



Automated translation solution to improve effectiveness

Two of the largest map companies in the Baltic States - Karšu izdevniecība Jāņa sēta Ltd from Latvia and Regio Ltd from Estonia - have agreed to develop an automated translation solution „TerraLexicon“ that is focused on translation of geographical names and other proper nouns.

Currently available machine translation tools are strong at translating text, when it is needed to be done between languages considered dominant in the translation market. However, European Union consists of 24 official languages where most of them are regional languages. Both cooperation partners are also operating in these regions and are affected by language barriers that are limiting their export potential. Available translation tools are not capable of translating geographical names and translation has to be done manually, making it expensive because of high labour costs. Since both map companies' common interest is to solve the problem, they have agreed to develop an automated translation solution „TerraLexicon“.

„We have been in need of such an automated translation solution for years and completing the solution will definitely have a strong positive impact on our export potential,“ says **Leida Lepik**, CEO of Regio Ltd.

One of the aims of the project is also to provide this translation service to other companies in the region to ensure the sustainability of the project results. To accomplish this goal the first project activities include market research in order to understand the conditions and requirements of the market and to gain an overall understanding of the market situation. The market research was started at Frankfurt Book Fair in October 2019 which is the main event for contacting the potential customers and introducing them the translation solution. The Book Fair was attended by both cooperation partners with a common exhibitor stand.

Cross-border cooperation when developing such a solution has several benefits, the most important of which are that it enables partners to share costs and use specific knowledge and human resources of both companies.

Mareks Kilups, Co-CEO of Karšu izdevniecība Jāņa sēta Ltd, executive manager, Geospatial solutions business unit: „This is definitely our largest joint project, which will strengthen the capabilities of both map companies in the international market - the most important to think about for such niche companies from countries as small as Latvia and Estonia. Together we take decisive steps to be recognized and successful internationally.“

Both companies will work closely over the next 1,5 years to jointly implement the project “Geoname translator for maps”. The next steps of the project implementation include such activities as development of translation API, technological development of automated translation solution, creation of the prototype and development of the web portal.

The project “Geoname translator for maps” (Est-Lat112) is supported by the European Regional Development Fund, the Estonian - Latvian cross-border cooperation programme Interreg. The project is being implemented in the Estonian - Latvian (EST-LAT) cross-border cooperation programme in the thematic objective “Increasing the competitiveness of SMEs” priority axis “Active and attractive business environment.” The project started in September 2019 and ends in March 2021.

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