

Turning fragmented annotation into scalable impact for a global networking platform

A leading professional networking platform was struggling to manage data annotation work across multiple projects and languages. Internal teams were stretched thin, and a previous vendor had failed to solve key problems around efficiency, resource utilization and coordination. With annotation volumes continuing to increase, they needed data annotators and linguistic help to support AI-driven recruitment and talent workflows at scale.

That's when they turned to TrainAI by RWS.

By moving from a fragmented, ad hoc approach to a fully managed service model, TrainAI helped them streamline processes, reduce annotator idle time to less than 5% (often < 1%) and expand confidently from English into French, German, Spanish and Portuguese.

Contact us



Key benefits

- Achieved full team ramp-up in 4 weeks
- Expanded from English to French, German, Spanish and Portuguese
- Reduced annotator idle time to below 5% (often < 1%) over 3.5 months
- Delivered 7,137 hours of work across 22 different projects in 1 quarter



Background: when AI data ambitions fail to meet operational reality

The client runs a global platform that supports millions of professionals in multiple languages. Their products rely on AI systems to enhance talent search, job matching and communication workflows.

For these systems to succeed and deliver fair, accurate candidate matches, they needed precise, *context-aware data annotation* that captured natural language nuance across regions and cultures.

Unfortunately, their early attempts fell short of expectations.

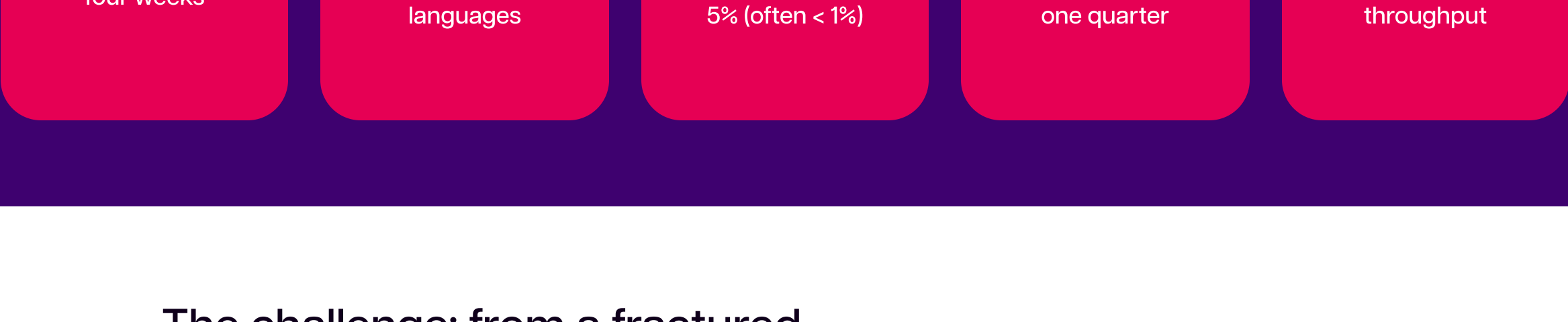
Challenges

- Fragmented annotation workflows across teams and vendors
- High annotator downtime due to poor coordination and unclear ownership
- Low confidence in outsourcing after a failed vendor engagement
- Growing annotation volumes across multiple languages and projects
- Inconsistent quality control limiting scalable AI deployment

Solutions

- TrainAI from RWS
- Human-in-the-loop data validation
- Identifying talent based on clear qualifications
- Onboarding talent and orienting them to new processes
- Solidifying quality assurance and feedback loops
- Expanding from English to French, German, Spanish and Portuguese

Results



The challenge: from a fractured process to structured success

Early data annotation attempts resulted in broken processes

The in-house workflow left significant process gaps leading to frequent downtime for data annotators. A previous vendor partnership also failed to meet expectations, leaving the client skeptical about outsourcing.

What they needed was a scalable, repeatable process with strong coordination and oversight – something they hadn't yet achieved.

