mitchell

San Diego, CA

INDUSTRY

- Property & Casualty claims
- Collision repair
- Software services

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Goals:

- Ensure that international customers can effectively and efficiently use Mitchell's solutions to process their transactions.

- Improve the quality and efficiency of translating online Help and documentation for Mitchell WorkCenter™, RepairCenter™, and estimating products.

- Support near-term requirements to translate more than 5,000 pages of documentation and provide the ability to scale and meet growing content demands.

Solutions:

- MadTranslations translation and localizaiton services

- MadCap Flare for single-source authoring and multichannel publishing

- MadCap Lingo integrated translation tool

Benefits:

- Accuracy: MadTranslations has demonstrated an extraordinary attention to detail, according to Mitchell, ensuring first-class translations while minimizing work for the Mitchell team.

- Efficiency: Mitchell pulls content straight into MadCap Lingo from a MadCap Flare project, and then turns it over to MadTranslations for translation and localization.

- Collaboration: Mitchell cites MadTranslations' collaborative approach, from initial steps to scaling the solution, as central to the success of Mitchell's localized documentation and Help.

Mitchell International, Leading Provider of Property and Casualty Claim Solutions, Relies on MadTranslations to Localize 30-Plus Online Help and Documentation Projects

Since 1946, Mitchell International, Inc. has been a leading provider of technology, connectivity, and information solutions to the property and casualty claims, collision repair and workers' compensation industries. The company processes over 50 million transactions annually for 300-plus insurance companies and more than 30,000 collision repair facilities throughout the United States and Canada.

With an expanding global footprint, Mitchell's solutions now operate in the Americas, Europe, and Asia, working behind the scenes of auto insurance claim filings to simplify, enhance and accelerate claims handling processes. Ensuring that customers have intuitive, localized information to optimize their use of Mitchell's solutions in processing these transactions is a top priority.

Today Mitchell relies on MadTranslations, Inc., a subsidiary of MadCap Software, for the translation and localization of its WorkCenter™, RepairCenter™, and estimating products' documentation and online Help.

Growing Beyond Machine Translation

For years, the Mitchell development team relied on publicly-accessible online tools to help with its translation needs. However, as the company expanded internationally, it realized that there were more issues than answers with this approach. With an eye toward finding a translation and localization service provider, Mitchell embarked on an extensive research, request for proposal (RFP), and evaluation process to identify the company that could best support its needs.

Anticipating upwards of 5,000 pages of documentation to be translated, Mitchell wanted to be diligent in selecting the best primary vendor for its needs. Translation quality combined with customer service would be critical to the company's evaluation process.

"Entering this new area of translation and localization, we wanted our primary vendor to have the expertise to guide us," says Don Rasky, Mitchell Sr. Technical Writer. "If the first step is a misstep, it's an uneasy feeling."

Results-Focused RFP Process

Significantly, Mitchell wanted to provide a level playing field in examining the benefits and challenges of working with each vendor, unbiased by any current or past affiliations the company had with the vendors.

"We had the vendors translate a small piece of content, so we could have it evaluated anonymously," Rasky explained. "It was helpful for us to see firsthand what we were getting back. It highlighted the technical issues we were experiencing and gave us a chance to experiment a bit."

To document the evaluation process, Mitchell's technical writers relied on MadCap Flare for single-source authoring and multi-channel publishing, software which they already were using to produce online Help and documentation. Using Flare, the Mitchell team single-sourced both the website and RFP documents that needed to be distributed to every bidder in the RFP process. This ensured that the evaluation form was consistent across the board, and that every bidder would have access to the same information at the same time.

"We kept things very organized with a website that included documentation related to the RFP process," recalled Sheila Truesdell Manager Mitchell Technical Communications & Education Services.

"It's the only RFP we've seen done that way," added Scott Bass, MadTranslations' Production Manager.

From Samples to Selection

During the research and RFP process, Mitchell took detailed notes on its experiences. When comparing vendor experiences, the company was able to lay out the different costs as they were presented via the RFP process.

"Even though we asked for cost information in a specific way, we got a potpourri of information back. Those results were valuable in showcasing how each vendor worked," Truesdell observed.

The Mitchell team also observed that the service and interactions the company experienced throughout the RFP process reflected the quality of the vendors themselves.

For example, Truesdell said, "One of the vendors submitted information that was incomplete. Another submitted translations that seemed appropriate for one part of the world but not Europe."

Significantly, Rasky noted, "We didn't care if there was a problem, but we did care about how those problems were solved. Having to deal with certain issues in your native language is hard enough, but when it's a language you don't speak, it's much harder."

After comparing different vendors' samples, MadTranslations emerged as the clear choice, providing translation samples that went above and beyond expectations.

"I almost broke out into a Halleluiah Chorus when I couldn't find anything wrong with the translation samples from MadTranslations because it meant I wouldn't have to deal with a range of problems," Rasky noted. "The attention to detail in the MadTranslations samples was extraordinary because it understood the technical end of assembly and troubleshooting. As a person implementing the solution, that's huge."

