Localization 2022 Member Benchmark Survey Results

- President/Owner of Comtech
- Director of CIDM
- 30+ years in information development

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Definitions

Translation	Turning content of one language into another language, for example, English into French
Localization	Adapting content (language) to fit a specific market or country and adjusting it to accommodate the linguistic, cultural, political, and legal differences
Localization service provider (LSP)	An individual or company that offers professional translation and localization services

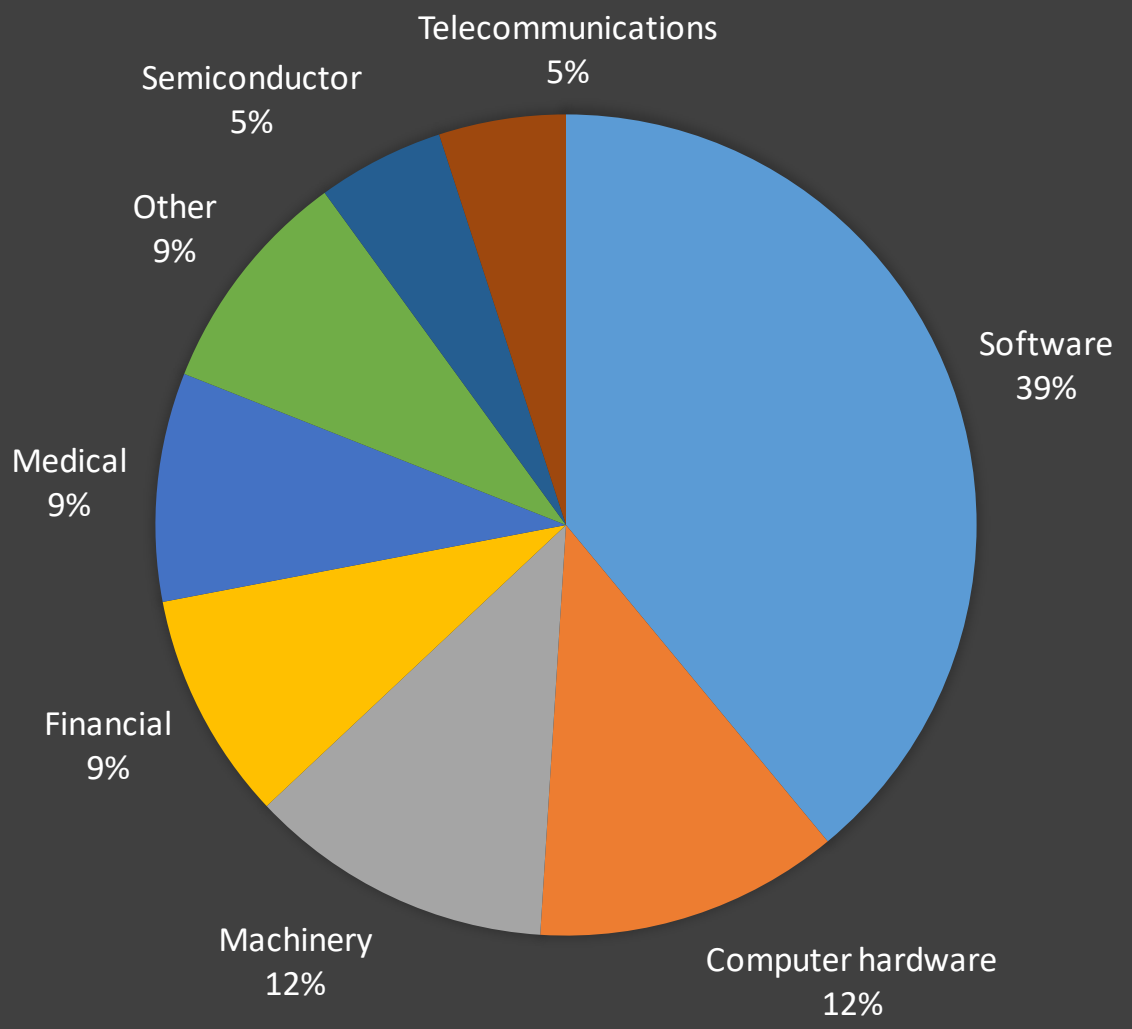
Translation and localization are sometimes written as T9N (translation) and L10N (localization) to shorten the terms.

Demographics

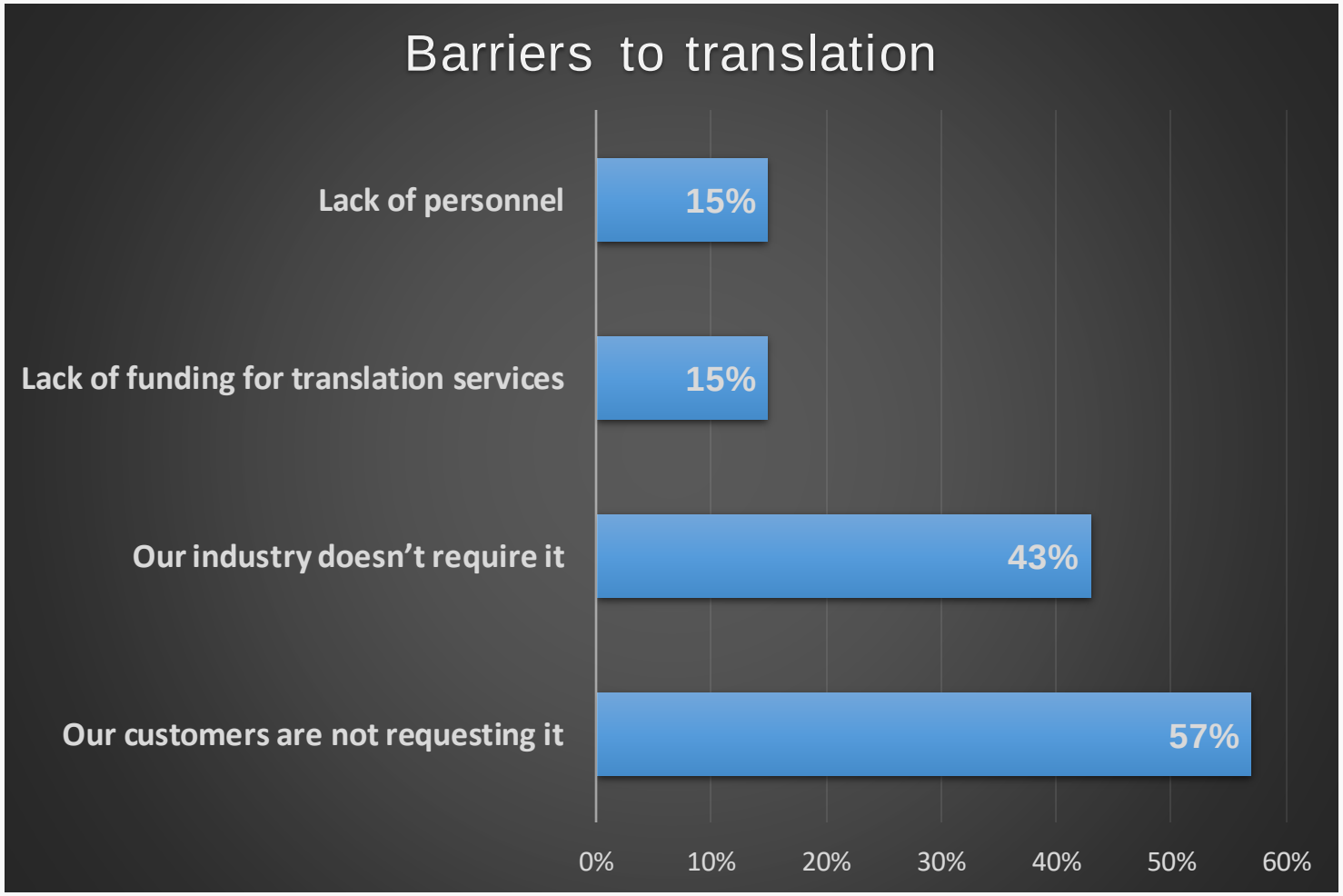
- 84% translate or localize
- 16% don't, of which <50% are global
- 7% sell to North America only
- 93% sell worldwide
  - North America
  - Latin America
  - APAC (including India)
  - EMEA and Russia

Demographics

INDUSTRIES



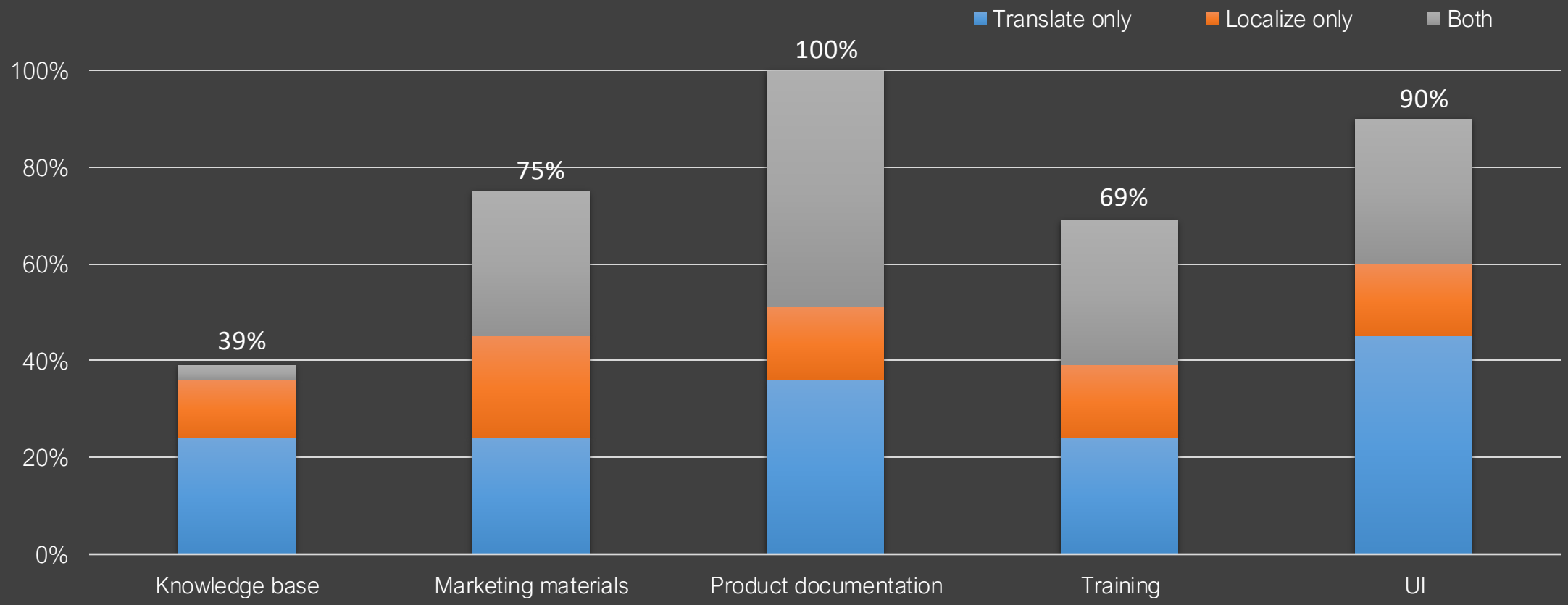
Why don’t companies translate content?



