



The 2026 NIMDZI



The size and state of the **LANGUAGE INDUSTRY** | Including the ranking of the **100 LARGEST PROVIDERS**

The 2026
NIMDZI
100

The size and state
of the global
language industry



ABOUT US

Who we are

The language services industry is growing, and there is no end in sight. For your company to optimize competitive positioning and be ahead of the game, you require insights – and that is where we come in. We are a market research and international consulting company made up of analysts, consultants, LSP experts, and researchers with diverse language industry backgrounds. But we are all connected with one united goal – helping our clients succeed.

And yes, we know the industry.

What we do

With a global team management approach, we work directly with you, learning the ins and outs of your business so that we can help to customize and tailor your commercial needs on the global stage. When you localize your message to prospective global customers, you reach them on a much deeper level and that only means one thing: customers are engaged and interested. We help you to better understand and connect with your demographics.

We build actionable insights and reports that cater specifically to your products and services. We provide the window into the ever-changing translation and localization industries. Working with us means building relationships with influential players – an essential part of penetrating your market.

The future lies directly in the global market. We get inside the head of the localization users and focus on factors that are important to them. We research. We report. We advise. We direct. We guide.

We're here to help

Looking to move into the global market? Want to establish the ultimate customer experience? Need some insights into how to adapt your products and services to have the look and feel of your target market? Dreaming of creating an ultimate user experience – one that will help to advance your marketing strategy and drive your business goals? We're here to help.

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Table of CONTENTS

TL;DR	08
State of the Language Industry	13
Striving for Stability	14
The AI Revolution - a Double-Edged Sword	14
Growth or No Growth, That Is the Question	16
On Growth Sectors	16
Optimism and Projections	17
New Product and Service Launches	18
Rankings	19
Top 100 Ranking	20
Just Shy	29
Watchlist	29
New Arrivals	30
Market	31
Market Sizing	32
Revenue Concentration	33
Growth by Ranking Segment	34
Most Productive Companies	35
Fastest Growing Companies	36
Growth of Select Providers	37
Women-Run, Women-Owned	38
Top Services and Verticals	40
Business Challenges	42
The Interpreting Sector	44
China and Emerging Markets	46
Staffing and Talent	48

Money	49
Inflation and Economic Pressures	50
Changes in Pricing Models	51
Growth Services and Verticals	52
M&A in 2025	54
M&A Outlook for 2026	56
Atlas	57
Regional Trends in 2025	58
Where the Largest Providers Are	59
Growth and Market Share by Geography	60
Where the Clients Are	62
Change in Demand	64
Tech Trends	65
Language Technologies and AI	66
The Build-or-Buy Challenge	67
Industry Effects of Generative AI in 2025	68
Generative AI Effect on 2026 Budget	70
Data-for-AI - Sector Analysis	71
Machine Translation - Sector Analysis	71
Translation Management - Sector Analysis	72
Multimodal Language Technologies - Sector Analysis	73
The Human Aspect in the AI Age	74
Appendix	76
How We Create the N100	76
Glossary	77
Infographic and Tables Index	78

TL;DR

No time to read the full report but still want to stay up to date? We've got you covered. Below is an executive summary of the main findings from this year's analysis.

Macroeconomic Influences

- ◇ Despite market hesitation, most language industry providers expect their revenue to increase in 2026, maintaining industry optimism. Many leaders view current artificial intelligence (AI) disruptions as a unique opportunity to consolidate and mature a highly fragmented market.
- ◇ Geopolitical shifts – including United States (U.S.) budget freezes, English-only rhetoric, and trade tariffs that devalued the U.S. dollar – have caused public-sector spending delays and severe margin losses for international vendors.
- ◇ Structural adjustments and cost-cutting are accelerating, with many companies heavily downsizing traditional in-house linguistic and project management staff (sometimes by 20% to 25%) to offset inflation and adapt to the threefold productivity increases brought by AI.
- ◇ The global trade war is reducing some direct cross-border product volumes, but it is simultaneously opening new localized trade pathways across the Asia-Pacific region, driving fresh demand for new language pairs.

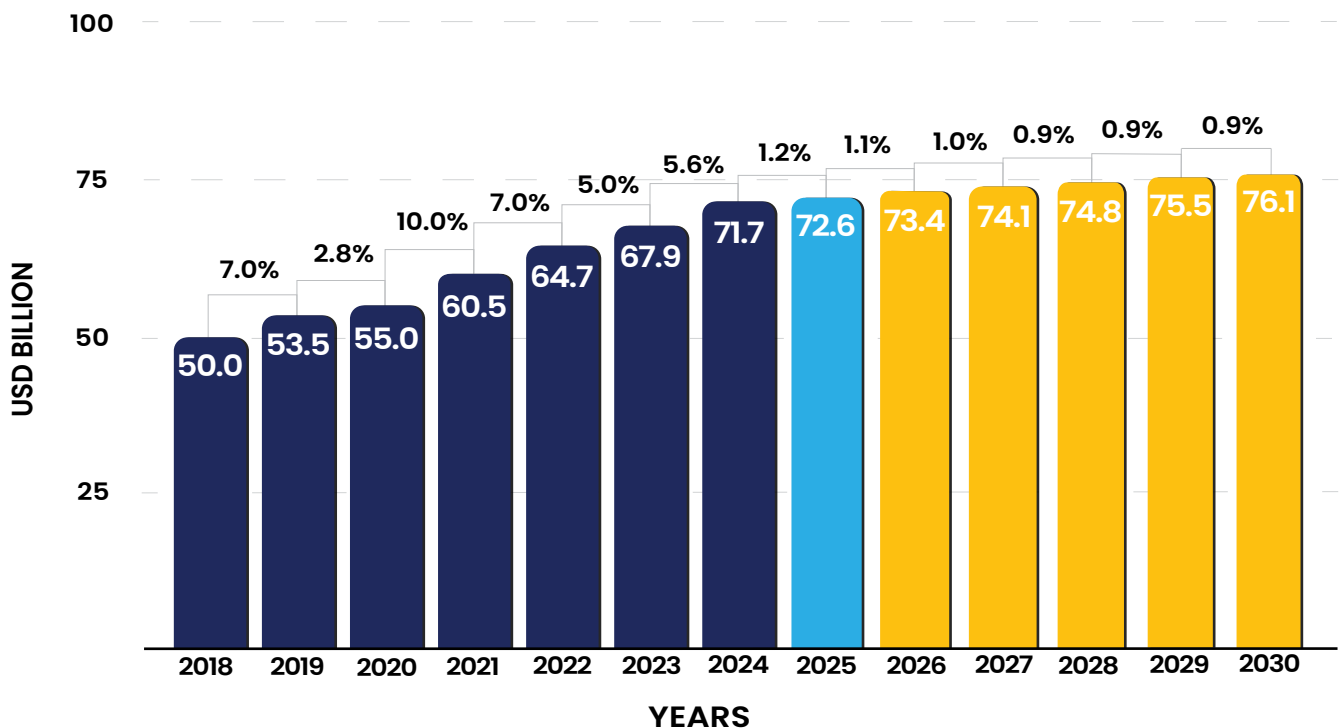
Market Size and Growth Projection

- ◇ The industry's rapid transformation in the age of AI has prompted us to update ranking qualifiers. As such, companies like DeepL, Phrase, Smartling, and XTM International deserve a seat on our rankings. We expect that as the span of services and technologies offered by language industry actors expands – such as with data services or AI dubbing – the list of areas in our market analysis and providers in our ranking will keep increasing.
- ◇ In addition, non-traditional language industry companies like Uber, Shopify, and Canva have claimed a stake in the language industry by offering language technologies and/or services for years now, representing a less transparent market share that is growing mostly out of sight.
- ◇ The language industry reached an estimated USD 72.6 billion in 2025 and is projected to grow to USD 73.4 billion in 2026. We project a linear growth in the near future and a less than 1.0% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) afterwards, reaching USD 76.1 billion by 2030. A parallel 'optimistic' model is projected to reach \$96.9 billion by 2030.

Market Size and Growth Projection (continued)

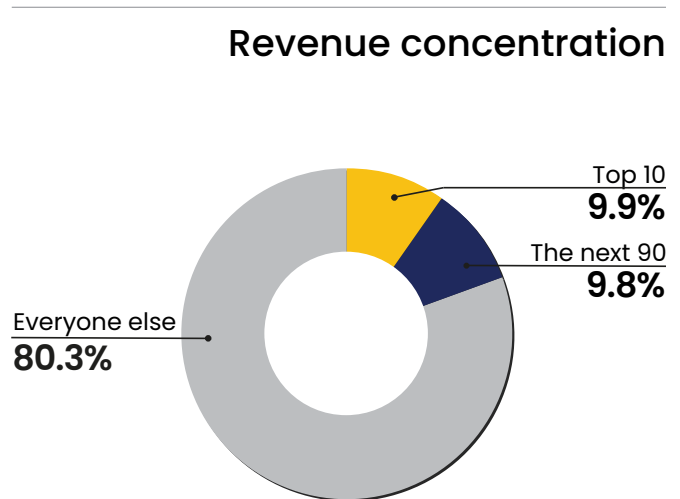
- ◇ Currency fluctuations such as the U.S. dollar devaluing significantly against the Euro in 2025 caused severe margin losses that EU-based providers catering for the U.S. market struggled to absorb. Conversely, the same foreign exchange rate movements somewhat inflate the non-USD based revenues of all providers in our conversions for the market size estimation and rankings.
- ◇ The industry remains highly fragmented, with the top 100 making up 19.8% of the total industry size in 2025.
- ◇ 52 of the top 100 largest language providers in the world reported various degrees of growth, 23 even realizing double-digit percentage growth, fewer than in 2024. 23 providers had negative growth, of them six had double-digit percentage losses, more than in 2024.
- ◇ The then fastest-growing companies include tech-first platforms such as Smartling and GienTech, alongside interpreting providers, including Propio Language Services and Equiti.

Language industry market growth 2018–2025 and forecast 2026–2030



Regional Growth & Market Share

- ◇ Of the top 100 language providers, 42 are headquartered in Europe and 34 in North America. Companies from Asia total 17. Oceania hosts 7 of the top players.
- ◇ Growth of the 100 largest providers was focused on Asia (7.2%) and North America (6.0%), followed by meager growth in Europe (0.7%) and Oceania (0.2%).
- ◇ North America is responsible for USD 30.6 billion of all services acquired in 2025. Services rendered to Europe were worth USD 25.5 billion, Asia USD 12.6 billion, Africa USD 0.4 billion, and the Middle East made up USD 1.1 billion of the entire market demand. Oceania and South America count for a market share of USD 2.4 billion combined.



Money and the Business Environment

- ◇ Proprietary AI and data services – including (but not exclusively) data curation, prompt engineering, and custom large language model (LLM) integration – accounted for the greatest areas of revenue growth and margin protection in 2025.
- ◇ Interpreting continues to be a massive growth driver, largely impervious to AI replacement in high-stakes scenarios, while machine interpreting (MI) keeps finding new market opportunities where human services are unaffordable.
- ◇ Growth verticals remain those with traditionally large capital flows and strict compliance requirements – such as life sciences, healthcare, defense, financial, and legal sectors. These regulated environments still mandate expert-in-the-loop human oversight, shielding them from full AI automation.
- ◇ Intense margin compression and client demands for drastic cost reductions (sometimes expecting cuts of up to 75% via AI) are the most critical business challenges. This is forcing language providers to abandon traditional per-word pricing in favor of platform access fees, SaaS licensing, and hourly productivity models.
- ◇ Structural vulnerabilities have been exposed in the mid-market. Providers that are heavily reliant on public-sector contracts and inbound requests for proposals (RFPs) experienced revenue drops due to tightened government spending. Conversely, the top-tier segment continues aggressive mergers and acquisitions (M&A).

Mergers and Acquisitions

- ◇ 2025 shifted the industry into a definitive buyer's market for those with capital. A staggering 60% of respondents from the Top 100 language industry providers are actively looking to buy, driven by a desire to acquire specialized AI capabilities, secure data pipelines, and dominate the interpreting sector – all amidst plummeting multipliers.
- ◇ A capital-intensive divide is widening. Large, tech-forward firms are capturing market share through proprietary AI ecosystems and M&A, leaving resource-strapped smaller agencies unable to keep pace with necessary innovation.
- ◇ The market narrative is shifting from “growth at any multiple” to disciplined cash generation. The transfer of Lionbridge from H.I.G. Capital to KKR reflects investor preference for predictable EBITDA, strong free cash flow, and low capital intensity over aggressive, and often volatile, top-line expansion.
- ◇ Leading players are accelerating IP-led positioning through targeted acquisitions and strategic partnerships. TransPerfect's use of Unbabel's LLM stack, RWS's moves with Papercup and Cohere (Language Weaver Pro), Centific's partnership with Amazon Web Services, and Sorenson's investments in AI sign language signal a shift toward owning or strategic partnering for differentiated technology layers.

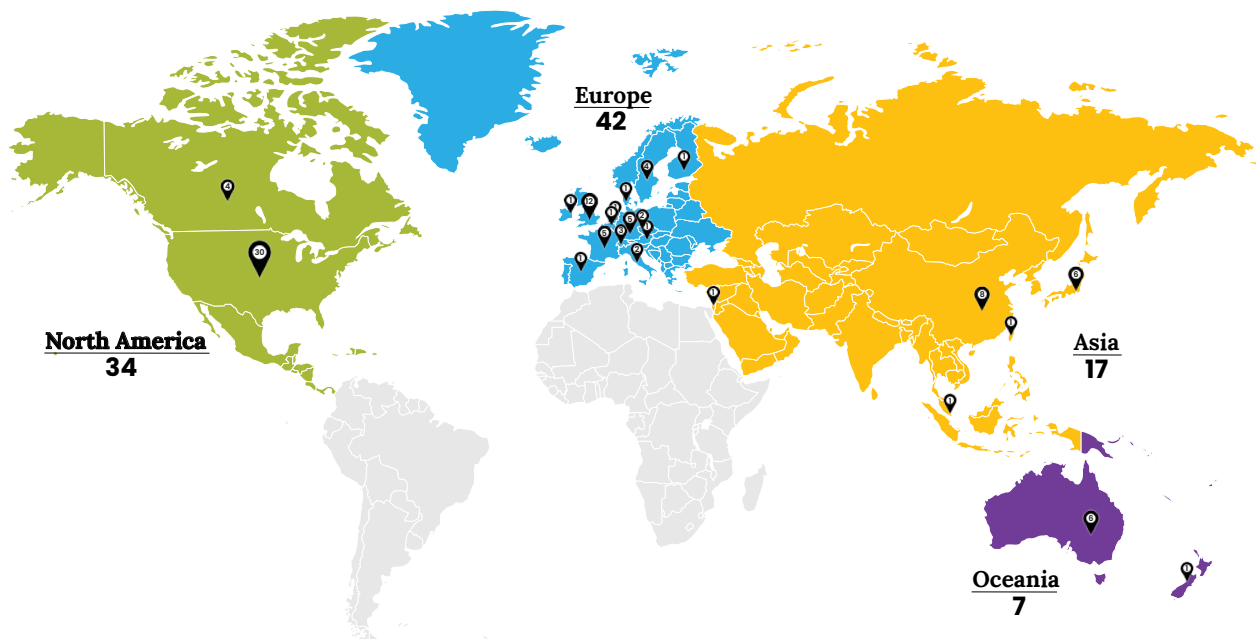
Other Key Trends

- ◇ Women owned, founded, or otherwise led 18% of the 100 largest language industry companies in 2025. This remains significantly higher than the Fortune 500 at 11.0% and the S&P 500 at 9.6%.
- ◇ A mere 11.0% of surveyed language companies report having a strong technology focus. Developing custom LLM integrations and proprietary platforms requires massive capital, leaving smaller, under-resourced providers severely disadvantaged against tech-native competitors.
- ◇ 2026 will be characterized by a surge in agentic solutions. These tools move beyond static workflows toward autonomous decision-making and multimodal processing, forcing traditional translation management systems (TMS) to evolve into unified data platforms and AI-powered localization hubs.
- ◇ AI dubbing and real-time voice translation are seeing wider adoption in low-risk environments like YouTube. However, high-profile content still requires scaled hybridization, where humans arbitrate identity, tone, and cultural nuance.
- ◇ Enterprise focus has pivoted toward AI-first engineering, transferring decision-making power to CTOs. This has resurfaced the Build-vs-Buy dilemma, fueled by vibe coding and open-source personal AI agents that allow organizations to rapidly prototype in-house tools.

Challenges and Actions

- ◇ Overall staffing levels dropped by less than 5.0% over the course of 2025 as the nature of rapid automation has contributed to the cutting of linguists. Nevertheless, 18.0% of companies report a shortage of tech talent, 27.6% report shortages in linguists, and 23.9% indicate a crunch in attracting interpreting talent.
- ◇ Experienced linguists are fleeing the mind-numbing task of post-editing, while AI consumes the entry-level work young translators need to build skills. Language providers must invest to rebrand roles as AI conductors to retain the high-level experts required for complex validation.
- ◇ Language industry providers are battling the IKEA-ization of localization, where buyers favor the speed of AI output to reduce dependency and slash budgets. Providers must now act as consultants, defending the necessity of human oversight against the liability risks of AI hallucinations.
- ◇ Large providers are significantly more optimistic about 2026, as they possess the capital and customer base to validate AI implementations. Smaller providers face greater risk, as AI experimentation is budget-intensive and requires a high volume of data to refine.
- ◇ The traditional price per word (PPW) metric is becoming increasingly impractical in an AI-driven workflow. To stay profitable, providers must transition reluctant procurement departments toward SaaS-style licensing, platform access fees, and hourly productivity models.
- ◇ In times of austerity, diversification can provide respite and open up new revenue generating opportunities. Order volumes are down more in 2025 than they were in 2024, indicating a revenue crisis.
- ◇ Time spent with clients to discuss shifts in expectations and the role of linguists in AI-centric workflows is one of the most valuable investments providers can make in 2026.

Where the largest language providers are



01

**STATE OF THE
LANGUAGE
INDUSTRY**

In 2025

Striving for Stability

If recent years were defined by AI uncertainties, the current landscape can be characterized as a period of profound adaptation and reorganization. The rapid surfacing of LLMs, reasoning models, and agentic AI has made previous predictions obsolete, placing language technologies in the center of the current paradigm shift. Whereas 2024 companies were primarily occupied with comprehending the capabilities of generative AI, 2025 was a year of restructuring, process optimization, and the proactive integration of AI technologies. Many companies downsized their traditional in-house staff, shifted to AI-enabled consultative models, and diversified their service offering to reduce dependency on single large accounts.

Client behavior and expectations have changed drastically. Buyers are demanding faster turnarounds and lower costs, sometimes attempting to bypass human translation entirely by using raw AI output for content previously assessed “not for MT”. However, this AI-only approach has frequently resulted in high-profile quality failures and hallucinations, leading clients to return to language providers for secure, expert-in-the-loop validation. Those providers able to

bridge this gap financially emerge as the success stories of 2025. Many providers are shifting their services from basic translation execution to comprehensive workflow orchestration, regulatory consulting, and AI data management. The role of the linguist is evolving from bilingual typist to language architect and AI conductor.

Thus, the global language market is experiencing distinct technology stratification: large enterprises with the capital to build proprietary AI ecosystems are capturing market share through consolidation, while smaller agencies struggle to keep pace. Ultimately, the value proposition of the modern language provider is no longer just language conversion, but the secure, culturally intelligent, and technologically sophisticated management of global communication.

