar graph that shows the (completed and incomplete) tasks and holidays of suppliers within a selected time frame. The begin/start date of the time frame can be selected by clicking on the down arrow on the left of the date box. A calendar will appear which allows the user to select the appropriate date. The end time frame date can be selected in the same way by clicking the down arrow on the right of the selection box.

The Report module is an invaluable support programme for the project manager, which creates instant summaries and overviews of projects in development: providing reliable estimates of expected and actual turnover, expenses and profit. It converts information currently stored in the database into useful reports. The general reports supplied in the ORGANISER can be edited by using Crystal Report software in order to customise them (by adding a company logo…). The Report window is divided into two distinct parts: the group tree directory that displays the various reports created by LTC using Crystal Reports on the left hand side; and the Reports and Parameters selection boxes on the right hand side. The group tree directory contains the standard reports provided by LTC. These convert all the relevant information in the database into user-friendly graphic reports. At the bottom right of the Reports field you will find "+" and "-" buttons. These allow the user to add and delete reports as required. The basic structure of the report group tree is as follows: REPORTS -> +TRANSLATION MANAGEMENT -> +CLIENT MANAGEMENT -> -PROFITS PER PROJECT -> -PROFITS PER TYPE OF CLIENT -> +SOFTWARE MANAGEMENT. Reports can be exported in the following file formats: .doc, Excel .xls, HTML, .txt, .dif, Lotus 1-2-3, .rtf or OBDC source. The Finance Module allows the user to archive a comprehensive list of invoices, purchase orders and quotes; and also to keep a record of payments due and payments made in order to facilitate efficient and timesaving financial management. The Finance Module encompasses the

Client Payment Management, the Supplier Payment Management and the Price List Management.

Managing several options

The Design Module enables you to customise the product to specifications that are oriented to one company only. In the Supplier, Client, Project, Contact, Price list, and Software management features, a new PAGE called Perso can have static controls, data controls and even visual basic scripts added. Another option, The TRADOS interface, makes it possible to import Workbench analysis directly into LTC Organiser Suppliers can register and update their personal details, download/upload their tasks and enter the status of projects. Clients can request quotes and check the progress of projects simply by logging on to your website!

Does the management management suite actually delivers?

The LTC Organiser is a useful and business process management and workflow control software system. It was developed according to the requirements of LTC's comprehensive translation activities, and may reflect years of experience in managing large scale multilingual translation and software localisation projects from their part, but it certainly delivers the necessary grouping of tasks in a varied and complex workflows. LTC eases the translation co-ordination and may keep your hair from growing grey. This software is therefore of considerable use to translation companies worldwide. Some of the advantages are: significant reduction of translation management costs, considerable increase of reliability of service, the integrated environment, automatic calculation of invoices through user definable price lists in the Finance Module and the possibility to import/export your database easily.

Various versions

LTC Organiser is now divided into 3 products: Corporate, Agency and Small Business (the web solution is now offered as an incorporated option).

• The Small Business version is aimed at smaller-scale operation, and is only available on the Access database and therefore doesn't give access to the web forms. It is limited to 5 licenses and the database is also limited to 100 suppliers and 100 clients. Design module and TRADOS interface are optional.

• The Agency version is identical to the Small Business version except that it is unlimited with respect to licenses, suppliers and clients. Design module and TRADOS interface are optional.

• The Corporate version has all the features of the Agency version, but also includes an SQL database, access to the Web

forms, and Security management, with unlimited licenses as well.

With LTC 3.50, a Web version of the Organiser has been released as well. It has exactly the same interface as the local version, but works with a web server. ■

System requirements:

LTC Organiser is written in Delphi 5, a 32 bits oriented object RAD. This product is therefore optimised to perform under Windows 95, 98 and NT. The software uses an Access 97 database, which can be shared in a server for multi-user purpose or Ms SQL Server for additional workload. This product is fully 2000 compliant.

LTC Organiser requires as a minimum: Intel Pentium, 48 Mb of RAM, 30 Mb of disk space, SVGA 800x600, 16 colours and Windows 95, 98, NT or 2000.

Note: When using Windows 2000, better log on as an Administrator or a Power User in order to install or launch the program.

Prices: vary

LTC Organiser is available from the distributors at variable prices, depending on the version and number of licensees. For further information check at the website www.langtech.co.uk

Ease of Us	✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪
Aesthetic Appeal	✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪
Speed	✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪
Claims vs Reality	✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