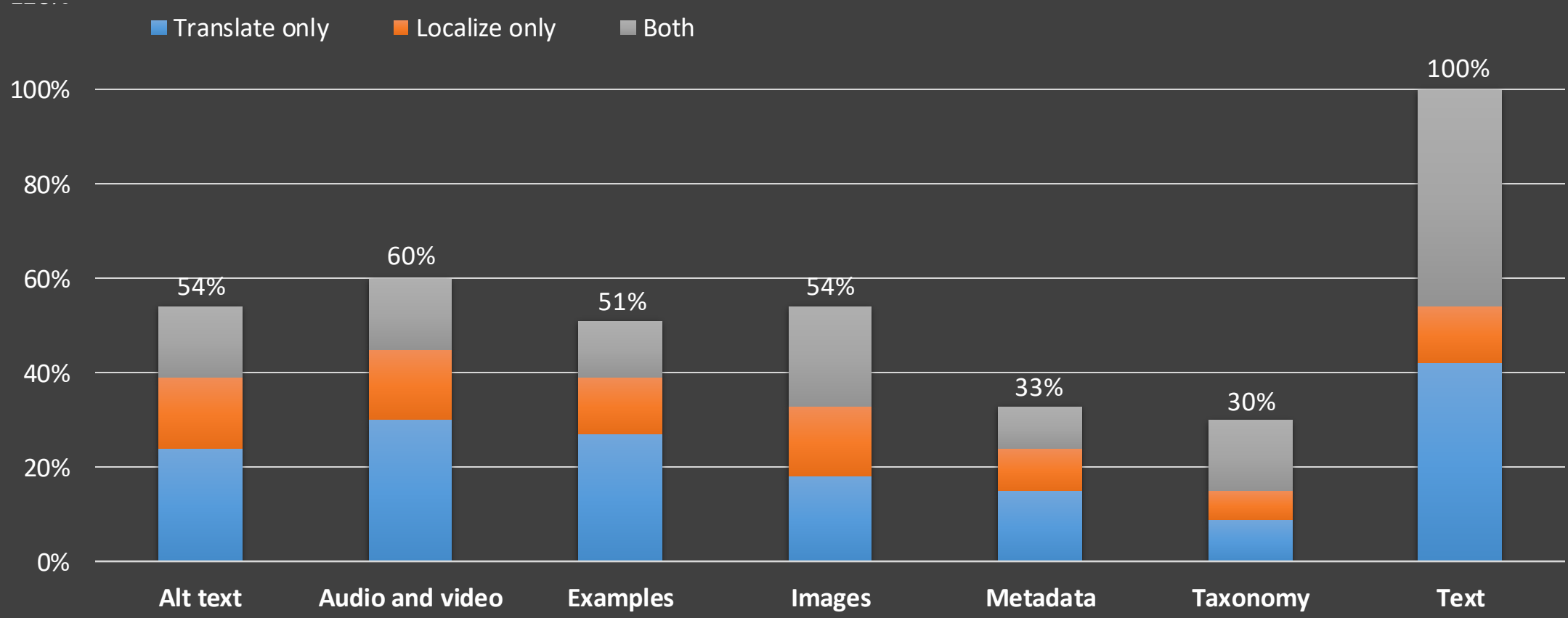
Future plans	
No plans	86%
Will start both translating and localizing	14%

How do you accommodate people who are not fluent in English?	
Minimalism	71%
Simplified Technical English/Plain Language	29%
Images instead of words	14%
Readability measures (such as Flesch-Kincaid)	0%

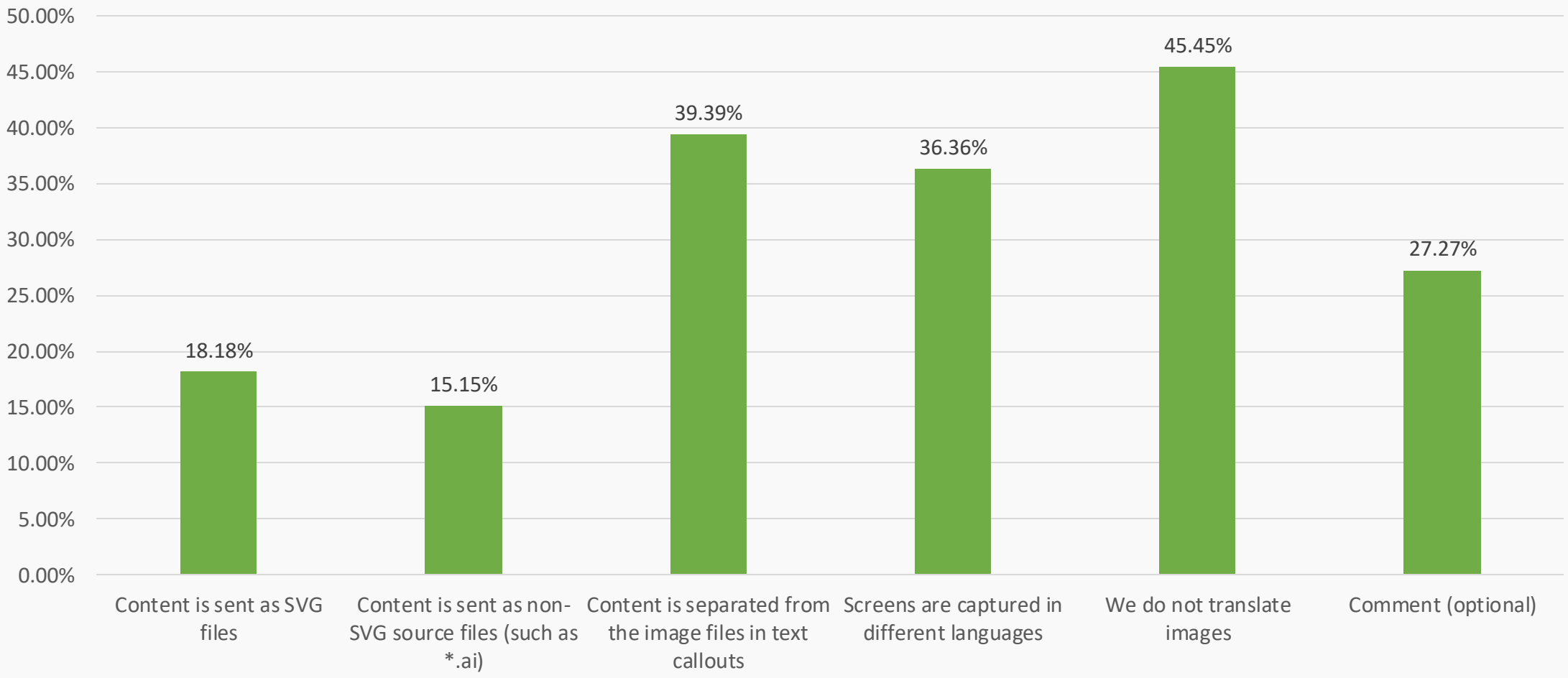
Which content types are translated?



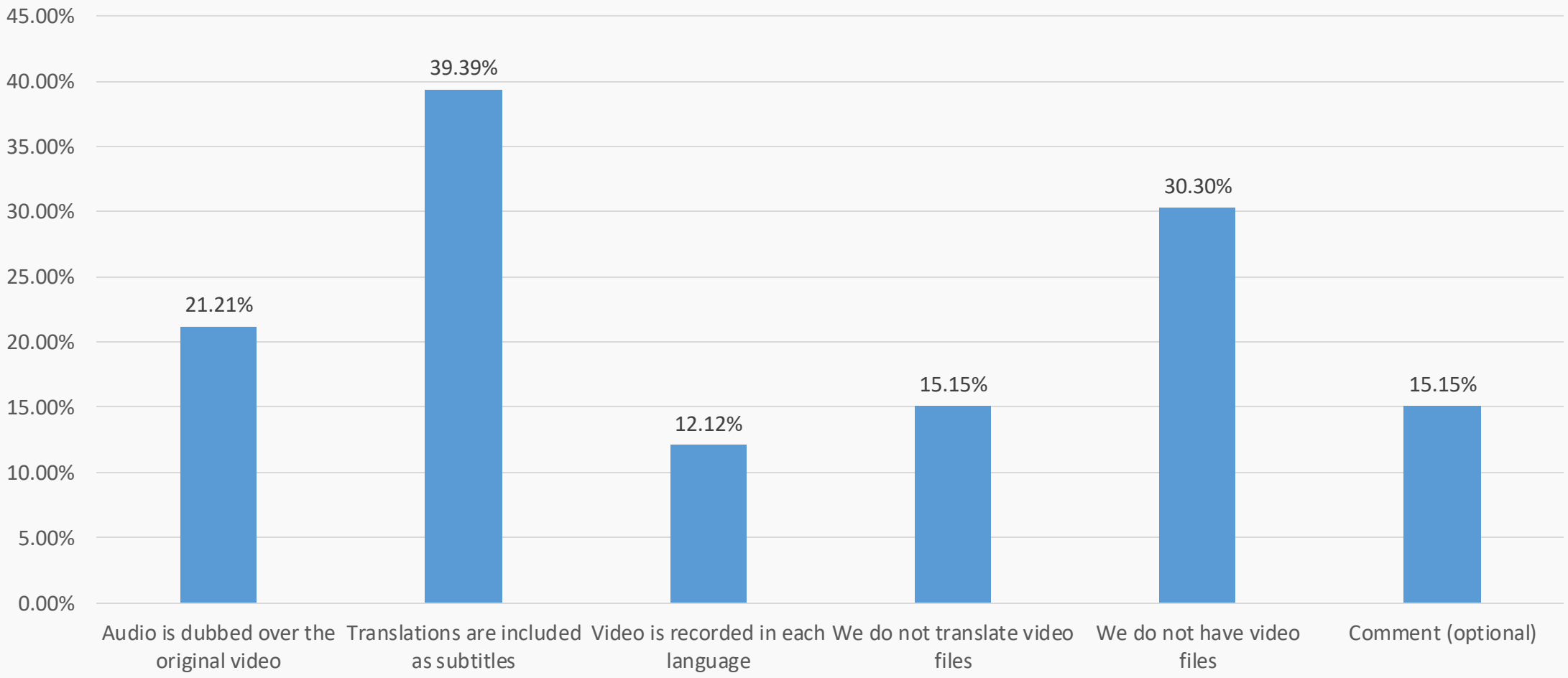
Which content components are translated?