Our research has signaled that the hardest times might be over. Although the fallout for providers that have been unable or unwilling to adapt will continue, many have adjusted their workflow in 2024 and 2025 and the tech-first transition is proving to be resilient. What’s ahead is a period of intense M&A activity, a threat of power shift to engineering armed with vibe-coding, and carving out more time for conversations with clients to increase demand volumes.

The AI Revolution – a Double-Edged Sword

AI has disrupted the language services landscape for many years, forcing a radical shift in how language providers and buyers interact. The expectation from the C-suite that generative AI will instantly slash localization budgets has often collided with the reality of regulated industries and complex content. While machines can produce highly fluent, near-instantaneous output, they are also prone to hallucinations, deceptive fluency, and a lack of the cultural nuance required for critical texts. Consequently, the much-feared total automation of the linguist has not materialized; instead, the industry is witnessing the fortification of the expert-in-the-loop model, where human oversight remains a non-negotia-

ble safeguard against liability, end-user harm, and reputational damage.

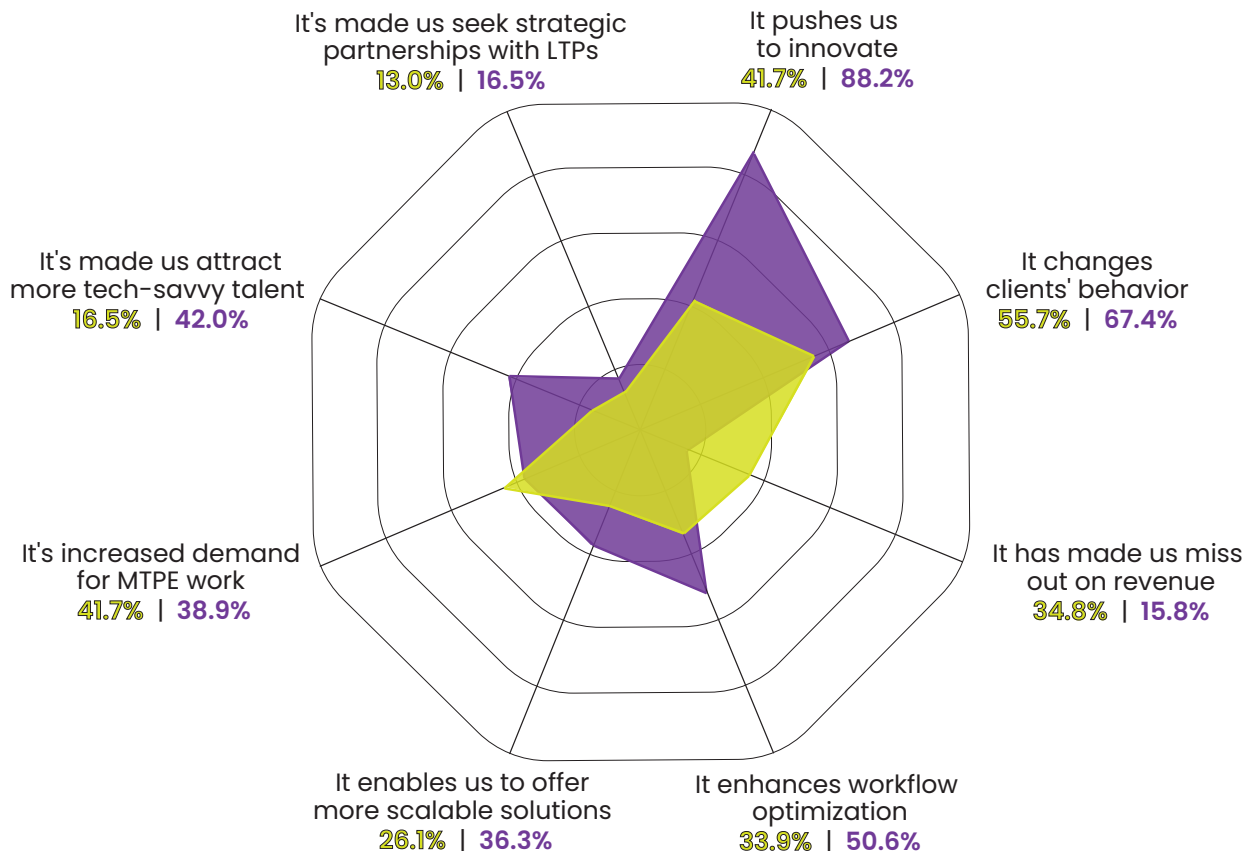
Translation memories (TMs) are becoming increasingly obsolete as the segment-based matching of the past breaks the holistic context that modern AI relies upon to generate more accurate text – the translation itself. In response, the most responsive language providers are shifting from selling pure translation execution to offering comprehensive workflow orchestration and language data management.

Service offerings have expanded far beyond core translation to include data curation, prompt engineering, synthetic data creation, and AI dubbing and subtitling. Rather than fighting the

technology, proactive companies are productizing AI solutions, establishing customized, highly secure platforms (such as Sovereign AI initiatives where nations and organizations develop and control their own AI capabilities for reasons of data security, geopolitical risks, and the need for cultural alignment) to cater to government and enterprise clients demanding strict data compliance and privacy. On the provider side, this technological shift has fundamentally altered company dynamics and human resource requirements. Traditional in-house linguistic and administrative project management roles are being downsized or repurposed as automation increases productivity

threefold. In their place, there is a surging demand for computational linguists, AI business developers, and prompt engineers who can navigate both language and machine. For the linguists themselves this transition has been polarizing: experienced specialists who adapt to auditing, cultural editing, and managing AI workflows are commanding higher premiums, while those relegated to basic, unrewarding post-editing face significant downward pricing pressure and job dissatisfaction. This dynamic has led to a noticeable talent exodus, raising widespread industry concerns about a looming shortage of highly qualified professionals capable of authenticating AI output.

How generative AI effects business considerations



Growth or No Growth, That Is the Question

In 2025, we estimated flat but positive growth. Now, our research prompts us to adjust our previous projections downward yet again. The language industry reached an estimated USD 72.6 billion in 2025 and is projected to grow to USD 73.4 billion in 2026. We anticipate a more linear growth in the near future and a slower, a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) lower than 1.0% afterward, reaching USD 76.1 billion by 2030. This estimation, of course, carries high uncertainty as the industry faces intense restructuring efforts that require large investments, while margins are down, top linguists are finding more satisfying work elsewhere, and price pressures are at an all-time high. Whether this mode of restructuring will be the new norm or the ecosystems will stabilize after the new onset of agentic AI disruption, remains to be seen.

Our research this year indicates that growth across the spectrum of language providers was severely polarized. The overall combined 100 largest language industry providers realized a humble growth rate of 1.1%. The top 10 ranked providers rebounded to lead growth at 3.6%, while the top 20 grew by 3.4%. However, a select few mid-tier providers have seen a slip in their standings; the 51–100 segment experienced a

4.3% decline – the first negative growth recorded for any segment since 2021. Providers outside of the top 100 exposed structural vulnerabilities, reporting an overall weighted 1.1% decline.

However, remarkable success stories are also visible from the results, largely driven by aggressive tech-forward positioning and consolidation. Effectiff secured the number one spot as the industry's fastest-growing company with 94.4% growth. Smartling followed closely in second place with an impressive 93.4% growth, fueled by its tech-first platform. Propio Language Services continued its meteoric rise with 70.6% growth, driven by interpreting dominance and landmark acquisitions like CyraCom. XTM International makes their debut in our ranking, carrying three tech acquisitions in 2025 (Transifex, TXTOmedia, and Consoltec), contributing to a 60.0% growth rate in 2025. Language Network (35.2%) and Equiti (17.6%) also posted strong double-digit growth, reinforcing that interpreting and proprietary technology are major competitive advantages. Overall, much of this growth can be attributed to mergers and acquisitions as consolidation activity reached new highs in 2025, with 60% of the top 100 actively looking to buy.

On Growth Sectors

We see distinct focus areas of growth and decline for the foreseeable future. First, proprietary AI and data services – including data collection and curation, prompt engineering, and custom LLM integration – accounted for the greatest areas of new revenue and margin protection. Because accurate AI performance requires robust training material, data-for-AI (including platforms, tools, and services) is a new industry outpacing the growth of the narrowly defined language industry. Providers are capitalizing on their expert freelance networks and technology expertise to bring about custom data solutions for their current and new clients in monolingual, multilingual and multimodal domains. .

Experience with this also allows for, expanding into more complex AI-adjacent tasks such as model evaluation, domain adaptation, and synthetic data creation allows providers to capture new business from both AI model creators and large enterprises that are actively building out their AI infrastructure. We observe this through the creation of data-for-AI sidearms of large language solutions providers such as Transperfect, RWS, Lionbridge, Welo Global, or Argos Multilingual, the pivoting of Summa Linguae into DATAmundi. These efforts are in competition with the rise of generalist providers and platforms such as Scale.ai, Labelbox, or Uber AI Solutions next to prominent actors such as

Appen and TELUS.

As the industry increasingly relies on cloud-based machine translation and LLMs, enterprise and government clients have grown highly sensitive to the risks of data misuse and cross-border data transfers. To capitalize on these fears, forward-thinking language industry providers are transforming robust data safety and security into a major competitive differentiator and sales tool by actively securing multiple ISO and cybersecurity certifications to prove their systems are impenetrable. This strategic pivot opens up more business from risk-averse buyers in heavily regulated sectors like banking, audit, and healthcare.

In the more “traditional” language industry space, remote interpreting also continues to be a massive growth driver, with interpreting rep-

resenting 33.6% of top 100 revenues, remaining largely impervious to AI replacement in high-stakes scenarios. Conversely, traditional services like desktop publishing (DTP) and linguist staffing are lagging at the bottom of growth metrics.

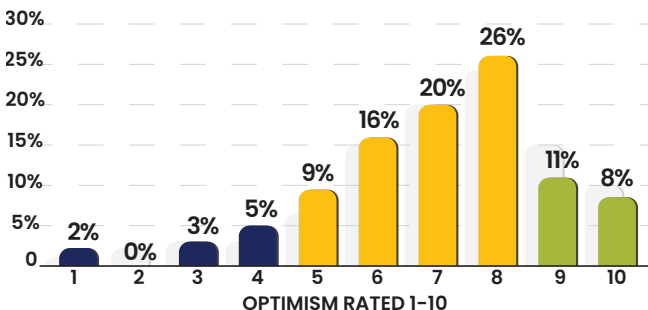
Vertically, we are witnessing a flight to safety toward regulated environments that still mandate expert-in-the-loop human oversight. The strongest verticals are those with large capital flows and strict compliance requirements, such as life sciences (offered by 78.4% of providers), financial and legal (73.0%), and government (70.3%). Meanwhile, verticals like video games and packaged goods have slipped down the ranks, heavily impacted by rapid improvements in AI-powered localization and reductions in international trade of physical products.

Optimism and Projections

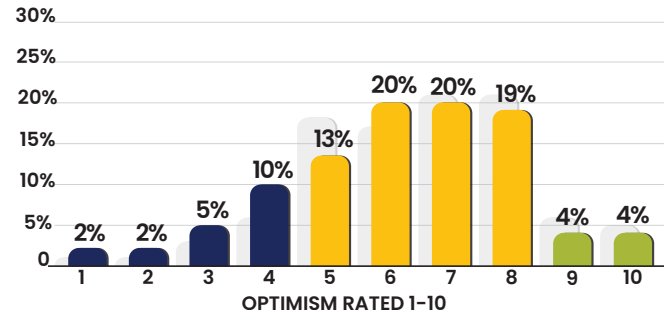
In response to the question, “Overall, how optimistic are your business and the industry in 2026?” language industry providers indicate a relatively positive outlook for 2026, although the industry-wide average rating of 6.2 is lower than last year’s 6.5. When asked to rate their

own business outlook, responses are more positive overall with an average rating of 7.0 compared to last year’s 7.2. While it’s possible that the data isn’t completely unbiased – as struggling providers might be less likely to respond – it still suggests an appetite for the future.

Providers’ optimism about their company



Providers’ Optimism about the Industry



Light grey bars represent previous year's results

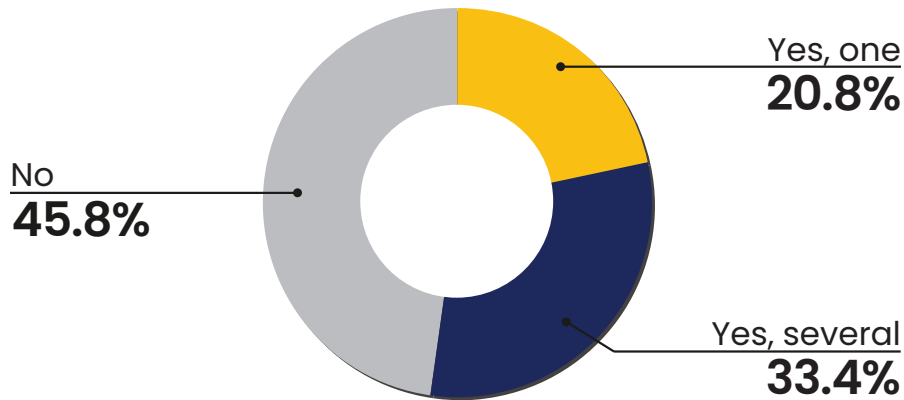
New Product and Service Launches

About a third (33.4%) of the surveyed top 100 companies found the capacity to launch not one, but several new products or services in 2025, compared with 17.7% of the rest of the survey pool. This suggests that market leaders have the resources and infrastructure to manage multiple simultaneous launches – and indeed, they are forced to do so both by the need to signal innovation and by competitive pressure.

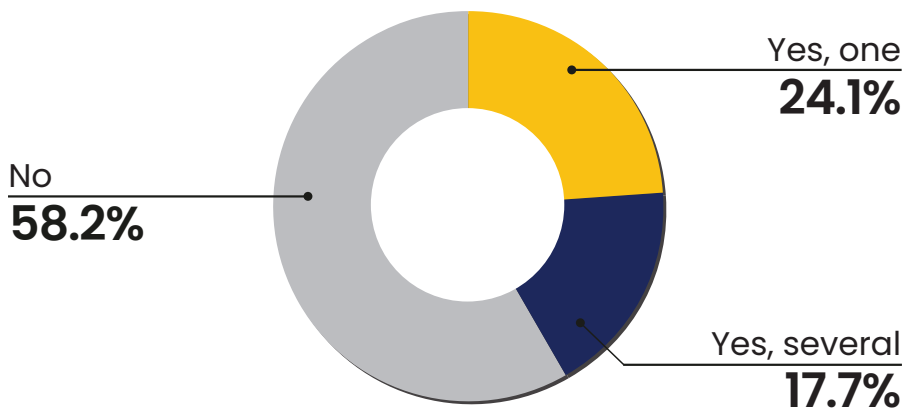
Interestingly, smaller or general-market com-

panies were slightly more likely to focus on just a single launch (24.1%) compared to the top 100 (20.8%). This implies that for the broader market, a single product launch is the standard win, while for top performers, it is often just one of several. A majority (58.2%) of companies not among the top 100 did not launch any new products or services at all in 2025. In contrast, among the top 100, this figure drops to 45.8%.

Top 100 new product/service launches in 2025



Extended market new product/service launches in 2025



02





















RANKINGS




















The Nimdzi 100 Ranking spans the next nine pages. It lists the top 100 largest language industry providers worldwide. Following are the Just Shy ranking, Watchlist, Changelog, and what's new in this year's ranking.

Rank	Change in Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Note	Revenue Change FY24-FY25	Main Business
01	⊖	TransPerfect	United States	1,320.0	v	⬆️	life sciences, legal
02	⊖	LanguageLine Solutions	United States	1,100.0	v	⬆️	interpreting, healthcare, government
03	⬆️	RWS	United Kingdom	909.2	v	⬆️	AI-powered translation software, patents
04	⬇️	Keywords Studios	Ireland	850.0	e	⬇️	video game services
05	⊖	Sorenson Communications	United States	800.0	e	⊖	sign language interpreting
06	⬆️	Propio Language Services	United States	566.5	v	⬆️	interpreting, healthcare, government
07	⬇️	Lionbridge	United States	513.9	e	⬇️	life sciences, technology, legal, games & entertainment
08	⊖	Translate Plus	United Kingdom	399.0	e	⬆️	dubbing, manufacturing, marketing
09	⬆️	GienTech	China	364.5	v	⬆️	language testing & QA, technology, IT & software
10	⬆️	Side	Japan	349.0	v	⬆️	translation, video game services

Rank	Change in Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Note	Revenue Change FY24-FY25	Main Business
11	⊖	PTSGI	Taiwan	346.5	v	⬆️	interpreting, healthcare, video games, financial & legal, life sciences
12	⬆️	Hogarth Worldwide	United Kingdom	330.1	v	⬆️	communications company, localization
13	⬇️	Welo Global	United States	325.2	v	⬇️	data & AI, technology, legal, life sciences
14	⬆️	Centific	United States	300.0	v	⬆️	localization, data curation, global experiences
15	⊖	AMN Language Services	United States	296.7	v	⬇️	interpreting, healthcare
16	⬇️	Iyuno	United States	280.0	e	⬇️	media localization
17	⊖	Acolad Group	France	248.3	v	⬇️	AI-powered translation software
18	⬆️	Appen	Australia	230.8	v	⬇️	data company
19	⬇️	STAR Group	Switzerland	226.2	v	⬆️	platform licensing, automotive & aviation, manufacturing
20	⬆️	Equiti	United States	200.0	v	⬆️	interpreting, healthcare
21	⊖	DeepL	Germany	197.0	e	⬆️	AI-powered translation software, writing and editing tools

Rank	Change in Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Note	Revenue Change FY24-FY25	Main Business
22	⊖	Pixelogic Media	United States	191.3	e	⊖	media localization
23	⬆️	Translation Bureau	Canada	147.2	v	⬆️	interpreting, government
24	⬆️	VSI	United Kingdom	137.9	v	⬆️	media localization
25	⊖	STAR7	Italy	131.0	v	⬆️	manufacturing, IT
26	⬆️	GTCOM	China	126.1	v	⬆️	language technology, data & AI
27	⬇️	Dubbing Brothers	France	122.9	e	⊖	dubbing, voiceovers, audio services, subtitling
28	⬆️	Global Talk Group	Netherlands	106.8	e	⬆️	interpreting, government, healthcare
29	⬆️	GLOBO Language Solutions	United States	98.0	v	⬆️	interpreting, healthcare, government, education
30	NEW	Smartling	United States	96.7	v	⬆️	translation management system, transcreation
31	⊖	Visual Data Media Services	United States	94.5	e	⊖	media localization
32	⬆️	Datawords	France	93.1	ee	⊖	translation, marketing
33	⬆️	thebigword	United Kingdom	91.1	v	⊖	interpreting, translation, government














Rank	Change in Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Note	Revenue Change FY24-FY25	Main Business
34		DALS	United Kingdom	85.6	v		interpreting, education, financial
35	NEW	TechTrans International	United States	82.4	v		interpreting, translation, education
36	NEW	Language Services Associates	United States	80.0	v		translation & localization, interpreting
37		CQ fluency	United States	79.4	v		healthcare, life sciences
38		Verbit	United States	75.2	e		Transcription, captioning, translation
39		Translated	Italy	74.1	v		AI-powered translation software
40		ElaN Languages	Belgium	73.4	v		copywriting & transcreation
41		Argos Multilingual	United States	71.7	v		translation & localization, life sciences, technology & IT
42		Logos Group	Italy	70.0	v		copywriting & transcreation, dubbing & audio
43		Verztec	Singapore	68.9	v		interpreting, DTP & graphic design, education, financial & legal
44		Certified Languages International	United States	67.1	e		interpreting, healthcare, other LSPs

