

Case Study



Zebra Technologies

Introduction

Zebra Technologies Corporation is a global leader in helping companies to identify, locate and track assets, transactions and people with on-demand specialty digital printing and automatic identification solutions in more than 100 countries around the world. More than 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies trust innovative and reliable Zebra printers, supplies, RFID products and software to increase productivity, improve quality, lower costs, and deliver better customer service.

With a target market geography of over 100 countries, producing reference materials, safety guides and user manuals in a timely manner in order to satisfy client demands – as well as comply with legislative requirements – caused Zebra to rethink how it was producing their multilingual documentation.

Challenge

Zebra's global requirements presented the company with the task of translating its user documentation into multiple languages, and within restricted cycle times. In 2003, Zebra provided translated documentation in 13 languages using the services of independent translators. These translators worked independently and without the benefit of translation memory technology.

Translated materials were not available until 2 to 4 months after a product was released. When a new Translation Coordinator was hired by Zebra, she reviewed the process that was in place and found it too time-consuming and expensive to maintain, especially as the company was looking to expand its global presence.

Solution

The first step to managing translations more efficiently was to select a translation provider experienced in translation memory technology, which would decrease the overall costs of translation while ensuring terminological and stylistic consistency. Interpro Translation Solutions was selected as the primary translation vendor based on their expertise and overall value proposition.

The second step was to streamline the source content. Without the benefit of a Content Management System, the Technical Publications department revised the source FrameMaker files by making extensive use of conditional text and topical files. In some cases, manuals across product lines shared as much as 75% of content. A dedicated editor ensures consistent phrasing and content reuse across all user documentation, increasing the amount of matches to the translation memory, thus reducing costs and translation times.

Interpro provided a dedicated Project Manager and FTP site for Zebra projects, ensuring quick turnaround for quotations, project launches, and final delivery. Translation and post-DTP review are included as part of the translation process, something not available when independent translators were used.

Results

Zebra's Technical Publications department now provides user documentation in as many as 30 languages, available simultaneously at product release. Per page translation costs have been reduced 72% from approximately \$90/page in 2003 to \$25/page in late 2006. Overall, Zebra has experienced a significant reduction in cost and translation development times, while increasing the total number of words being translated as well as the number of languages being offered.