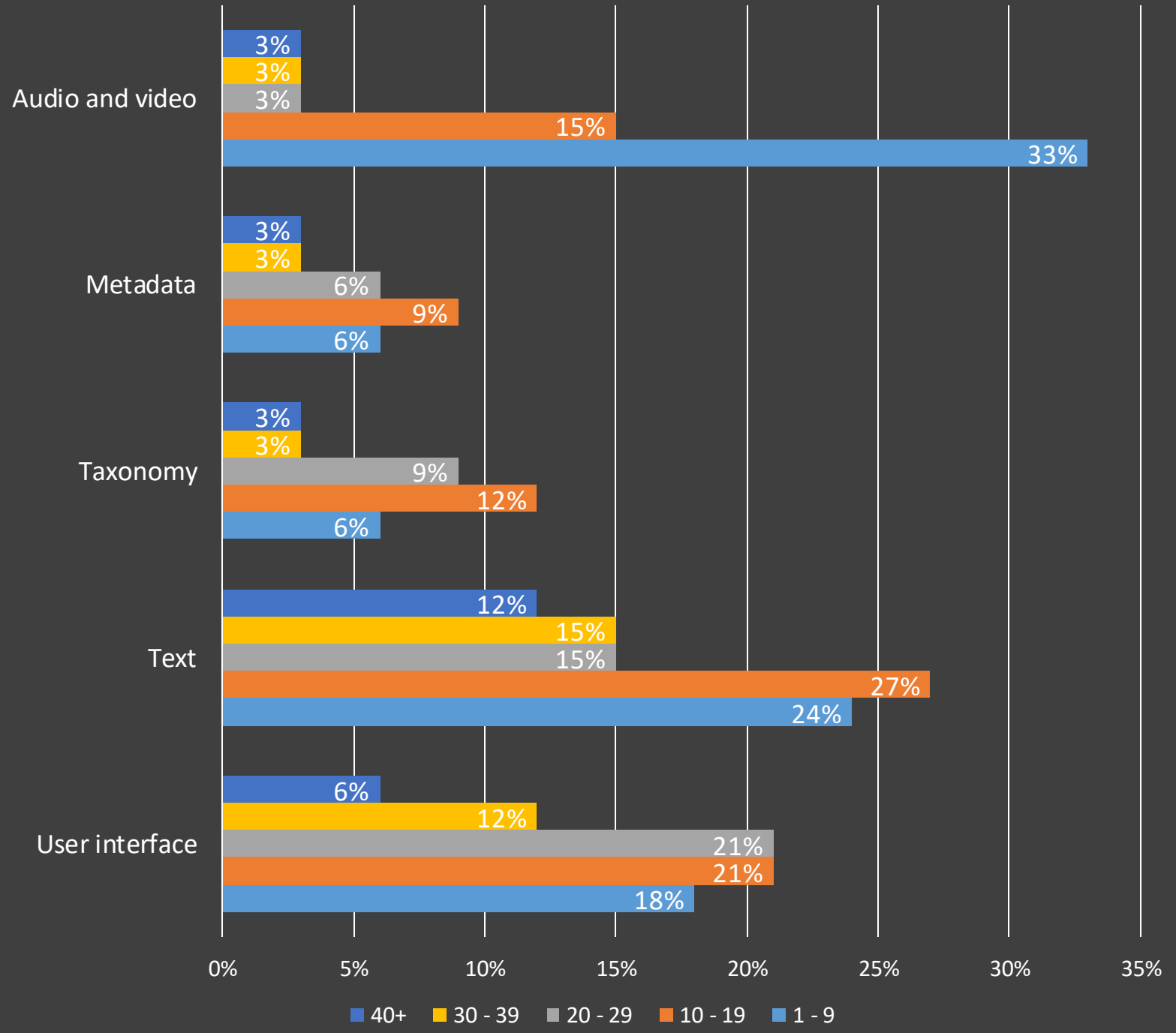
How are images translated?



How is video translated?



Into how many languages do you translate the following?



Which are the most common source languages?

#1	#2	#3	#4
English • United States @ 75% (en-us) • United Kingdom (en-gb) @ 6%	Japanese (ja)	French (fr-fr)	Chinese – Simplified (zh-cn)
		German (de)	Chinese – Traditional (zh-tw)
		Portuguese – Brazil (pt-br)	Dutch (nl)
		Spanish – Spain (es-es)	Italian (it)
			Korean (ko)
			Ukrainian (ua)

Which are the most common target languages?

1. Chinese – Simplified (zh-cn)* 85%
2. French (fr-fr)* 79%
3. Japanese (ja)* 79%
4. German (de)* 73%
5. Russian (ru) 70%
6. Spanish – Spain (es-es)* 70%
7. Italian (it)* 67%
8. Portuguese – Brazil (pt-br)* 67%
9. Korean (ko)* 64%
10. Dutch (nl)* and Polish (pl) (tie) 58%

* Also a source language

Which are the most common variants?

- 13 Spanish
  - Spanish – Spain (es-es) 70%
  - Spanish – Mexico (es-mx) 52%
  - Spanish – Argentina (es-ar) 12%
  - Spanish – Colombia (es-co) 9%
- 8 English
  - English – United Kingdom (en-gb) 18%
  - English – Australia (en-au) 9%
  - English – Canada (en-ca) 9%
- 4 French
  - French - Canada (fr-ca) – 55%
  - French (fr-fr) – 79%
- 3 German
  - German (de) – 73%
- 2 Chinese
  - Chinese – Simplified (zh-cn) 85%
  - Chinese – Traditional (zh-tw) 48%
- 2 Portuguese
  - Portuguese – Brazil (pt-br) 67%
  - Portuguese – Portugal (pt-pt) 42%

CIDM

What is the approximate volume of content translated each year?

High 400-700M words*

Low 6K words

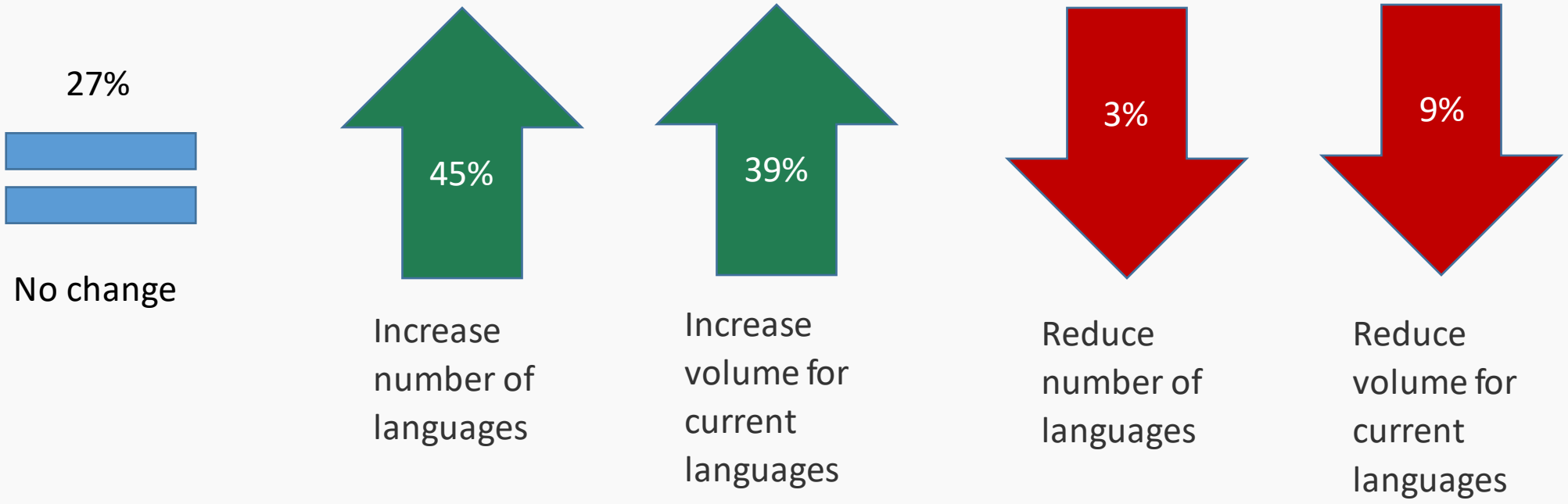
Mean 45M

Median 1.25M

Mode 1M (50K next most frequent)