Rank	Change in Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Note	Revenue Change FY24-FY25	Main Business
45		Sunyu Transphere	China	62.8	v		intellectual property, technology & IT
46		LanguageWire	Denmark	62.8	v		life sciences, consumer products, automotive
47	NEW	Phrase	Czech Republic	56.4	v		translation management system, language tech platform
48		Piedmont	United States	55.0	e		government
49		Multicultural NSW	Australia	54.8	e		interpreting, government
50		Honyaku Center	Japan	54.1	v		patents, life sciences, finance & legal
51		EC Innovations	China	53.0	v		interpreting, life sciences, technology & IT
52		Acclaro	United States	50.0	v		copywriting & content creation, technology & IT, media & entertainment
53		KERN Global Language Services	Germany	49.9	v		interpreting, life sciences, automotive, technology, financial
54		Sichuan Lan-bridge	China	49.8	v		manufacturing, technology & IT, automotive

Rank	Change in Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Note	Revenue Change FY24-FY25	Main Business
55	▼	Toppan Digital Language	United Kingdom	46.9	v	▼	healthcare, marketing, finance
56	▲	SeproTec	Spain	46.9	v	▲	interpreting, pharma, life sciences, IP
57	▲	Lilt	United States	44.6	v	▬	AI-powered translation software,
58	▲	MotionPoint	United States	43.7	e	▬	website translation, DTP
59	▼	ZOO Digital Group	United Kingdom	42.5	v	▼	subtitling, dubbing, media & entertainment
60	▲	Ai-Media	Australia	41.8	v	▼	services, government, education
61	▲	Språkservice Sverige	Sweden	41.2	v	▲	interpreting, government, technology & IT
62	NEW	XTM International	United Kingdom	40.0	v	▲	AI-powered translation management software & TBMS
63	▲	ONCALL Language Services	Australia	39.4	e	▬	interpreting, healthcare
64	▲	Linguava Interpreters	United States	37.4	v	▲	interpreting, healthcare
65	▲	DigitalTolk	Sweden	36.3	v	▲	interpreting, public sector
66	▲	Hanna Interpreting Services	United States	36.3	v	▲	interpreting, healthcare, government, public sector




Rank	Change in Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Note	Revenue Change FY24-FY25	Main Business
67	▲	TIS National	Australia	33.2	v	▲	interpreting, government, public sector
68	▬	Weglot	France	33.1	e	▬	website localization
69	▲	Transvoice	Sweden	32.8	v	▲	interpreting, healthcare, government
70	▲	Plint	Sweden	32.6	v	▲	media localization
71	▼	Yamagata	Japan	32.0	v	▼	documentation company, technical translation
72	▼	Spark Brighter Thinking	United Kingdom	31.3	e	▬	localization, technology, media
73	▬	Akagane	Japan	31.2	e	▬	DTP & graphic design, manufacturing
74	▼	Alpha CRC	United Kingdom	31.1	v	▼	technology & IT, video games,
75	▲	MarsHub Co.	China	30.5	v	▲	interpreting, media localization, LQA
76	▲	Rozetta Corp.	Japan	27.3	v	▲	platform, technology
77	▲	Datamundi	Poland	27.0	e	▬	data & AI, technology & IT
78	▲	Difuze	Canada	26.6	e	▬	media localization
79	▲	TRSB	Canada	26.5	v	▼	financial & legal, life sciences

Rank	Change in Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Note	Revenue Change FY24-FY25	Main Business
80	▼	SWISS TXT	Switzerland	26.1	e	▼	media localization
81	▲	Glodom Language Solutions	China	26.0	v	▲	IT, patents
82	▲	BLEND	Israel	25.0	e	▬	education, IT, video games
83	▬	Versacom	Canada	24.9	e	▼	financial & legal
84	▲	CRESTEC	Japan	24.4	v	▲	manufacturing, automotive, IT & software
85	▼	Janus Worldwide	Austria	24.3	v	▼	technology & IT, manufacturing
86	▼	Straker Translations	New Zealand	23.9	v	▲	technology & IT, manufacturing
87	▬	Skrivanek	Czech Republic	23.6	e	▬	technology & IT, manufacturing,
88	▲	Language Network	United States	23.0	v	▲	manufacturing, other LSPs
89	▲	Transline Gruppe	Germany	21.1	e	▬	interpreting
90	▲	MasterWord Services	United States	20.8	v	▼	DTP & graphic design, manufacturing, life sciences
91	▲	LanguageLoop (VITS)	Australia	20.6	v	▲	interpreting, government
92	NEW	Effectiff	United States	20.2	v	▲	interpreting, technical, legal, financial
93	▲	Tarjama AI	United Kingdom	20.0	e	▬	interpreting, dubbing & audio, subtitling

Rank	Change in Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Note	Revenue Change FY24-FY25	Main Business
94		Translations in Motion	United States	19.8	v		interpreting, healthcare, finance & legal, government
95		Lingsoft Group	Finland	19.3	v		subtitle, dubbing, terminology management
96		t'works	Germany	19.2			website localization, manufacturing, life sciences, legal
97		Supertext	Switzerland	19.0	v		AI-powered translation software, MTPE
98		Systran	France	18.9	e		translation & localization, technology
99	NEW	kothes GmbH	Germany	18.8	v		localization, desktop publishing, terminology management
100		Hansem Global	South Korea	18.5	v		technical writing, translation, consumer goods

Notes

Nimdzi's annual ranking is based on revenue and lists the 100 largest language industry providers worldwide. Our ranking is a living document and therefore subject to change. Some companies appear to have the same revenue due to currency rounding. However, the ranking order is accurate considering the second decimal.

-  **Up**, ranking/revenue increased compared to previous year's Nimdzi 100
-  **Level**, ranking/revenue increased compared to previous year's Nimdzi 100
-  **Down**, ranking/revenue increased compared to previous year's Nimdzi 100
- v** **Verified**, data provided by companies or financial statements
- e** **Estimated Revenue**, based on extensive industry research

Just Shy

The following companies did not quite make it into this year's Nimdzi 100 ranking. Their work in the translation and localization space deserves our consideration, and with continued growth

they may find themselves on the list in the future. They merit recognition as leaders shaping the industry and their efforts continue to elevate the entire language industry.

Company	Country	2024 revenue (USD million)	Note
Lingsoft Group	Finland	17.8	v
The Spanish Group	United States	17.3	v
Hero Tolk	Norway	17.2	e
Language Network	United States	17.0	v
Interpreters Unlimited	United States	16.5	v
Future Group	United Arab Emirates	16.4	v
Terra Translations	United States	16.2	v
THG Fluently	United Kingdom	15.7	v
Hansem Global	South Korea	15.5	v
itl Institut für technische Literatur	Germany	15.1	v

Watchlist

The Watchlist consists of providers that might be in the top 100 but do not disclose, publish, or otherwise reveal their revenue. Furthermore, some providers are units inside larger corporate groups where a part of revenue comes from

language services, and researchers struggle to specify those revenues. Even though they might not compete in the ranking, they compete for clients, talent, and resources. They also represent opportunities for investors.

Company	Country	Main business
BIG Language Solutions	United States	interpreting, education, healthcare, financial
Braxehma AI	India	media localization
Linguamatics	United Kingdom	natural language processing
Omnicom	United States	transcreation, content creation
Translate.one	United States	financial & legal, life sciences
Vistatec	Ireland	translation, LQA

What Has Changed in the Rankings

A lot has changed in the ranking since last year. Side (formerly PTW) has been steadily climbing the ranks and made history this year as the first woman-led company to break into the top ten, landing at #10. TechTrans International and Language Services Associates disclosed their information and made their debut on the list as new entrants at #36 and #48, respectively. We also saw some significant rebranding and restructuring: Equiti took the #20 spot after previously operating as Cloudbreak Health, while Datamundi entered at #79 following its rebranding from Summa Linguae Technologies. Finally, BlueLion and GATS merged to form the newly branded

TransNarrative, and tech-forward players like Effectiff and Smartling posted massive growth of over 90% to further shake up the standings.

TransPerfect acquired Apostroph Group (previously #83) and Unbabel (previously #65) – explaining why they are no longer included in this year's ranking. Propio Language Services acquired major interpreting player CyraCom (#19 in the 2025 ranking), launching Propio into third place in this year's ranking. We also highlight other – mainly technology – acquisitions and rebrandings that affect the top ranks.

New Arrivals in the Nimdzi 100

Mirroring a trend similar to the Nimdzi 2025 Interpreting Index, there have been few years with this many newcomers at the top of the industry. Ten language providers entered the 2026 Nimdzi 100 ranking that were not there last year. Smartling was on the 2025 watchlist and this year our research was able to confirm its meteoric rise and year-over-year revenue surge. Having

introduced DeepL for the first time in our 2025 ranking, we fully updated our ranking qualifiers in 2026. LLMs, SaaS, and platform providers are now represented and include TechTrans, Phrase, and XTM. Others previously included in our mid-market ranking such as Kothes and Effectiff, the latter of which is one of the fastest growing companies this year.

Rank	Company	Country	2025 revenue (USD million)	Note
30	Smartling	United States	96.7	v
35	TechTrans International	United States	82.4	v
47	Phrase	Czech Republic	56.4	v
36	Language Services Associates	United States	80.0	v
88	Language Network	United States	23.0	v
92	Effectiff	United States	20.2	v
95	Lingsoft Group	Finland	19.3	v
99	Kothes GmbH	Germany	18.8	v
62	XTM International	United Kingdom	40.0	v

03

MARKET

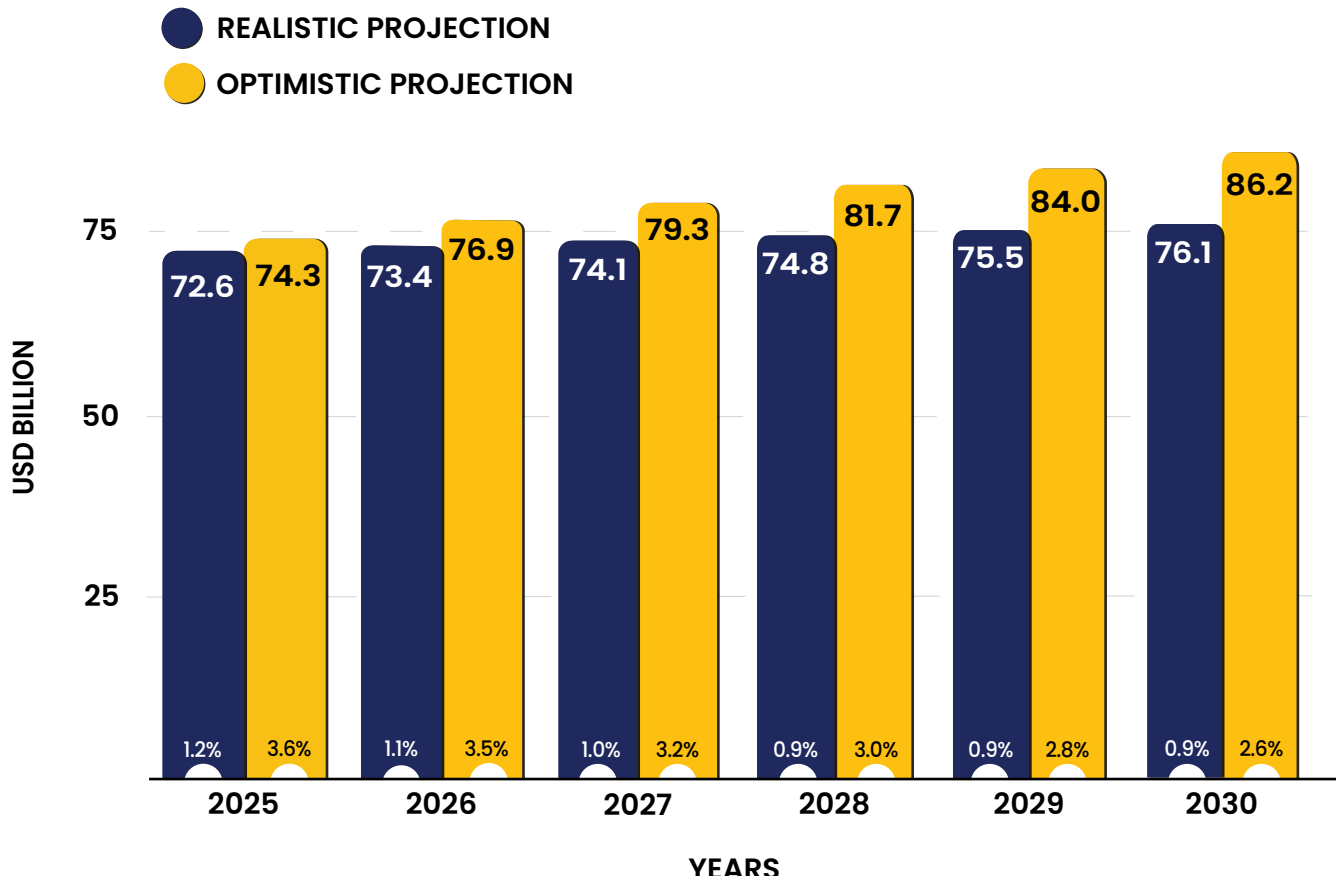
We estimate that the language services industry reached USD 72.6 billion in 2025 and expect it to grow to USD 73.4 billion in 2026. We project a more linear growth in the near future and a <1.0% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) afterwards to reach USD 76.1 billion by 2030.

Market Sizing

When calculating the addressable market for their services, commercial providers should limit the opportunity to 60% of the total figure. Firstly, not everything is outsourced, as a significant portion of the overall volume is performed by in-house teams on the buyer side. For example, the European Union employs about 5,000 staff translators and interpreters. Secondly, the market size calculation includes revenues for both translation companies and their suppliers, i.e. a part of the revenue is counted twice.

Beyond calculating the current market size, future projections carry high uncertainty due to a perfect storm of technological, operational, and macroeconomic disruptions. In this environment of great uncertainty we present two five-year growth projections instead of one. A realistic forecast observes the industry size reaching USD 76.1 billion by 2030, and an optimistic forecast of USD 86.2 billion by the same year. Both projections observe a more linear instead of exponential growth.

Five year growth projection



Revenue Concentration

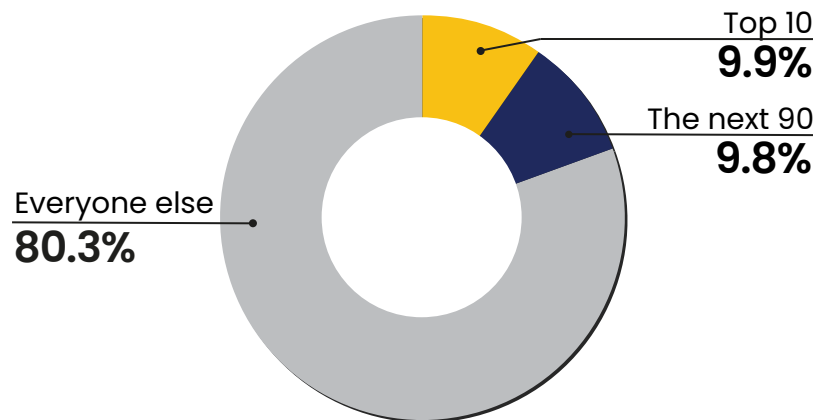
Not much has changed over the last few years and the industry remains highly fragmented. Although consolidation is being realized with more prudence and intent, the top 10 companies have nibbled away 0.3% of the market share, occupying 9.9% of the market in 2025, compared to 9.6% in 2024. The next 90 hold 9.9% in 2025 compared to 10.1% in 2024, and everyone else holding 80.2%, 0.1% less than in 2024. In absolute figures, the companies ranked by Nimdzi earned over

USD 14.3 billion in their latest fiscal year. The top 10 companies were responsible for almost half (49.9%) of the top 100 total.

- ◇ USD 7.17 billion in the top 10
- ◇ USD 7.15 billion in the next 90

Despite ongoing consolidation at the top, the industry is still predominantly made up of companies smaller than USD 20 million.

Market concentration



In this year's ranking, 52 of the top 100 largest language providers in the world reported various degrees of growth, precisely the same as last year. 23 of those 52 providers reported double-digit percentage growth, compared to 27 in 2024 and 31 in 2023. 23 providers had negative growth, of them 6 had double-digit percentage losses compared to 13 providers in 2024. The remaining providers presented flat revenues.

A historic trendline of combined top 100 revenues demonstrates the growth from USD 7.4 billion in 2018 to a peak of USD 14.3 billion in 2025, though with a flattened growth rate of +0.2% in the final year. This corresponds to industry-wide observations that while the industry is growing, it is doing so at a more linear rate than previously

projected due to macroeconomic factors and AI confusion.

This distribution may also point to a structural shift in how growth is materializing across the industry. The plateau in double-digit performers, combined with fewer extreme losses, suggests a normalization toward more predictable, steady performance rather than rapid expansion. At the same time, the flattening of aggregate growth indicates that scale alone is no longer translating into accelerated outcomes. Instead, companies appear to be operating with greater emphasis on consistency, margin discipline, and operational efficiency, reflecting a more mature and measured phase of industry development.

Growth by Ranking Segment

Not all boats are lifted by the tide. The combined revenues of the top 10 ranked language providers grew by 3.6% (compared to 1.4% in the previous period), similar to the top 20 at 3.4%. The top 50 providers grew by 20% in 2025. Conversely, the 51-100 segment experienced a 4.3% decline – a first in our reporting on growth by ranking segment in 2021. Overall, the 100 largest language industry providers combined realized a modest 1.3% growth rate, but growth nonetheless.

The 51-100 segment’s unprecedented decline is largely rooted in their business models. Many mid-market providers are structurally dependent on inbound, public-sector contracts and RFPs. In 2025, geopolitical shifts, U.S. and Canadian budget freezes, and unprecedented English-only rhetoric caused government buyers to prioritize guaranteed funding and reduce discretionary spending. Because these smaller firms often suffer from market segmentation blindness and lack repeatable outbound sales competencies, they were unable to pivot quickly when traditional inbound demand streams evaporated, with some experiencing revenue drops of up to 25%. Furthermore, trade tariffs and currency fluctuations – such as the U.S. dollar devaluing considerably against the Euro in negotiated contracts – caused severe margin losses that smaller companies struggled to absorb.

