

Ensuring Quality

Introduction

An important consideration for companies who have decided to implement crowdsourcing is how to maintain quality. The first aspect to note is that the translations offered to crowdsourcing communities are usually lower stakes; meaning not medical instructions or legal work, but texts such as blogposts and short translation strings. The following document is a brief description of the steps that Human Rights Watch can take to maintain the quality of your translations within your social translation community.

A. Build your own tool for translators to use

Consider developing a simple-to-use tool that is straightforward enough for your non-professional translators. Clean UI, peer-review functions, simplified TM function, or gamification should be implemented where appropriate.

B. Community Guidelines

Companies looking to implement crowdsourcing into their business need to develop clear guidelines for their community outlining the expectations and consequences of certain actions. Firing volunteers isn't as straightforward as firing a paid employee, and it requires documentation to back up the decision. It is necessary to create a system outlining what will happen to translators who continually provide inappropriate, fake, or poor translations; how many violations it will take before they are blocked from the program; and how will these violations will be tracked and documented.

Companies also need to set up a data storage system in which they track violations in case there is any legal dispute with the expelled parties. Finally, it would be wise to set up a way to flag users in the initial engineering of a program so that upper management can keep an eye on repeat offenders.

C. Democratic validation

Whether you incorporate a voting function into the peer-review process mentioned above or as a post-submission function, voting is another good way to build a translator's reputation and to improve the overall quality of the translations. If feasible, consider running the submitted translations by a separate focus group. If your product or service is well known, try testing the translations on groups of people who will likely represent your user base. Have these individuals vote on the translations that make the most sense to them!

D. Hire a Language Service Provider (LSP)

By using non-professional translators, we reduce the need to rely on LSPs for translation; however, sometimes it is worth hiring an LSP to assist with the final stages

of a translation. Some companies and organizations are realizing that allowing an LSP to complete the Quality Assurance phase of a project can be worth the price — especially when translating certain content (e.g. medicine, legal jargon, government materials).

E. Start a project with machine translation and let your community post-edit

Machine translation (MT) is not all bad! Sometimes a project's parameters leave room for machine translation at first, followed up by a few rounds of post-editing by the crowd. In cases where the content must be translated only to convey the gist of the original source text, it can be easier to start with MT and let your translators tie up the remaining loose ends.

Conclusion

We at KD&T recommend that Human Rights Watch implement a combination of the above proposed tactics to create a solid structure to ensure quality translations and save time in a financially responsible manner. Please contact us if you have any questions or if you wish to know more about alternative ways in which to ensure quality in your community translations.

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