



Xiaomi saves 2,000 work days with tech-enabled content management

Xiaomi is one of the world's leading smartphone companies – ranked no. 2 in Q2 2021 in terms of global smartphone shipments.

Xiaomi is a consumer electronics and smart manufacturing company with smartphones and smart hardware connected by an IoT platform at its core.

Industry: hi-tech

Established: 2010

Headquarters: Beijing, China

Size: 20,000+ employees (2020)

Revenue: CNY¥248.5bn (2020)

Solution elements

Tridion Docs (intelligent content management)

WorldServer (translation management)

Trados Studio (translation productivity)

When a business goes from zero to a hundred international markets in five or six years, one of the many areas it needs to reimagine is content management. In search of a better way to comply and communicate globally, Xiaomi turned to RWS.

The challenge

When Danica Shi, the manager of Xiaomi's translation team, tells you that the company operates in more than 100 markets, you just assume that it has a long history and a mature localization operation. But Xiaomi itself isn't much older than 10 years, and the company spent its first four years growing in China. It's fair to say it has come a very long way in a very short time indeed.

In that short time, the translation team has become responsible for localizing websites, marketing materials, product documentation, UIs and user guides into more than 70 languages – a total of around 10 million words per year.

But it's not just the number of markets and languages that has grown. Xiaomi's product lines have expanded as rapidly as its geographic reach. Starting with just one original smartphone, today it has hundreds of product lines, not just smartphones but tablets, laptops, TVs, wearables and more. It also presides over a growing range of Xiaomi-branded smart home devices – manufactured both by Xiaomi and partners – controlled through Xiaomi's smart home app.

Xiaomi grew to realize that global growth combined with product expansion wasn't a challenge just for localization, but for content management even in its originating languages of Simplified Chinese and English.

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Danica Shi
Translation manager, Xiaomi

The dangers of inefficient content management

One problem was the lack of a centralized content management strategy and process. The same or similar content was being created, reviewed and translated multiple times by different teams.

This led to different levels of quality and inconsistent terminology across similar content. Xiaomi knew it needed to act in order to preserve its brand values, and to minimize regulatory demands for correction (for example, based on a feature description not accurately representing the feature). So the company set up a Content Management Office and transferred Danica’s team into it.

Xiaomi’s second major problem was its essentially manual processes, using tools not designed for the job. Translation project managers used email and spreadsheets. Content teams used traditional word-processing and design software, even where the content was technical or operational rather than creative. This was inefficient and error-prone on many levels, not least because it required a lot of copy-pasting when documents with similar content (for example, user guides for different models with common features) had to be updated. If the company received notice that it urgently needed to update legal or regulatory content, it was a major challenge to identify where that content was – then update potentially dozens of different files one by one.

The lack of appropriate tools meant that even for translation (which went through one team before creation of the Content Management Office), there was no practical way to enforce consistency or know for sure if content had been translated before. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that Xiaomi used several different language service providers (LSPs) for translation.



Key solution features

- Combination of integrated technologies for content management and localization
- Ability to integrate with other business systems to streamline end-to-end processes
- High levels of automation for content updating, localizing and publishing
- Platform for maximizing content reuse and consistency in Chinese, English and 70+ other languages

The solution

The Content Management Office is still in its early days, with its supervisor managing two dedicated content professionals, a technology support person, and the seven-person translation team (one fulltime translator, two project managers, two language specialists, a quality manager and Danica). But it has started unifying Xiaomi’s content processes, setting standards for the business, and rolling out key technologies to streamline the end-to-end process of content creation, translation and publication.

Before investing in its first technologies, the Content Management Office spent a year talking to stakeholders throughout the business about their content challenges and needs, and digging into their roles and workflows. They also began engaging with several solution providers, including RWS.

“We knew and trusted RWS because they were one of our LSPs,” says Danica. “Since they’re also a major language and content technology company, it was natural for us to talk to them. RWS stood out by asking to be involved in our engagement with the business. They sat in on our interviews and we learned so much from how they analyzed our issues and turned that into solution design ideas. Their local presence and proactivity, combined with the product features we wanted, made RWS the right choice for us.”



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The RWS solution for Xiaomi comprises:

- WorldServer, a translation management system (TMS) giving visibility and control across all localization work.
- Trados Studio, a computer-assisted translation (CAT) tool, integrated with the TMS to give Xiaomi's in-house translator the productivity benefits of a tech-enabled translation process.
- Tridion Docs, a component content management system (CCMS) giving the content team a flexible platform to transform the management of product documentation (the team's first focus).