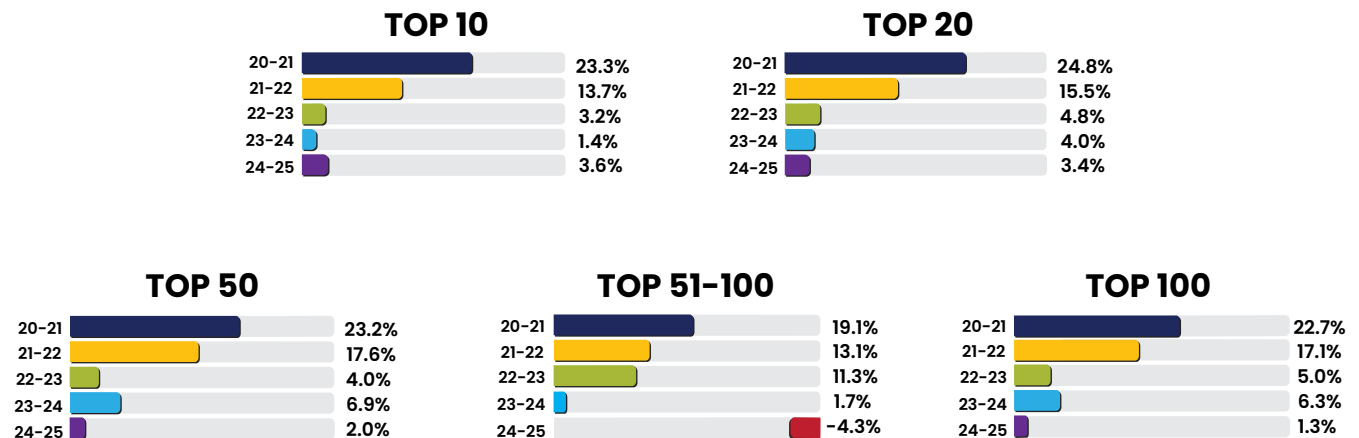


Some providers in the 51-100 tier are unable

TO AFFORD THE INVESTMENTS TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE

Some providers in the 51-100 tier are unable to afford the massive investments required to remain competitive. They are forced to rely on third-party tools, risking technology lock-in, and are experiencing distinct technology stratification, where the gap between well-funded leaders offering bundled technology solutions and resource-constrained smaller agencies is widening. Conversely, much of the top 20’s growth is not purely organic but relies heavily on M&A action – a reminder that company size does not by itself result in more clients. Additionally, interpreting continues to be a massive growth driver for top companies, of which there are two in the top 10 and four in the top 20.

Growth by ranking segment 2021-2025



Most Productive Companies

The average revenue per employee of the top 100 language industry providers was about USD 414,931 in 2025, compared to USD 239,000 in 2024, and USD 227,000 in 2023.

This means productivity rose an astonishing 73.6% from 2024 to 2025, partly due to the number of newcomers to the top 100. In our conversations with providers in the top 100, they indicated that budgets have been shortened to meet price pressures, linguist staff was reduced drastically in some cases, and emerging technologies enabled greater volume output per employee. Although some who experienced revenue growth in 2025 actually increased staffing levels compared to 2024 (including Propio, Phrase, Welo Global) to meet greater demand, most top 100 providers cut at least some staff, even after positive growth.

This year, similar to our 2025 report, shows an overrepresentation of interpreting companies



Productivity rose an
ASTONISHING 73.6%
FROM 2024 TO 2025

in this list. Six out of the top 10 most productive providers in the Nimdzi 100 derive a majority portion of their revenue from interpreting services. A shared understanding of the importance of good payment and working conditions for hourly-based services are paramount in interpreting services, especially in high-stakes regulated industries such as legal and medical interpreting.

Productivity Rank	Company	Country	2025 Revenue (USD million)	Size Class	Productivity (USD thousand per employee)
1	AMN Language Services	United States	296.7	100 to 249	1,735.1
2	Global Talk Group	Netherlands	106.8	100 to 249	1,017.3
3	Equiti	United States	200.0	100 to 249	877.2
4	Propio Language Services	United States	566.5	500 to 999	833.1
5	GLOBO Language Solutions	United States	98.0	100 to 249	657.7
6	Plint	Sweden	32.6	50 to 99	543.5
7	Linguava Interpreters	United States	37.4	50 to 99	542.0
8	PTSGI	Taiwan	346.5	500 to 999	515.7
9	GTCOM	China	126.1	250 to 499	450.2
10	Translated	Italy	74.1	100 to 249	435.9

Fastest Growing Companies

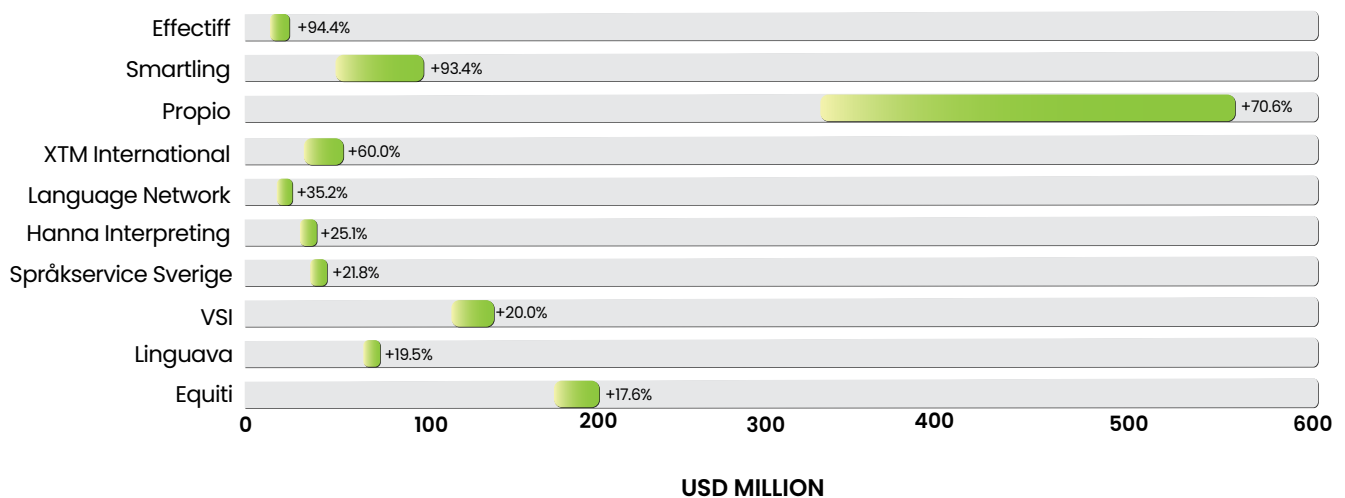
Effectiff secured the #1 spot as the industry's fastest-growing company in 2025 with 94.4% revenue gains compared to 2024. Smartling followed closely with an equally impressive 93.4% growth, fueled by its proprietary AI translation platform. Propio Language Services continued its streak, taking third place with 70.6% growth driven by its acquisitions of CyraCom. XTM International joins this club with 60.0% growth, partly stemming from the acquisitions of Transifex, TXTOmedia, and Consoltec. Double-digit growth from the other six players stems from organic business gains, exclusive of M&A.

Compared to the previous year's fastest growing companies, growth rates have slowed even in this segment. Whereas 2024 saw two companies report more than 100.0% growth, 2025 knows no such surges. The 10 fastest growth rates in 2024 ranged from 28.9% to 165.6% while in 2025 they ranged from 17.6% to 94.4%. In 2024, six out of 10 grew by more than 50.0% whereas in 2025 there were four – another indicator that even the largest and most successful language companies are experiencing business slow-down.



Growth rates have slowed
**EVEN AMONG THE
 FASTEST GROWING
 COMPANIES**

Ten fastest growing companies in 2025



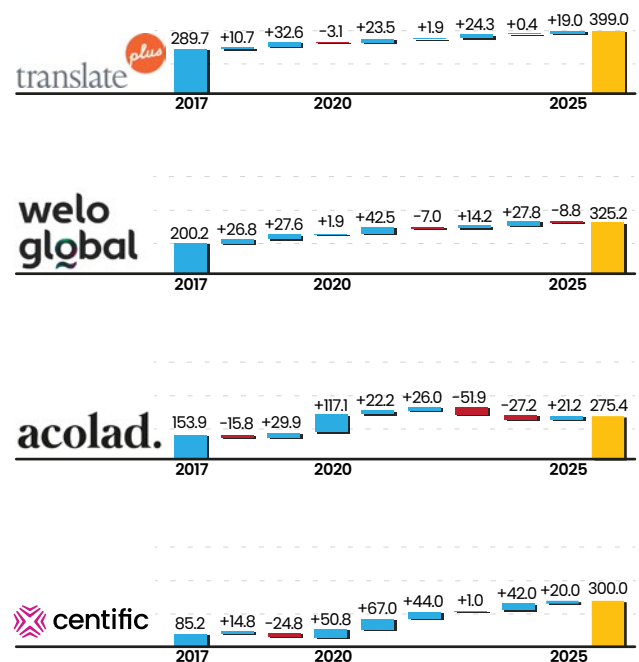
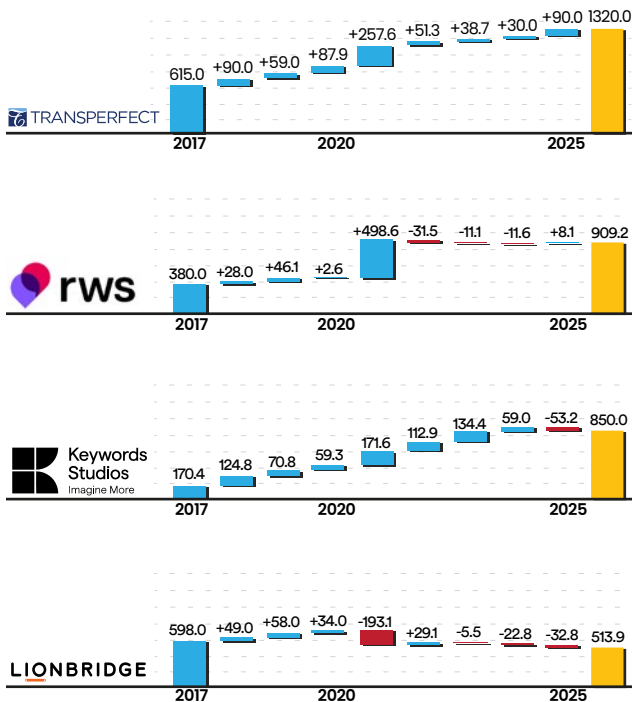
Growth of Select Language Providers

In taking a closer look at eight language industry providers and their revenue trajectories, most of them have maintained a general upward trend for the last eight years, though several encountered volatility mid-period. TransPerfect and Translate Plus (part of Publicis Groupe) stand out for their remarkably consistent year-on-year growth, showing almost no downward movement since 2018. In contrast, RWS and Acolad both experienced a major revenue surge followed by a cooling-off period characterized by minor, consecutive losses in the later years. Lionbridge shows a particularly unique profile; after a period of steady gains, it suffered a sharp decline in 2022 that it has yet to fully recover from, resulting in a 2025 valuation lower than its mid-period peak. Meanwhile, Welo Global, Acolad, and Centific have demonstrated resilience, overcoming brief late-stage dips to finish 2025 on a positive growth note.



Even the top providers are **FACING ECONOMIC CHALLENGES**

Growth of select language providers 2017-2025



Woman-led Providers in the Nimdzi 100

After a dip in representation in 2022 and 2023, women-owned and women-led businesses have become more prominent again at 18.0% in 2025. In comparison to two other datasets – Fortune 500 and the S&P 500 – women make up a greater segment of the language industry’s leadership pool. Across all three indexes women are slowly but surely holding more of the reins, although these numbers are a far cry from equal representation.

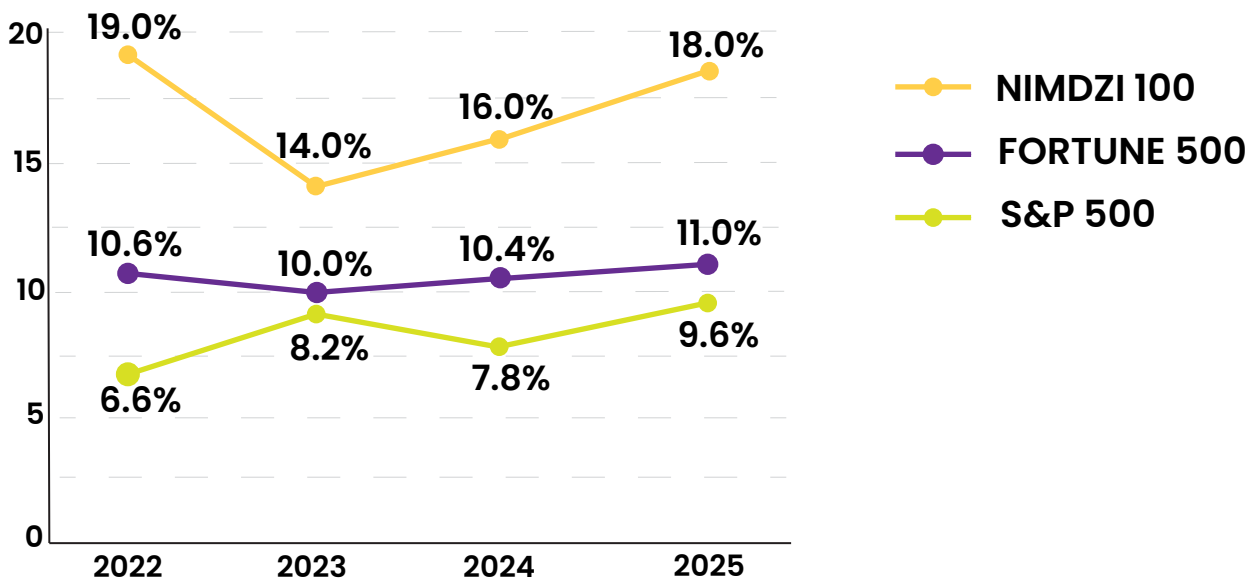
Which companies are included in these three collections is based on their financial achievements. New companies enter these indexes each year. Therefore, the changes in female representation in leadership does not necessarily mean that those companies who were on the list previously changed hands – although this is true sometimes – but serves equally as a testament to the success of companies under a woman’s leadership.

New on this year’s list are Maureen Huber, who took up the role of CEO at Equiti in 2024, and Tameeka Smith, who took over from Elisabete Miranda as CEO of CQ Fluency. Additionally, Beth

Williams as co-founder and CEO of TechTrans International, and Laura K.T. Schriver, who is the founder and chair of the board at Language Services Associates. Both TechTrans International and Language Services Associates are new companies in the Nimdzi 100 this year. Mary Kazamias, CEO at TRSB, retired in November, 2025, and therefore still qualifies for our listing of women in leadership during 2025. Véronique Özkaya is still CEO at Datamundi, which was rebranded from Summa Linguae Technologies in 2025.

Three of the top 20 providers are woman-led or women-owned, compared to two in 2024. Looking at the 50 largest providers in 2025, nine of them are woman-led, which is 18% versus 82% being led by men. The bottom half of the top 100 has another nine women-led providers, or 18%. The complete dataset collected for Nimdzi’s 2026 language industry market analysis – containing more than 350 providers – emphasizes the gender imbalance in leadership even more. Almost 30% of the survey respondents who are not in the top 100 are woman-led or woman-owned, compared to 18% of the top 100.

Woman-led providers in the Nimdzi 100 compared to other indexes



Woman-led providers in the Nimdzi 100

Rank	Company	Leader	Country	2025 Revenue in USD million
10	Side (formerly PTW)	Deborah Kirkham Cofounder	Japan	349.0
15	AMN Language Services	Cary Grace CEO and President	United States	296.7
20	Equiti	Maureen Huber CEO	United States	200.0
28	Global Talk Group	Astrid van Rossum CEO	Netherlands	106.8
35	TechTrans International	Beth Williams Co-founder, CEO, Chairwoman	United States	82.4
36	Language Services Associates	Laura K.T. Schriver Founder, Chair of the Board	United States	80.0
37	CQ fluency	Tameeka Smith CEO	United States	79.4
39	Translated	Isabelle Andrieu Co-founder, Chairwoman	Italy	74.1
46	Certified Languages International	Kristin Quinlan CEO	United States	62.2
65	DigitalTolk	Leyla Sarac Co-founder	Sweden	36.3
66	Hanna Interpreting Services	Jennifer Hanna Founder, CEO	United States	36.3
70	Plint	Åsa Zimmerman CEO	Sweden	32.6
78	Datamundi	Véronique Özkaya CEO	Poland	27.0
79	TRSB	Mary Kazamias CEO	Canada	26.5
80	Glodom Language Solutions	Shirley Li CEO	China	26.0
86	Straker Translations	Merryn Straker Co-founder, COO	New Zealand	23.9
90	MasterWord Services	Ludmila Golovine Founder, CEO	United States	20.8
93	Tarjama AI	Nour Al Hassan Founder, CEO	United Arab Emirates	20.0

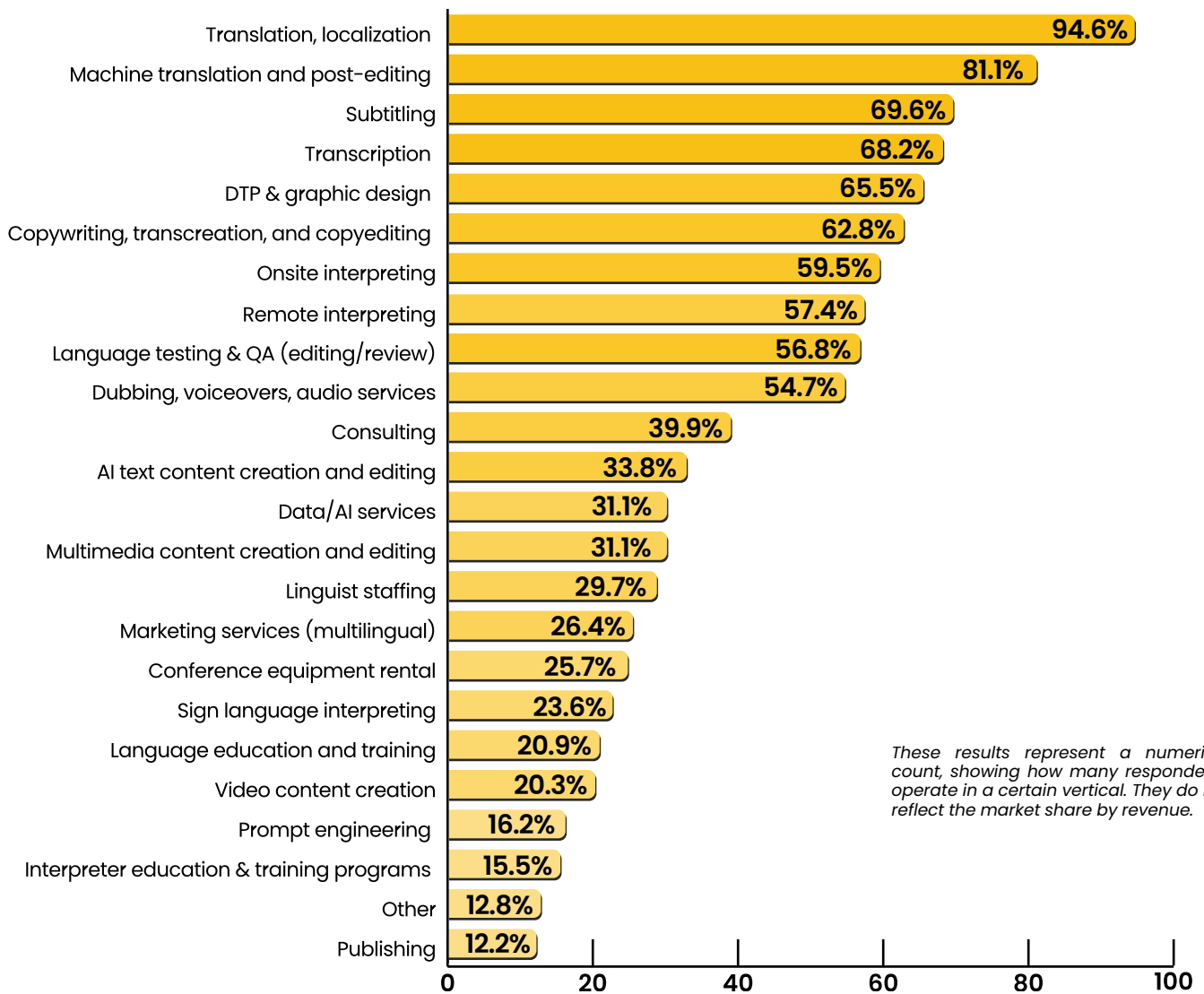
Top Services

While some providers reported no changes in 2025, many highlighted a pivot toward AI-enabled workflows, MTPE, and providing bundled solutions rather than individual services. The results show that the services most commonly provided are translation and localization (94.6%), MTPE (81.1%), and subtitling (69.6%). Transcription takes fourth place at 68.2%, followed closely by DTP (65.5%), copywriting and transcreation (62.8%), and onsite interpreting (59.5%). These results are mirrored in the responses from the 100 largest providers, excepting language testing and QA being ranked third, followed by transcription as fourth.