*1 page=250 words

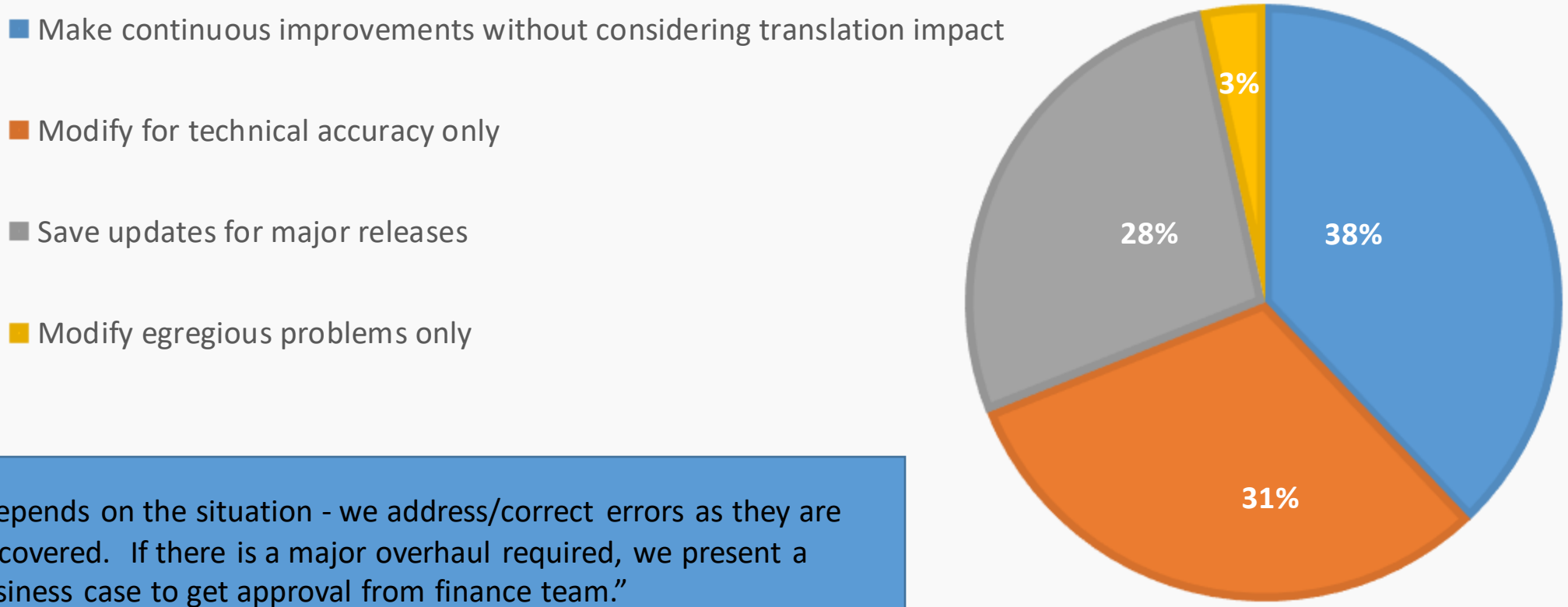
What are your future plans for your volume of translation?



How much do companies spend on translation yearly?

>$25K	6%
$25K–$99K	9%
$100K–$490K	18%
$500K–$990K	3%
$1M–$4.9M	9%
<$5M	6%
Unknown	49%

How do translation costs influence decisions to update content?



"Depends on the situation - we address/correct errors as they are discovered. If there is a major overhaul required, we present a business case to get approval from finance team."

How is translation managed?

31% Independently by business unit with vendor from approved list

27% Centralized corporate translation department

15% Independently by BU/division/department with any vendor

15% Centralized doc translation team

12% Independently by BU/division/department but coordinated with other groups

Who translates your product documentation?

A professional, certified LSP	90%
Machine translation with human post-edit	58%
Machine translation (no post-edits)	35%
An employee who is a native speaker of the target language or a regional office	29%
An internal localization department	6%

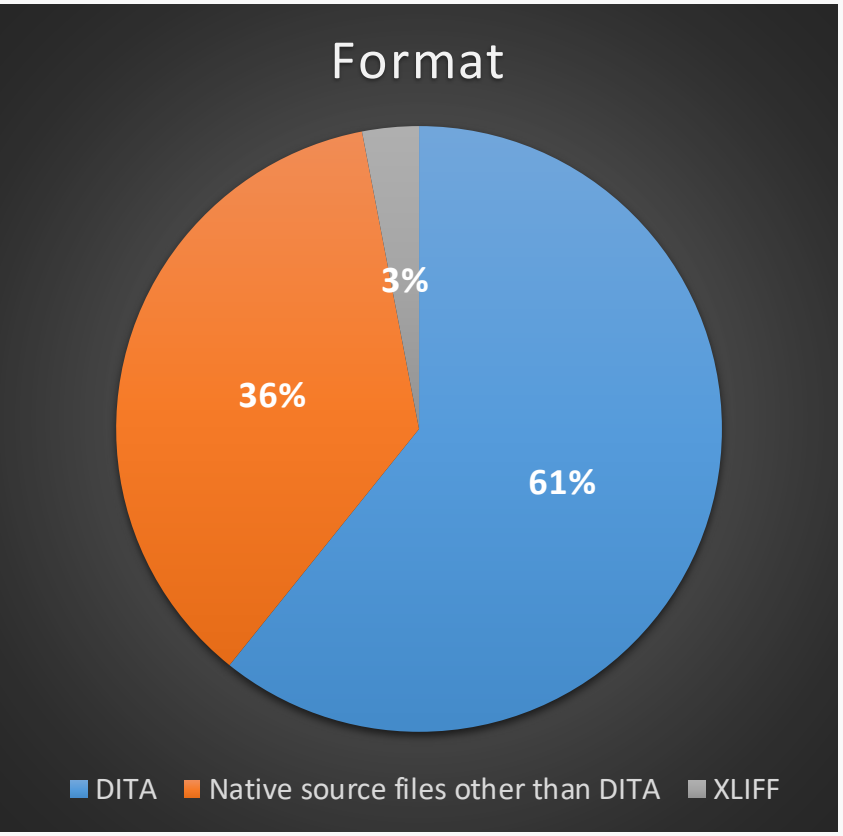
# of LSPs used	
1	10%
2	14%
3	48%
4	10%
5	4%
6	4%

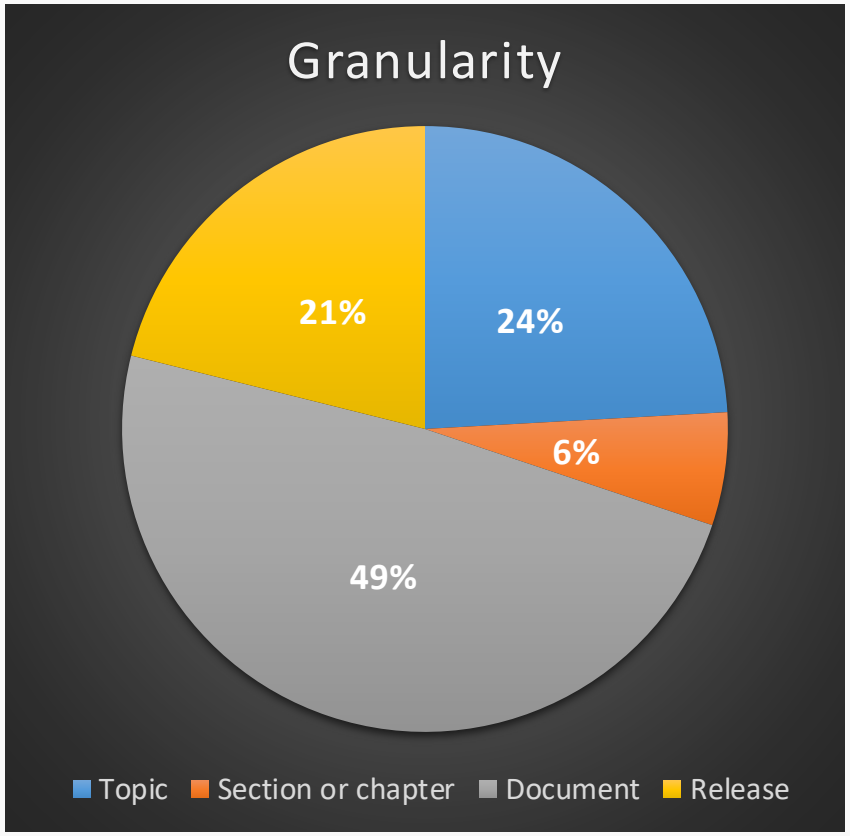
What services does your LSP provide (beyond text translation)

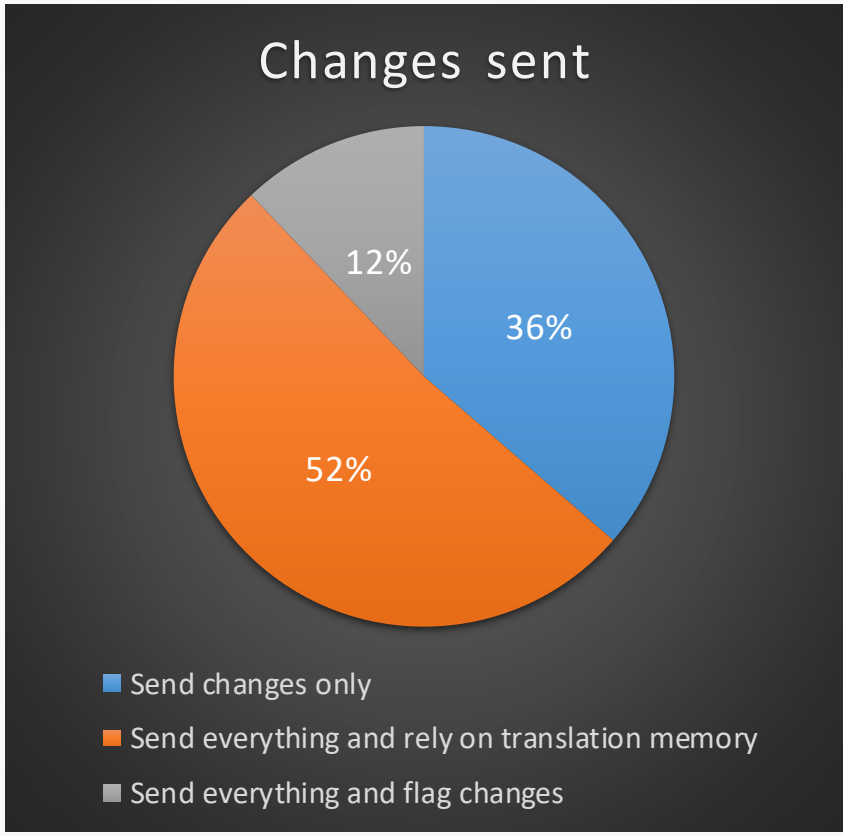
Create and maintain translation glossary	52%
Provide advice about writing for translation, terminology, taxonomy, and information model	48%
Translate strings in maps	45%
Properly place DITA tags (such as keys) as needed	42%
Translate topic metadata	32%
Translate attributes	26%
Other/Comment	26%
Check compliance with DTD (will it publish)	19%

"I would encourage everyone to develop a good working relationship with your service providers, it helps ease the common headaches associated with translation when communication flows freely between parties."

