

FUNDAMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES FOR IP TRANSLATION SERVICES



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The strength of intellectual property documents, including international patent applications, relies in part on the quality of the translation. While some form of technology has been used for translations – perhaps beginning in the 1940s with electronic files rather than paper documents, universal translation technology has only begun to serve as a major utility for human translations in recent years.

The result: a more efficient process that consistently produces high quality outcomes.

1 / TERMINOLOGY MANAGEMENT



Creating glossaries or databases of terms that are standard to a specific industry or brand helps create consistency across translations and ensures efficient translations that are relevant to the specific context of the document. The automobile industry has a glossary that will be very different than a glossary for the pharmaceutical industry.



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The initial glossary provides a starting point for collecting client-specific terms and their respective translations into various languages. Terminology management software also captures additional terms as documents are translated, and then tracks the source of the term, the date the term was entered, who entered it and other related information, as well as the translation of the new term.

Along with gathering data to continually improve and increase the glossary, terminology management software also offers suggestions to translators “on the fly,” easing the process of knowing whether a word or phrase has a client- or industry-specific translation.

TAKEAWAY

Terminology management software creates consistency and efficiency for client- and industry-specific translations.





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2 / TRANSLATION MEMORY



Translation memory software allows translators to leverage past translation efforts in their current translations. The first step is for the software to parse the source and translated material down to segments, such as sentences or phrases, which can be matched in subsequent documents.

Fuzzy matching offers suggested translation matches stored in memory and based on a range of similarity. As technology improves, the range of similarity narrows for better translation.

Contextual matching improves on fuzzy matching methodology. Contextual matching technology looks for additional clues by remembering the two or three sentences before and after the match. The longer phrases and sentences will usually have a higher degree of accuracy with contextual matching based on what is stored in translation memory than shorter phrases.

Even with more advanced contextual matching, translations from translation memory software still receive human review to ensure accuracy in terminology and context.

TAKEAWAY

Translation memory speeds the translation process and has improved over time with contextual matching.



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3 / MACHINE-ASSISTED TRANSLATION

Don't let this make you nervous! Machine translation technology for patent translation is simply the process of taking existing technologies, such as glossaries and translation memory, and training a server to use contextual matching for an initial translation prior to human post-editing.



No matter where this technology is applied (e-discovery, prior art search, office actions, etc.), all machine translations need post-editing. Because of a potentially wide range of accuracy, the adoption of machine-assisted translation must be accompanied by an understanding and measurement of the traditional translation system, in order to compare outcomes and measure efficiency and quality.

For a machine translation server to qualify for use in translation production, human time and effort, plus the cost of the machine translation system (including installation and maintenance), must be less than that of the original all-human system, while producing the exact same human quality. However, efficiencies also continue to improve over time. Analyzing errors in machine translation and creating a feedback loop continually helps the machine perform better.

TAKEAWAY

Machine-assisted translation is a technology tool for IP translators to improve efficiency while maintaining quality.



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4 / PROJECT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

While this technology doesn't help create translations, it is nevertheless crucial to the patent translation (and overall foreign patent filing) process. Project management software tools can help manage workflows that allow team members to collaborate across languages, which is an important best practice in creating transparency in schedules, budgets and client reports, and creating high quality translations for use around the world. Project management software for translation processes helps delegate tasks and assign priorities as the software tracks source and target languages, as well as document attributes, and associates the most pertinent glossaries and translation memories to each source document.

Additionally, project management software helps schedule resources, assign and track deadlines, and estimate costs for project proposals based on similar past projects. Tracking deadlines is particularly important in the patent filing process to ensure ongoing protection of a client's IP and comply with all prosecution requirements that vary by country.



TAKEAWAY

Project management software supports a streamlined translation process with transparency in scheduling, budgets and quality.



CONCLUSION

Two valuable outcomes of using technology to assist in patent translations are quality and efficiency.

Minor mistakes in IP documents and patent applications could drastically affect the meaning and scope of a patent, opening it up to litigation and potentially resulting in millions in lost revenues. Translation technologies help ensure consistency in translations and across a brand or industry and also support translations that apply to the intended context. Additionally, in a streamlined translation model, project management with technology tools can help eliminate errors across the board that may be only initially identified in one language version.



International patents are expensive, no matter where you are seeking protection, and costs increase as you increase the number of jurisdictions in which you file. If your business plans to compete in a global market, you need enough resources to apply for patents in numerous countries. Technology-aided translations help create efficiencies realized when filing broadly or filing a high volume of patents.

Overall, having a service provider that uses the latest, most advanced technologies for your foreign patent filings – along with the proper people and processes – will help ensure timely and quality translations that help speed the time to grant and reduce the risk of litigation or invalidation, better protecting your valuable intellectual property.



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