Top Generative AI Services

Survey respondents indicate that the AI services most commonly provided across all provider segments are editing of AI-generated content (72.0%), AI-generated translation (70.3%), and transcreation (51.7%). Terminology management takes fourth place at 51.7%, followed by cultural adaptation (40.7%), AI-powered quality assurance (40.7%), and AI dubbing (39.0%).

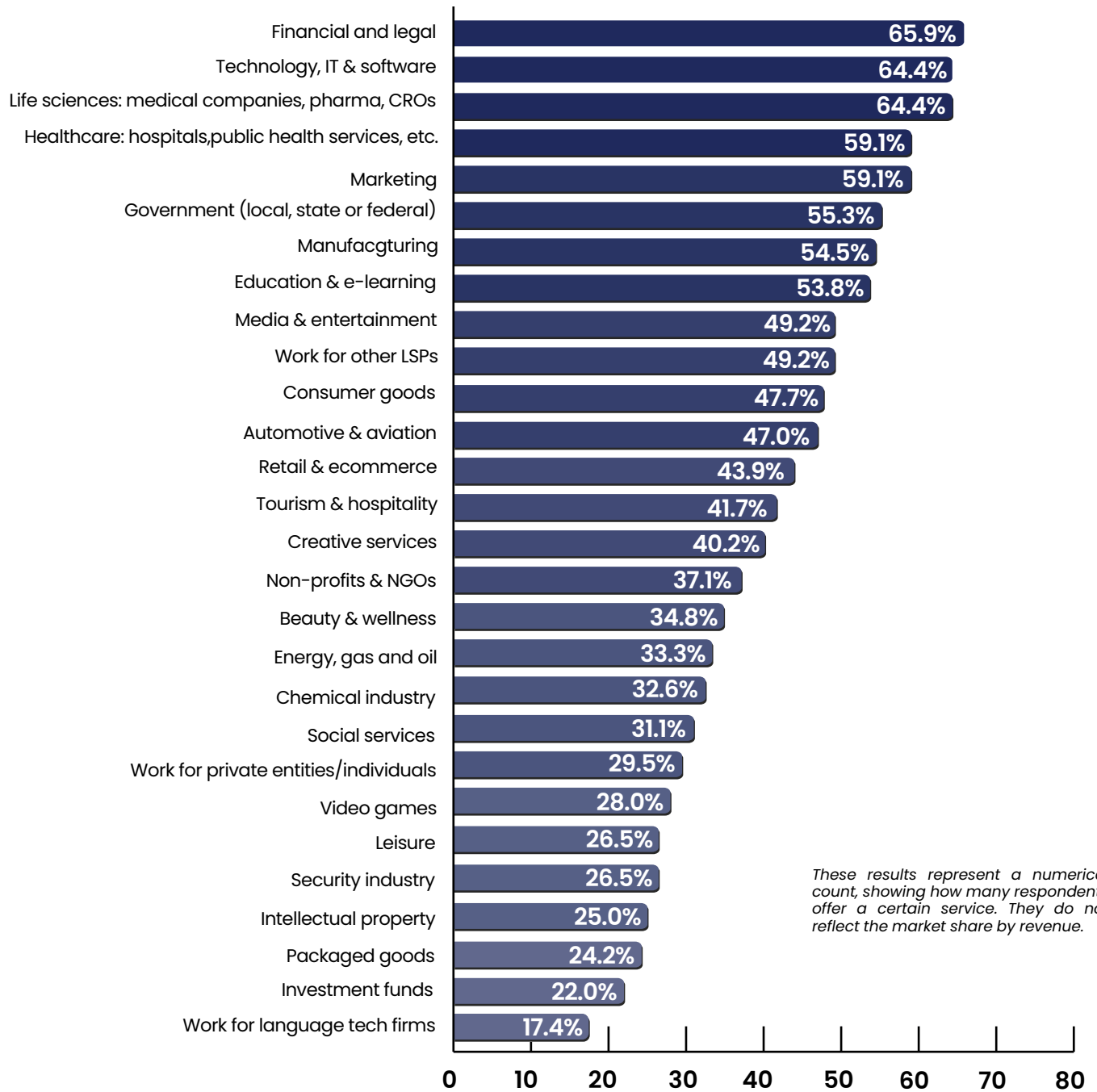
Transcreation ranks significantly higher among the Top 100 at 66.7%, and newer technical offerings like prompt engineering (39.4%) and sentiment analysis (33.3%) show a much stronger adoption rate compared to the broader provider pool.



Top Verticals

When asked about 2025, many companies highlighted a flight to safety toward highly regulated environments with traditionally large capital flows and strict regulatory requirements. The results show that the verticals most commonly served by language providers are financial and legal (65.9%), technology, IT and software (64.4%), and life sciences (64.4%). Healthcare

takes fourth place at 59.1%, followed closely by marketing (59.1%), government (55.3%), and manufacturing (54.5%). These results are similar in the responses from the 100 largest providers, with the exception of life sciences being ranked first in that segment (78.4%), followed by financial and legal (73.0%) and government as the third most served vertical (70.3%).



Business Challenges

The industry is facing unpredictable demand. The main drivers of this volatility are economic insecurities brought about by tariffs, military wars, AI disruption, and public-sector austerity. This environment has exposed deep structural vulnerabilities, particularly within the mid-market segment. Many small-to-mid size language providers that depend heavily on government-driven RFPs experienced severe revenue drops as discretionary spending slowed. Intense margin compression and client demands for drastic cost reductions driven by the perceived capabilities of generative AI represent another critical business challenge.

Growth is indeed the first and foremost challenge indicated by our survey respondents year on year, followed by price pressure. The threat of losing demand to new technologies rose to the forefront in 2025 as a divide has appeared among language providers, separating those that have been able to adapt and those that have not. Marked as the third greatest business challenge in 2025, it was considered a more remote threat in eighth place one year ago. It is precisely these technologies that providers are imminently aware of needing to implement soon, or fade into obscurity, unable to provide either speed or accuracy or competitive pricing.

Business challenges ranked

	1	2	3	4	5	
I want to grow company revenue	3%	7%	9%	41%	40%	4.1
Price pressure	5%	7%	26%	40%	21%	3.7
Technology and automation reducing demand for services	4%	9%	26%	38%	23%	3.7
Implement new processes and technologies	1%	9%	36%	41%	13%	3.6
Improve my company's brand position in the industry	4%	9%	32%	38%	17%	3.5
Develop additional service offerings	4%	15%	19%	50%	12%	3.5
Reduced order volumes	9%	14%	27%	28%	23%	3.4
Inflation and economic pressure	5%	13%	37%	26%	19%	3.4
Cut costs and optimize processes	6%	16%	31%	35%	12%	3.3
Increased competition	4%	18%	35%	35%	10%	3.3
Expand into new verticals	7%	12%	41%	29%	11%	3.3
Expand into new markets	13%	23%	28%	25%	10%	3.0
Higher volumes	21%	16%	35%	21%	7%	2.8
Talent retention and acquisition	16%	25%	33%	21%	6%	2.8
Shorter turnaround times	16%	18%	48%	14%	4%	2.7
Develop proprietary technology	29%	14%	25%	19%	12%	2.7
Develop and train my team	14%	17%	38%	20%	1%	2.7



*While the AI execution
itself might be cheap,*
**THE PREPARATION IS
HIGHLY VALUABLE**

In times of austerity, diversification can provide respite and open up new revenue generating opportunities. Indeed, order volumes are down even more in 2025 than they were in 2024, indicating a revenue crisis. And even though the language industry has always appeared impervious to crisis, inflation and economic pressure are a main contributor to providers' insecurity. Team investments (training and development opportunities) become of lesser concern as developing proprietary technologies, cost cutting, geographical expansion, and competitive positioning take precedence.

Providers are finding that having the technological capacity to process massive volumes means very little if the clients themselves do not have the content to match it, or if they refuse to pay for the human oversight required to make that volume usable. While the optimistic industry theory is that AI-driven cost reductions will encourage clients to keep their localization budgets stable and translate ten times the volume into new languages, some providers are running into a strict limit on client demand – depending on the verticals they operate in. While many enterprises have no commercial interest in adding new languages to their portfolios, content explosion is still ongoing, and the attention economy – especially in B2C settings – demands that organizations keep up with competition for the au-

dience with even more content.

Language providers realize that while the AI execution itself might be cheap, the preparation is highly valuable. Language providers now charge for expert data curation. This includes cleaning legacy translation memories to train new engines. They also offer data annotation for text, audio, and images. Professional terminology management and technical support are now premium services.

Providers are also changing their sales targets. They sell bundled, end-to-end AI solutions directly to IT departments. By bypassing traditional localization managers, they become high-value technology consultants. Many companies have recently executed a hard reset. They have heavily downsized their in-house linguistic and project staff. These leaner teams use AI to increase internal productivity threefold. Consequently, a smaller group can manage significantly larger workloads.

Traditional translation demand has dropped significantly for many. Yet, the total volume of global content is exploding. Providers must protect their bottom lines and avoid layoffs. To do so, they are expanding into high-margin services. These include AI dubbing, regulatory consulting, and risk-assessed workflows. Multimedia localization is also becoming a core pillar of their survival strategy.

The Interpreting Sector

The interpreting sector was both impacted less by market insecurities in 2025 – compared to the rest of the language industry – and impacted more. Regulated industries still require high-quality human interpreting in any economic landscape, but 2025 presented a unique new challenge.

A confrontation of multiculturalism in the U.S. under Trump’s rule resulted in sweeping executive actions that restrict funded language access. Most notably, the administration declared English the only official language of the U.S., revoking the 2000 Language Access Order. These policy changes have also threatened accessibility for the Deaf and hard-of-hearing, as the administration’s orders regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) programs left deaf federal workers facing uncertain access to sign language interpreting.

Additionally, interpreting providers noted a temporary slowdown in demand because immigrant populations – even highly skilled scientists or those in the U.S.

legally – became too hesitant to seek medical care in fear of being collected by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents. Interpreting providers who serve the education sector in the U.S. have remarked on a similar effect, with some immigrant parents keeping their children from attending school. Legal assistance is another area where demands for interpreting services dropped, as non-native U.S. residents are apprehensive of entering the legal system, thus creating lower demand in at least three major verticals.

On a more positive note, heading into 2026, the interpreting sector is continuing its technological transformation, albeit less profound than the rest of the translation and localization industry. According to our projections, machine interpreting (MI) and speech-to-speech solutions rank as the top technologies expected to gain importance because they offer highly scalable, real-time accessibility in scenarios where human interpreters are either too expensive or unavailable. For example, the European Parliament is deploying a real-time speech-to-text and MT tool that instantly transcribes and translates parliamentary debates across 24 official languages.

Further applications have included the DeepSeek-powered emergency platform deployed during the Myanmar earthquake rescue, mitigating life-saving communication barriers.

The rising importance of these technologies is primarily driven by the convergence of modalities. Users and clients no longer distinguish heavily between text and speech

translation; they simply expect technology to seamlessly handle foreign languages across audio, video, and text simultaneously. However, because fully automated AI still poses risks regarding data privacy, hallucinations, and a lack of legal accountability, the industry is settling into a dual approach. MI is taking on highly standardized or emergency-driven tasks, while computer-assisted interpretation (CAI) tools are empowering human experts-in-the-loop to handle complex, high-risk, and highly regulated communications.



Immigrant populations – even highly skilled scientists or those in the U.S. legally – became too hesitant to seek medical care in

IN FEAR OF BEING COLLECTED BY IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE) AGENTS

Interpreting technologies expected to gain importance in 2026

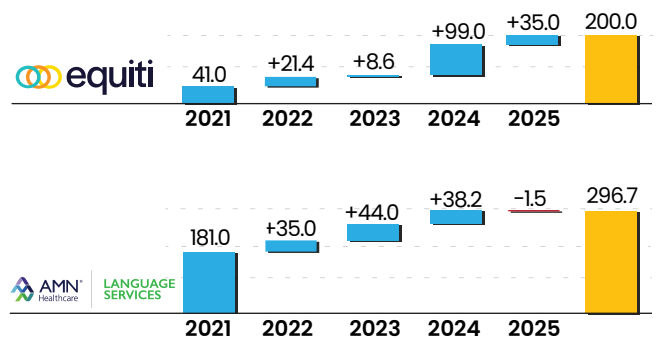
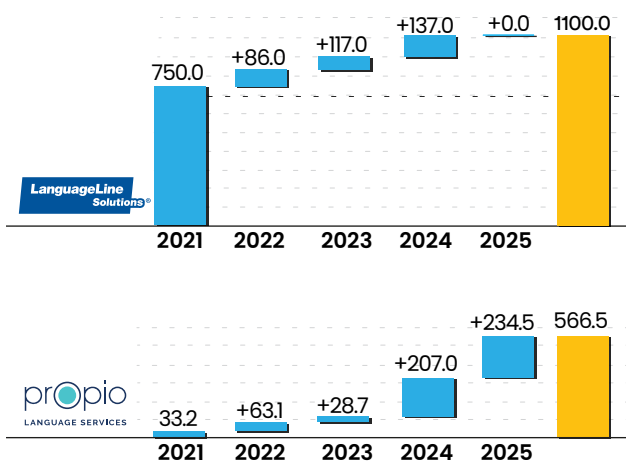
	1	2	3	4	5	
Machine interpreting / speech-to-speech solutions	2%	4%	20%	57%	16%	3.78
Remote simultaneous interpreting platforms	0%	8%	39%	47%	6%	3.51
Video remote interpreting platforms	0%	10%	37%	45%	8%	3.51
Interpreter management and scheduling platforms	2%	4%	46%	40%	8%	3.48
Computer-assisted interpreting (CAI) tools	2%	4%	40%	49%	4%	3.46
Over-the-phone interpreting platforms	2%	13%	38%	38%	10%	3.44

Growth of Select Interpreting Providers

Interpreting is the strongest sector in the language industry, that much is clear. When we look at the growth trend of four of the largest interpreting companies, all four reported positive growth every year since 2021, except for AMN Language Services, who suffered a slight drop of USD 1.5 million last year. LanguageLine is holding steady at USD 1.1 billion in 2025 as even the

top providers are facing economic challenges. Propio's meteoric rise continues with acquisitions and organic growth and is entering 2026 as the second largest provider of interpretation services, platforms, and technologies. Equiti on the other hand, after a rebrand in 2024, realizes its growth organically, signaling an exceptional business model.

Growth of select interpreting providers 2021-2026

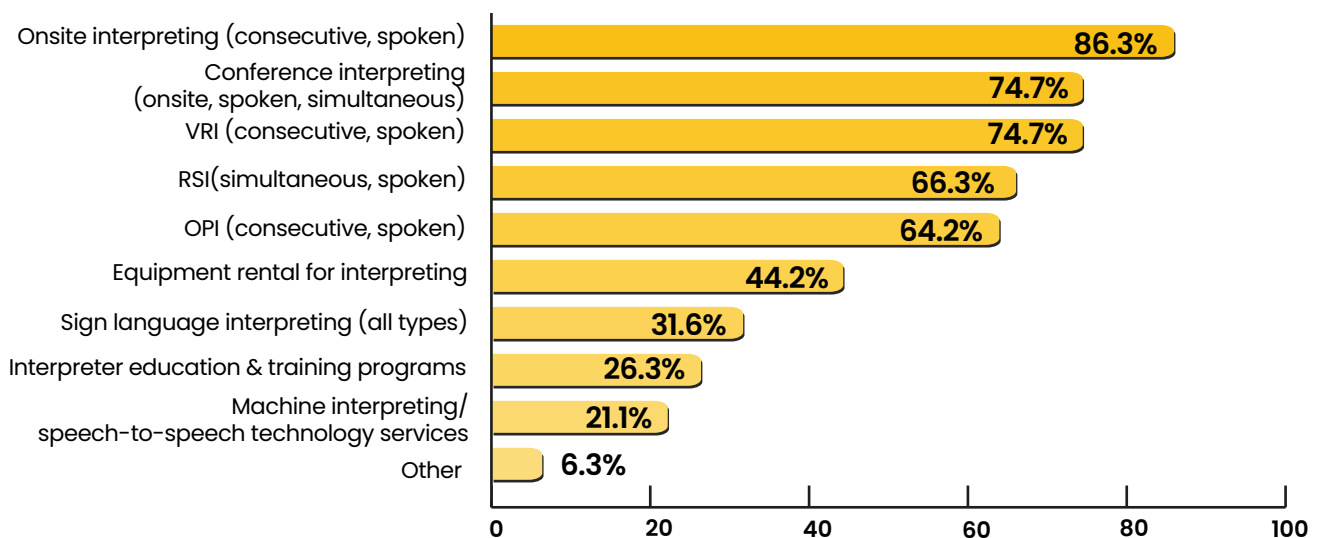


Top Interpreting Services and Margins

Gross margins for remote and onsite interpreting are a healthy 32.1% and 32.9% and show little sign of suffering the AI and price pressures that are felt across the rest of the language

services industry. Top interpreting services are onsite interpreting (86.3%) followed by conference interpreting (74.7%) and video remote interpreting (74.7%).

Top interpreting services in 2025



China and Emerging Markets

The Chinese language services market is experiencing significant growth, driven by a combination of technological innovation, national strategic initiatives, and the expansion of specialized industry verticals. In 2025, traditional translation (67.2%) and language education (25.3%) were the strongest core language services in China, while specialized verticals like elderly care, emergency response, and medical services represent the most lucrative and rapidly growing market segments.

As Chinese enterprises accelerate their efforts to expand overseas, there is a surging need for localized language solutions. Specifically, the Belt and Road initiative and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) have generated massive market potential, with the

annual growth rate for Southeast Asian language translation demand reaching 25%. However, despite the global buzz around AI, emerging services like natural language processing, language technology development, and localization currently make up a very small percentage (less than 6% combined) of the core businesses for Chinese pure language service providers.

As China is facing intense tariff pressures, most of all by the Trump administration in the U.S. which were as high as 50-100% on many consumer electronics, automotive, and raw materials, its neighbors have come to serve as practical and convenient alternatives to fulfill reduced yet immediate global demand, with Vietnam and the Philippines being heavily targeted for future growth. Additionally, business dealings

encompassing sensitive data are moving away from Chinese providers among cyber security concerns. The shifting landscape of global hardware production and IT services has significantly boosted the economic value of Southeast Asia. Taiwan alone produces over 60% of the world's semiconductors and over 90% of advanced chips. Thailand has become a massive hub, particularly the Bangkok area, which is now considered extremely important for the Japanese export industry and its related supply chains.

