Language translation and localization program plan in MasterControl Academy

Summary

This program aims to provide an accurate, scalable solution for customers to learn how to use MasterControl in the languages our product supports. This includes ensuring the experience of accessing translated materials in MasterControl Academy is clear and effective. All supporting content—such as catalog pages, learning paths, Pendo guides, course content, and multimedia assets—will be systematically prioritized for translation, accessibility, and an automated updates cadence.

Current state

We are in progress with translating 96 end-user-focused courses into 15 languages. MasterControl Academy currently houses over 750 English-language courses with no automated translation solution in place. We have yet to determine if all courses need to be translated. The current manual translation process is time-intensive, requiring 38-60 minutes per course, and faces several operational challenges:

1. Videos remain untranslated and rely solely on .vtt captions
2. Links take users to English courses
3. Translated content is not searchable or tagged beyond the translated language

Despite long-standing customer requests and compliance requirements in certain markets for translated training, we've been unable to meet and sustain these needs effectively. This limitation particularly impacts our global market presence and customer success in regions where English is not the primary language.

Minimum viable solution

With effective communication and progress being made toward automating the updates process for translating courses, we can direct customers to the courses that have been translated and begin to gather feedback on their experience. This will help us understand what improvements need to be prioritized. We can also apply our tagging scheme to translated courses to help customers filter results on the Browse Library page as long as translated courses also include the exclude tag, preventing these courses from appearing in Search.

Ideal future state

MasterControl Academy will feature a fully automated translation system capable of processing content updates within 24 hours of English course modifications. The entire course library will be available in 15 languages, maintaining 90-95+% translation accuracy across all languages. Users will experience a seamless, fully translated journey from login to course completion, including navigation (catalog pages), learning paths, and multimedia content, with no disruptions caused by broken or inaccurate links. The system will be supported by sustainable processes for content management and a robust feedback mechanism for continuous improvement. This comprehensive language support will ensure compliance with national training requirements while strengthening our position in global markets and enhancing the overall learning experience for non-native English speakers.

Objectives and key results

OKR #1 (Committed)

Objective: Create an effective, user-centered learning experience in MasterControl Academy for non-native English speakers.

Key results

1. Translate and deploy the following into 15 languages:
    a. Text and video captions files for all 96 end-user courses.
    b. 100% of CQx and Mx Pendo walkthroughs.
2. Implement language-based filters and tagging system for 100% of translated courses in MasterControl Academy.
3. Achieve CSAT rating of +/- 10 for translated courses compared to English courses within first 6 months.
4. Collect feedback from at least 25% of users accessing translated content through integrated surveys and proactive outreach.

OKR #2 (Committed)

Objective: Create a sustainable translation system for content accessed through MasterControl Academy.

Key results

1. Something about tool being available by Q1
2. Reduce course translation time from 60 minutes to <3 minutes per course through automation.
3. Achieve 90% translation accuracy across all 15 languages in SmartCat.
4. If required, translate and make remaining ~650 courses available by end of Q2 2025.

OKR #3 (Aspirational)

Objective: Enhance the user experience in MasterControl Academy, so the functionality between English and non-English interfaces are identical by end of Q4 2025.

Key results

1. Develop matrix of courses and smart link routing system to take users to the correct course content by end of Q2 2025.
2. Develop and implement an automated content update system that processes changes within 24 hours of English course modifications by end of Q3 2025.
3. All catalog pages are translated and resources accessed through catalog pages utilize smart links by end of Q2 2025.
4. Search reliably returns relevant translated results for all users by end of Q2 2025.
5. Include translated search results in the AI pilot by end of Q2 2025.

Preliminary research

Program goals

1. Create a robust and complete learning program for non-native English speakers that replicates our best-in-industry learning approach to learning content access and teaching MasterControl to customers.
2. Enhance the user experience for non-native speakers by providing effective, high-quality translated content in a variety of modalities.
3. Streamline the translation process to reduce time and manual effort, maintain accuracy, and enable translated content to be up-to-date within a day of changes made to the master English course.
4. Collect and act on user feedback to continuously improve translated content and address specific barriers.
5. Ensure compliance with national requirements for training content in native languages.
6. Create a plan for localization, using best practice models and tapping into our company resources/personnel local to those regions.
7. Utilize MasterControl resources (e.g., Product's translation process to translate MCA), platform native integrations (SmartCat, Articulate), and then build sustainable, streamlined processes for content management.