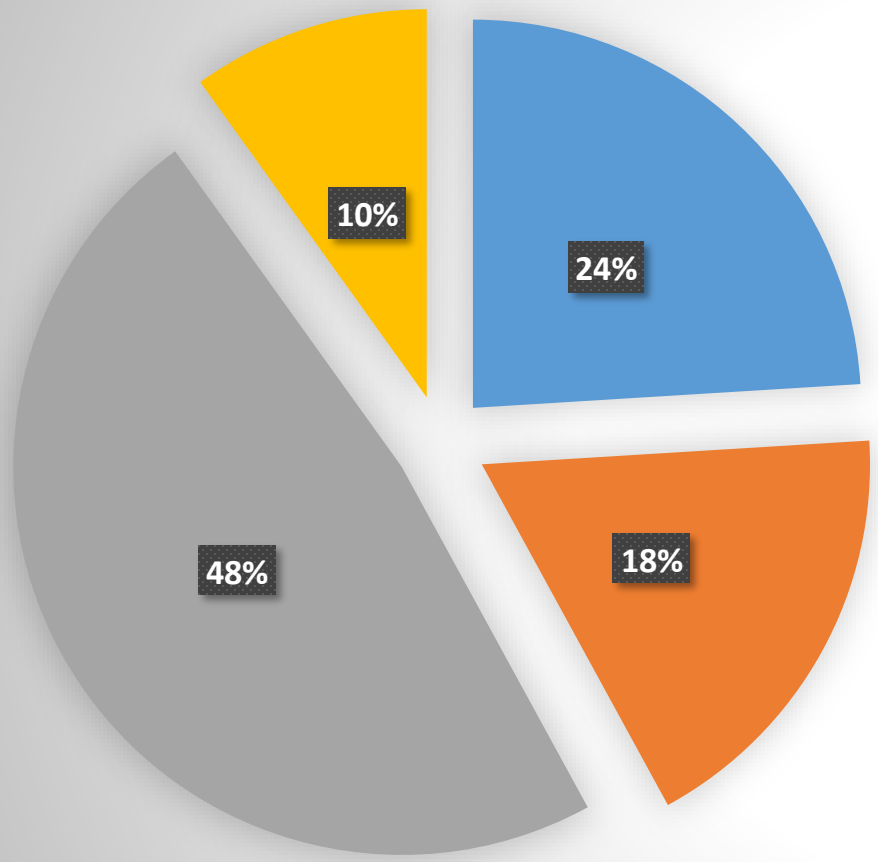
How do you send content for translation?







Which statement best matches your release process?



- Content for each language is released separately as it is completed.
- Content is not released until all language translations have been completed.
- Documentation for the primary language is released with the product. All other translations are held and released together.
- Languages are grouped and released together (for example, core languages, Asian languages, and so on).

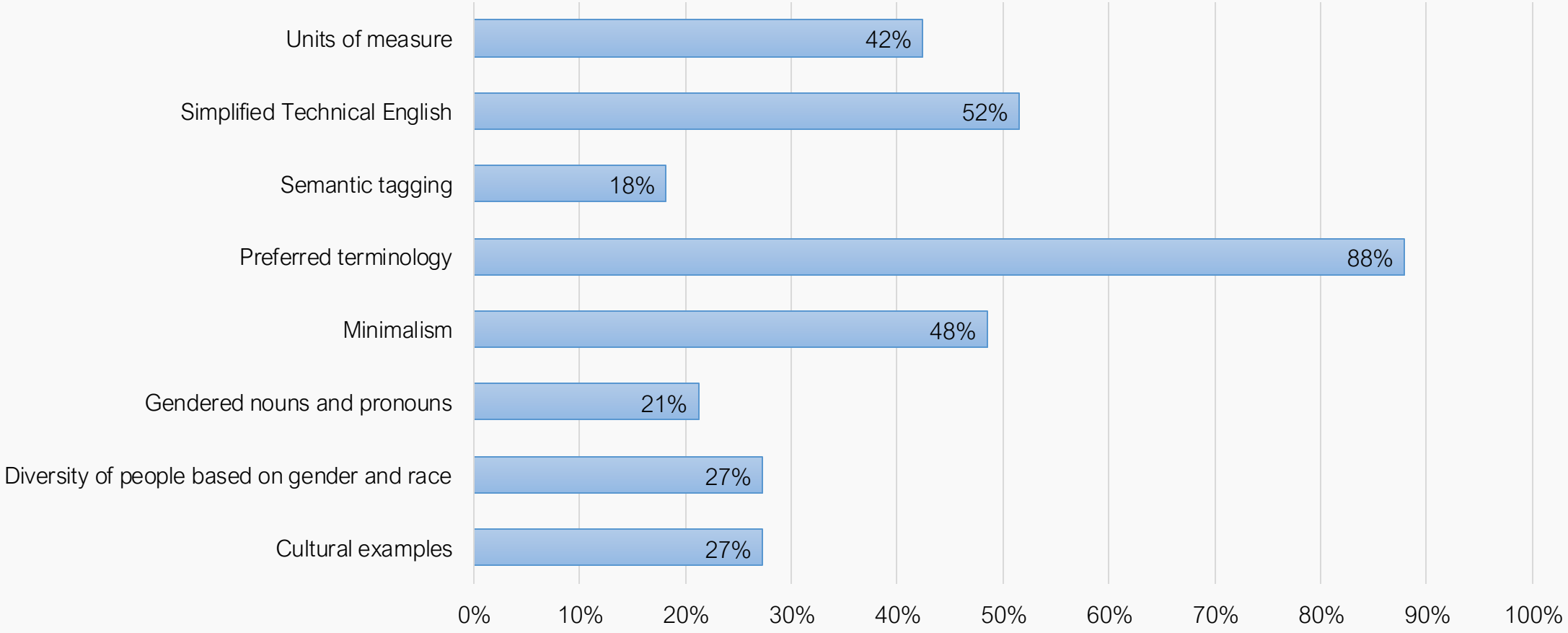
How much time do you allow for the translation process?

"Ha! With planning we align on delivery schedules. With no planning, we negotiate between when it's wanted and what's possible. "

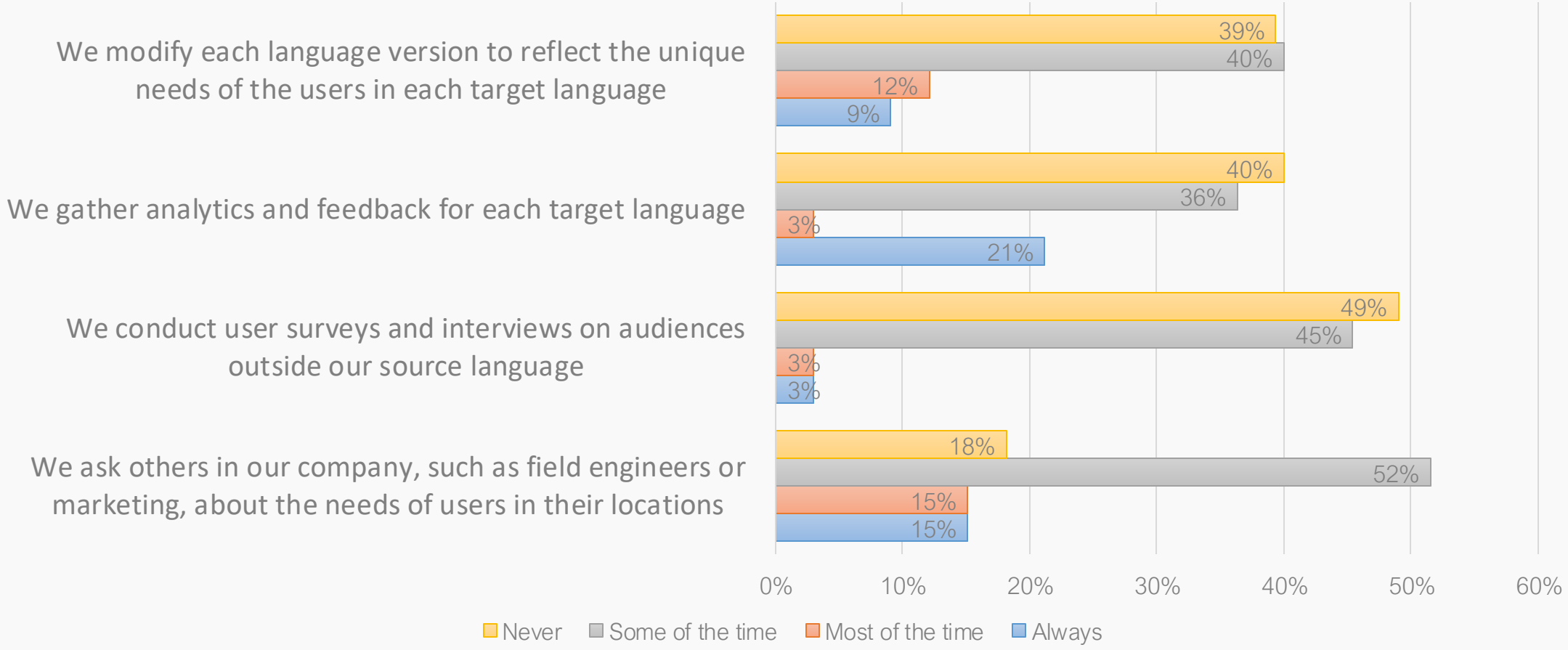
It depends…size of project, urgency, quality, planning (or lack of)

