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Prompt's new release
Offers
innovative approaches to integrating machine translation

CSN interview with Olga Beregovaya, CEO of PROMT Americas

PROMT is an established name in machine translation and is now becoming a solid player in enterprise automated translation solutions. The company has a unique offering targeting the professional translation community, both in-house localization departments and translation agencies. The new product, PROMT LSP, can be bundled with PROMT Translation Server, and features innovative approaches to integrating machine translation into a professional translation workflow. What does this mean to client-side Localization Managers and how will these innovations accelerate growth in our industry?

Olga Beregovaya is CEO of PROMT Americas, PROMT's division for enterprise product strategy and deployments. Prior to PROMT, Olga worked as Senior Localization Manager for many years at Autodesk and prior to Autodesk, Olga held an executive role with a California-based LSP.

CSN-
Tell us about the history and structure of PROMT.

OLGA-
PROMT is 19 years old and the company's research and development is in Russia. Product marketing and strategy activities are shared between US, Germany and Russia.

CSN-
Was the US company acquired?

OLGA-
No. US operations were started from scratch. Most of PROMT's US presence was limited to our desktop products. The company saw a market need for elaborate and flexible enterprise solutions that are capable of producing high-quality translations. Thus, the decision was made to run the enterprise product line from the US due to the global nature of US business.

CSN-
How are you guys doing?

OLGA-
Last year we did well despite the overall economic slowdown. We have major deployments with several Fortune 100 companies, financial institutions, government entities, non-profits and the academia sector. Companies were looking for ways of optimizing their translation spending and our substantial ROI right upon deployment was an important advantage.

CSN-
Tell us about the new product launches.

OLGA-
I'm convinced that PROMT LSP (on its own or bundled with an enterprise server) is unmatched in the market. We built a product that you can plug into a translation department or LSP. It's a completely white box, fully customizable with tons of support for QA functionality, dictionary management and sophisticated linguistic rules. I've been a buyer on the client side for years, my colleagues worked at LSPs, and when we were developing this product we were all thinking, "Let's build something that is market driven." Ultimately, we produced a product that is not expensive, easy-to-use and can be used by anyone in the localization community, large or small.

CSN-

Do you have different products depending on the end user?

OLGA-

There is PROMT LSP and PROMT Freelance. The difference is pretty much in licensing but with the Freelance, the freelancer is not going to be limited in access to any translation modules or functionality. The only limitation for the freelancer is one language pair. The Freelance product will be an ideal for independent translators and also for SLVs. The LSP solution works in a .NET -based environment; it is a client-server side product with shared collaborative functionality. The translation engine, functionality and access to modules are the same; we give access to the best translation functionality no matter what the type of engine use it will be.

PROMT Translation Server or PTS makes most sense for either major web venues or large enterprise clients. This product is bundled with our LSP product using client/server logic. For example, a corporate client can have a group that manages linguistic assets, builds dictionaries and translation memories, and trains engines through a combination of rule-based and statistical methods. This group will manage the enterprise server and use it as a part of their localization process, but the user base of the enterprise server can be the entire company, accessing it through their web browser or using plug-ins from within their MS Office suite. Lastly, the ability to run on VMWare with a tiny fraction of a second in processing delays is a significant money saver for enterprises.

CSN-

With these new product releases it looks like you have added more functionality. Are there any measurable improvements in the automated language translation process?

OLGA-

We worked actively with US enterprise clients and the professional translators' community. We completely revamped the architecture and the translation modules. First of all, the entire underlying language base has been extended and the language-specific general lexicons are much larger now. We've identified a handful of grammatical structures that can handle more complex syntax. You will see major quality improvements in the new release.
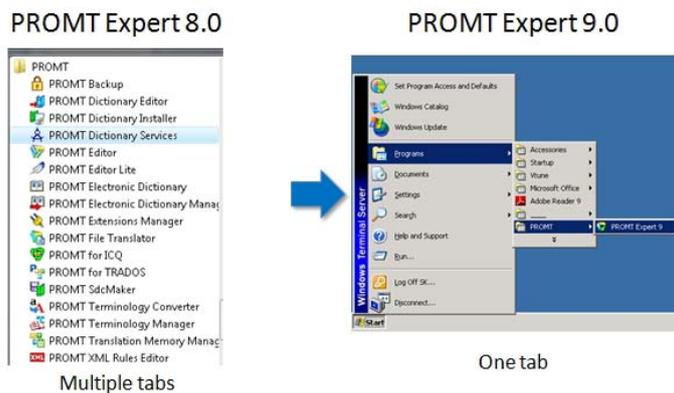
LSP & Freelance don't involve our newly developed hybrid engine coming later this year. For our enterprise clients there is an added benefit of having access to our hybrid engine which helps us produce results that are grammatically accurate, domain-relevant and fluent.

CSN-

Do you have any case studies available on the new product releases?

OLGA-

We have ROI and throughput data from the previous version of the product and a solid understanding of the productivity gains and savings from our existing clients. One of our corporate clients actually presented at a conference last year and mentioned 30% to 40% in productivity gains and cost savings. This matches our in-house case studies. This year we will be presenting our PayPal case study at AMTA and expect the numbers to be the same or even higher.

We also have deployments with clients outside of localization like DOD, financial institutions, and religious organizations that do not post-edit at all. Their ROI is even higher; the greatest advantage for these clients is the ability now to translate something that was not translated before.

