

Re: Office 2004 German to Office 2008

Source: <http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Mac/microsoft.public.mac.office/2008-02/msg00019.html>

- *From:* John McGhie <john@xxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Fri, 01 Feb 2008 20:58:44 +0930
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Hi Tobias:

If you sweat your way through here: <http://www.officeformac.com/blog/> you will find various references to all the things they did to wrestle this thing to the ground. You'll need to go back as far as three years...

Of course, software companies are extremely secretive about "how" they do things, and what is "actually" in the code.

I understand that the majority of Microsoft Office for Mac has been migrated to/re-written for the X-code development environment.

But I certainly wouldn't claim that there is "no" crufty old C++ hanging around in it. Particularly in this version when they were really struggling to hit the go-live date, they were absolutely rigid about "if it works at all, leave it alone..."

Previously, a "localised" application had to be edited by developers in the Microsoft localisation centres scattered around the world. They had to trawl through the code itself.

Now, the "language" is all externalised into strings files. They ship the strings files off to translators (in something that looks remarkably like a spreadsheet). The translators translate the strings and send it back. The Make File plugs the translated strings back into the application.

It's actually close to exactly the same process as they use on the Windows side. Everything is set up to use a Common Language Runtime, the way Office 2007 does.

However, for Office 2007, you can buy a Multi Language User Interface version, which WILL switch user interface languages on the fly. It costs extra, and is only marketed to multinational companies that need it. I work for Alcan, which has offices all over the world. When my co-worker logs on to my computer, his applications come up in French, mine in English. Same server, same applications exactly.

I understand that Mac Office is engineered to do that also, in this version; but they didn't have time to walk the final mile and produce the MUI

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application that actually performs the switch dynamically.

All the plumbing is there: but getting it all tested and debugged across 29 languages was a bridge too far for this release.

So the reason the other language versions come out a little after the English one is purely the time taken to translate the strings. Particularly for the user interface, it makes sense to wait for the English version to finalise and sign-off before they begin translation.

Can you imagine the version control issues inherent in tracking updates as they hit hundreds of thousands of strings across 29 different languages?

I don't have to: I used to work in the Translation Editing Section for Fujitsu :-). They tell me I will be OK if I just keep taking the medication...

Cheers

On 31/01/08 10:34 PM, in article towb-7B5D31.14043731012008@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, "Tobias Weber" <towb@xxxxxxxx> wrote:

In article <C3C7FAA9.F32D%john@xxxxxxxxxxxx>, John McGhie <john@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

All the Windows Office products are done that way.

Apparently I'm not up to speed

Mmmm... Not any more :-). That's one of the problems ? on OS X in Universal Binary they can't easily steal code from the Windows side. That's why this

I bet most of it is still crufty C(++) identical for both platforms

version was so expensive, and took so long.

Could you point me to some coverage on this?

They have :-). The localisation process now runs off external files that are not part of the executable code.

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Only now?

I meant the way things are organized rather than the technical side.

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