

# E-term + TM = AM

Can translation memory and authoring memory go hand-in-hand?

by Bob Clark



It seems like yesterday, but it's been a full six years to the day since I wrote an early review of the Logos Living Dictionary in the pages of this very magazine. The one thing that seemed astonishing at the time was the fact that the thirty-language, million-word-plus dictionary was available to the public completely free of charge. Remember, those were the days before people began to realize that trying to charge for anything on the Web was easier said than done. The luxury of hindsight also allows us to fully appreciate the sheer audacity of putting up a database of such magnitude on the Web, given the technology available in the early days. The more popular the Logos Dictionary became, the more they had to beef up their server. Connection speeds were painfully slow and there was a serious possibility that users would just stop bothering to wait. But Logos persevered and, today, the Logos Dictionary boasts over nine million words in more than 200 languages.

Now they've pulled another rabbit (in this case, a turtle) out of their hat—a recent version of their E-term solution developed for UNI, the Italian National Standards Body.

#### Terminology Management—who needs it?

Fact—Every Company uses terms very specific to their industry sector and product.

Fact—Most Companies take their terminology for granted.

For most people, terminology does not tend to be an all-consuming obsession. They're just words, right? In the grand scheme of things, terminology hardly features up there with Aids in Africa and the

**The Golden Rule should be One Concept—One Term, and this term should be used consistently throughout all corporate documentation.**

Middle East Crisis as discussion points. Let's face it, if the guy next to you at the bar starts talking about terminology, you'll almost certainly look at your watch and say, "Gosh, is that time? I really must dash!"

When it comes to terminology, familiarity breeds contempt. Authors writing corpo-

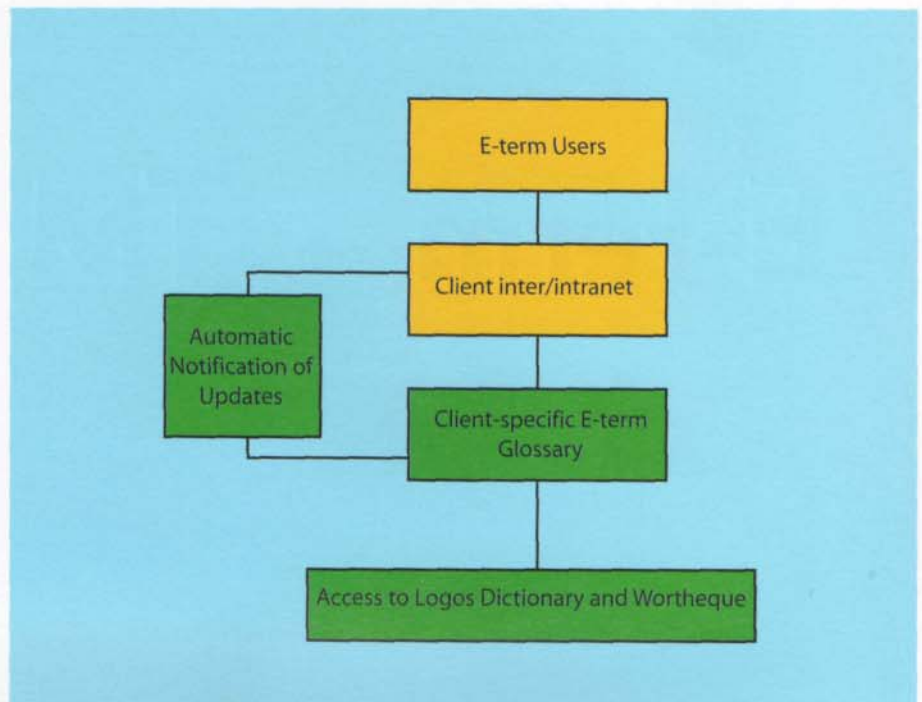


Figure 1

rate documentation, be it marketing brochures, technical manuals, catalogs or Web content, *should* know which terms to use. If they don't, they'd better stop authoring and do something else. So, why worry about it? We need to look at two important issues—Quality Management and Translation.