Program structure

1. Initial assessment

What we know:

- We've prioritized the translation of 96 end-user courses into 14 languages, which equates to about 1,344 courses.
- ~750 courses exist, needing translation into 14 languages (~10,500 total courses).
- Translation is time-consuming, and automation is under consideration.
- Some markets require translated training for MasterControl to be a viable sales offering. Offering translated training content for both SysAdmins and End-Users is an industry differentiator and can boost overall global and enterprise sales.
- Translation of course content has been a long-standing customer request.
- Our embedded course survey appears in the language determined by the user's browser. We *should* be able to add conditional /modify questions in this survey in translated courses without much work to collect feedback.
- Current challenges:
    - Links in translated courses point to English versions.
    - Videos are untranslated, relying on `.vtt` captions for accessibility.
    - Translated content is not searchable (due to the exclude tag), nor are there language-specific filters.
    - Synchronous interviews to gather customer feedback will be challenging.
    - Learning paths and catalog pages are English-only. Language packs should translate the catalog pages and any Skilljar metadata (short description, etc.), but links will still continue to point to English courses.

What we do not know:

- Accuracy and effectiveness of translated content without formal review.
- Extent and impact of formatting errors in translations (likely minimal).
- Level of customer demand for searchable and filtered translated content.
- Customer expectations for translated learning paths.
- Feasibility of tagging translated courses, which would be required for team members basics page, but may introduce complexity on our Browse Library page.
- How the full end-to-end availability of translated content will be communicated to and accessed by our target demographics.

Questions:

- How will language packs influence course navigation and user satisfaction?
- We do not have learning paths that contain translated courses for customers and courses contain links to English courses. What is the customer appetite for learning paths?
- Although catalog pages will be translated using language packs, links to SCORM course content will take users to English versions of courses without redirecting/routing users. How useful will these catalog pages be to users?
- Are untranslated elements (videos, links) acceptable in the short term?
- Will the AI search return translated content results (assuming we remove the exclude tag from translated courses)?
- When will language packs be introduced? Answer: tentative plan in March.
- Who should we collaborate with to address cross-cultural or untranslatable challenges identified in our course content?
- Does having all translated course content on a single Browse Library page pose accessibility challenges for our users?
- Will customers need some kind of introduction to the program (and ongoing communication to announce updates) that explains what we're doing and some of the current limitations/updates that we intend to address in the coming months?

2. Key questions and research plan

1. **Customer insights:**
   a. Survey non-native speakers on their current experience with translated content.
   b. Solicit feedback on ease of understanding, navigation barriers, and additional needs.
   c. Test demand for language-based search and filtering.
   d. Test demand for full library translation (Sysadmin courses, catalog pages)
   e. Test need for multi-modal content translations (beyond captions)
   f. Test for usage and need
2. **Content evaluation:**
   a. Perform a quality audit of translated courses.
   b. Identify and assess the frequency and impact of formatting errors.
3. **Process analysis:**
   a. Determine the efficacy of automation in reducing translation time.
   b. Align tagging scheme used in Master courses with translated courses (without introducing additional complexity for English-speaking customers).

3. Design the user experience

Ideal journey:

- The language in MasterControl Academy is automatically selected when the user logs in (presumably from browser-selected language).
- All in-app communication and onboarding is translated.
- Search results are filtered by language, with the option to adjust settings.
- All course content, including learning paths, links, and resources, is seamlessly translated or appropriately routed.

Short-term experience:

- Translate critical end-user content, prioritizing compliance-related markets.
- Provide `.vtt` captions for videos and gradually introduce video translations.
- Retain English buttons and links while working on systematic updates.

Long-term experience:

- All learning paths, catalog pages, and resources are fully translated.
- Intelligent routing directs users to content in their language, with fallback instructions if routing logic takes users to untranslated content.

4. Scoping questions

1. Content Scope Questions:
    1. What content needs to be translated beyond the initial 96 end-user courses? Should system administrator courses be included in the translation scope? How can we understand if there is a need for this content to be translated? We've received plenty of requests from customers on behalf of CSMs and other employees regarding language translation. Perhaps we can contact these customers to ask what topics (perhaps that we pre-propose) they need translated content for.
    2. What is our strategy for translating video captions? Currently, I believe Vanessa is translating captions for courses that have videos. When we have our course translation automation in place, we can simultaneously upload our captions files from the SCORM package for translation. If this excessively increases our SmartCat word allotment, we can find another tool that will translate this for us for free, although we will want to consider and compare the accuracy of translations in SmartCat to, say, Premiere.
    3. How do we plan to identify non-English users in MCA that are willing to provide feedback? Survey feedback for translated courses requires users to submit responses while in those courses. We can identify translation-specific feedback through non-English course titles in survey responses. To gather sufficient data, we'll need to promote these courses and encourage feedback through external communications.
2. Technical Implementation Questions:
    1. [To be considered at a later time] How will the routing logic work on catalog pages for translated content versus English content?
    2. How will the tagging system be implemented to accommodate multiple languages? Is there any reason why we should wait to tag translated courses so they can be accessed using filters on the Browse Library page?
    3. [To be considered at a later time] What is our approach for handling links within translated courses?
3. User Experience Questions:
    4. What is the minimum acceptable user experience for the initial release?
    5. What are the specific requirements for language-based filtering and search?
4. Process Questions:
    6. [To be considered at a later time] What is the quality assurance process for translated content?