30-Plus Translations in 2014

Today, working with MadTranslations, Mitchell has localized the online Help and documentation for several products with multiple modules across its three principle solutions paths: WorkCenter™, RepairCenter™, and estimating products. Effectively supporting different languages—French, Canadian French, Spanish, and German—Mitchell published between 30 to 50 multilingual Help file deployments for North America and Europe in 2014 alone.
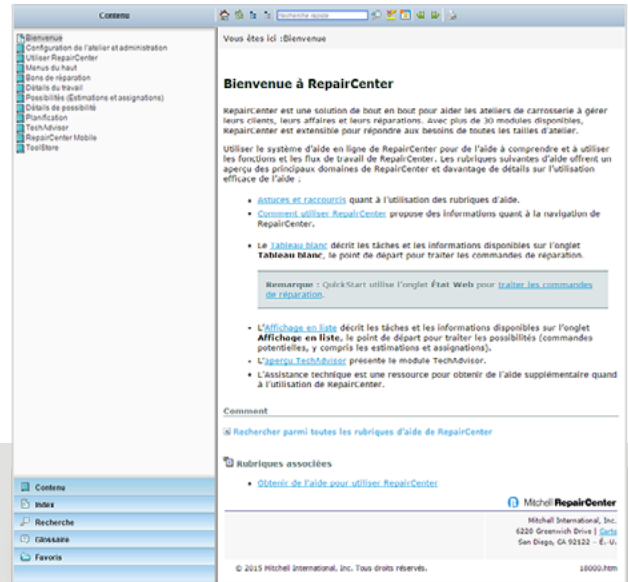
Mitchell RepairCenter™ Canadian French Online Help
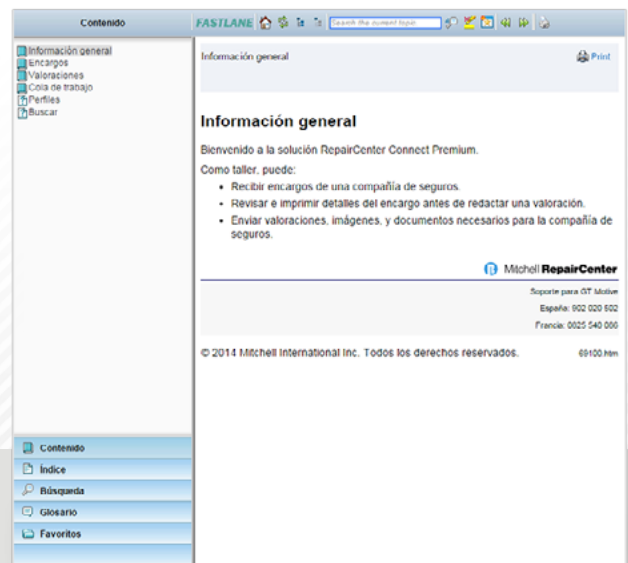
Mitchell WorkCenter™ Spanish Online Help

Because of how Mitchell's development architecture is setup, some of the internationalized files are posted locally in development. Additionally, there are production and user acceptance testing (UAT) environments setup for the different regions in the world, including Canada, Europe and the United States.

Streamlined Translation Process

One key to the success of the localizations has been the development of tool-agnostic translation process.

"MadTranslations helped us to design a tool-independent methodology and process, showing us where things are realistic and how they can be more practical," Rasky explained. "It's helpful that the MadTranslations team has been willing to work with any software we've chosen."

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Mitchell authors content in MadCap Flare and then packages it in translation bundles for MadTranslations using the fully integrated MadCap Lingo translation tool. Once MadTranslations receives the bundles, the localization professionals there run the content through up to three different translation systems to leverage the best automation available.

"We're able to take content, pull it straight into MadCap Lingo from a Flare project, and then turn it over to MadTranslations," Rasky notes. "We now have a process that works like a pit crew, which is critical because our software development and supporting documentation is a vehicle that does not stop moving."

Stellar Service and Support

Beyond technology and process, service and support have also played a central role in Mitchell's success working with MadTranslations.

"Without the level of service that we received from MadTranslations, from initial baby steps to scaling the solution, we wouldn't have succeeded. We needed that level of collaboration and cooperation. It was essential," says Rasky.

Working with source files—some of which were created more than a decade ago—the support and knowledge provided by MadTranslations was critical to solving any technical problems arising from the older software.

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Truesdell adds, "MadTranslations support is fantastic. We always get this feeling like we're the only customer."

Scaling into the Future

Looking ahead, Mitchell anticipates that the localizations in 2015 will significantly expand its multilingual Help file deployments for the US, Europe, and Canada.

"We're scaling fast," Rasky observes. "We're excited to see how we can continue expanding and growing with MadTranslations by our side."