CSN-

How is the new product line being received?

OLGA-

Extremely well. Existing clients are happy with the upgrade; we are doing many pilots, which are gateways to preorders, or at least major interest. We have run a couple of very well-received webinars, with more planned. We also had professional translator interest in an in-depth training program, which we are now starting to offer. One of the prominent industry communities on LinkedIn called our product "the most anticipated product".

At the moment post-editing MT output is receiving lots of press and we have lots of reporting tools in our product to address this issue. We have been doing many pilots, where we partner with LSPs and measure MT quality improvement side-by-side with decrease in their post-editing time.

Expert 9 – Changes in UI –
Client – Start Menu

PROMT Expert 8.0

Multiple tabs

PROMT Expert 9.0

One tab

CSN-

Speaking of partnerships, do you have any current or planned integrations?

PROMT9. Main application menu
One tab for opening all products

OLGA-

Just in the last 12 months we have integrated with We-Localize's GlobalSight, Sajan, we have a plugin from Alchemy Publisher, SDL Idiom, SDL TMS, and Ontram with several more integrations planned for the immediate future. We see that the overall translation supply chain market is changing and we make a point of staying on top of industry demands by providing a variety of integration scenarios.

CSN-

Are LSPs using your product now?

OLGA-

"We've had a pretty significant buy-in, for example parts of Translations.com are using our software already. Welocalize is using our product and are very skilled in post-editing our output; we work together on multiple projects. Logrus, our post-editing partner for Russian, is providing us with rather encouraging feedback on their post-editing figures within their methodology. SimulTrans is utilizing our latest LSP version, with their in-house linguists focusing on tuning the engine for typical L10N terminology and style. A handful of smaller LSPs are using our products as well and we definitely expect to see more engagement from the LSP community."

CSN-

That's great to hear such significant growth anticipation.

OLGA-

to the best of my knowledge there isn't a product out there that caters to LSP and freelancers which is affordable, has all the functionality of the major enterprise deployments, and does not require costly hardware. We can run on 200 MB of operational memory without any loss in translation quality, which is pretty unique for an MT solution with our level of complexity.

CSN-

Cost savings and increases in speed to market are typically addressed. I think this new rollout allows access to profitable expansion opportunities and helps to stimulate overall international economic growth.

OLGA-

Absolutely. Our clients have more visibility into what their field offices are doing. Management's focus is shifting to global markets, not just the U.S. All our translation pairs are bi-directional. Initially we were receiving requests for translation mostly from English and now we see that there's a lot of demand for translation into English. Organizations want to crowdsource more in that country or collect more market data from that country.

CSN-

And this new shift is being facilitated by a new product.

OLGA-

What helps our users is our white-box approach. Our professional tools offer a great deal of automation, both in terms of linguistic assets management and engine customization. With the new product, clients can perform automated steps independently so there is no professional services lock-in. Lastly, our clients have access to our API to integrate our engine into their in-house applications.

CSN-

Freedom is a huge issue now. Is PROMT a part of the TAUS TDA initiative as well?

OLGA-

We are TDA founding members, contributed some of our dictionaries and are pooling TDA Data to train the hybrid piece of our engine. Once the hybrid has been launched, we will be looking into API-based integration with the TDA portal.

CSN-

Olga, thank you for your time and valuable insight. Your product is definitely a paradigm shifter for the localization industry. I'm sure in the next few months we will hear many positive responses from the field.

PTS 9 – Changes in UI – Improved Translation Settings
Thirty eight settings that improve translation

Title	Value	Title	Value
1. Translation of Pronoun "you" »	Вы	25. Translation of Verb "be" in Construction with "there" »	"есть"
2. Gender of Pronoun "I" »	feminine	26. Translation of Verb "have" »	"есть"
3. Gender of Pronoun "you" »	feminine	27. Translation of Referential "it" When Antecedent Is Not Found »	impersonal
4. Gender of Pronoun "we" »	feminine	28. Order of Subject and Verb at End of Sentence »	do not swap
5. Gender of Pronoun "they" »	feminine	29. Choice between Noun in Singular Form and Verb in Any Form except for 3rd Person Singular at Beginning of Sentence »	noun
6. English Language Variant »	English (United States)	30. Choice between Noun in Plural and Verb in 3rd Person Singular at Beginning of Sentence »	noun
7. Transliteration of Proper Names »	do not transliterate	31. Choice between Participle and Personal Form of Verb after Noun »	verb
8. Translation of Company Names »	translate	32. Choice between Participle and Personal Form of Verb at Beginning of Sentence »	participle
9. Translation of Proper Names with Ampersand »	translate	33. Choice between Present or Past Tense of Verb »	past
10. Analysis of Names Typed in Lowercase	do not process	34. Time Format »	convert
11. Analysis of Team Names »	common	35. Date Format »	do not convert
12. Translation of Computer Commands »	do not translate	36. Representation of Quotation Marks »	do not convert
13. Translation of Adjective in Compound Nominative Predicate »	full	37. Use of Lower Case in Headlines »	no
14. Translation of "may not" »	possibility	38. Analysis of Addresses in Letters »	do not analyze
15. Translation of Modal Verbs with Personal or Impersonal Form »	common		
16. Translation of Clause with Verb in Present Continuous and "you" as Subject »	common		
17. Translation of Gerund After Conditional Subordinators with Gerund or Noun with Noun "при" »	gerund		