The language industry on the African continent is currently in a transitional phase, characterized by a small but growing commercial market share, increasing investments in indigenous language technologies, and highly specialized

by 75% to make it more efficient.

The strong economic position and development of Middle-Eastern countries have transformed the region into a high-growth, emerging market that language providers are actively targeting. Governments are heavily investing in international trade, particularly in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries. Additionally, language AI startups are securing significant investments – such as Tarjama raising USD 15 million and Intella raising USD 12.5 million – to scale their Arabic speech intelligence platforms and advance native Arabic AI models. As new economic and technological sectors emerge in the Arab world, terminology standardization has become essential, laying the groundwork for high-quality



While the AI execution itself might be cheap,
**THE PREPARATION IS
 HIGHLY VALUABLE**

humanitarian applications. Industry leaders note that “Africa is coming to terms with economics,” and is actively seeking cost-efficient language solutions to deal with its enormous linguistic diversity. Furthermore, the growth of regional broadcasters and the expansion of international streaming platforms on the continent are boosting localization needs. In a bid to lay claim to a continent that’s too often ignored, major tech companies are actively entering the space. Recent developments include Google investing USD 8 million into African language and health technology, Cohere Labs launching a vision-language dataset for African languages, and local African AI talent successfully shrinking the continent’s first multilingual language model

localization.

Meanwhile, geopolitical tensions in Latin America (LATAM) are accelerating nearshoring trends, driving cross-border business activity and increasing the demand for localization in the region. In a major multinational initiative, Chile has partnered with 30 institutions across LATAM and the Caribbean to create Latam-GPT in a coordinated push to develop culturally relevant AI language models for the region. Also, Chinese manufacturers and tech companies find viable buyers in much of Latin America as the region is experiencing relative political tranquility and economic stability, even as some face sudden and ongoing challenges (Venezuela, Argentina, Cuba, Honduras).

Staffing and Talent

Although overall staffing levels dropped by less than 5% between the end of 2024 and the end of 2025, price pressure and the mind-numbing nature of post-editing AI output have driven many linguists to leave the profession. Additionally, the nature of rapid automation has contributed to the cutting of linguists. Nevertheless, 18% of companies report a shortage of tech talent, 27.6% report shortages in linguists, and 23.9% indicate a crunch in attracting interpreting talent.

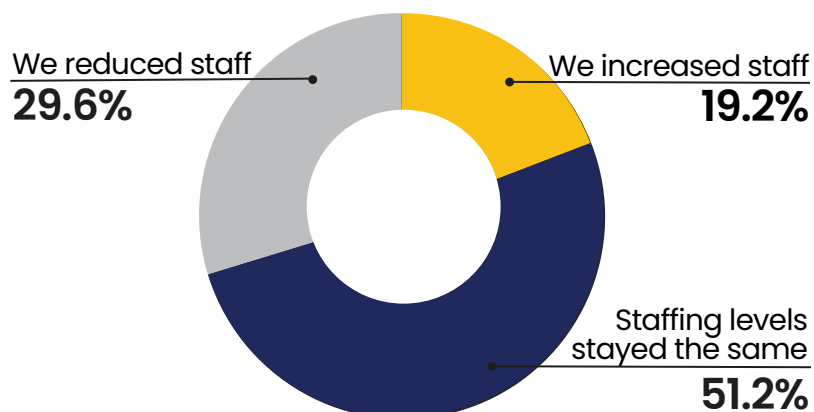
Staffing shortages are most acutely felt in the services division of the language industry, where 29.4% of survey respondents indicate a deficit in language talent. This contradicts consistent and ongoing reporting of linguists feeling forced out of their jobs by the AI revolution. However, many linguists and language company leaders in our research have indicated that linguists are leaving the industry voluntarily, disenchanted with requirements to adapt to a tech-forward translation process. As in any job market, esteemed talent feel more confident to make a career change, resulting in a crunch of high-end linguists. Interpreters are also in demand, and data show 26% of respondents are experiencing a shortage of interpreting linguists. The industry



Overall staffing levels
dropped by less than 5%
**BETWEEN THE END
OF 2024 AND THE
END OF 2025**

appears to be attracting much tech talent, as only 20.6% of respondents say they experience a shortage. In accordance with global trends there is an abundance of young, motivated localization engineers, AIOps and LLM specialists, multi-lingual data scientists, and software engineers.

Staffing level changes in 2025



04

MONEY

Money provides the foundation for everything in business. Where is it coming from, and where is it going? How can providers compete for their share? Let's explore if experiences match across the industry, and how its leaders are strategizing for 2026.

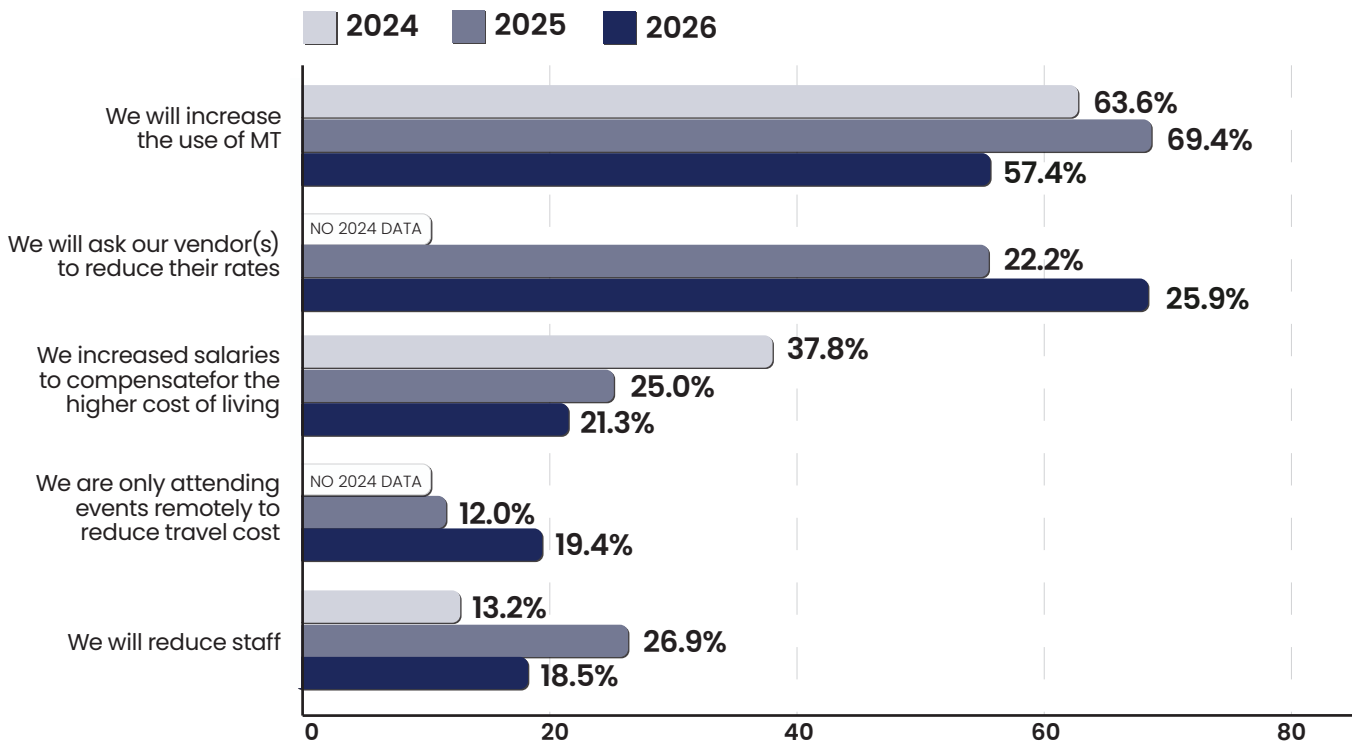
Inflation and Economic Pressures

Language industry providers are attempting to offset inflation and economic pressures by aggressively increasing the use of MT (cited by 57.4% of companies), asking vendors to reduce rates (25.9%), and cutting travel expenses (19.4%). The cost of in-house staff is also top of mind, and in order to retain valued workers, 21.3% of survey respondents indicated that they plan to increase salaries in 2026 – a gradually dropping figure over the past two years. Staff, office space, and increasing prices are considered less viable options to optimize finances in 2025 compared to previous years.



21.3% of survey respondents indicated that they **PLAN TO INCREASE SALARIES IN 2026**

Top five strategies to offset inflation and economic pressure



Changes in Pricing Models 2025-2026

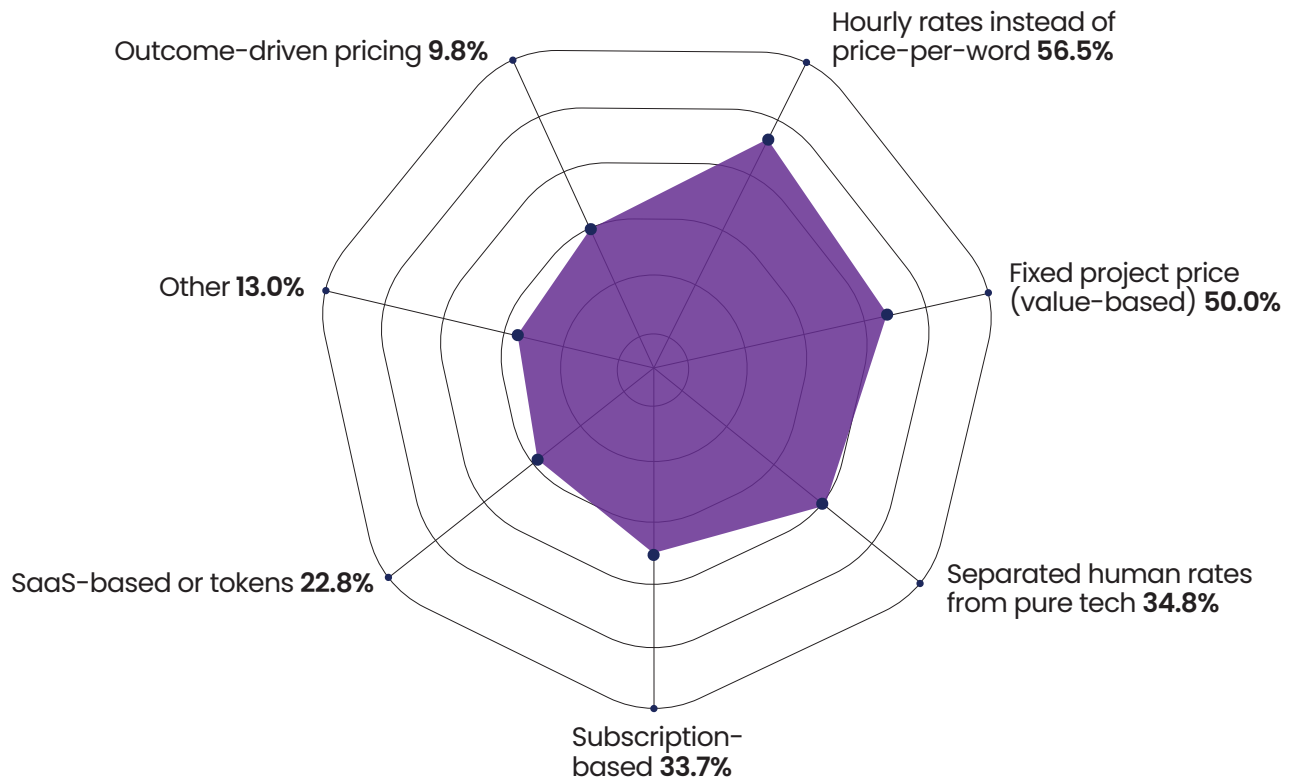
Pricing models are likely to undergo their most radical shift in decades. More than three-quarters of survey respondents are looking to change at least some of their pricing models, recognizing that the traditional PPW metric is antiquated in an AI-driven workflow. While providers recognize as much, many clients – particularly in procurement – still tend to demand per-word rates to easily compare vendors.

Value-based pricing and separated human rates versus pure technology offerings were implemented by nearly half of survey respondents in 2025. Subscription models, platform (SaaS) access fees or token-based pricing are less popular overall, but said to gain importance in 2026, according to survey data. As TM discounts are becoming obsolete providers are migrating toward hourly productivity models. For human in-

tervention, providers are selling specialist hours for expert review, auditing, and post-editing, ensuring that linguists are paid for their time rather than penalizing them for leveraging AI.

We compared the perceptions and intentions of language providers on pricing since 2023. Raising prices has become less of a realistic option over time, and each year providers express less optimism about their ability to raise rates. On the other end of the scale, price reductions have become a tool for survival in an increasingly competitive market, and year over year more language companies are willing to drop rates. This illustrates an environment of strong pricing pressure that has become even more challenging in 2025 than in previous years. This is one of the main reasons behind the apparent need to innovate on pricing models.

New pricing models implemented in 2025

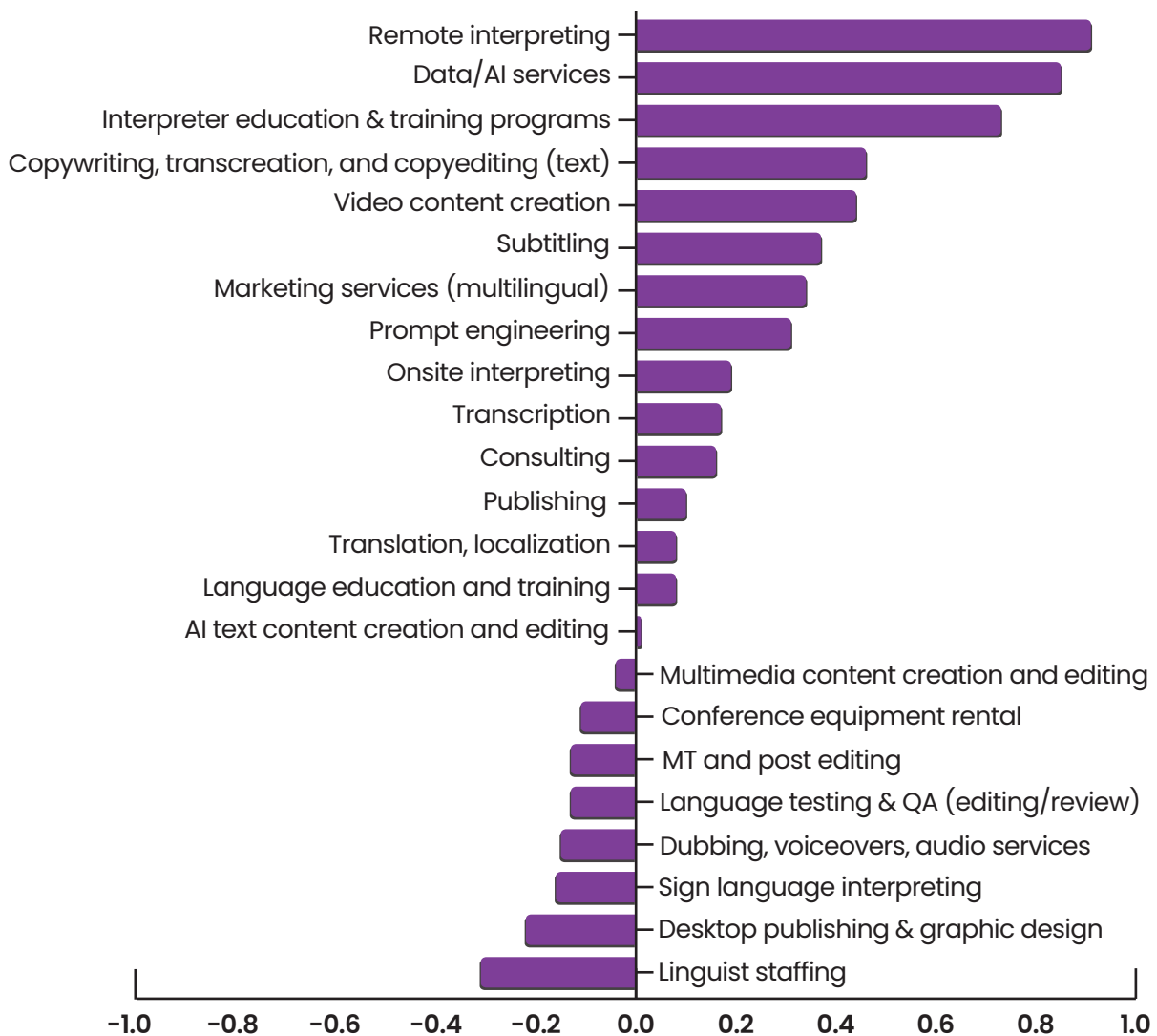


Growth Services

Remote interpreting, data/AI services, and prompt engineering are the strongest growth areas in 2025, with DTP and linguist staffing the weakest, emphasizing the rapid evolution of AI-dominant language solution workflows. Interestingly, publishing is experiencing a resurgence as consumers are appreciating the tactile experience of print products and curated content over AI slop. It might seem counterintuitive to see MTPE experiencing a drop in demand in 2025, but

it remains the second most provided service, and topped the charts in terms of demand increase in 2024. Conversely, prompt engineering is a newer, more specialized service that's offered by 16.2% of surveyed providers, yet in extremely high demand. Video content creation was more in demand in 2025 than the previous year with North American and European markets nearing saturation, growth is now concentrated in the Asia-Pacific and Latin American regions.

Growth services in 2025

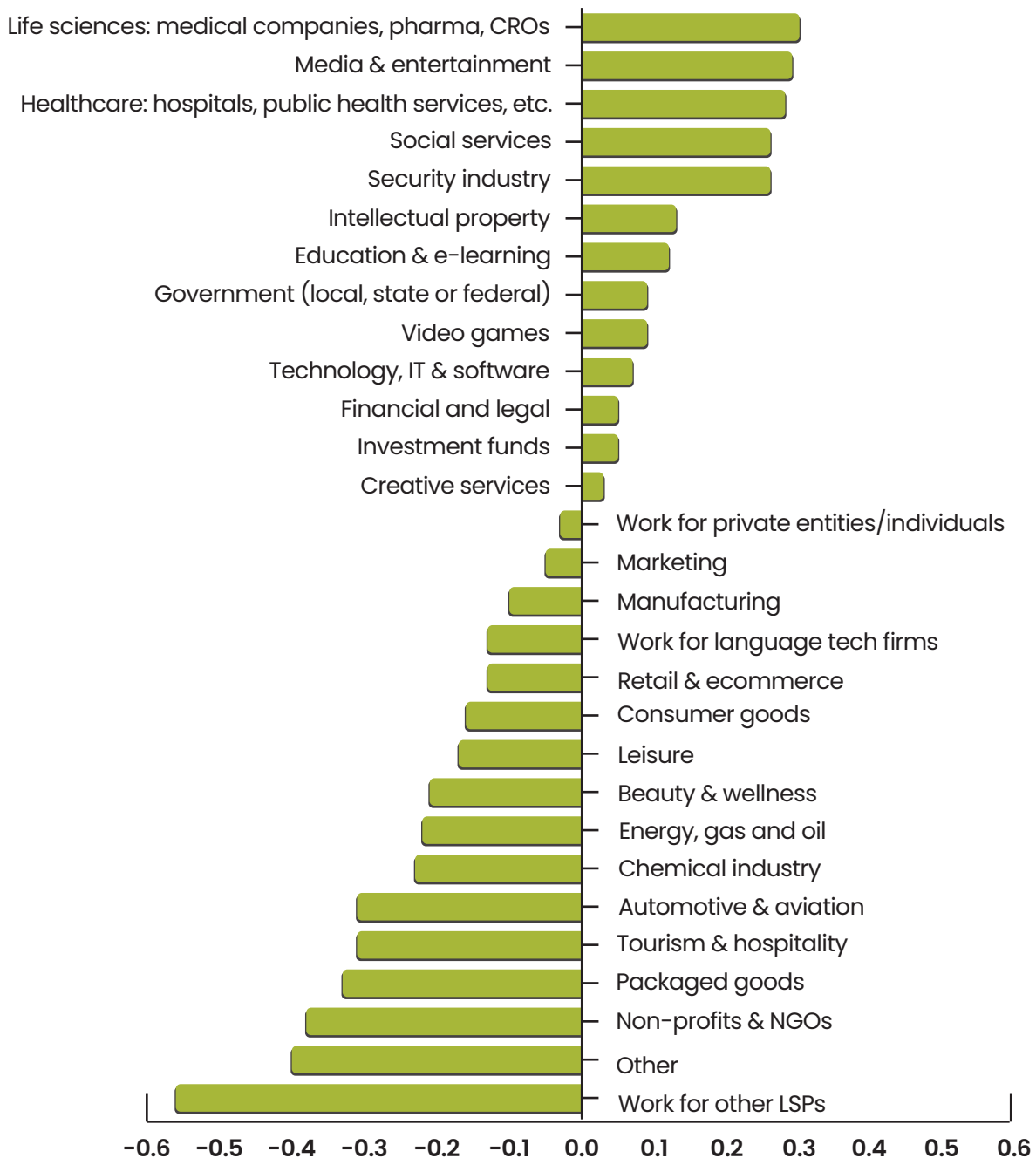


Growth Verticals

Regulated industries showed resilience in 2025 compared to those dependent on physical trade routes. Word among industry leaders is that the video games vertical is in a turmoil, taking ninth place in 2025, down from fifth place in 2024.

