What's new in 2019?

2018 has been a steady year for our business, with most of our revenue coming from existing clients.

It is fair to say that business confidence in the UK is suffering due to the extended uncertainty caused by Brexit.

So far, this uncertainty has not had a major impact on the business areas in which we operate. The key business and market drivers of growth in the UK market remain robust. We look forward to what new opportunities this will bring.

The Global Market

The UK market for technical communication remains robust, despite the uncertainty over Brexit, which has dominated political and economic discourse over the past three years. In 2018 we noted an increase in UK businesses seeking funding for global projects. Regulatory projects remain an area where both private and the public sector continue to need expertise from technical communication specialists.

Germany has been the powerhouse of Europe, but experienced a recent slowdown. The other major European economies—France, Italy and Spain—are also suffering. Growth in the US and China remains strong, with some concerns of potential slow-down in these markets.

International companies, in particular those based in the US, have experienced strong growth. US companies have a strategic interest in the UK, and are targeting companies operating in the financial and government sectors. US companies are interested in using a local supplier who understands the local market and can supply communication services adapted to this market.

Brexit Uncertainly

With the uncertainty over trading arrangements with our European colleagues, UK companies are increasingly targeting solutions towards the fast-growing BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China), in order to gain entry into these vast, lucrative markets.

We foresee a continued demand for technical documentation solutions to support this expansion.

Financial services

The need for technical communication services in the financial and legal sector remains strong. In addition to customer-facing instructions, organisations need documentation to cover their internal IT infrastructure, systems policies and disaster recovery plans.

One example of this is the need for good business and technical documentation to meet regulatory requirements, such as the Markets in Financial Instruments Directive 2 (MIFID 2) and the CASS regulations.

CTC Initiatives during 2018

We are continually seeking to improve the services we offer to clients and increase our involvement in the community. Below are some of our initiatives during 2018.

Technology and trends

In 2018 CTC invested in updating our applications and equipment, and looked at new technology trends:

- **Web design trends** – the explosion of the Smartphone and tablet market has meant that technical communicators need to rethink how they deliver information to customers. Responsive design enables content to be optimised dynamically to the end-user's device. Technology such as parallax scrolling enables delivery of engaging and dynamic content.
- **Single sourcing, multi-channel publication** – applications, standards and tools that enable information chunking and multi-channel publication from a single source content, such as XML and DITA, continue to offer a powerful means of delivering just-in-time content to customers in the way they want it. Off-the-shelf tools such as the Adobe Communications Suite enable implementation of responsive, multi-channel content from a single source.
- **Integrated, dynamic content** – applications and software are now available to enable the delivery of integrated dynamic content within standard technical writing publications (e.g., embedded video and demos within PDF manuals).
- **Content management systems** – we've explored a number of systems for managing content

Move to cloud-based services

Cloud-based services have now matured to the point where they offer a reliable and cost-effective solution for a small business such as CTC.

We can now access a range of business services directly from the cloud, from virtual meetings and teleconferencing, online calendars, digital asset management and file storage, to software and applications.

Charitable Contributions

CTC is proud to contribute to charities such as Oxfam, World Vision and the British Red Cross.

Our charitable donations programme enables clients to nominate a charity of their choice and we will donate 5% of our income from their project to their nominated charity.

Graduate Training Programme

In 2019 we may be reintroducing our graduate training programme, to enable potential technical communicators to gain entry into this profession.

More details about this program to follow.

Forecast and objectives for 2019

We believe that 2019 will be a good year for technical communication services in the UK. We await the outcome of Brexit to see what impact this will have on businesses in our sector.

To remain competitive, CTC will need to continue to offer a high quality service at affordable and competitive rates. We are also seeking to expand our partnership efforts, in particular with those organisations that offer complimentary services to our own.

Our website remains our main advertising portal for customers. Our current website needs revamping and work is underway to develop a new look and feel, a new company logo and a fully responsive design. We will also be developing a new set of company collateral.

CTC is hoping to expand operations into Europe, the US and South Africa. More details about this and other developments in our next newsletter.

Warren Singer
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