



sprachmanufaktur.ch

Industry: Translation
and localization

Location: Zurich, Switzerland

Size: Five employees,
>100 certified freelancers

Part of ARGUS DATA INSIGHTS
Schweiz AG, Zurich, Switzerland

180 employees

Small and sophisticated: the best of both worlds for a boutique translation agency

When you're transforming from an in-house translation department into an independently branded translation agency, and you want to present yourselves as professionally as possible, who do you call?

For boutique Swiss agency ARGUS Sprachmanufaktur, the obvious answer was SDL. Founded as the in-house translation department for ARGUS DATA INSIGHTS Schweiz AG (a Swiss media intelligence business), the translation team had long relied on SDL Trados Studio as its CAT tool.

"We love Studio," says translator and project manager, Zoe Edis. "So when we became ARGUS Sprachmanufaktur, and wanted to professionalize our whole workflow, it just made perfect sense to add SDL Trados GroupShare to the mix. GroupShare complements Studio perfectly, giving us project and team management capabilities that help us work with our clients and freelancers much more efficiently, professionally and securely."

A brand built on quality and the personal touch

The history of ARGUS Sprachmanufaktur goes back almost 15 years, when ARGUS DATA INSIGHTS first hired linguists to produce its management summaries. The translation responsibilities of this team, and the team itself, grew over time. As a language service department it not only translated for the company, but also started seeing demand for translation from the company's clients, separately from the core media intelligence work of the business.



Challenges

- Present a more professional face as an independent translation agency
- Build solid foundations for development

ARGUS

Sprachmanufaktur uses:

SDL Trados Studio –

the market-leading CAT tool for improving translator productivity and reducing the effort to achieve the highest levels of consistency and quality.

SDL Trados GroupShare

– improving teamwork through streamlined project management and centralized sharing of project files, translation memories and termbases.

SDL MultiTerm – for the creation and management of multilingual termbases (accessed from SDL Trados Studio), to ensure accurate and consistent application of approved terminology and brand names.

“Clients liked the quality of work we delivered, and the strong personal touch we always brought,” says Zoe. “So they wanted to use us for their own wider translation needs. And so it grew.”

Today, the majority of the newly branded agency’s work comes from outside its parent company, and the team of five is handling around 100 to 120 projects per month – mainly translating to and from the major official Swiss languages (German, French and Italian) and English.

Adding control and flexibility to the mix

Zoe herself has been with ARGUS Sprachmanufaktur for around three-and-a-half years. Her start at the company marked her first experience with SDL Trados Studio.

“I get on much better with Studio than with the CAT tool I was previously using,” she says. “It’s a lot more sophisticated, even when it comes to something as apparently straightforward as a concordance search. Studio is just so helpful in finding fuzzy and fragment matches and giving me the context to use them effectively. And since we added GroupShare, we have been able to operate at a whole new level. Studio is good by itself, but even better with GroupShare.”

One of the biggest benefits for ARGUS Sprachmanufaktur is a level of control and flexibility that effectively gives freelancers more time when projects have tight deadlines. Before the agency had GroupShare, it relied on its project managers to (for example) get a translated file from a freelance translator and manually email it on to the designated proofreader.

“Sometimes,” says Zoe, “I’d have to ask the translator to get the translation done before I left the office, even if they were willing and able to work on it in the evening. Now, with all project files held centrally and checked into and out of GroupShare, and GroupShare automatically notifying the proofreader when a translated file is ready for them, my availability to act as intermediary is no longer a bottleneck.”

It means that freelance translators and proofreaders have the flexibility to make more time for urgent projects, and can usually deliver a better quality of work as a result. As the project manager, Zoe can also distinguish what the translator and proofreader have each done, because it’s all tracked. If anything looks odd – maybe there are too many proofreading changes, or none at all – she can take a closer look.



"SDL is central to the value we offer clients."

Zoe Edis

Translator and Project Manager, ARGUS Sprachmanufaktur



"The SDL solution helps us monitor quality and see which translators and proofreaders are good for which type of work, which over time helps us deliver a better, faster service to our clients."

Topping up with collaboration, consistency and security

GroupShare also makes it easier for Zoe and her colleagues to help freelancers if they get stuck for any reason. The freelancer can simply check the file in, and the ARGUS Sprachmanufaktur project manager (all of whom are also translators) can take a look and provide advice.

"Collaborating on projects is so much smoother and easier with GroupShare," says Zoe.

All of this is down to the fact that GroupShare makes project files, translation memories and termbases available centrally, with workflow management functionality designed for translation. Besides greater flexibility, control and collaboration, this also gives always-on access to the most up-to-date versions of translation memories and termbases, which can be updated in real time. It all adds up to an environment in which it's much more efficient to produce the highest levels of quality.

It's also a more secure translation environment, because it removes the need to send and receive files by email. As Zoe points out, it helps if you don't need to worry about zipping and securing attachments, or trying to find a secure way to send translation memories that are too big to send by email.

Making the right impression

A big part of the agency's appeal for its clients is that it's a small company with a very personal service. But 'small' doesn't mean 'unsophisticated'.

"We have a specific process that we follow to ensure the highest quality," notes Zoe. "We can take clients through the way we work, and show that we have state-of-the-art tools to support our process and keep their information secure. For existing clients, our investment in SDL software shows that we're continuing to do better for them all the time. For potential clients it makes the right first impression. Either way, SDL is central to the value we offer clients."



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Results

- More flexible and efficient use of freelancer time – with a positive effect on quality delivered
- Closer and more effective collaboration on projects
- Confidence in information security
- Flexibility to deliver value and develop new capabilities

The company is proactive about it, too. If ARGUS Sprachmanufaktur receives a document for translation that contains content it has previously translated, it will immediately let the client know that the cost will be discounted because there are translation memory matches.

Room for development

With Studio and GroupShare at the heart of the business, the team at ARGUS Sprachmanufaktur is also confident about being able to continue to develop and grow. Zoe cites a few examples:

- SDL AppStore extensions. Recently, for example, a client requested the localization of audiovisual files for a subtitling job. The team found a free plug-in on the SDL AppStore that enabled them to work with these file types within Studio.
- End-to-end business workflow. With a flexible and efficient translation workflow already in place, the agency is now investing in business management software, and knows that it will integrate smoothly with Studio and GroupShare.
- Machine translation. As the team starts exploring the use of machine translation as an additional service for specific file or content types, it knows that whether it chooses to use SDL Machine Translation, or another service through a Studio plug-in, SDL will support whatever they want to do.

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