Additional loss in demand is felt strongly from the energy, gas, and oil, automotive, and chemical industries when energy prices are up and tariffs on luxury goods such as cars have made consumers hesitant to make large purchases.

Growth verticals in 2025

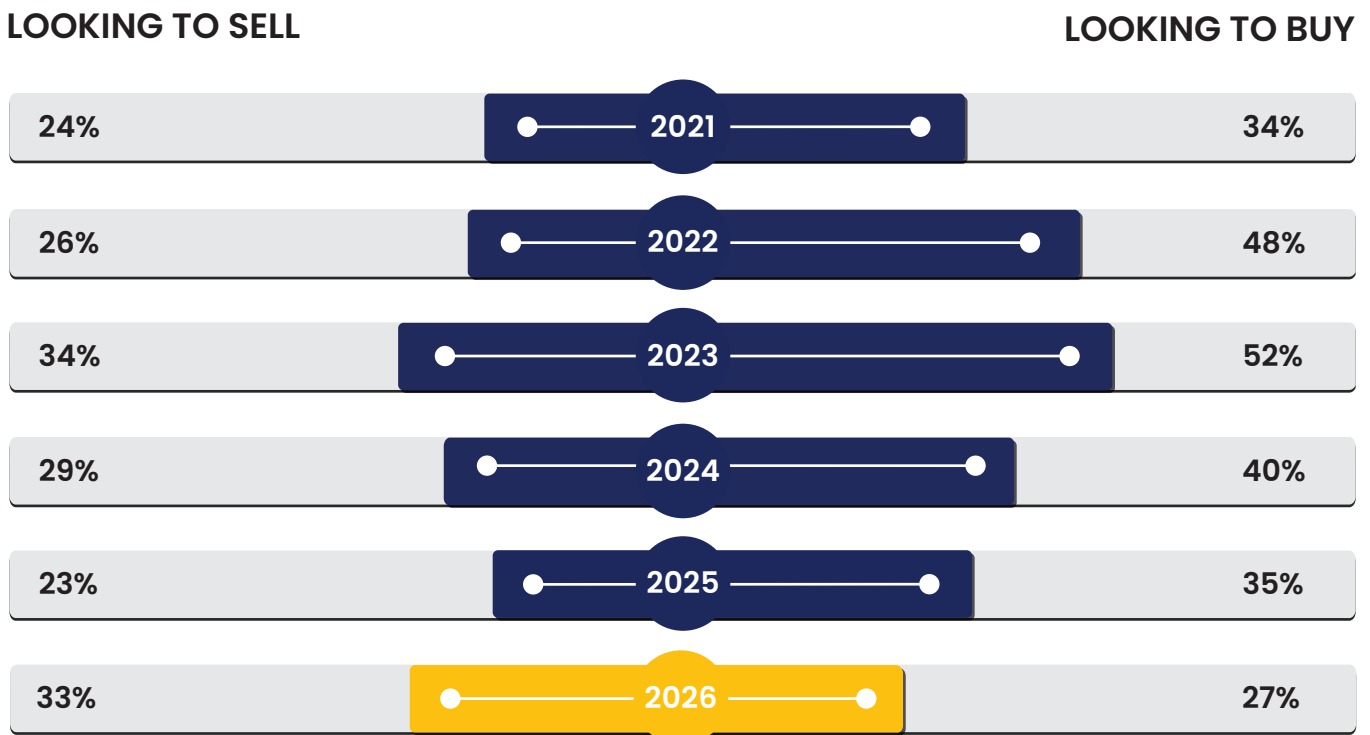


M&A in 2025: Technology Buy-Ups and Non-Monetary Partnerships

The M&A landscape has shifted to a definitive buyer’s market in 2025, though with a more nuanced dynamic beneath the surface. Buying power is constrained by pricing pressure, margin compression, and a prioritization of internal AI investments. As a result, only 27% of respondents report being active buyers, the lowest level since our tracking began. At the same time, 33% indicate they are open to selling, up from 23% in 2024 and the highest since 2023 (34%). This contrasts sharply with the behavior of the largest players, where approximately 60% of the Top 100 are actively pursuing acquisitions and only 8% are looking to exit, reinforcing a consolidation pattern led by scale.

The strategic logic behind M&A is also evolving. The focus has moved beyond geographic expansion toward acquiring differentiated capabilities, particularly in AI, data infrastructure, and interpreting. Leading firms are increasingly pursuing IP access through acquisitions and partnerships, integrating LLMs, AI dubbing, and workflow automation directly into their delivery stack. This reflects a broader shift in how value is built, with less emphasis on rapid top-line expansion and more on strengthening margins, improving efficiency, and creating defensible technology layers that support more predictable performance over time.

What language providers say about M&A



All visible 2025 M&A activity in the language industry space

Organized by month

Company A	Activity	Company B	Month	Reason
DEMAN	Acquired	GLS	Jan	Growth Strategy
MotionPoint	Acquired	Key Content	Jan	Market Expansion
Sorenson	Acquired	OmniBridge and Hand Talk	Jan	Growth Strategy
XTM	Acquired	Transifex	Jan	Growth Strategy
Korn Translations	Merged	Zaum Langs	Feb	Market Expansion
TransPerfect	Acquired	Apostroph Group	Feb	Market Expansion
Diuna Group	Acquired	Intertext	Mar	Growth Strategy
Diuna Group	Acquired	LSP Yellow	Mar	Growth Strategy
Translation People	Acquired	Transladiem	Mar	Market Expansion
TransPerfect	Acquired	TheSpeech	Mar	Growth Strategy
UpHealth	Acquired	Cloudbreak	Mar	Growth Strategy
BlueLion	Merged	GATS	Apr	Becomes TransNarrative
LSA	Merged	Lingolet	May	Growth Strategy
Magna Legal Services	Acquired	Base Santiago	May	Growth Strategy
Observe	Acquired	Dubdubai	May	Growth Strategy
Comactiva	Acquired	Textforum	June	Growth Strategy
John Snow Labs	Acquired	WiseCube	June	Offerings and Accuracy
Quansight	Acquired	Cobalt Speech and Language	June	Growth Strategy
RWS	Acquired	Papercup's AI IP	June	Services Expansion
XTM	Acquired	TXTOMedia	June	Growth Strategy
DigitalTolk	Acquired	24translate	July	Growth Strategy
Meta	Acquired	Play AI	July	Startup buy for Services
Propio	Acquired	CyraCom	July	Growth Strategy
The Wolfestone Group	Acquired	Omni	Aug	Market Expansion
TransPerfect	Acquired	Unbabel	Aug	Growth Strategy
1-StopAsia	Acquired	Villam	Oct	Becomes InAnyLanguage
Bering Lab	Acquired	Intersphere	Oct	Asian Scale-Up
XTM	Acquired	Consoltec (flowfit)	Oct	Improve Enterprise Offering
Critical Gap	Acquired	LTP EzDubs	Nov	Growth Strategy
Argo Translation	Acquired	Magnum Group	Dec	Services Expansion
Translate.one	Acquired	Landoor	Dec	Global Operations

M&A Outlook for 2026

The M&A engine in language services isn't slowing down, but the fuel has changed. For most of the last decade, the industry ran on private equity money chasing growth-for-exit: buy a platform, bolt on acquisitions, hit a multiple, flip it. That playbook produced a generation of language providers optimized for the next sale rather than the next decade, and many of them are now sitting on revenue lines pointing in the wrong direction.

The result is an industry awash in companies quietly for sale. There has never been this much inventory on the market and this little appetite to pay yesterday's prices. Sellers are still anchored to pre-AI multiples. Buyers are pricing in a different industry.

What's replacing the growth-for-exit thesis is something closer to old-fashioned operational discipline. The smart money is no longer paying for a multiple expansion story; it's paying for cash. That changes which value drivers matter. Primary factors such as customer durability via innovation and intimacy and operational diligence (overhead leverage, predictable margins, and low working capital) have moved to the front of the diligence conversation, while the differentiation pitch and the acquisition-led growth story have become supporting arguments at best.

It also changes who's at the table. The aggressive platform builders of 2018-2022 have gone quiet, and a different kind of buyer is stepping in: opportunistic, patient, and willing to buy cheaply, lean on debt and seller financing, and generate returns by fixing operations rather than riding a market wave. The targets don't have to be glamorous. They have to be fixable.

A parallel wave is unfolding further down the market. Smaller providers are being absorbed by medium-sized players hungry for their book of clients, their local presence, and their language pair coverage. Many of these deals are driven less by strategy than by demographics. Founders who built their businesses in a different era are looking at AI, at shifting buyer expectations, and at the energy required to reinvent everything they know, and deciding it's time to hand over the keys. The buyers get distribution and revenue. The sellers get an exit they can live with, even at lower multipliers.

Interpretation is the exception that proves the rule. Demand keeps growing, video remote and over-the-phone volumes haven't peaked, and the segment still rewards scale, so expect deal activity there to stay closer to the old playbook of mergers and roll-ups chasing growth.

That doesn't mean the AI-native deal has disappeared, only that it's taking a different shape. Outright acquisitions of AI capability have proven far harder than the headlines once suggested, especially with the rapid progress by which foundation AI builders are architecting ecosystems and partnerships around their models. Unbabel, once the poster child for AI-first translation and a company that raised over \$100 million in venture funding, ended up changing hands to Transperfect at what amounted to liquidation value. That outcome reset expectations across the category.



*The result is an
industry awash in*
**COMPANIES QUIETLY
FOR SALE**

The industry is now gravitating toward joint ventures and partnerships where the risk and the upside are shared. RWS with Cohere and Centific with Amazon are the early templates: two-sided arrangements that give the provider genuine access to frontier technology without forcing a billion-dollar bet, and give the tech partner a distribution channel into regulated, multilingual enterprise content. Expect more of these, and expect them to matter more than the next mid-market roll-up.

M&A in 2026 will keep happening at volume, but the foundations have shifted underneath it. The era of buying growth is over. The era of buying cash flow, fixing what's broken, and partnering for the parts you can't build yourself has already started.

05

ATLAS

We have compiled several world maps that show where growth happened, where revenues came from, and how language providers experienced changes in demand by geographical region.

Regional Trends in 2025

According to survey respondents, Europe remains a primary client stronghold, driven heavily by its stringent regulatory framework (such as the MDR, CSRD, and the EU AI Act). This environment guarantees sustained demand for specialized translation. Language providers are also leveraging Europe's structural multilingualism and aiming to scale internationally through established European multinational corporations. North America presents a highly polarized and polarizing market. While there is continued growth, geopolitical tensions and domestic political instability have caused market hesitation. Many providers anticipate the U.S. might suffer economically in both the medium and long term, prompting them to actively shift their partnership conversations elsewhere, benefiting Europe more than any other region.

Asia and the APAC region are widely anticipated to capture significant market share over the next five years. This surge is driven by rapid digital transformation, e-commerce, mobile-first product adoption, and export-ready startups

that require non-stop localization. Latin America (LATAM) is also viewed as a high-potential frontier due to its comparatively lower market maturity, creating massive room for growth. Africa is emerging as a region to watch – improving economic conditions, a vast diversity of local languages, and a strong search for cost-efficient language solutions are setting the stage for future industry integration.



North America
34

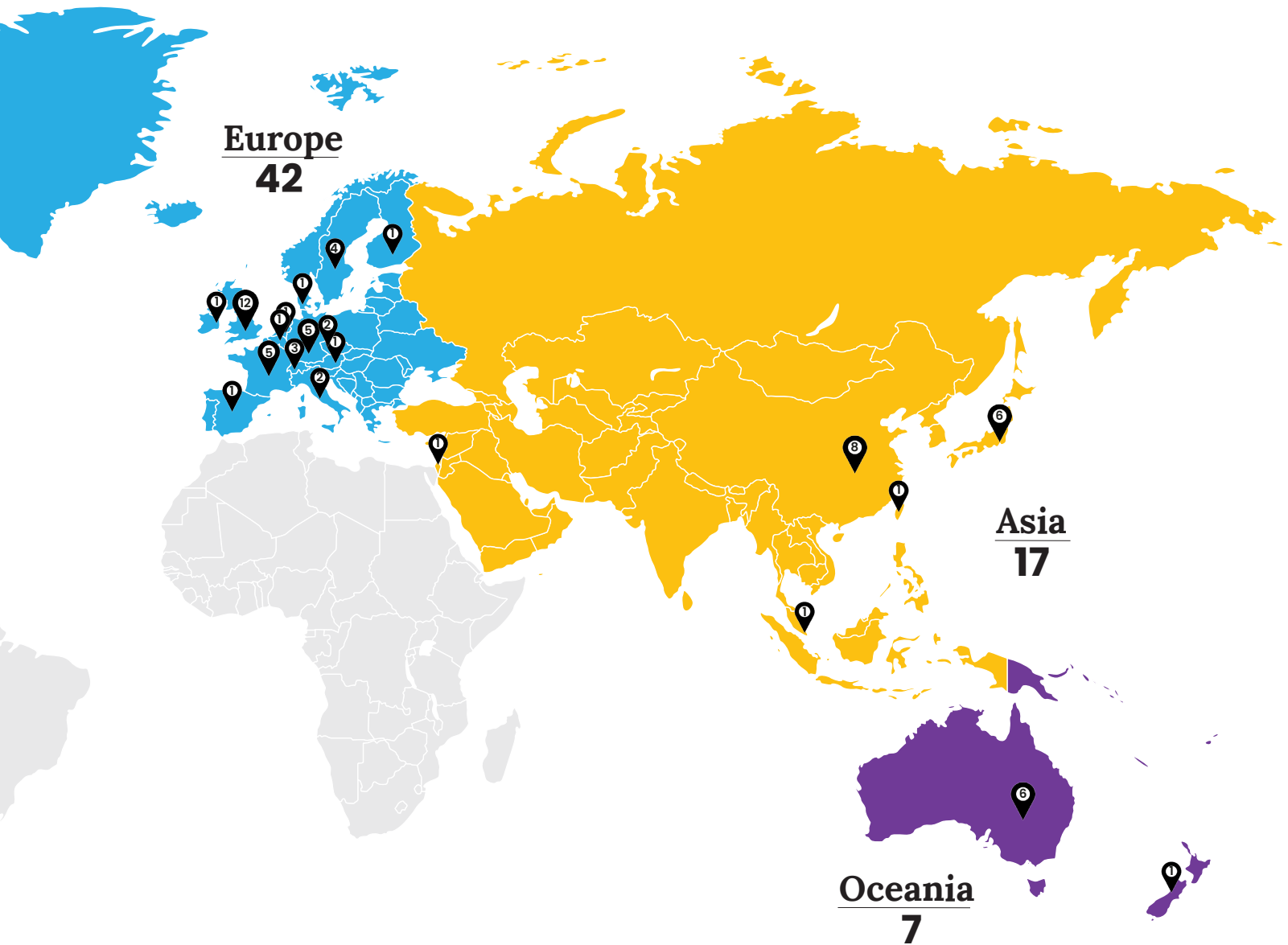
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*Geopolitical tensions
and domestic political*
**INSTABILITY HAVE
CAUSED MARKET
HESITATIONS**

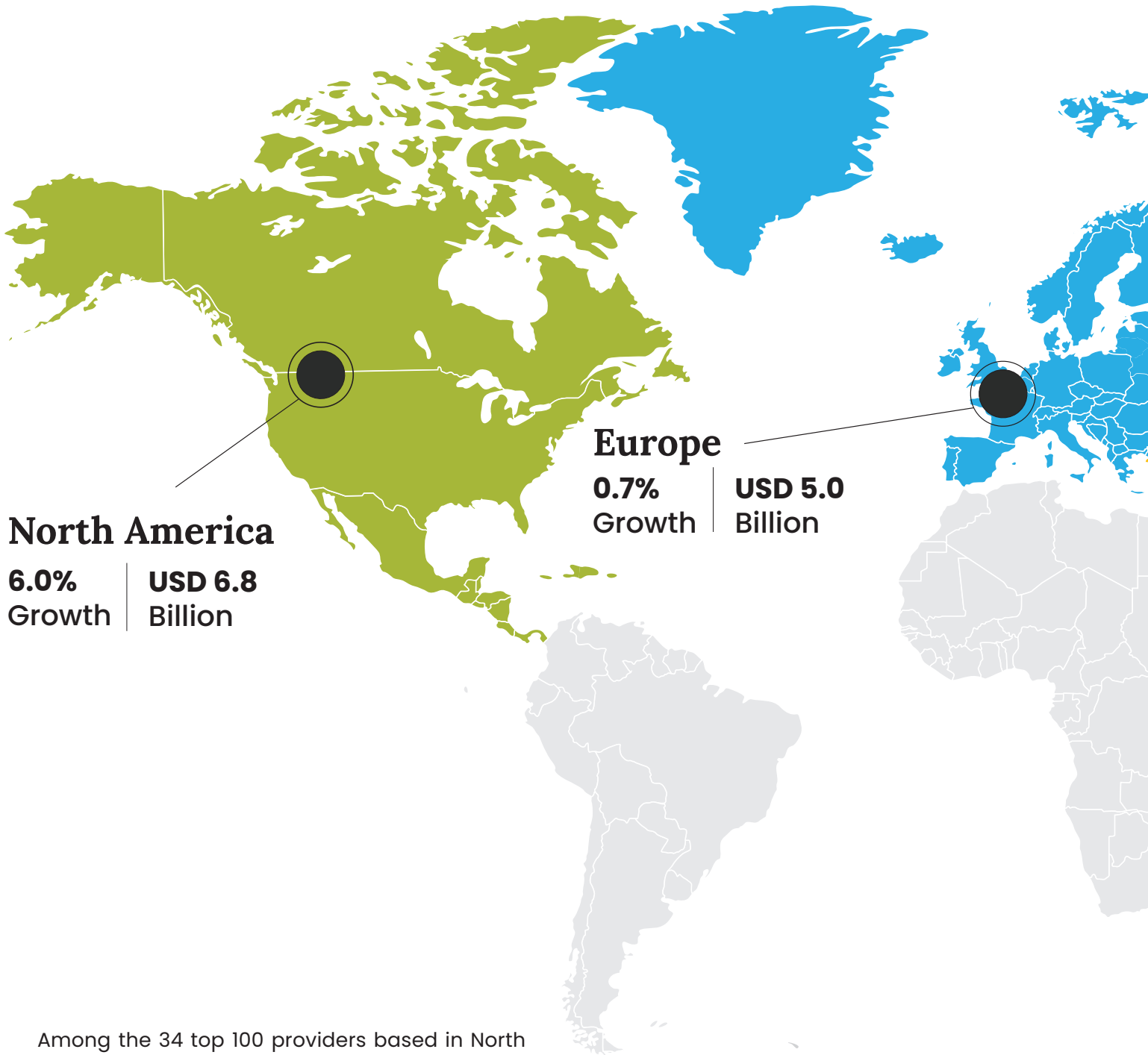
Where the Largest Providers Are

Of the top 100 language providers in this year's Nimdzi rankings, 42 are headquartered in Europe and 34 in North America. Companies from Asia represent 17 of the geographical distribution, in-