The ability to integrate this solution with other business systems, starting with Xiaomi's self-developed web content management system (WCMS), was key for Xiaomi. It allows for straight-through processes that need minimal human intervention, which has already delivered time-savings of 70-75% for different use cases.

How to save 2,000 work days per year

One example is a 70% faster process for localizing web product pages, amounting to 2,000 work days saved per year. Instead of copy-pasting page content from the WCMS into a document to be emailed for translation, the web team now requests translation directly from their system with a few clicks. This automatically generates a project in the TMS, which Danica's team can deliver to their in-house translator or one of the LSPs – again, with a few clicks.

Once the content is translated, in-country review is also managed centrally through the TMS. Following approval, translated pages are delivered straight back to the WCMS for staging and publishing.

As well as providing automation and visibility throughout the process, the TMS gives Xiaomi the power to avoid duplication of work and improve consistency, using the benefits of translation memory (TM) and terminology management (creating and maintaining a termbase).¹ Both TM and termbase are held centrally in the TMS and used by every translator working on Xiaomi content, whether in-house or not. Xiaomi is also building a business portal to make its termbase available to the whole company and to partners, so that everyone can benefit from the Content Management Office's guidance on the use of technical terms, brand names and other terminology.

¹ A TM is a database of previously translated content used to automatically provide matches when new content needs to be translated, thereby avoiding re-translation and improving consistency. A termbase is a database of approved terms (and terms to be avoided), used by companies for further control over content consistency and brand compliance.

Intelligent content management accelerates publishing by 70-75%

Xiaomi's use of Tridion Docs is still in its early stages, with a pilot project underway to migrate more than 1,000 user guides to the platform. These are ideal for management through the CCMS, because they are highly structured with paragraphs of text (components) that are frequently reused across multiple documents.

The system allows these components – examples include legal wording, standard warnings, common feature descriptions and more – to be stored once and used wherever they're needed in different documents. If a component needs to be updated, or a new one added, this only has to be done once, with the update cascaded to create new document versions 'at the push of a button'. It's a step-change in content management – in any language, since the CCMS can store components and their approved translations. And of course it integrates directly with the TMS to support streamlined translation of components.

As well as simplifying content creation and updates, the CCMS transforms publication. Instead of designers having to artwork every individual document for printing, the system holds design templates, allowing document generation to be automated and artworking time essentially eliminated. The Content Management Office estimates that Tridion Docs will cut the time it takes to maintain and publish these user guides by 70% and potentially save millions of Chinese renminbi.

Tridion Docs also supports dynamic publishing to online channels, which Xiaomi hopes to benefit from after further development of its WCMS. For now, just being able to push existing PDFs through Tridion Docs to the WCMS is saving the company 75% of the time it used to take to link to updated PDFs across all of the sites it has for different markets.



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Protecting and enhancing the brand

“Even now,” says Danica, “we’re realizing enormous value from the RWS solution, and we’ve only just started on our content management journey. We can step up to meet growing business needs without having to hire more people, and we can deliver more consistent work of the highest quality with less effort and cost. We also have time and head space to explore future improvements and innovations, such as linguistic AI, that will deliver even greater value.

“Whether offline or online, the content we produce as a company informs what our customers around the world think of us. It’s important, and RWS is helping us to put our best foot forward.”

Key benefits for Xiaomi

- 70% faster localization of product webpages, saving 2,000 work days
- 75% reduction in time to publish PDFs to multiple country websites
- Similar gains estimated for producing printed user guides through CCMS
- Significant improvements in translation consistency and quality
- Time freed to focus on the growing localization needs of a fast-expanding business

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About RWS

RWS Holdings plc is the world’s leading provider of technology-enabled language, content management and intellectual property services. We help our customers to connect with and bring new ideas to people globally by communicating business critical content at scale and enabling the protection and realization of their innovations.

Our vision is to help organizations interact effectively with people anywhere in the world by solving their language, content and market access challenges through our collective global intelligence, deep expertise and smart technology.

Customers include 90 of the globe’s top 100 brands, the top 10 pharmaceutical companies and approximately half of the top 20 patent filers worldwide. Our client base spans Europe, Asia Pacific, and North and South America across the technology, pharmaceutical, medical, legal, financial services, chemical, automotive, government and telecommunications sectors, which we serve from offices across five continents.

Founded in 1958, RWS is headquartered in the UK and publicly listed on AIM, the London Stock Exchange regulated market (RWS.L).

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