#### Quality Management

We are firmly in the age of ISO Certification. Certain industry sectors can't budge without it. We all know that Quality Certification will never guarantee a perfect product, but what it *does* do is indicate that the *procedures* and *processes* of a given organization conform to a quality standard subject to rigorous monitoring. If the use of terminology is ignored in these procedures and processes, what we can end up with is one term being used in a catalog, another in Instructions for Use or service documentation, and still another in marketing material. Sadly, this happens every day. Inconsistent use of terminology, at best, can be interpreted as carelessness and reflects badly on the organization, at worst, it might even end up being a legal or safety issue.

#### Translation

Let's look at the basics—Terms and Concepts. According to the official ISO definitions, a *Term* is the "Designation of a defined *concept* in a special language by a linguistic expression. (Note - A term may

consist of one or more words or even contain symbols). (ISO 1087:1990)". A *Concept* is "A unit of thought constituted through abstraction on the basis of properties common to a set of objects. (Note - Concepts are not bound to particular languages. They are, however, influenced by the social or cultural background). (ISO 1087:1990)". In short, a concept is a thing and a term is what it's called. In an organization, The Golden Rule should be One Concept—One Term, and this term

**"Quality and consistency in terminology usage are crucial to our organization", says Pierangela Bossi, Manager Literature Development at Whirlpool Europe.**

should be used consistently throughout *all* corporate documentation.

If we look at the implications of this on translation, it's obvious that any inconsistency in the source language is bound to be perpetuated in the translation, and, possibly, compounded even further. Ironically, it is at the translation stage that inconsistencies quite often come to light and, with an efficient feedback loop, can be rectified. However, this normally only applies to inconsistent use of terminology found



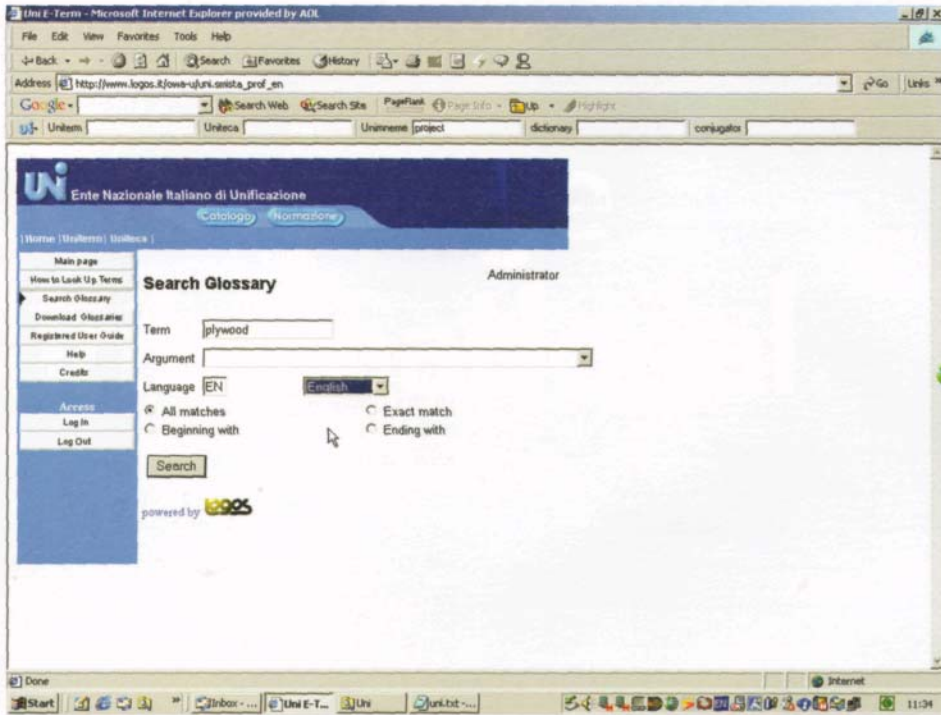


Figure 2

within the same document or document type. One way to solve this problem is for an organization to maintain a central ter-

minological database accessed by *all* members of an organization, wherever they are. This enables authors, editors, translators,

and QA people to “sing from the same hymnbook”.

