

# Translation memory – high-performance technology that saves time and money

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## Introduction

Translation memory systems are productive tools for editing all kinds of text – to the benefit of the client. During the translation process, the translator can store text segments in the translation memory system and re-use these at a later time. This makes TM systems a kind of extension of the translator's own memory – and a labor-saving device that helps to considerably reduce the cost of translation.

### A digital aide-mémoire for translators

A translation is more than simply a translation. Often, it is several translations at once. Thus, when working on a text, a professional translator will periodically encounter individual text elements which have possibly been previously translated, or which will be repeated. Without computer-aided translation (CAT), it is impossible for the translator to recognize and appropriately utilize these parts of the text. Yet previously translated sentences and terms represent a rich and reusable treasure trove of text components and translation templates. To put it in simple terms, translation memory systems (TMs) are digital repositories which make it possible to save translated text segments and allow them to be reused. A translation memory can therefore be viewed as an aide-mémoire for the translator. The various TM programs on the market provide user interfaces that put the saved translations at the user's disposal in an efficient and user-friendly way. As the translator works, these saved translations are presented to him or her as fully formulated suggestions.

Source	Target	
1. Wer wir sind	Who we are	0% ✓
2. Gemino Language Services & Solutions ist ein Geschäftsfeld der Gemino GmbH, das sich mit der Planung, der Organisation und dem Management von kundenspezifischen Übersetzungsprozessen für die multilinguale Unternehmenskommunikation beschäftigt.	Gemino language services & solutions is a business division of Gemino GmbH, and specializes in the planning, organization and management of customer-specific translation processes for multilingual corporate communication.	0% ✓
3. Die Expertise von über 20 Jahren in allen Bereichen der Übersetzung und Lokalisierung ermöglicht es uns, die strategischen Anforderungen unserer Kunden an Mehrsprachigkeit in effiziente, ökonomische und zukunftsorientierte Abläufe umzusetzen.	With more than 20 years of experience and expertise in all fields of translation and localization, we're able to implement efficient, economical and forward-looking processes to meet the strategic demands of our customers for multilingualism.	0% ✓
4. Darüberhinaus bietet Gemino alle Technologien und Ressourcen an, die für die Durchführung nötig sind.	Gemino also offers all the technology and resources needed in order to conduct our work.	0% ✓

A translator's typical TM work environment

## Efficiency and competence: TM-based translation in practice

In practice, the work with TM systems is organized in the following way: The programs break down texts into smaller units of texts; these are often individual sentences (known as segments). The translator therefore works with smaller, easily manageable units of meaning within the text. In each instance, the TM system searches for matching or similar segments in parallel to the actual translation process, and offers completed translations where these are available. Each of the suggested translations can then be accepted, edited or rejected by the translator. If the system fails to find any corresponding saved segment, the translator enters his or her own translation, which is subsequently saved together with the segment of original text. From this point onwards, the translation is available within the translation memory.

## Interactive translation with pre-translation functionality

Translation work can also be carried out interactively with other translators. Translations can be written in a communal virtual repository via the internet, and be accessed from there. The way to use these systems most efficiently depends on the specific job and the skill of the translators. Here, experience from different translation projects is a major factor.

Translation memory systems can be used to considerably increase the efficiency of translation processes. One example is the use of the pre-translation function. Here, the text to be translated is compared segment by segment against an available translation memory. When matches are found, the translation is entered. The translator then needs to deal only with the inexact matches and any untranslated segments. This is a procedure that cuts down considerably on costs and time. And the automatic incorporation of previously translated texts and words in the translation process also safeguards consistency of style and terminology. This protects brand names in particular, which are used in manuals, product catalogues, and on websites. The use of company- and sector-specific terminology is also ensured.

Translation memory -

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## Conclusion

Like every kind of technology, this one has its limits. Translation memory systems are not „translation machines“ that provide a completed translation at the press of a button. The skill to analyze the content and structure of a text, to research the terminology and transfer the style, is in the hands of the professional translator – who should also be well versed in the use of translation memory systems.

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