Launching the engagement wasn't as simple as replacing the prior vendor. Instead, it required a complete shift in the operating model.

A chaotic start, with too much idle time

Previously, the client relied on contractors spread across internal teams. Transitioning to TrainAI's managed service model meant introducing new channels for submitting requests, new team lead structures and new reporting expectations.

Initially, incoming projects were chaotic. Work was assigned ad hoc, with no clear prioritization or resource plan. Annotators and linguists often sat idle, while urgent requests piled up without clear ownership.

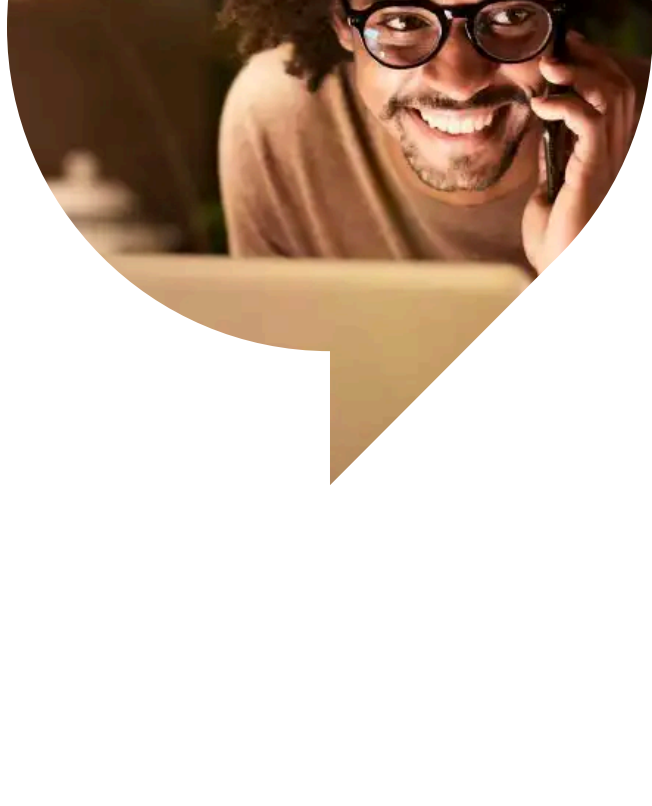
It's a familiar story for organizations trying to scale data annotation without established workflows in place.

Complex data annotation tasks requiring complex orchestration

The data annotation itself was diverse and complex. Tasks included:

- Direct annotation of priority projects
- Reviewing and arbitrating outputs produced by other vendors
- Sampling and adjudication support for large-scale, crowdsourced datasets

The diversity of tasks required for the project wasn't as much of an obstacle as coordination across teams. Each type of project demanded different expertise, turnaround times and quality measures.



Solution: managed service excellence with expert coordination

To rebuild trust and scalability, our approach began with talent selection and training. Learning from the client's past challenges, including a lack of orchestration and underused resources, we introduced an iterative hiring model, onboarded talent and implemented a quality oversight framework.

Overall, we accomplished the following with our solution:

- Streamlined resource allocation across multiple concurrent projects based on teams' strengths and schedules
- Developed a living knowledge base through collaborative project presentations and documentation
- Implemented meaningful background tasks for upskilling and cross-training during anticipated idle time

Identifying talent based on clear qualifications

We began with short-term contractors, focusing on candidates who combined strong linguistic backgrounds with a familiarity of the client's platform. This strategy reduced risk, accelerated the initial phases of the project and helped build context quickly.

The qualifications we looked for in candidates included:

- Prior familiarity with the client's tools and workflows
- Clear communication skills for cross-functional collaboration with engineers and linguists
- Comfort working in real-time escalation environments
- Demonstrated linguistic experience with an interest in preparing AI training data and understanding how data annotation decisions affect AI outputs

Beyond these core skills, we optimized resource allocation by mapping specific tasks to individual strengths. This flexibility extended to scheduling. Annotators who preferred earlier shifts were given critical assignments to accelerate turnaround times, ensuring the right person was always assigned to the right task.