### The UNI approach

UNI, the Italian National Standards Body, is a non-profit association founded in 1921 appointed by the Italian government and the European Union to develop, approve and publish technical standards in all economic sectors (industry, trade and services), excluding the electronic sector. Its main sources of income are:

- sales from publications
- membership fees
- public funding linked to specific technical activities.

The UNI operating structure is comprised of some 125 employees, based in Milan, the headquarters, at the Rome branch office and at sixteen “UNI Points” located in major cities throughout Italy. UNI Points are managed by independent entities operating as information centers, distributing UNI standards and other publications.

Standardization is developed by 57 UNI commissions and 14 independent feder-

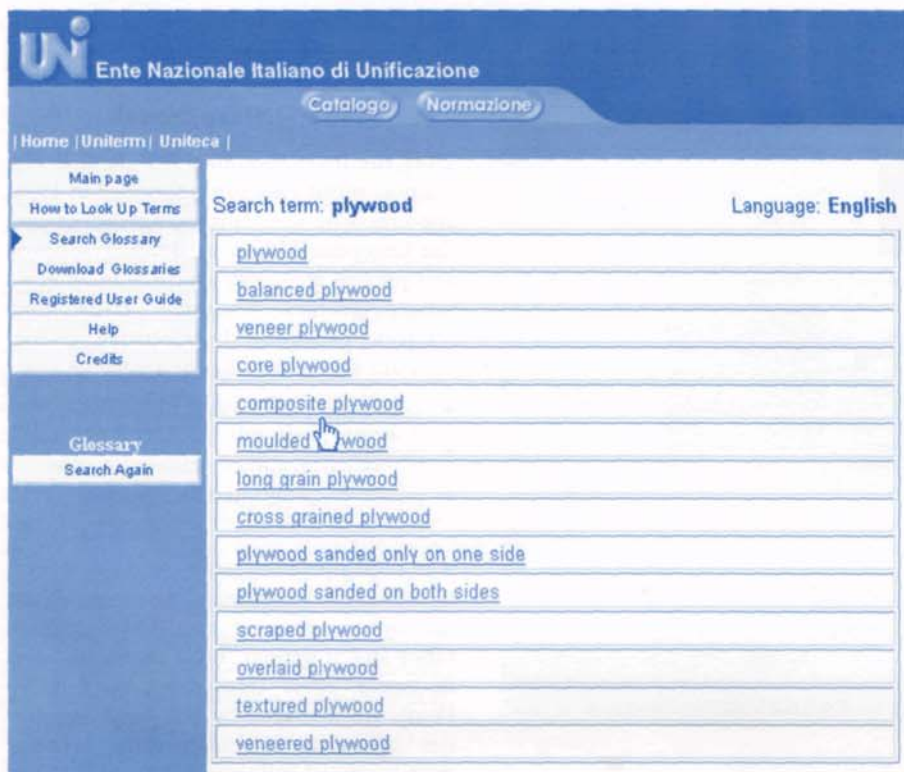


Figure 3

ated bodies to which specific sectors are delegated. Every year approximately 8,000 people representing all interested parties (industry, trade, users, consumers, public administration, research institutes) take part in standardization. In recent years, thanks to UNIONE, the INTERNET network for standardization, output averaged more than 1,000 documents per year and, as of 1 January 2002, the total number of valid UNI standards was more than 14,000.

Logos had been translating standards for UNI for a number of years and were asked to develop a bespoke system to manage UNI terminology. This is how it works. Current terminology management procedures are thoroughly reviewed and a design is presented incorporating client requirements. Corporate terminology is stored on a dedicated secure Web server hosted by Logos along with a customized user interface and Help guide. Any existing glossaries are integrated into this interactive terminological database. E-term is not an off-the-shelf, one-size-fits-all application and there are probably as many versions as there are clients. The flowchart in Figure 1 shows a typical system.

