Why is the translation business management system not suitable for you?

Every developer of specialized software for managing translation businesses sometimes receives feedback like this: "You got it all wrong. If you knew how a translation agency works, you would have done it differently!" In this article, we will look at the reasons for such feedback.

Individual needs

First, we'd like to address the comment "If you knew how a translation agency works..." Let's let you in on a secret. Any translation business management software was developed either on-demand for a specific translation agency or by an internal team within that agency. So, the developers initially knew very well how this business works. But that experience is based on the example of ONE company, usually a successful company that had the funds to attract a team of programmers.

However, translation agencies do not operate based on a single template. Each of them is unique, with its own working processes and structures. Therefore, after public release, it turns out that a system that fully satisfied the first customer may not have the features needed by other companies. Or, on the contrary, it may have unnecessary features.

After receiving initial criticism and feedback, the developers learn more about the processes within different companies. Having collected the feedbacks, they develop the most sought-after features for potential clients. In this way, after several years of development, the team knows much more about

how translation companies work than the management of a single translation agency, which only knows its processes.

Therefore, you can be sure that any translation business management system incorporates the management practices of many successful companies. And if your processes still cannot be reproduced in a system developed over many years, they are truly unique. However, it is much more common to find that the problem is not in the lack of features but in understanding how they work in a specific system.

Resistance to change

People tend to resist change, especially when it comes to implementing new technologies and work processes. If the staff of a translation agency is used to a certain way of working, they may (and will!) resist, because during the initial stage of implementing the system, they will have to relearn many things, which is psychologically uncomfortable.

In this case, the role of the manager is crucial. The leaders must be firm in their decision to implement the translation business management system and understand the benefits it provides. Psychological work with subordinates is also important: it is necessary to explain the reasons and advantages so that it does not appear as unjustified tyranny. Finally, the leaders themselves must break the cycle of old business management habits.

Misunderstanding the capabilities

Sometimes users may not understand all the capabilities and advantages offered by specialized software for managing translation businesses. This can lead to them thinking that the program does not meet their needs, when in reality the problem lies in insufficient knowledge and experience using the program. For example, if a team used Excel spreadsheets, they might perceive the new translation business management system as an improved Excel file rather than a comprehensive and all-encompassing tool. They might say, "In Excel, I can enter data faster," but at the same time MANUALLY create invoices, write letters, send tasks to performers, manage finances in a completely different system, spend a day on financial reports, etc.

Here, it is essential to understand the horizons that open up when implementing the system and not focus on how to do everything the old way but with a new system.

Communication issues

It could be that developers and users of the software do not communicate effectively enough to identify and address problems and misunderstandings. As a result, users may think that developers do not understand their needs when the actual problem lies in the absence of clear and open discussion.

It is important to simply talk and not be silent. The translation agency will only benefit if it thoroughly formulates and describes the problems to the support team. Firstly, it is very likely that most of them will be solved during the communication process. Secondly, this is a good way to test the reliability of the software provider's support. After all, you are not just buying software, but also accompanying services: technical support, implementation of new features, and consulting.

Expectations and reality

All users have an ideal picture of how a translation business management system should work and what functions it should have. However, as described above, you may have genuinely unique processes that no other company has. And if this is the case, no one in the world has developed software for these processes. But it is much more likely that the necessary functions are in the system; you just need to understand how to use them. In this case, the technical support team plays a crucial role, helping you implement the system.

A reasonable approach here is the Pareto principle, 80:20. The system should solve at least 80% of your tasks, and the remaining 20% may require further development or other tools. Yes, it's not 100%, but the number of unresolved tasks becomes 5 times smaller!

In conclusion

To get the most out of a translation project management system, you need to:

- Be open to new possibilities and be ready to change old habits
- Spend time learning the system, because without this, you won't be able to use it effectively
- Actively communicate with the developers' support team. They will help you implement the system, train you to work in it, and advise on how to reproduce your work processes in it. And if some functions are indeed missing, your voice will be passed on to the development department, and eventually, the necessary function may appear.