Answers vary from 3 days to months

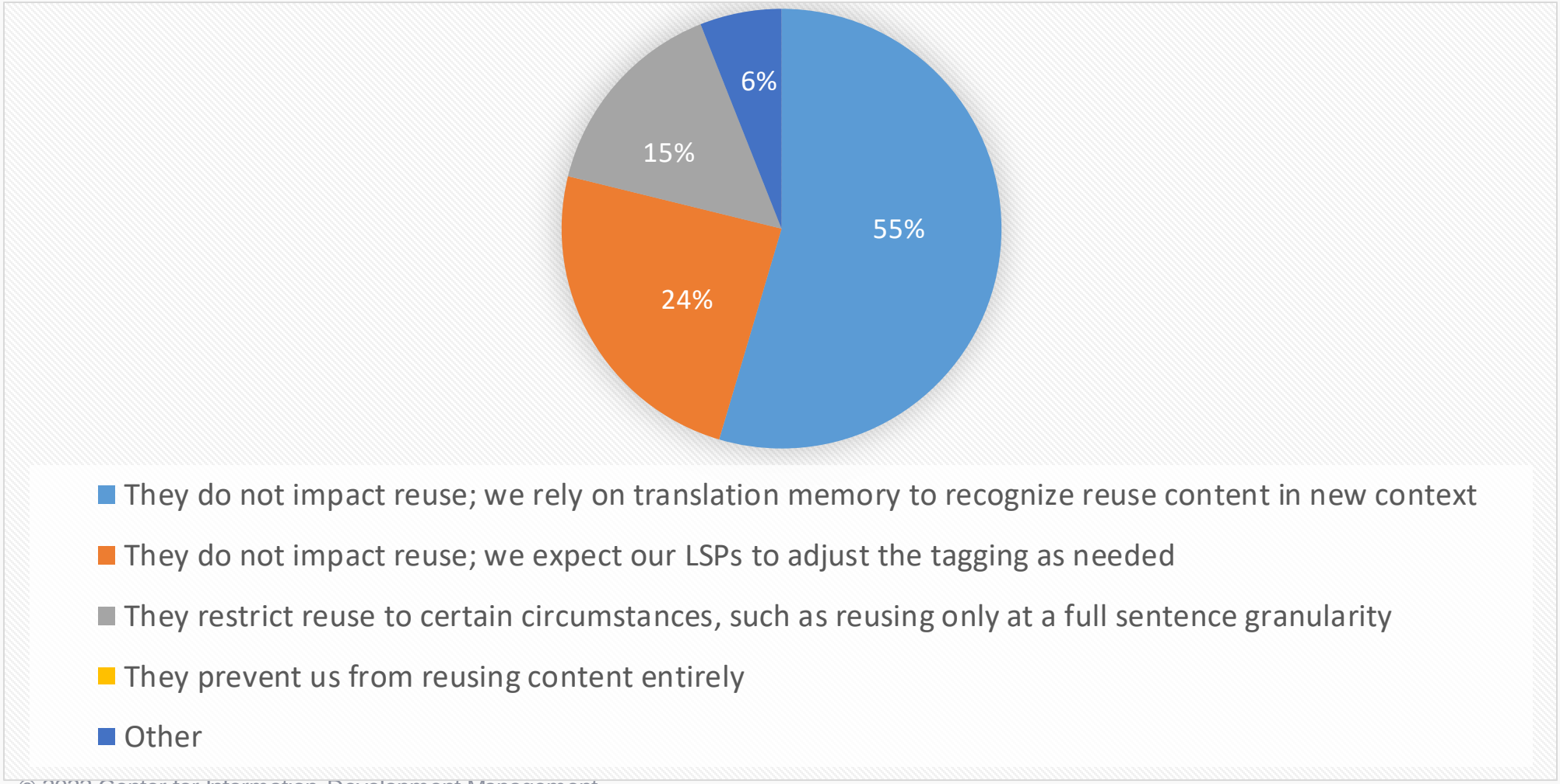
Which translation best practices are included in your info model or style guide?



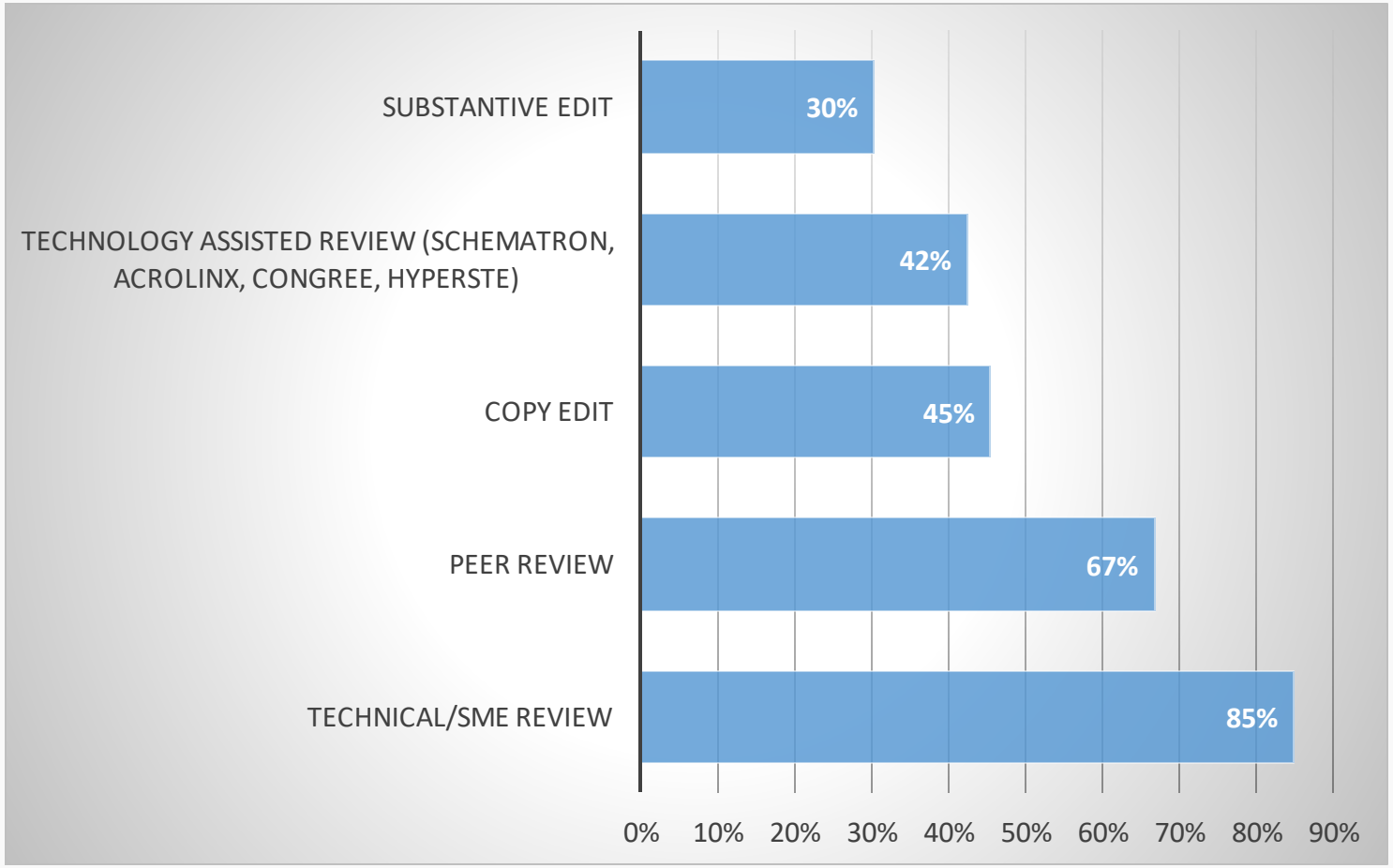
What types of user research do you for users within each target language?



How do translation considerations impact your reuse strategies?

