



acrolinx case study

ROCKWELL AUTOMATION

Better, Faster, Cheaper. Rockwell Automation's Quest for Content Success

Number of users: 75

Content analyzed: **2 million words
per month**

ROCKWELL AUTOMATION



THE PROBLEM

As a global provider of industrial equipment, Rockwell Automation produces technical and marketing content for customers all over the world. Unfortunately, translating all of its content into as many as 17 different languages was historically both time-consuming and expensive, costing the company millions of dollars each year. With budget pressures looming, Rockwell Automation had to find a more cost-effective way of creating high-quality content and streamlining the localization of that content. In addition, efforts to edit content manually were fragmented and could not support all teams.



THE SOLUTION

Rockwell Automation knew that the key to managing its translation costs was to improve the quality of its source content, and to find a better way to manage its terminology. To make all of that happen in an easy and automated way, the company turned to Acrolinx's content optimization platform.

The thing about our organization is that if we decide that we're going to do something, we do it right. While it may take time to make the best decision, in the end we look for the right solution that meets the business need, that works for our employees, and that ultimately serves our customers. In this case, there was no doubt in our minds that Acrolinx was the best solution to meet our needs.

Kathleen Ruggeri

Manager of Information Architecture and Content Strategy for Technical Content in Global Sales and Marketing, Rockwell Automation



Rockwell Automation is a global provider of industrial automation equipment that's been serving the food and beverage, entertainment, and manufacturing industries, among others, for over 100 years. Like most companies, the Milwaukee-based business is always under pressure to produce more with less. For its technical and marketing communication teams, that meant not only keeping up with the growing demand for great content, but also making it available in multiple languages.

As an international leader with approximately 22,000 employees worldwide, creating and maintaining high-quality, consistent documentation has always been a top priority for Rockwell Automation. Given the global nature of the business, so has managing translation costs. And, considering that the company spends millions of dollars each year translating its content into as many as 17 different languages, it's not hard to understand why.

That's what ultimately led Rockwell Automation to upgrade its translation management system a few years back. In the process, the company realized that finding a better way to rationalize its terminology and improving the quality of its source content would be essential for more cost-effective translations. It also recognized that to make all of this happen, it would have to invest in some automation upstream of the translation process.

Enter Kathleen Ruggeri, Rockwell Automation's Manager of Information Architecture and Content Strategy for Technical Content in Global Sales and Marketing, one of the key managers tasked with solving this problem. "We needed to find a better, more efficient way to create and translate our content," Ruggeri said. "And when I came across an article about Acrolinx, I thought that I might have stumbled upon just the right solution."

The article was written by Val Swisher, the founder and CEO of Content Rules, and one of Acrolinx's implementation partners. Content Rules would go on to play an integral role in helping to bring Acrolinx to Rockwell Automation and roll it out successfully.

Over the next several years, Rockwell Automation examined its options and thought about how to best streamline its content operations. "The thing about our organization is that if we decide that we're going to do something, we do it right," explains Ruggeri. "While it may take time to make the best decision, in the end we look for the right solution that meets the business need, that works for our employees, and that ultimately serves our customers. In this case, there was no doubt in our minds that Acrolinx was the best solution to meet our needs."

As Ruggeri and her colleagues learned more about Acrolinx, it became clear that they had found the right software to address the company's pain points. Not only would it help Rockwell Automation automate many of its content creation processes, such as editing for grammar and style, it could also help its writers create better, more consistent content that would be easier and less expensive to translate. What sealed the deal, however, was that the software could also provide a much-needed terminology management solution for English-language terms.

Our writers like that the software integrates directly into the authoring tools that they're already using. And the Marketing Communication and Technical Communication Managers like that it's helping the writers become better and more consistent because they're learning from the platform and constantly improving as a result. That means better content and faster, more cost-effective translations.

Kathleen Ruggeri

Manager of Information Architecture and Content Strategy for Technical Content in Global Sales and Marketing, Rockwell Automation

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Rockwell Automation's Path to Acrolinx Adoption

Once Rockwell Automation decided to become an Acrolinx customer, Ruggeri and team worked with Content Rules to initiate a pilot program to start rolling out the software on a limited basis. They recruited a small team of writers and editors that spanned the company's marketing and technical communication groups. Then Content Rules prepared some basic training for them, and let them use Acrolinx for several months with the software's out-of-the-box settings and writing guidelines.

