

TMS Evaluation and Selection Proposal for **Translation by Design**

Océane Cui

14th May, 2025



Introduction

Translation by Design specializes in providing customized language and cross-cultural solutions to help organizations communicate effectively in a global context.

Translation by Design provides document translation across all languages, including rare and indigenous ones. Their expertise spans legal, financial, medical, environmental, and publishing sectors. Except for translation, website localization is another pillar of its business; one of its missions is to adapt websites to resonate with diverse cultural audiences worldwide.

The biggest advantage of Translation by Design is that their translators are highly qualified professionals with advanced degrees and are sensitive to cultural, social, and political nuances, ensuring accurate and contextually appropriate translations. However, They **don't publicly state** which TMS or tools they currently use. Their website focuses more on services (e.g. legal/medical translation, cross-cultural training) than on tech infrastructure.

This suggests they might rely more on **traditional tools** (email, Word, manual QA) than modern automation or integration. That's where this proposal of evaluating and selecting a Translation Management System (TMS) comes into play.

Business Requirements of Translation by Design

After an initial analysis, the very requirements Translation by Design includes:

1. Automated Workflow Management

Stakeholder: *Project Managers*

Business Requirement:

Streamline project creation, vendor assignment, and deadline tracking.

- **Need:** Replace email- and spreadsheet-based workflows with automation (e.g. auto job assignment, file routing).
- **Benefit:** Reduces human error and project turnaround time.

2. Real-Time Progress Visibility



Stakeholder: *Operations & Management*

Business Requirement:

Gain full visibility into project status, bottlenecks, and resource usage.

- **Need:** Dashboards and reporting features to monitor KPIs and deadlines.
- **Benefit:** Informed decisions on resource allocation and client delivery assurance.

3. Integrated CAT Tools

Stakeholder: *Translators & Editors*

Business Requirement:

Access translation memory (TM), termbases, and machine translation from within the platform.

- **Need:** Unified environment with QA features, segment-level editing, and fuzzy match highlighting.
- **Benefit:** Boosts productivity and improves consistency across projects.

4. Scalable Vendor Management

Stakeholder: *Vendor/Resource Managers*

Business Requirement:

Manage freelance linguists, interpreters, and reviewers at scale.

- **Need:** A system to store linguist profiles, specializations, certifications, rates, and availability.
- **Benefit:** Assign the right linguist for the right job, reducing time spent on manual sourcing.

5. Secure Client Portal & Collaboration Tools

Stakeholder: *Clients / Business Development*

Business Requirement:

Provide clients with a secure portal to upload content, view project progress, and receive deliverables.

- **Need:** Self-serve client portal, messaging system, and version-controlled file exchange.
- **Benefit:** Enhances client trust and engagement.

6. Quality Assurance & Audit Trail

Stakeholder: *Quality Control / Legal Clients*

Business Requirement:

Maintain high linguistic quality and defensible audit trails, especially in legal/medical sectors.

- **Need:** Built-in QA checks (terminology enforcement, missing translation alerts), versioning, and change tracking.
- **Benefit:** Ensures ISO-level quality compliance and audit readiness.

7. Multi-Format & API Integration Support

Stakeholder: *Localization Engineers / IT Team*

Business Requirement:

Handle diverse content formats and integrate with CMS, CRM, and file repositories.

- **Need:** Support for file formats like XLIFF, XML, JSON, HTML; REST API for integrations.
- **Benefit:** Reduces manual handling of files and enables seamless content flow across platforms.

The form below will show how important each requirement is, and which gaps are remained for a TMS candidate to bridge:

The **Importance** (rated 1–5) measures how importance each requirement is:

Score	Definition
5 = Critical	Essential for core operations, client retention, or compliance. Not meeting this would directly hurt revenue, client trust, or legal standing.
4 = High	Strongly impacts efficiency, scalability, or quality. Not critical for survival, but vital for growth and competitiveness.

3 = Moderate	Adds value and improves operations but isn't mission-critical.
2 = Low	Nice to have, minor impact on business operations.
1 = Minimal	Very limited relevance to the company's current focus or service model.


The **Current Gap** (rated 1–5) measures **how well the company's current tools or processes meet that specific business requirement**:

- **5 = Major gap** — Translation by Design **doesn't currently meet this need at all**, causing serious inefficiencies or risks.
- **3 = Moderate gap** — Translation by Design has **partial coverage**, but it's not optimal or scalable.
- **1 = No gap** — Translation by Design's current system **fully meets this need**, no pressing improvement necessary.

Weighted Score = Importance × Current Gap

This approach highlights the **most critical unmet needs**, combining how essential a requirement is with how poorly it's currently addressed.

Business Requirement	Stakeholder	Importance (1-5)	Current Gap (1-5)	Weighted Score
Automated Workflow Management	Project Managers	5	4	20
Integrated CAT Tools	Translators & Editors	5	4	20
Quality Assurance & Audit Trail	Quality Control / Legal Clients	5	4	20
Real-Time Progress Visibility	Operations & Management	4	3	12



Scalable Vendor Management	Vendor/Resource Managers	4	3	12
Multi-Format & API Integration Support	Localization Engineers / IT Team	4	3	12
Secure Client Portal & Collaboration Tools	Clients / Business Development	3	3	9

The Evaluation of TMS Candidate

After defining the business requirements of Translation by Design, XTM and Lokalise would be the two candidates which need to be evaluated in terms of how well they cater to these requirements.