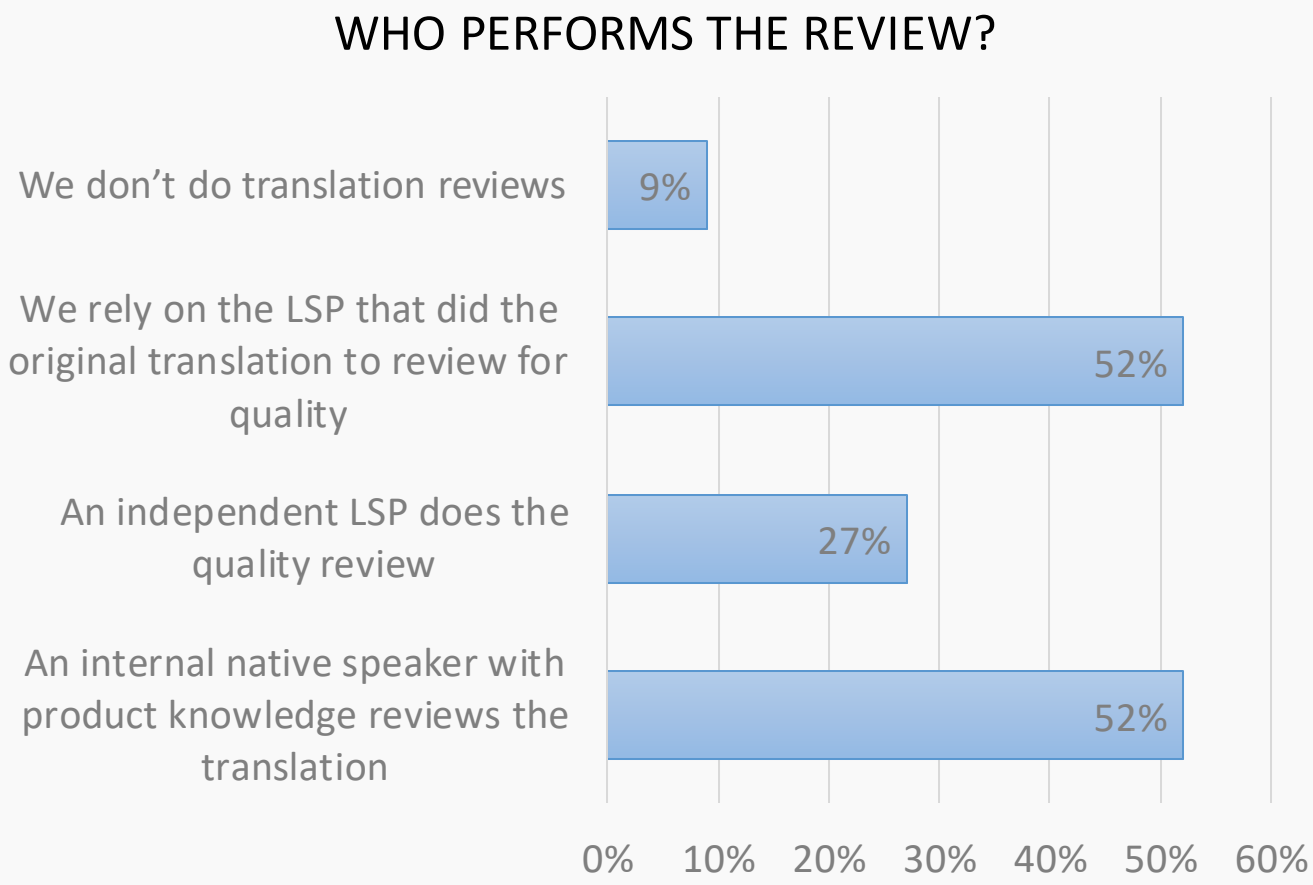


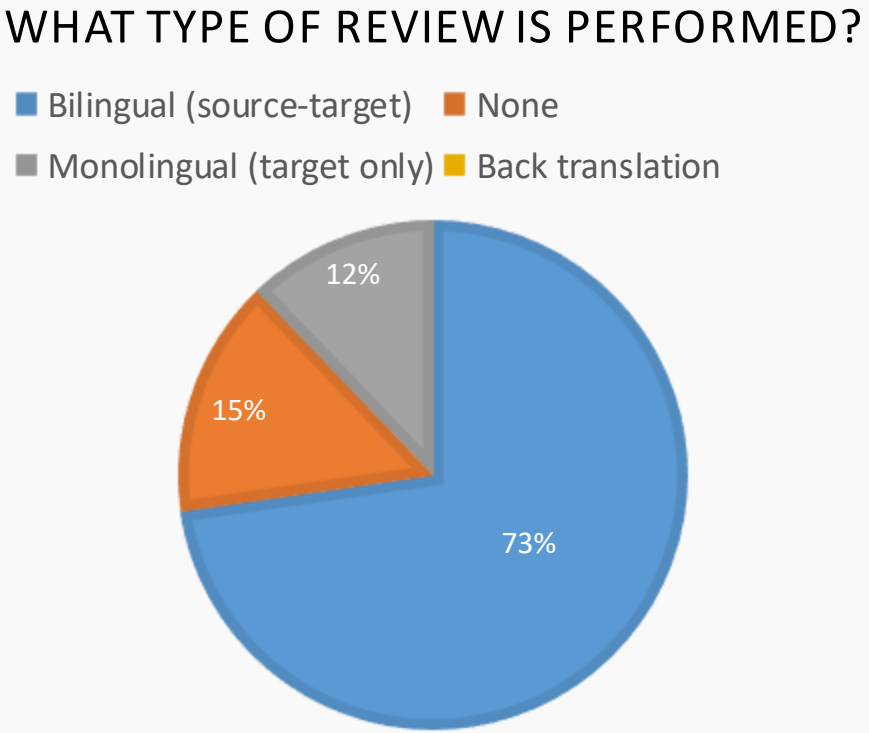
How do you review for content quality prior to translation?



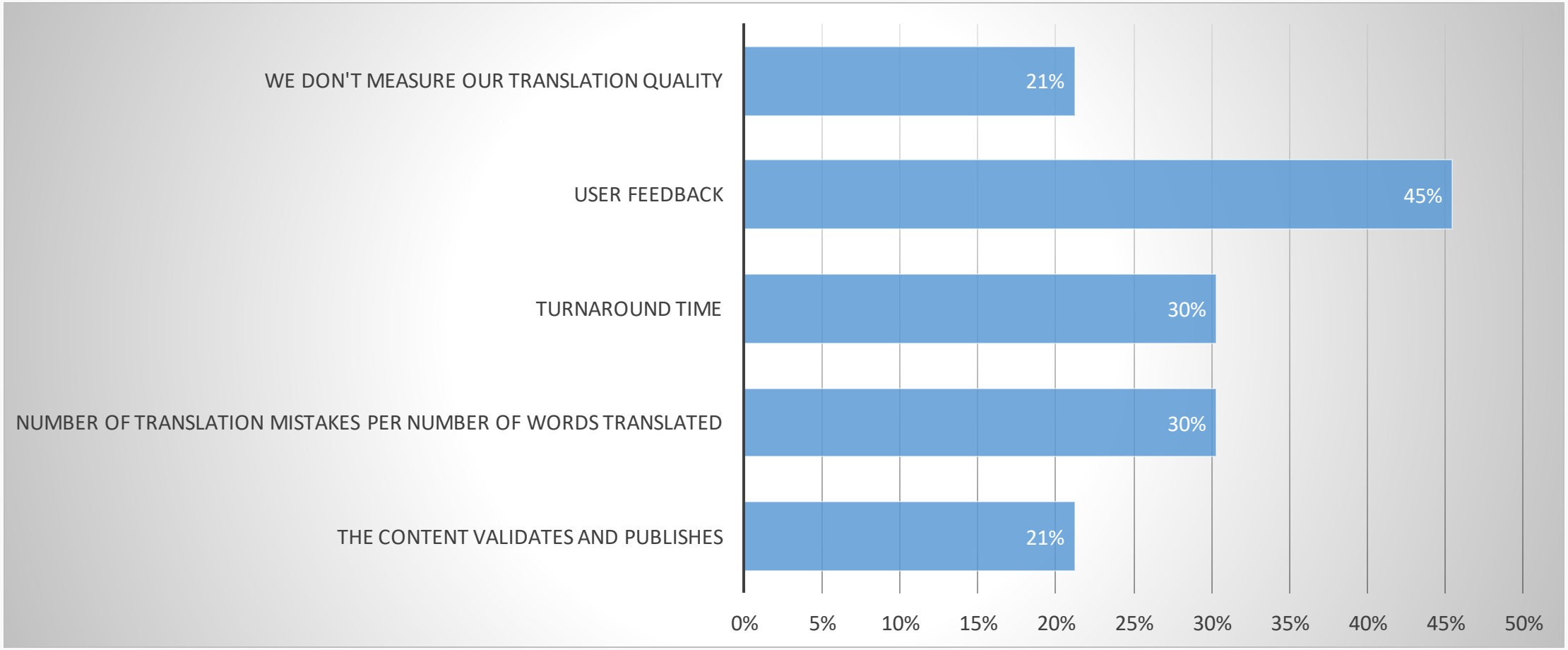
"The challenge is to persuade the content providers to allow enough time for translation and quality reviews. Constant education on cost and timing."

How do you review translated content for content quality?



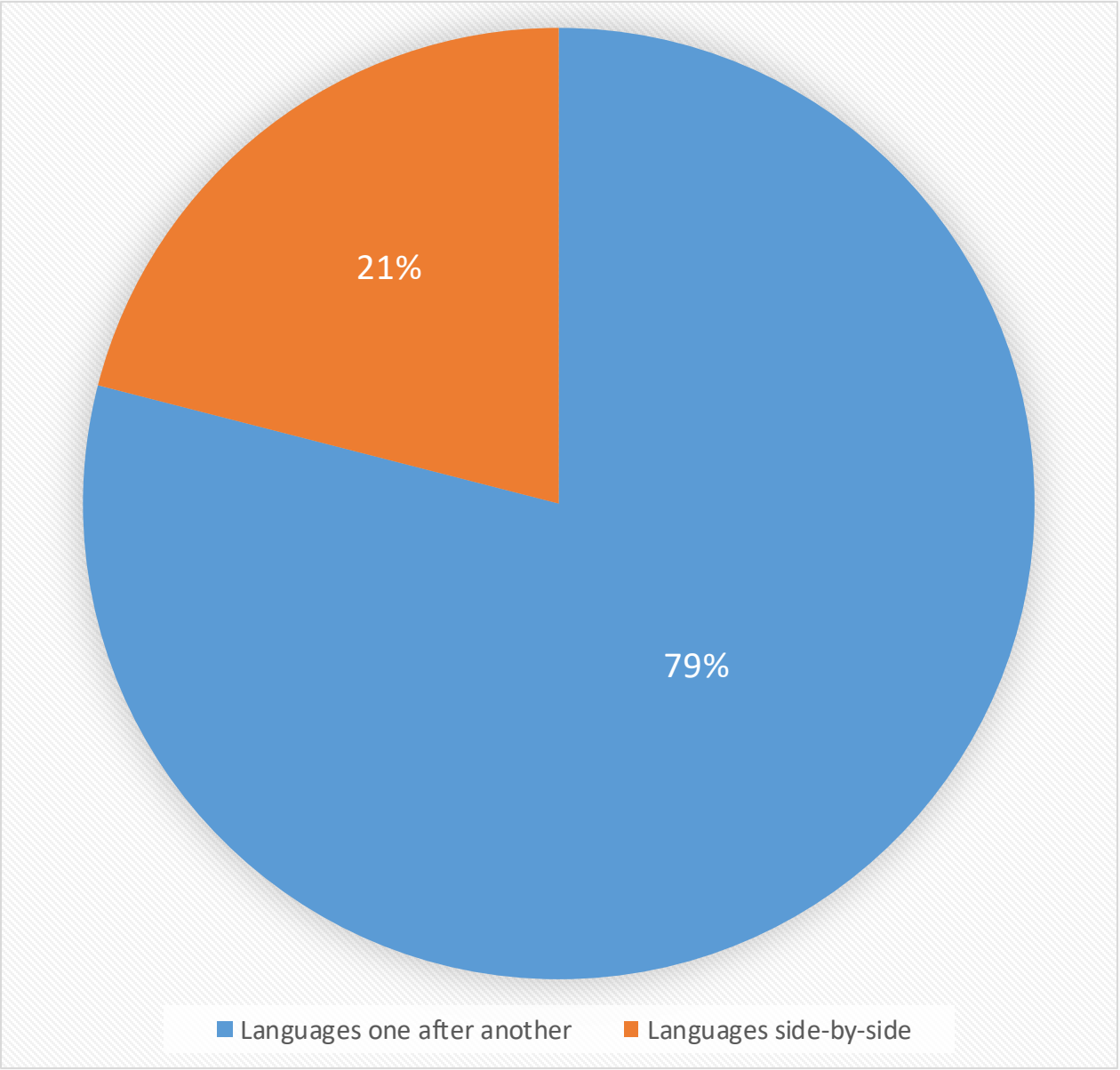


What KPIs do you measure for translation quality?

