

What Are Translation-Specific Tool Providers and Developers Doing to Assist Translators During COVID-19?

In light of the current situation, it was suggested that I write something connecting technology with our all-consuming health crisis. None of us can predict what things will be like when this column goes to print, but it's safe to say that our lives will not have returned to normal—whatever “normal” is now.

I really liked the idea, so I asked the same question of the technology vendors themselves. (Since I had to limit myself, I asked only computer-assisted translation tool or translation environment tool providers and developers.) This is the message I sent:

I'm working on an article about what vendors of translation-specific tools are doing to respond to the coronavirus. Clearly, these are very, very difficult times for all of us, personally and professionally. I'm aware that you may see a significant decrease in sales in the next few weeks and maybe months as much of translation life slows down. Still, this is a good opportunity to reach out to translators with offers specifically geared toward this crisis, including training, digital meetings, and other kinds of engagement. What you are planning in this regard?

You won't be surprised to hear that virtually all vendors replied to outline their efforts. I'll list them here in alphabetical order. (I edited the answers to cut text that seemed too promotional or offers that listed special sales of existing products. Also, nearly all respondents mentioned that staff members are working remotely while ensuring the operation of all services and necessary uptimes required.)

Please keep in mind that the timelines for these offers might have changed since the initial responses were received, so make sure to consult the websites listed. I just wanted to provide a snapshot of how vendors responded to the gravity of the situation to offer support to translators and interpreters during a difficult time. It's just



another example of how our industry is pulling together to do what they can.

ATRIL

www.atril.com

ATRIL has been trying to help our customers and partners face this difficult situation. For example, in China, where we partner with a large number of universities, we've equipped university staff and students with free DVX3 Pro licenses so they can still study and learn while being at home.

For translators who are already using DVX3 but need an additional license for another computer during this crisis, we're providing them with temporary activation codes.

MEMOQ

www.memoq.com

The top priority of memoQ is ensuring a safe and remote working environment for our employees, as well as providing our users with professional solutions and supporting life science companies during the pandemic. To this end, we have:

- Published an e-book to support the switch to home offices: <https://bit.ly/memoQ-home-office>.

- Provided local and international organizations and software development companies that are fighting COVID-19 with free server licenses during the crisis.
- Provided free server licenses for non-governmental organizations and life science companies that are fighting COVID-19 and dealing with crisis communication.

In addition to these initiatives, memoQ organizes virtual events to further develop their users' project management skills and provide both memoQ and non-memoQ users with valuable information on how to improve their translation and localization workflows.

SDL

www.sdltrados.com

The skills of the professional translation community are in high demand at the moment. As such, SDL has taken the following actions:

- Provided free access to machine translation for health science professionals (see xl8.link/SDLHealthcare)

This column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals.

- Increased the allocation of free machine translation characters to SDL Trados Studio users. There may be a greater need for urgent translations at this time. Some businesses may also be suffering from staff reductions. Therefore, for SDL Trados Studio customers who are currently on a neural machine translation package provided by SDL Machine Translation, we're doubling the number of free characters per month until the end of May—and we might extend further depending on the global situation. This change shall be automatically applied to customer accounts and should help them cope with any surge in demand.
- Provided new virtual events and additional educational activities. To ensure that we continue to deliver content, virtual networking opportunities, and educational activities that contribute to our customers' continued professional development, we have digitized a number of our in-person events. Check: xl8.link/SDLWebinars.

SMARTCAT

www.smartcat.ai

Smartcat has always provided its core technology stack at no charge to freelancers, so this will not change. We also provide free access to getting work through our marketplace.

We've found that the issue that most concerns our freelance users during this economic downturn is confidence in timely payments, so here's what we have to offer:

- Payment insurance by Smartcat for projects contracted through and carried out on the Smartcat platform.
- Prioritized Payment: Guaranteed payment within 30 days of project completion, regardless of the standard payment schedule of an end buyer.
- Enhanced support to provide answers to user request within 12 business hours.
- We'll also cover those who have issues working with customers because of AB 5.

For language services providers, Smartcat is eliminating per-user licenses, while offering reduced payment fees and enhanced vendor-sourcing options. You

can find more information here: smartcat.ai/freelancer-offer.

TEXT UNITED

www.textunited.com

Some of our clients are from industries that have suffered a major hit due to COVID-19 (e.g., hospitality, travel, and automotive). We're trying to ease the financial impact for them by delaying their subscription payments by two to three months. Also, we're offering these clients free use of our translation management system until the end of June of 2020.

To those outside our client base, we'll provide media channels support in the translation of articles and video subtitles. This will help them reach a wider and international audience to ensure that as many people as possible understand the situation and the precautions they need to take.

TRANSLATED (MATECAT AND MODERN MT)

www.matecat.com, www.modernmt.com

To help our community of customers and translators, we've decided to offer our best adaptive machine translation service, ModernMT, for free until May 30. We will not limit usage. The only limit will be the capacity of our infrastructure (hundreds of graphics processing units). Visit www.modernmt.com to see the range of application programming interface plans we have for enterprises and professional translators. Pick the plan that best fits your needs and add a credit card (to avoid spam—you will not be charged).

WORDBEE

www.wordbee.com

Now more than ever, it's important that health-related information be available to all in as many languages as necessary. To assist the health care industry in its efforts, Wordbee is launching a support initiative by offering Wordbee Translator, our cloud-based translation management system, for free for two months. Wordbee Translator includes everything needed to translate, revise, and manage projects. Five users can work simultaneously, and these users can include in-house managers, editors, and external freelance translators. In addition, the Wordbee team

will offer free online training to help kick-start your translation efforts.

These exceptional conditions will apply for those working in hospitals, scientific or diagnostic laboratories, pathology clinics, residential health facilities, nursing homes, companies that produce biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and other scientific services. Also eligible are medical device manufacturers and non-governmental organizations that help support the delivery and financing of health care services among large segments of the population.

WORDFAST

www.wordfast.net

- We implemented, early in the pandemic, a measure for employed translators who must comply with containment measures and work from home. We amended the terms of our end-user license agreement to move in-company licenses to translators' personal computers for free.
- We remain committed to granting free technology to humanitarian and relief efforts. During the COVID-19 emergency, our offer is extended to government-backed efforts, not just non-governmental organizations.
- We're working on a project management extension for our online translation environment, Wordfast Anywhere, that would greatly help translation workforces get up and running overnight.

Our offer is valid for the duration of the crisis worldwide. We'll extend that by three months after the crisis ends. Of course, no one can put a specific date on that, but we'll count the economic aftermath as part of the crisis. Which means, as far as things go, it's until Dec 31, 2020.

The Wordfast team appeals to machine translation providers, such as Google, Microsoft, and DeepL, to grant free access during the COVID-19 crisis for translators working from home. ○



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