More and more people are beginning to realize that the most efficient and cost-effective method of managing corporate terminology is to provide a central repository with distributed access. This access may be distributed among several departments in a single corporate entity, several

corporate entities in the same country or, with increasing globalization, several entities in several countries.

"Quality and consistency in terminology usage are crucial to our organization", says Pierangela Bossi, Manager Literature Development at Whirlpool Europe. "E-term plays a key role in enabling us to present unified multilingual (27 languages) termi-

nology internally and to our customers. Companies of all sizes are coping with the need to communicate with customers, partners and employees on a more global basis, and in ways that ensure accurate communication—this means accurate language and terminology. E-term is the kind of solution our company has adopted, as it is easily accessible from anywhere using a standard Web browser, and can be readily integrated with content management systems. E-term is easy-to-use and intuitive, which is crucial for the acceptance of terminology. In addition, its open system architecture allows customization". So, let's look at the UNI solution in detail:

Once logged into the secure UNI site, the user is presented with a glossary search screen (Figure 2). As we can see, the look-up options can be all matches containing the word being searched, any match beginning or ending with the word, or exact matches only. Clicking the search button with the word "plywood" entered in the search box will produce the result in figure 3.

All entries in the glossary containing the word "plywood" are displayed. If the term "composite plywood" is selected, all translations for that term are displayed as in Figure 4. If a translation is to be amended or added, authorized users can do so on this screen.

For example, if the user wishes to amend a definition, clicking on the green Lemma button would display the screen in figure 5.

Translation for: **composite plywood** Language: **English**

	Italian		<b>pannello di legno compensato composito</b>		<b>A</b>
	English		<b>composite plywood</b>		<b>A</b>
	French		<b>contreplaqué composite</b>		<b>A</b>
	German		<b>Verbundsperrholz</b>		<b>A</b>

To add a translation, please select the language and write down the word in the appropriate box.

Language:

Term:

Language:

