Welcome to the summer issue of the Crestec Newsletter.
In this issue, we will start with an article on our TAUS membership and a short update on the Portuguese spelling reform. We will continue with an article about Latvia and we'll finish with a profile story on our Sales Executive Yumi Masaki.

Crestec joins TAUS
Crestec has become a member of TAUS (Translation Automation User Society). Since 2004, TAUS has performed a key role in increasing the size and significance of the translation industry with the goal of helping the world to communicate better. The TAUS community does this by assuming a leading role in developments such as the implementation of improved technology, service innovations and cross-industry collaboration. The key TAUS action lines are the support and promotion of machine translation, the Dynamic Quality Framework and interoperability. TAUS acts as a unifying hub for everyone involved in this aspect of translation automation and language business innovation.

Currently, TAUS is focusing on three challenges. The first of these is quality evaluation. Instead of the rigid, error-based models commonly used in the localization industry with a ‘one size fits all’ approach, TAUS proposes dynamic evaluation models. These dynamic evaluation models focus on customer satisfaction rather than on strictly applying the same standards to every translation. These models take into consideration the content type, its function, the requirements of the end user and the way documents are translated.

In addition to dynamic quality evaluation, TAUS is also busy promoting interoperability. This means that translation data should be able to be processed easily and safely, regardless of whether the translation is performed by a translator, a machine or some combination of the two. TAUS’s goal for the resulting data is that it be usable, preferably in open-source format standards.

The third challenge is open-source machine translation. TAUS has always been a knowledge base for companies who are facing issues related to machine translation, but the organization is now also acting as a common research platform for the sharing of investments and know-how. By benchmarking and testing, TAUS will provide quantitative and qualitative evaluations for its members.

At Crestec, we believe that TAUS plays an important role in the future of the localization industry and we are therefore, very proud to be members of TAUS!
Status update: Portuguese spelling reform – February 2012
The heavily contested Portuguese spelling reform has finally reached Portugal!
In a nutshell, the reform contains new rules for dropping silent consonants, different rules for accents, hyphens and lower- and upper-case letters and more.

Portugal
In 2011, parts of the Portuguese media started using the new spelling. Schools have been using the new spelling since September 2011, and starting 1 January 2012 the state institutions have also been using the new spelling.
On 13 May 2015, the transition period will end. From this day onward, everybody should be using the new spelling.
Despite of all this, the Portuguese people are generally not happy about the new spelling. The reason for this is mainly that the new rules are not clear. Even the official spelling reference materials are inconsistent.
Due to the resistance against the spelling reform, some amendments can be expected, but the new rules are almost certainly here to stay.
Given the information above, it is advisable to start thinking about gradually converting the contents of Portuguese translation memories to the new spelling.
Crestec has the tools and the qualified people available to facilitate this conversion.

Brazil
Brazil, on the other hand, started using the new spelling in 2009. The adaptation period, during which both the old and the new spellings are valid, will expire there on 31 December 2012.
Usage of the new Portuguese spelling has caused less controversy in Brazil, because the changes affect fewer words than in Portugal.
At Crestec we have reliable software tools for converting Brazilian Portuguese translation memories into the new spelling.
It is advisable to plan your conversions during the course of 2012.

Feel free to contact your account executive for advice regarding the conversion of your Portuguese documentation materials!

The Latvian language
Latvian is the official state language of the Republic of Latvia and has about 1.4 million native speakers. It uses the Latin alphabet, and together with Lithuanian it forms the Baltic branch of the Indo-European language family. It is an inflected language with complex nominal and verbal morphology. There are two grammatical genders (masculine and feminine) and nouns are declined in seven cases, while verbs are used in five conjugations. With just a few exceptions, in all Latvian words the stress falls on the first syllable.
Latvian developed as a distinct language around the 16th century. Until the 19th century it was heavily influenced by the German language, as the first written texts in Latvian were composed by Baltic Germans. During the first Latvian National Awakening at the end of the 19th century, the Latvian language was standardized, and the old, German orthography was replaced with the Latin one.
During the Soviet era, the Latvian language was heavily influenced by the Russification policy. In order to ensure the status of Russian as the only lingua franca in the Union, a massive immigration from other Soviet republics ensued. As a result, the proportion of Latvian native speakers fell from 80% in 1935 to 52% in 1989.
Nowadays ethnic Latvians account for up to 62.1% of the total population, and the Latvian language is spoken by 79% of the total population of Latvia. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the Latvian language has served as a topic of many heated discussions in the Latvian media and the political arena as well as in the relations between Latvia and Russia. While the government of
Latvia strongly advocates the status of Latvian as the only official state language, pro-Russian activists claim that the Russian native speakers (37.5% of total population) are being discriminated against.

