OmegaT is a computer-assisted translation tool written in the Java programming language. It is free software originally developed by Keith Godfrey in 2000, and is currently developed by a team led by Didier Briel.

OmegaT is intended for professional translators. Its features include customisable segmentation using regular expressions, translation memory with fuzzy matching and match propagation, glossary matching, dictionary matching, translation memory and reference material searching, and inline spell-checking using Hunspell spelling dictionaries.

OmegaT runs on Linux, Mac OS X and Microsoft Windows 98 SE or higher,[1] and requires Java 1.5. It is available in 27 languages. According to a survey in 2010[2] among 458 professional translators, OmegaT is used 1/3 as much as Wordfast, Déjà Vu and MemoQ, and 1/8 as much as the market leader Trados.

## How OmegaT works

OmegaT handles a translation job as a project, a hierarchy of folders with specific names. The user copies non-translated documents into one named /source/ (or subfolders thereof). The Editor pane displays the source documents as individual “segments” for translation one segment at a time. OmegaT, when directed, generates the (partially) translated versions in the /target/ subfolder.

Other named folders include ones for automatic consultation within the program: /tm/ for existing translation pairs in .tmx format, /tm/auto/ for automatic translation of 100% matches, /glossary/ for glossaries, /dictionary/ for StarDict (and .tbx) dictionaries.

When the user goes to translate a segment in the Editor pane, OmegaT automatically searches the .tmx files in the /tm/ hierarchy for previous translation pairs with similar source sentences and displays them in the Fuzzy Matches pane for insertion into the Editor pane with a keyboard shortcut. The Glossary and Dictionary panes provide similar automatic look-up functions for any glossaries and dictionaries in the corresponding named folders in the project. The optional Machine Translation pane shows machine translations from Google Translate and similar services.

When the user leaves a segment, OmegaT normally first adds the source-target pair to its database in memory. It subsequently saves that database to disk in Translation Memory eXchange (.tmx) format for use another day, in other projects, by other translators, and even with other CAT tools. No change, naturally enough, means no such update. Version 3.1 added a setting for blocking targets equal to their sources, a common slip, plus a keyboard shortcut for overriding it—numbers, source code in programming manuals, etc.

At any point, the user can create partially translated versions of the source files. Note that OmegaT copies source segments verbatim if they have yet to be translated. Before doing so, however, the user is advised to use the Validate menu command to check for tag and other errors. Version 3.1 added a menu command (and keyboard shortcut) for limiting operation to the current file—for partial delivery or quick update, for example.

## Glossaries

For glossaries, OmegaT mainly uses tab-delimited plain text files in UTF-8 encoding with the .txt extension. The structure of a glossary file is extremely simple: the first column contains the source language word, the second column contains the corresponding target language words, the third column (optional) can contain anything including comments on context etc. Such glossaries can easily be created in a text editor.

Similarly structured files in standard CSV format are also supported, as well as TBX files.