powered by

Figure 4



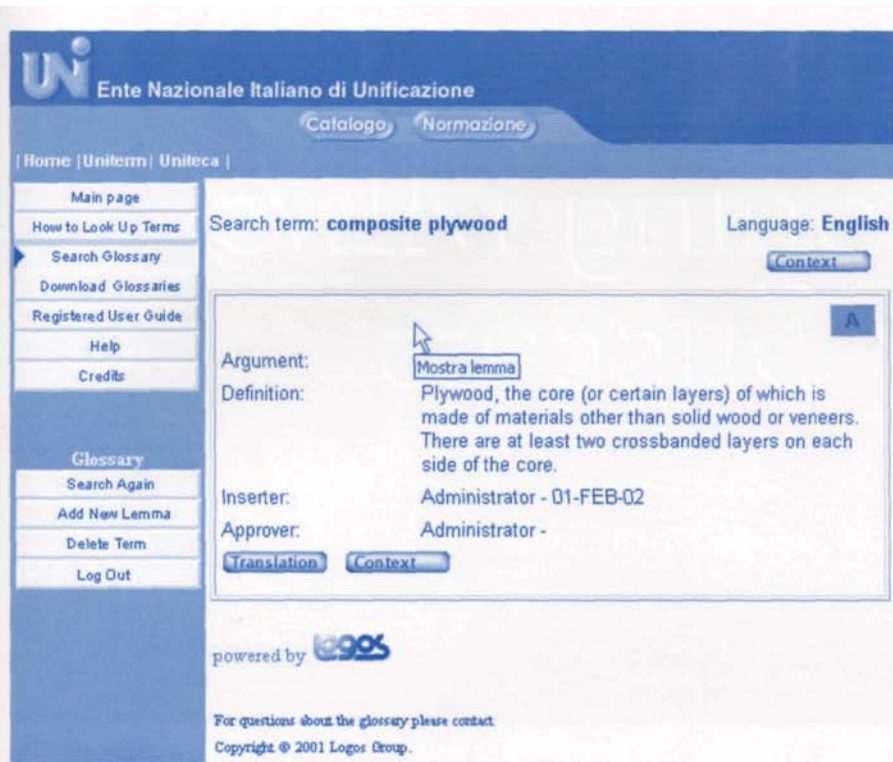


Figure 5

Definition and control information can only be changed on this screen by authorized users. The fields are all client-defined. Clicking on the Context button would return a concordance of the term from client documents stored on the server. What you've seen so far are the sort of options that the Logos E-term solution has been offering clients for quite some time now—with one exception. And this is the exciting bit! Logos can provide

custom-made toolbars that enable the user to access E-term from a Web browser or directly from a Word document.

As you can see on the toolbar in Figure 6, in addition to: Uniterm, which accesses the client's personal terminological database, Uniteca, which accesses the client's personal indexed database of documentation, Dictionary, which accesses the Logos



Figure 6

Source language: EN	Target language: IT
Gratings for installation in unused flat roofs shall project not less than 30mm above the roof covering	Le griglie per l'installazione in tetti piani non praticabili devono sporgere di un'altezza non minore di 30mm dalla superficie del tetto
b) the free vertical distance between the level of the highest area on the car roof whose dimensions comply with 8.13.2 (areas on parts according to 5.7.1.1 c) excluded) and the level of the lowest part of the ceiling of the well (including beams and components located under the ceiling) situated in the projection of the car, expressed in metres, shall be at least 1,0 + 0,035 vm2	b) la distanza libera verticale, espressa in metri, tra il livello della superficie più alta sul tetto della cabina le cui dimensioni rispondono a 8.13.2 [con esclusione delle superfici sulle parti di cui in 5.7.1.1 c)] ed il livello della parte più bassa del soffitto del vano (inclusi le travi e i componenti installati sotto il soffitto), situati nella proiezione della cabina, deve essere non minore di 1,0 + 0,035
6.1.2 Diverter pulleys may be installed in the headroom of the well provided that they are located outside the projection of the car roof and that examinations and tests and maintenance operations can be carried out in complete safety from the car roof or from outside the well	6.1.2 Le pulegge di rinvio possono essere installate nella testata del vano di corsa a condizione che siano fuori della proiezione del tetto della cabina e che le verifiche, le prove e le operazioni di manutenzione possano farsi in tutta sicurezza dal tetto della cabina o dall'esterno del vano di corsa

Figure 7

dictionary, Conjugator, which offers full verb conjugation in 30 languages,

the solution developed for UNI includes Unimneme, which enables the user to actually search their Translation Memory. If we enter "project" in the Unimneme (Translation Memory) box, we see in Figure 7 that all occurrences of the term (including expanded forms) are displayed in the source search language along with the target language.

What Logos has managed to achieve with this approach is the liberation of Translation Memory data from the traditional constraints of the "translation environment".

Fortunately for Logos, they were advocates of the "central repository" approach long before Content Management became the fashionable buzzword that it is today. They

**What Logos has managed to achieve with this approach is the liberation of Translation Memory data from the traditional constraints of the "translation environment".**

always maintained all client Translation Memories at their Modena site, so it was relatively simple to bolt on UNI's database to the E-term architecture. UNI's Translation Memory resides on their E-term

server and enables translators, terminologists and in-country reviewers to access it, wherever they are. But it doesn't require an enormous leap of the imagination to realize the potential that E-term offers the authoring process. With this solution authors can also ensure consistent use of source language terminology and search and retrieve what they have written in the past. With E-term, Translation memory has become Authoring Memory!

For further information on E-term, contact [info@logos.net](mailto:info@logos.net).

For further information on UNI, go to [www.uni.com](http://www.uni.com).