In 2012, the Russian activists called for a referendum which would grant Russian the official-language status. Many ethnic Latvians saw this referendum as an attempt to contest the country’s independence, and as a result, the referendum sparked record-high participation with 74.8% voting against making Russian the official state language.

**Popular myths about the Latvian language**

1. **The three Baltic languages are very similar.**
False. When talking about the Baltic languages, we usually have three languages in mind—Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian—which, just like these three countries, are considered to be similar. While Lithuanian and Latvian indeed both belong to the Baltic language branch, they are not mutually intelligible. Roughly speaking, the similarities between these two languages could be compared to those between English and German. Estonian, however, belongs to the Finno-Ugric language group and has similarities to Finnish. To communicate with their Baltic neighbours, Latvians most often use English or Russian.

2. **Latvian is a Slavic language and is similar to Russian.**
False. Even though there is historical evidence of the existence of the Balto-Slavic language group, the Slavic and Baltic languages are said to have split around the 10th century BC and have gone very separate ways since then. Unlike the Slavic languages, Latvian and Lithuanian have similarities to Latin and Sanskrit. Latvian and Russian languages are mutually unintelligible, however, the majority of Latvians do understand and speak Russian as it is taught in school and is widely used at all levels of everyday communication.

3. **Latvian has nothing in common with Western European languages.**
Mostly true. Latvian has retained a number of archaic language properties and, compared to other European languages, is a very conservative language. It is almost completely unintelligible to Western European readers, however, many Germans (and even Dutch speakers) might be surprised at how many words they may actually understand in Latvian. Some examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Latvian</th>
<th>German</th>
<th>Dutch</th>
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<tr>
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<td>chimney</td>
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<td>Schornstein</td>
<td>schoorsteen</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Team profile: Yumi Masaki

Yumi Masaki was born in 1983 in the town of Karatsu, in the south of Japan, halfway between Fukuoka and Nagasaki. She comes from a family with 3 brothers and sisters. As a child, her main activity and passion was sailing, which is no coincidence as her father is a sailing instructor. All her youth she spent sailing at the Karatsu coastline. She even made it to the top 20 of the Japanese national championships.

It was at the age of 16 when Yumi did a summer school program in England that she gained interest in the English language and the differences between cultures. She decided she wanted an international future for herself and enrolled in the study of Economics at Tokyo University. During her bachelor she did an exchange program of Economics and Business at Amsterdam University and after finishing her bachelor in Tokyo, she returned to the Netherlands to do her Masters of Economics and Geography in Utrecht.

After graduating, she did an internship at a semi-governmental research institute in Tokyo when she discovered an open Sales position at Crestec Europe. She started in May of 2010 with high expectations of the international working environment in Amsterdam.

Yumi started off in the project coordination section. For junior members of the Sales department it is common to start in the project coordination section. In this section, the sales member can learn about every aspect of a project at Crestec, because project coordinators are involved from beginning to end.

After six months, Yumi had become an expert on translation software and she had learned everything there is to know about the internal processes at Crestec. Yumi has always been very much involved in the Japanese to English communication between Japan and Europe too.

She moved to the sales department in November of 2010. In her new role as a sales executive, she changed her mindset from a more procedure angled approach to a very flexible client oriented approach. With 1.5 years of experience, Yumi really feels comfortable in her role as an account manager.

Gradually Yumi has grown into a decision making role in the sales team.

She especially enjoys the diversity of her work, from handling localization projects to printing, kitting, warehousing and fulfillment projects.

Every day is different, which makes her work exciting!

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