Choosing a translation business management system—the most common mistakes buyers make

In this article, we will look at the most common mistakes translation agencies make when choosing a translation business management system (TBMS).

Price as the guiding factor

The worst question you can ask developers is "How much does your translation business management system cost?" For the developer, this shows that the potential customer is not weighing up the cost of running the system against the benefits it will provide. In other words, the price of the system means more to the customer than its value; they are not so interested in the functionality of the system.

Buying a system is not an expense but an investment. An investment that will pay for itself.

Business automation systems save you money by reducing staffing costs. Simply put, once the system is in place, some work previously done by your staff will now be done by robots. This means that the company will be able to reduce labor and equipment costs, as the same number of people will be able to do more work. The company director will also have more free time, making it easier to see the big picture and take the business in the right direction.

So instead of asking "How much does it cost?" you should ask, "What will I get for my money and how will it pay for itself?" The answer to this question depends on whether a particular management system is suitable for the specific needs of your translation agency. Price is an important issue but certainly not the main one. It is a significant factor later on when you have already selected several suitable systems and now is the time to definitively chose the one for you.

Brand as the guiding factor

This is the opposite of the price-based approach. The buyer thinks, "This is a large, well-known company, so it's the one I'll go for. I'll pay more just to be sure!"

This is a very different approach, but the problem remains the same: when choosing a system, little attention is paid to the company's specific needs and return on investment. Even a popular system can have flaws, such as an awkward interface, unresponsive tech support, hidden fees, etc.

It is often the case that a heavyweight company gains a large number of users and then reduces its focus on customer service as it can easily absorb the loss of some income. This is exactly what happens with the big brands: they do not need to focus on customer service and fight hard for each customer, as those come on their own.

A large company has many customers; they have invested a lot of money, spent time deploying a management system, and started maintaining their databases of counterparties, projects, and finances. The system is fully integrated into their business processes, and it would be extremely difficult to change it, even if it does not fully meet their needs.

So avoid making impulsive choices based on first impressions. Always check what's behind the alluring packaging.

The importance of testing

Some customers are fine with buying a translation management system without first testing it (for the reasons described above, for example). Naturally, we are very happy to make such easy sales, but we are wary of them as the buyer may well not fully understand what they have purchased. Then we may have to deal with unsatisfied customers whose expectations were not met. This is why we recommend that you take advantage of our one-month trial period.

You should always test the software before buying it. If there is no free trial option, beware—you are taking a leap of faith, no matter how tempting the sales pitch is. After all, a translation business management system is a tool that you will be using for many years, so it's vital that it is suitable for your specific needs.

The importance of talking to the support team

You need top-quality support from the developer when deploying a business management system.
No matter how good the system is, it will be useless if not set up properly or if your office staff don't use its features.

During the testing phase of the management system, you need to be in constant contact with the support team. By doing so, you kill two birds with one stone: you set up the system optimally for your business and test the quality of the tech support. If you test and deploy the system yourself, you may not fully understand how it works, use it wrong, or miss out on a lot of automation features.

So don't hesitate to contact tech support with your questions and comments. Their job is to help you. The quality of the support will directly impact how much your business will get out of the new system.

So to summarize,

when choosing a business management system for your translation company, avoid making quick, impulsive decisions based on its price and brand. Take the time to understand your precise requirements for the system and make sure to test it before buying. When deploying a management system and training your staff to use it, you need to test not only the software but also the tech support, as the level of customer service they provide is just as important as the quality of the software code.