The first teams launched in English, with annotators located in Ireland and the United States.

Onboarding talent and orienting them to new processes

Getting started required alignment and collaboration with internal stakeholders, including engineers, linguists and project managers. TrainAI facilitated this alignment through project kickoff workshops, twice-weekly syncs with team leads and regular coordination with linguist points of contact.

Every project utilized dedicated chatrooms for real-time discussion, with live meetings recorded for future reference. We reinforced this structure with interactive Q&A sessions and pre-launch training sets.

The training focused on mastering processes and maintaining accountability. We trained talent to handle structured requests, hold each other accountable for their work and engage in reporting based on an established cadence.

Several contractors who had previously worked with the client joined the TrainAI team as well, contributing institutional knowledge that further accelerated onboarding. This blend of continuity and new oversight ensured a faster transition and seamless collaboration despite policy differences between the client and RWS.

Solidifying quality assurance and feedback loops

Beyond direct data annotation, our teams played a critical quality oversight role. We sampled third-party vendor outputs, applied multi-review cycles and escalated unclear cases through adjudication.

These steps included:

- Detailed reviewer commentary for guideline clarifications
- Regular feedback loops for internal teams and vendors alike
- Continuous collaboration with the client's in-house linguists to refine and localize instructions

We implemented an end-to-end, human-in-the-loop data validation structure ensuring consistent quality metrics, transparent escalation and continuous improvement. It ensured more consistent decision-making, clearer guidelines, and greater alignment with business goals.

TrainAI's intervention helped rebuild the process, and the program finally achieved structure. Within weeks, productivity and throughput began to stabilize.

Expanding from English to French, German, Spanish and Portuguese

Once the English teams were fully established, the client asked TrainAI to extend operations into French and German.

Scaling successfully meant more than just hiring new annotators. It required designing standardized, multilingual interview and onboarding processes to guarantee consistent skill levels across languages.

We adapted our training materials and workflows to account for cultural and linguistic differences. We also localized the client's guidelines, incorporating language-specific examples that made abstract rules concrete for each market.

And when the client needed expanded Spanish and Portuguese coverage, we rapidly added Brazilian annotators to the team. This level of flexibility, paired with the consistency of our managed service model, strengthened the client's confidence in TrainAI's ability to scale.



Results: from chaos to coordinated excellence

The process improvements implemented by the TrainAI team were clear and measurable.

Linguists and annotators were no longer sitting idle, waiting for other team members to finish their work before they could begin. In fact, idle time fell to less than 5%, even declining below 1% at times.

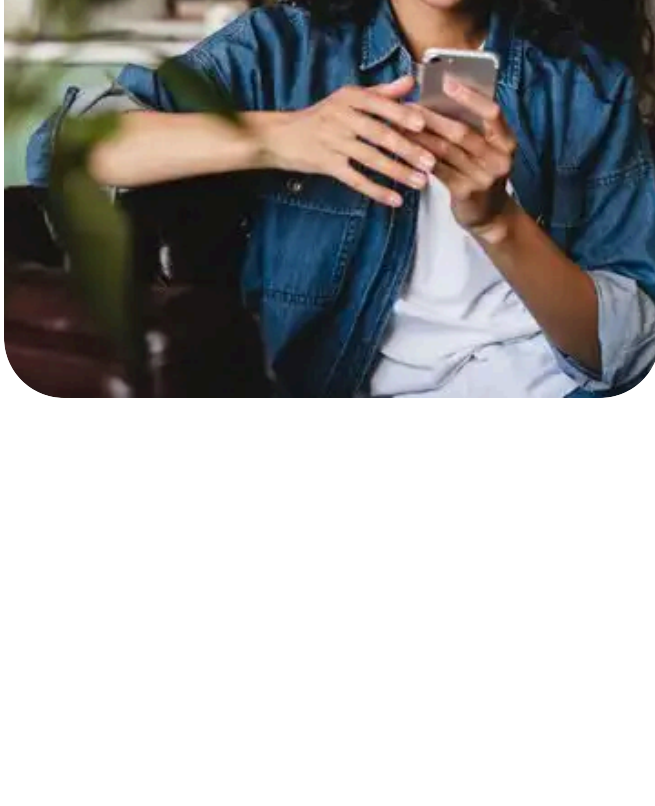
For a client who had originally targeted an idle time of 10% or less, this result far exceeded their expectations.