Taking this approach had several advantages.

First, it allowed them to obtain a lot of feedback about what worked well for Rockwell Automation's writers and editors, and what would require customization to align with the company's unique writing and terminology guidelines. All of this intel would later go to good use when they rolled out the software more broadly with custom rules and guidelines. It also helped justify that wider rollout to the rest of the Global Sales and Marketing organization because they had real data that they could point to about how Acrolinx was helping to improve Rockwell Automation's content.

The last, and perhaps greatest, advantage of the approach was that this group of early adopters transformed into a team of super users. That team ultimately served as ambassadors, acting as resources to the other writers who started using Acrolinx after them. Doing so meant that they were available to answer questions and provide support, while also helping build momentum and enthusiasm for others adopting the platform.

Another tactic that Rockwell Automation used to great success was turning one of its editing resources into a full-time Acrolinx admin, whose job is to help manage the software across the organization. That person is in charge of managing various aspects of Acrolinx, such as updating the terminology library, responding to questions, and ensuring that everything runs smoothly.

Rockwell Automation ultimately had a fairly large Acrolinx deployment, with 75 professionals using the platform across Global Sales and Marketing. Although there were many moving parts, Ruggeri, her team, and Swisher decided that their mantra was going to be “happy adoption,” and they did a great job of making that happen thanks to doing the necessary planning upfront.

“Implementing Acrolinx was a smooth, easy process,” Ruggeri notes. “Of course, the simultaneous implementation of a new translation management system certainly was a much greater challenge, and one that we were lucky to have Content Rules’ help with as well.”

Swisher attributes the successful implementation to being well organized and taking the time to customize the approach for Rockwell Automation’s specific situation. “This was a big deployment,” she says, “but it went extremely well thanks to the hard work and steady, consistent approach that we took. The fact that we were able to tailor the rollout for Rockwell Automation also helped a great deal.”

Acrolinx Gets Results

Today, Rockwell Automation checks more than 300 documents – the equivalent of about 2 million words – every month with Acrolinx. The company’s writers and editors in Global Sales and Marketing use Acrolinx diligently, and have seen significant improvements in their content as a result.

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Val Swisher

Founder and CEO, Content Rules

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One of the greatest advantages has been that with Acrolinx, Rockwell Automation has been able to institute automated terminology management. In the past, writers had to manually look up trademarks in a separate spreadsheet, and editors manually reviewed documents and corrected terminology. Today, Acrolinx helps ensure that all Global Sales and Marketing writers use the correct terminology and trademarks seamlessly, within whatever content authoring tool they are already using.

Thanks to this and the general improvements in content quality, the company has been able to reduce its translation costs. For example, Rockwell Automation has seen that there are 65 percent fewer flags on content created after Acrolinx was deployed compared to content created before Acrolinx was implemented. This is saving time and money in the translation process.

Ruggeri couldn't be happier. She and the writers and editors at Rockwell Automation feel like they've made an important investment that's helped make their team be more efficient and effective. In addition, the translation team now has better upstream partners in the larger content workflow.

“We're thrilled with the results we've gotten from Acrolinx so far,” Ruggeri says. “Our writers like that the software integrates directly into the authoring tools that they're already using. And the Marketing

Communication and Technical Communication Managers like that it's helping the writers become better and more consistent because they're learning from the platform and constantly improving as a result. That means better content and faster, more cost-effective translations."

The Companies

Rockwell Automation, Inc. (NYSE: ROK), the world's largest company dedicated to industrial automation and information, makes its customers more productive and the world more sustainable. Headquartered in Milwaukee, Wis., Rockwell Automation employs approximately 22,000 people serving customers in more than 80 countries.

Content Rules is an authorized Acrolinx reseller and professional services provider. Based in Silicon Valley, Content Rules Inc. provides consulting and professional services to assist companies with the entire content lifecycle. Client list ranges from new technology startups to Fortune 100 companies across the high-tech, life sciences, medical devices, and manufacturing sectors. Content development services include technical documentation, marketing collateral, and training courseware. Its consulting practice specializes in content strategy, structured authoring, new content delivery technologies, and global readiness. Learn more at contentrules.com.



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