THAMUS developments

The Italian company *THAMUS — Consorzio per la Linguistica Computazionale*, whose head office is in Salerno but which also has a commercial office in Milan, has decided to venture into the international translation market.

Thamus, a subsidiary of the IRI-Finmeccanica, was set up in 1988 to carry out research into computer science and linguistics for industrial applications in natural language processing. It co-developed the English into Italian and German into Italian language pairs of the LOGOS machine translation system, and is now the biggest user of LOGOS machine translation technology in Italy. With 28 researchers Thamus is one of the biggest Italian research centres working in the computational linguistics field.

Thamus has an in-house translation group consisting of nine graduate linguists and one computer programmer. This group has gained a great deal of experience working on translations and desktop publishing for big Italian companies such as Siemens-Nixdorf Italia, Ansaldo and Finmeccanica (IRI). Now Thamus feels it is the right time to venture into the international translation market.

Conscious of the need for high-quality services, and that Italian translations are often criticised for their low quality level, Thamus is working hard to define quality assurance procedures concerning project management, terminology research, revision and quality levels. Thamus is convinced that this approach — the use of advanced translation technologies and rigorous quality control — is the right answer to the growing demands of international customers.

Thamus uses an IBM 4381 mainframe, IBM RS/6000 workstations and Sun workstations. These are interlinked with a LAN, and can be linked with outside companies by means of a special line.

The LOGOS/Thamus machine translation system consists of a dictionary of more than 120,000 words and approximately 35,000 grammar and semantic rules.

Thamus is also working on two advanced translation systems, one from Italian into English, the other from Italian into German. In addition, Thamus is involved in the EUROLANG project which, over a period of three years, aims to develop a second generation machine translation system centred around English and the major European languages.