Their score will be evaluated by this metrics:

Score	Definition
0	No support at all
1	Minimal/basic functionality
2	Partial support with major limitations
3	Mostly supported, with minor gaps
4	Well supported, robust functionality
5	Fully supported, best-in-class implementation

Candidate 1: XTM XTM is a powerful, enterprise-grade Translation Management System (TMS) designed for large-scale multilingual content production. It is best for enterprises with complex workflows, legal/regulatory demands, or localization at scale which features robust workflow automation and role-based access control; native CAT tool with TM and terminology management; strong API and CMS integrations; enterprise-focused scalability and data security (ISO 27001 certified)

Candidate 2: Lokalise Lokalise is a cloud-based TMS optimized for product, app, and software localization. It emphasizes developer collaboration and continuous localization for agile teams. Its features include seamless integration with GitHub, GitLab, Figma, Jira, etc; real-time in-context editing for mobile/web UI; API and CLI for continuous localization; light project management tools (task assignment, comments, review).

#	Business Requirement	XTM (0–5)	Justification	Lokalise (0–5)	Justification
1	Automated Workflow Management	5	Robust custom workflows, triggers, automated task assignment	3	Basic task assignment; limited custom workflow support
2	Real-Time Progress Visibility	4	Advanced dashboards, reporting, vendor tracking	3	Activity logs and task views available, but not enterprise-level
3	Integrated CAT Tools	5	Built-in CAT tool, TM, termbases, QA, segment-level editing	2	Not a full CAT tool; uses integrations (e.g., with Phrase or Git)
4	Scalable Vendor Management	5	Vendor profiles, rates, automated matching, availability tracking	2	Primarily built for internal teams; lacks strong LSP support

5	Secure Client Portal & Collaboration Tools	4	File sharing, review cycles, user access control	4	Clean UI for clients, commenting features, in-context review
6	Quality Assurance & Audit Trail	5	Built-in QA checks, audit logs, ISO 27001 support, change tracking	2	QA is minimal; lacks deep audit trail support
7	Multi-Format & API Integration Support	5	Rich format support (XLIFF, XML, JSON), strong APIs	3	Excellent for JSON/YAML, limited outside software/app context

Plus the metrics defined earlier the final weighted performance score of the two are:

Business Requirement	Score	Importance (1-5)	Current Gap (1-5)	XTM Weighted Performance = XTM Score × (Importance × Current Gap))
Automated Workflow Management	5	5	4	100
Integrated CAT Tools	5	5	4	100
Quality Assurance & Audit Trail	5	5	4	100
Real-Time Progress Visibility	4	4	3	48




Scalable Vendor Management	5	4	3	60
Multi-Format & API Integration Support	5	4	3	60
Secure Client Portal & Collaboration Tools	4	3	3	36
Total:504				

Business Requirement	Score	Importance (1-5)	Current Gap (1-5)	Lokalise Weighted Performance = XTM Score × (Importance × Current Gap))
Automated Workflow Management	3	5	4	60
Integrated CAT Tools	2	5	4	40
Quality Assurance & Audit Trail	2	5	4	40
Real-Time Progress Visibility	3	4	3	36
Scalable Vendor Management	2	4	3	24
Multi-Format & API Integration Support	3	4	3	36
Secure Client Portal & Collaboration Tools	4	3	3	36
Total:272				

The Selection of TMS

Beyond the performance score of XTM and Lokalise in meeting key business requirements, here are four extra factors to consider to make the final choice.

1. Price



XTM	Lokalise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Plan: Starts at \$16,500/year . • Business Plan: Starts at \$60,000/year . • Enterprise Plan: Custom pricing based on needs . • Designed for enterprises with high translation volumes and complex workflows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start Plan: \$120/month for 10 seats; additional seats at \$12/month . • Essential Plan: \$230/month for 10 seats; additional seats at \$23/month . • Median Annual Spend: Approximately \$17,400/year . • Offers flexible pricing suitable for startups and SMBs

2. Vendor Stability

XTM	Lokalise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established provider with a focus on enterprise clients. • Offers robust security measures, including ISO 27001 certification and GDPR compliance . • Provides a comprehensive suite of localization tools, including XTRF and Rigi. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founded in 2017, headquartered in Delaware, USA. • Achieved ISO/IEC 27001 and ISO/IEC 27017 certifications as of November 2020 . • Rapidly growing with a strong focus on agile development teams.

3. Speed of Deployment

XTM	Lokalise
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers customizable workflows and integrations, which may require a more extended setup period. • Suitable for organizations needing tailored solutions and complex configurations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasizes quick onboarding with user-friendly interfaces. • Supports integrations with platforms like GitHub, GitLab, and Bitbucket, facilitating rapid deployment .



--	--

4. Support

XTM	Lokalise
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides tiered support options, including Silver customer support for Business and Enterprise plans .• Access to a comprehensive customer resource center with documentation and support .	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offers 24/7 live chat support with a median response time of approximately 1 minute .• Provides extensive documentation and a help center for self-service support .

These extra factors showed that although XTM is more expensive and slower in deployment compared with Lokalise, it has more established support and vendor stability; With its high performance in mind, XTM is arguably the most ideal TMS for Translation by Design.

Conclusion

As many other Mid-Sized LSPs, Translation by Design shares the pros and cons like:

- Have excellent linguists and project managers,
- But **lack centralized platforms**, and
- Often use **manual QA, spreadsheets, or siloed CAT tools**.

Based on the introduction of Translation by Design, its prioritized business requirements, and other factors, this proposal evaluated the performance of XTM and Lokalise in aligning with the business type and needs of Translation by Design.

In a nutshell, XTM stands out with its overall high performance.