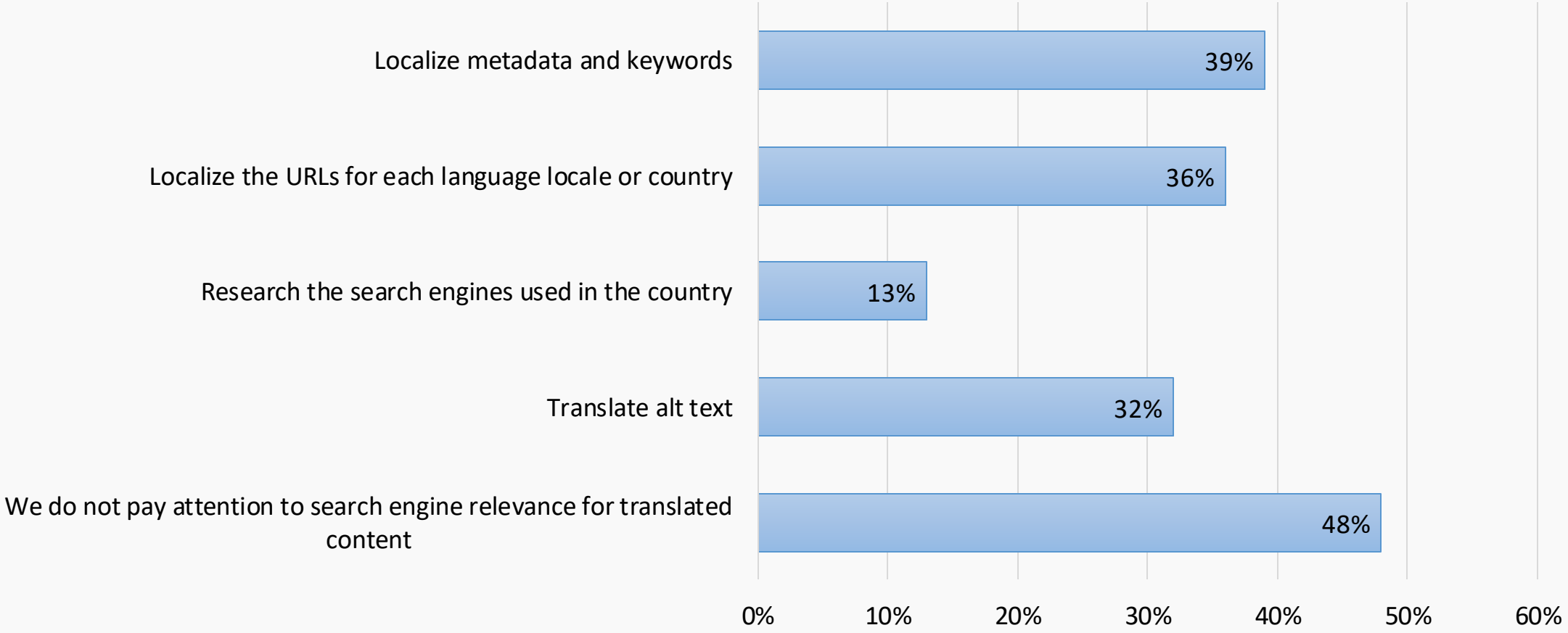


How do you publish translated content?

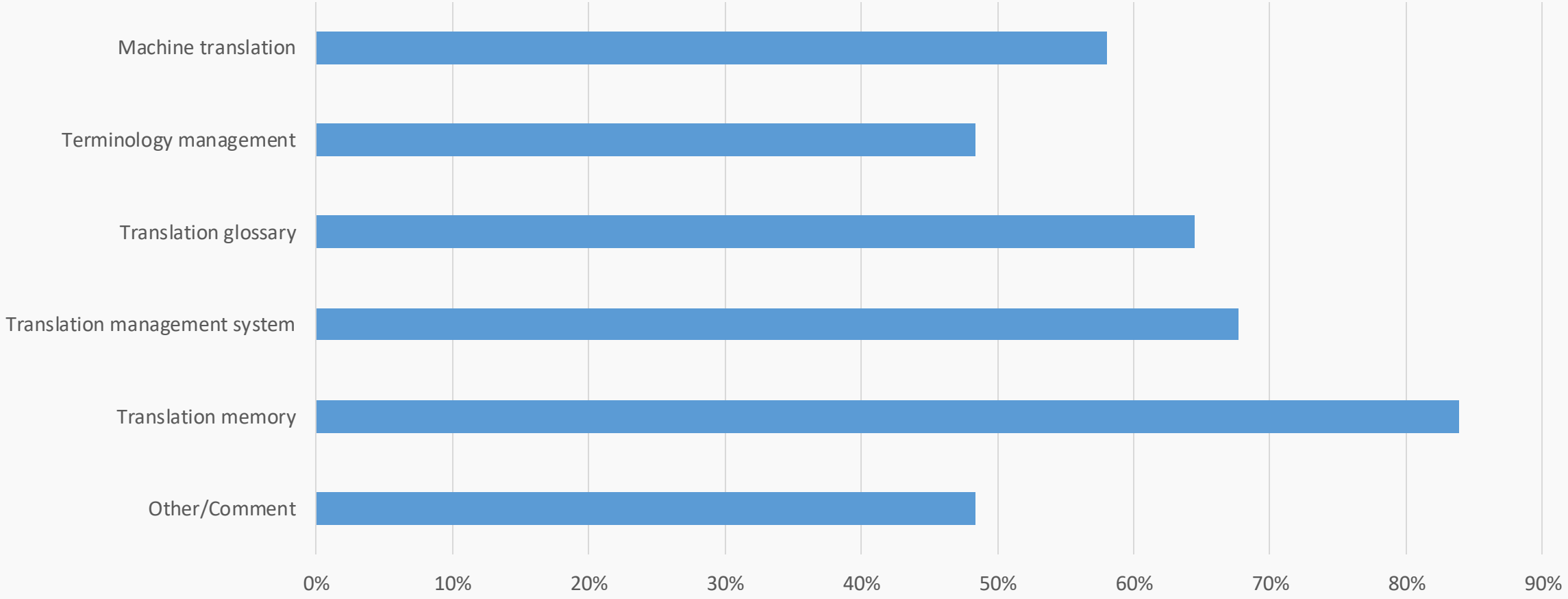
- 42% have 1 stylesheet for all languages
- 17% have 2 stylesheets
- 25% have 3 stylesheets



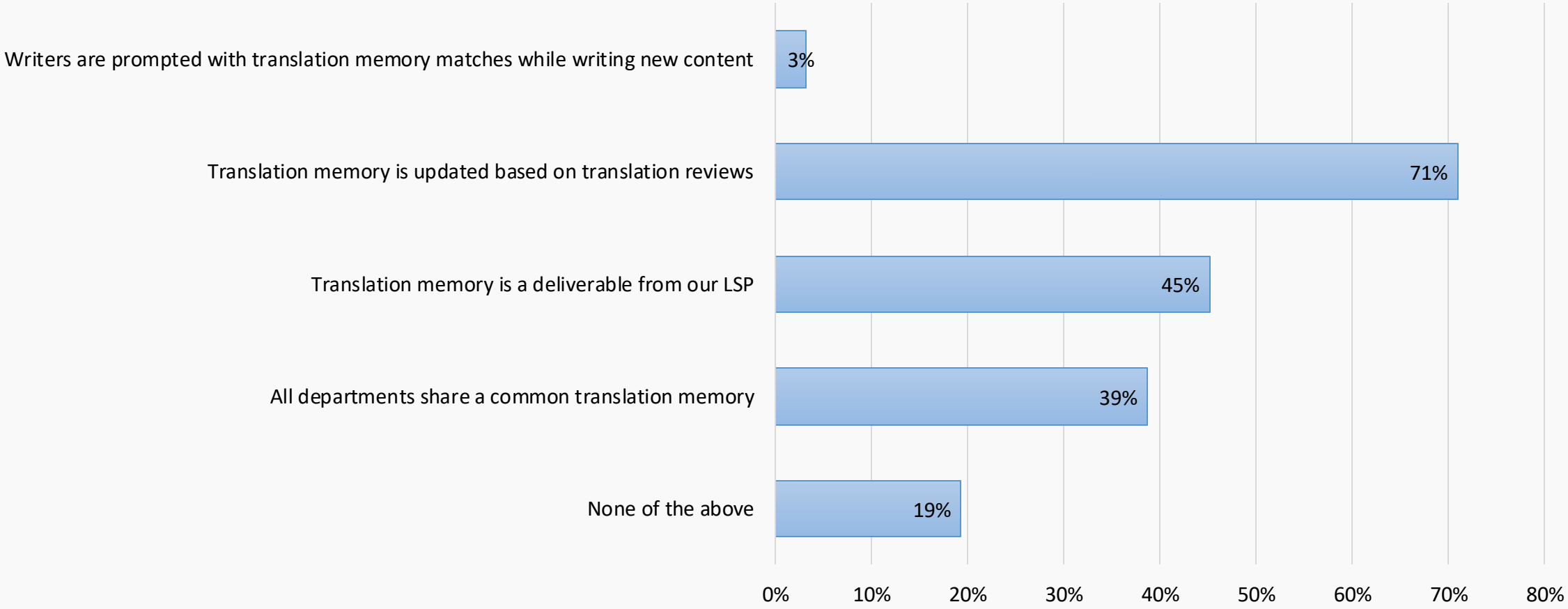
Which of the following do you do to improve search engine relevance for translated content?



Which of the following tools do you use?



How do you manage translation memory?



Conclusions

Translation and localization are a critical part of the documentation process for a vast majority of content providers.

There is much disparity in the type and amount of content translated, as well as how many languages are necessary.

Localization efforts lag behind translation. Content is not often modified to adjust to target user information or usability needs, especially in terms of findability.

Question time

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