Beyond efficiency, the most important outcomes included:

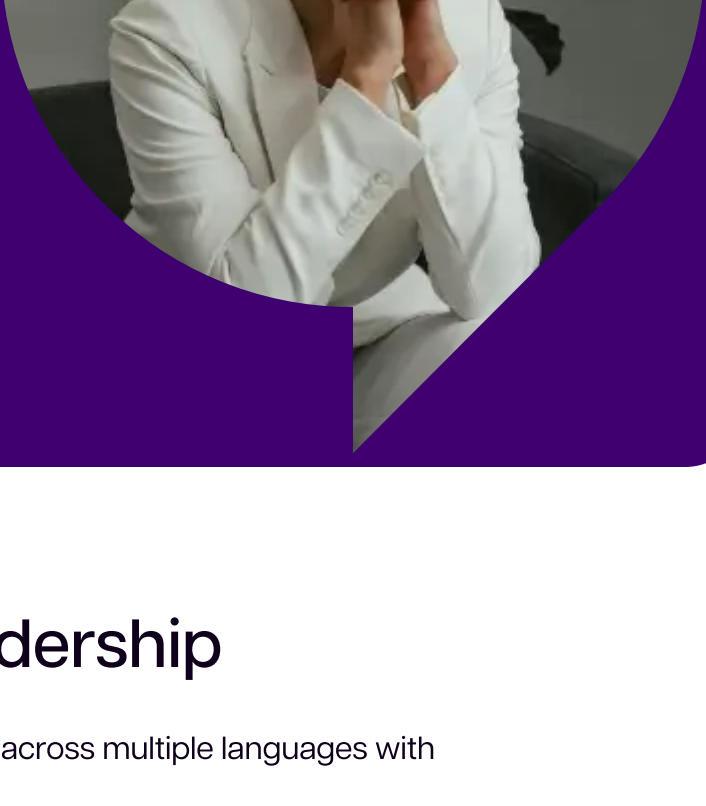
- Aligned scheduling between annotators and linguists
- Reliable throughput across projects, creating a "steady rhythm" of output
- Greater progress toward AI product-integration goals
- Fewer complaints from linguists due to clear assignments and tighter feedback loops
- Stronger oversight of both direct annotation and vendor review workflows

Client feedback was overwhelmingly positive when presented with metrics during quarterly reviews. Internal stakeholders also praised the smoothness of the workflows and the collaboration between annotators, linguists and project managers.

Upon project completion, teams led knowledge exchange presentations to document insights, turning individual project experiences into a living library that is continually used to upskill the workforce.



TrainAI's partnership with the client continues to grow. Today, data annotation operations extend across multiple languages with plans for even broader global expansion.



Looking ahead: scaling managed service leadership

TrainAI's partnership with the client continues to grow. Today, data annotation operations extend across multiple languages with plans for even broader global expansion.

Our team members remain closely involved in collaboration with the client's in-house linguists. This ensures their projects stay consistent and they can transfer knowledge to new contractors and team members.

What began as a fragmented and high-friction process is now a showcase of data annotation managed service excellence. The shift to TrainAI by RWS has not only improved day-to-day efficiency but also positioned the client for future growth with scalable, multilingual data annotation support.

[Contact us today](#) to learn how TrainAI's comprehensive AI data services can streamline your data annotation workflows and accelerate your AI development initiatives.