7. [To be considered at a later time] Who will be responsible for reviewing and approving translations? Will this be necessary?
8. What is the process for maintaining translated content when English content is updated? Generally speaking, the process initially will be: LXD downloads SCORM from host course; runs SCORM through pre-processor, SmartCat, post-processor; and replaces the SCORM files in Skilljar. Later, it'd be convenient if when an LXD uploads a new SCORM file to Skilljar, we have an event listener on a server that tells us when a new course has had its SCORM replaced, downloads that SCORM, runs the SCORM through the pre-processor, SmartCat, and post-processor, and replaces the course with translated content with the newly translated SCORM file.

5. Market/Business Questions:
9. Which markets/languages should be prioritized based on business needs/compliance requirements? This may be an irrelevant question once we have an automation in place, as courses will be translated at generally the same speed.

6. Communication Questions:
10. How will the translation program be communicated to different stakeholders?
11. What is the communication strategy for updating users about new translated content?
12. How will feedback be collected and incorporated into the program?
13. How will limitations and future improvements be communicated to users?

5. Implementation plan

1. **Phase 1: Introduction (0-3 months)**
   a. Get end-user courses translated (96 courses in 15 languages)
   b. Audit translated content for **formatting** accuracy.
   c. Draft and distribute surveys and feedback mechanisms for non-native speakers.
   d. Begin automation trials for translation.
   e. Identify critical markets for prioritized translation efforts.
   f. Tagging scheme applied to these courses.

2. **Phase 2: Development (3-6 months)**
   a. Roll out automated translation processes.
   b. Create initial translated language-based search filters.
   c. Translate `.vtt` captions for all videos, with select video translations as a pilot.

3. **Phase 3: Expansion (6-12 months)**
   a. Implement translated learning paths.
   b. Develop intelligent routing for language-specific resources.
   c. Address common formatting errors systematically.

4. **Phase 4: Optimization (12+ months)**
   a. Monitor feedback and make iterative improvements.
   b. Expand the use of language packs to refine navigation and experience.
   c. Finalize translation of videos and secondary content.

6. Evaluation metrics

- **Customer satisfaction:**
  - Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT)
  - Response to "I learned what I need to for my role" question
  - Feedback on accuracy, clarity, accessibility, and usefulness of translated content.
- **Content effectiveness:**
  - Error rate in translated courses and `.vtt` captions.
  - Completion rates for translated courses compared to English versions.
- **Adoption**
  - **TBD, but my thought here is to look at the adoption boards that are being put together and compare the results of non-native English speaker adoption with English version adoption and see if there are any correlations.**
- **Operational efficiency:**
  - Reduction in time required for translations through automation. Note: Current time required to translate one course is between 38 minutes to an hour and 12 minutes.
  - Percentage of translated courses aligned with English counterparts.

KPI	Key results
Customer participation	
Customer satisfaction	Achieve a program CSAT rating of 70 within 6 months.
Content accessibility	All 96 end-user courses will be translated into 14 languages by the end of January 2025 (~12% of the English course library). The remaining course library will be translated into 14 languages by the end of Q1.
Operational efficiency	Reduce current translation time by < 95% by automating the course translation process.
Content effectiveness	Achieve overall 90-95% translation accuracy across all languages in SmartCat.
Feedback and continuous improvement	All translated courses contain a way for us to gather program-specific feedback.

Challenges and mitigation strategies

- **Volume of content:** Prioritize translations for high-demand markets and compliance-related courses first.
- **Quality control:** Determine if we need to develop an automated review process or partner with certified translators for critical content and/or develop a way to collect user feedback to help us identify errors in translation.
- **Navigation complexity:** Use routing, clear instructions, and fallback options for untranslated resources.
- **Customer feedback:** Encourage continuous feedback through surveys, integrated forms, and user interviews.