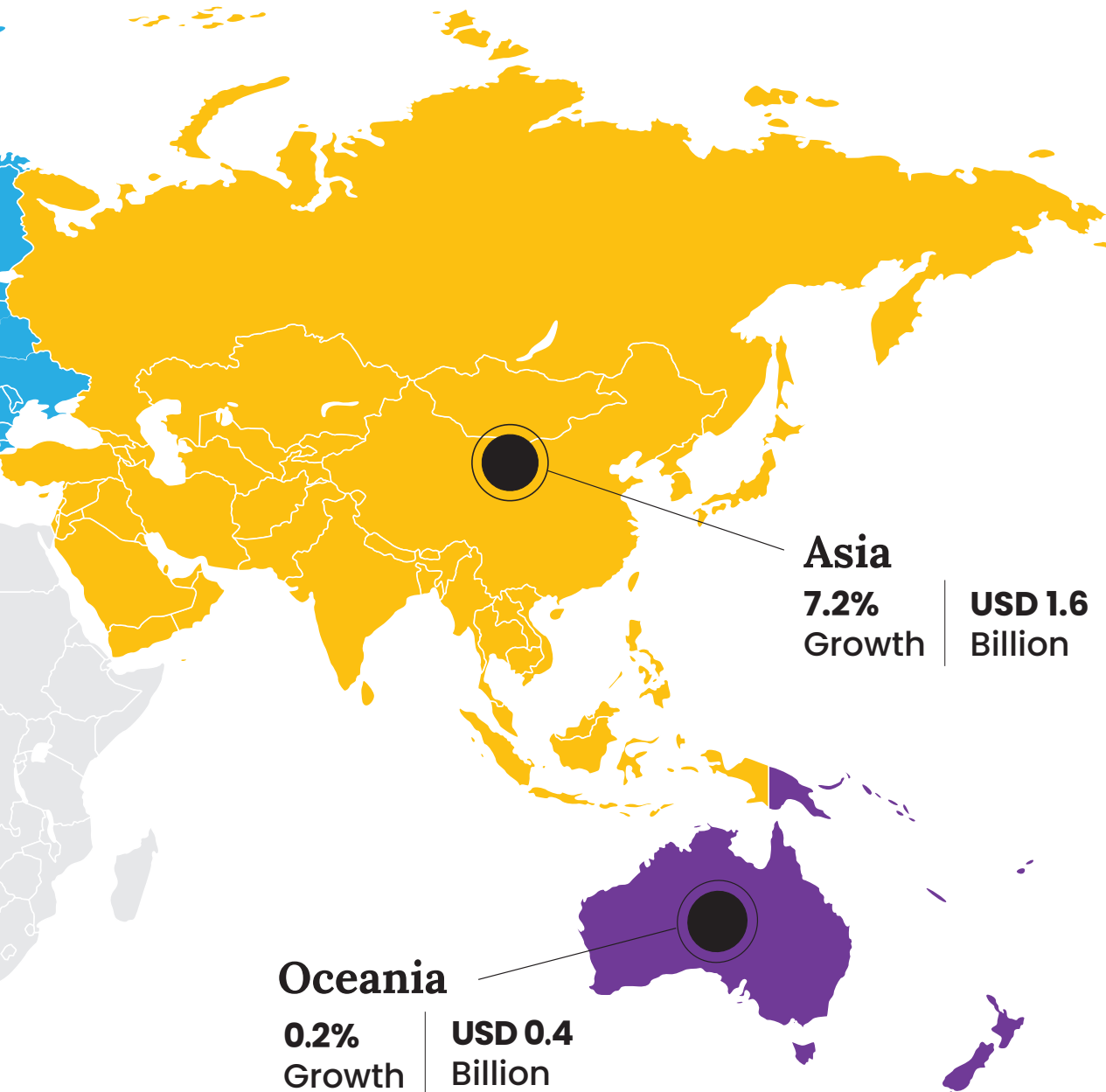
cluding one from the Middle East. Oceania hosts 7 of the top players. This year as well as last year, no provider from South America or Africa made it into the top tier.



Growth and Market Share by Geography



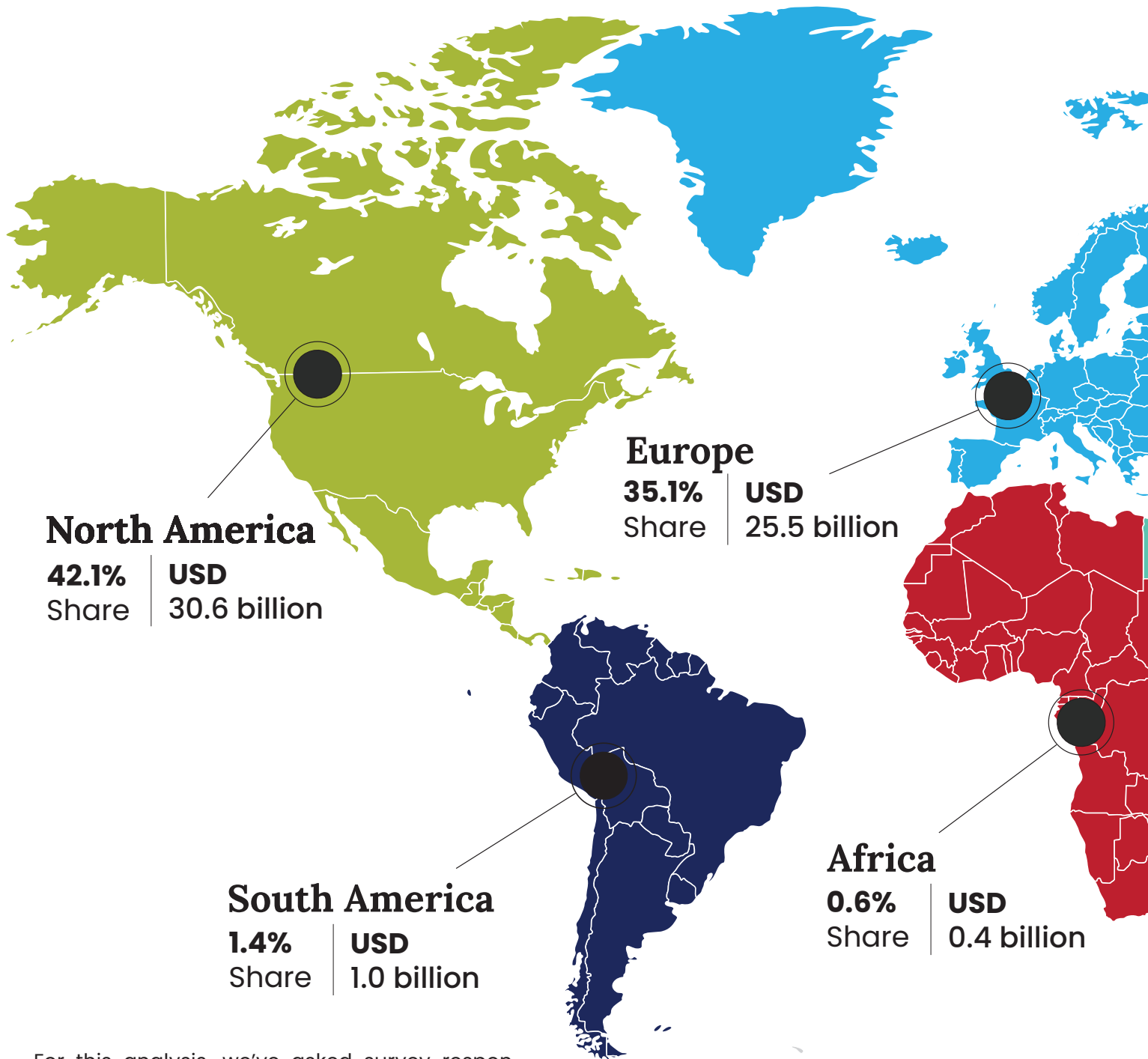
Among the 34 top 100 providers based in North America, weighted average growth slowed drastically from 20.6% in 2024 to 6.0% in 2025. Europe felt the effects of the U.S.' hostile stance toward global trade, as well as internal regulatory compliance needs, resulting in a joint weighted av-



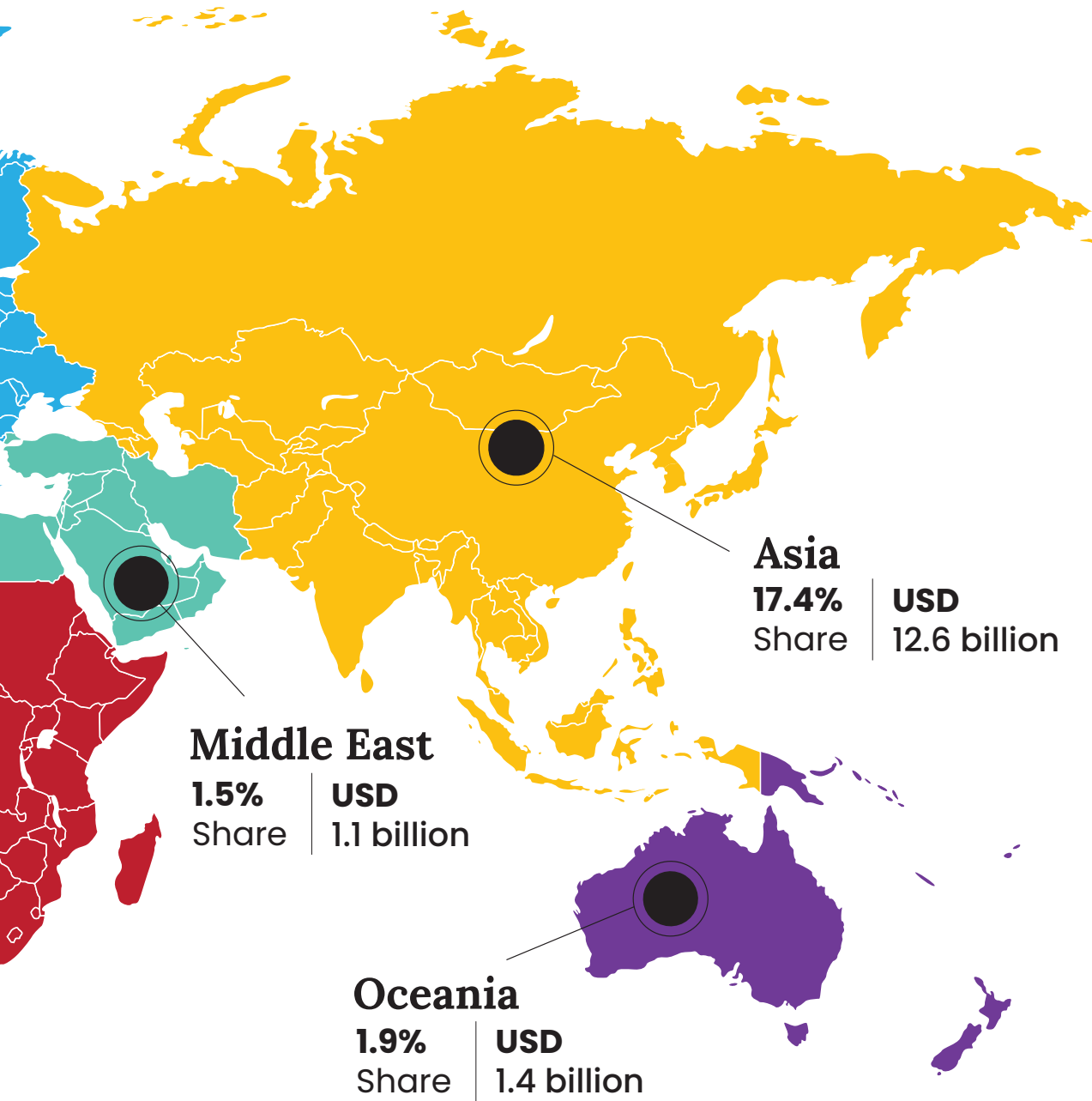
average growth of only 0.7% in 2025 – but growth nonetheless – compared to 4.4% in 2024. Oceania’s seven providers are back in the positive growth realm (0.2%) after two years of negative growth. The rising star among providers is Asia, with its 17 main players boasting 7.2% weighted

average growth compared to 1.6% in the previous year. North America-based providers hold a USD 7.2 billion market share (about 10% of the entire USD 72.6 billion market), second to Europe with USD 5.0 billion, followed by Asia with USD 1.7 billion and Oceania with USD 0.4 billion.

Where the Clients Are



For this analysis, we've asked survey respondents to divide their revenue by origin. Both Europe and North America were affected by a loss in client demand. However, North America is still responsible for the greatest demand in absolute numbers – USD 30.6 billion by our calculations.



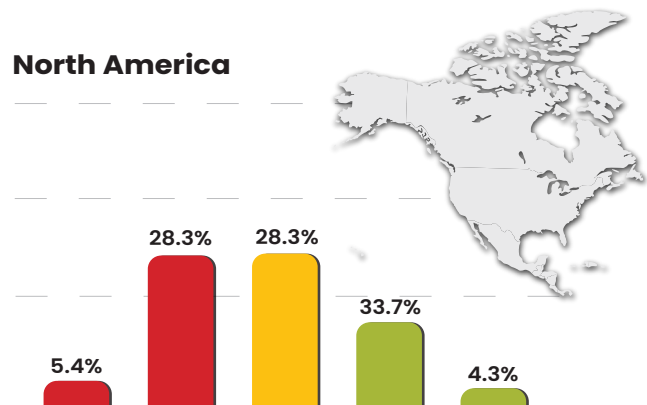
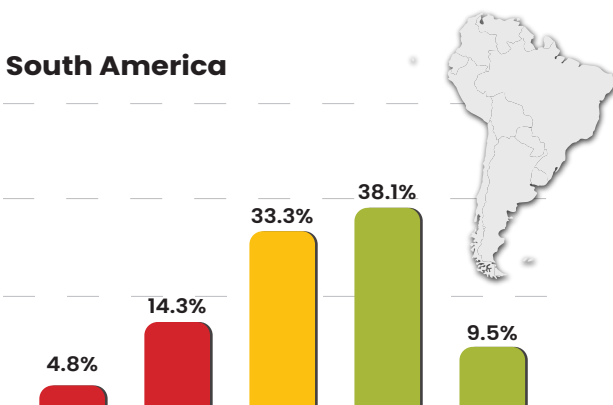
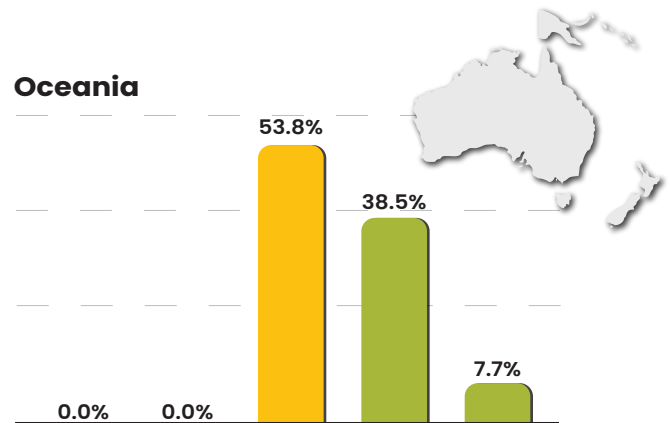
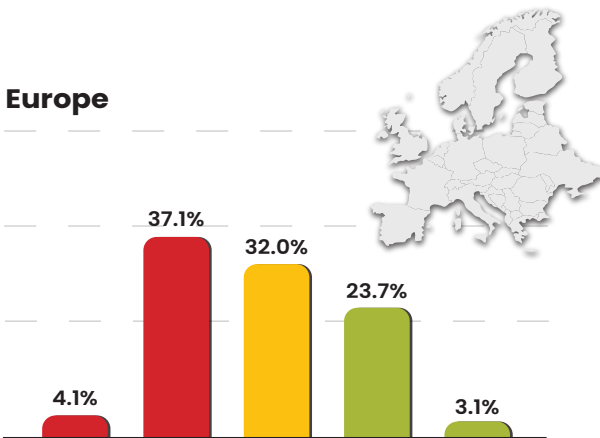
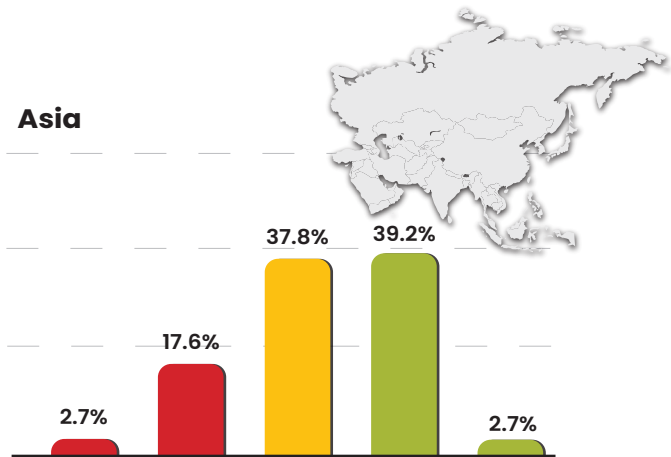
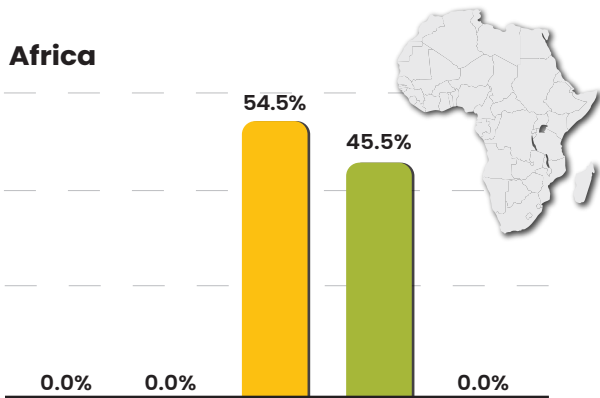
Europe is a close second with USD 25.5 billion and services rendered to Asia added up to USD 12.6 billion in 2025. Growth in market distribution is most notable in emerging markets. Africa is gaining viability at USD 0.4 billion, up from 0.3 in 2024. Separating the Middle East for the first time

in our reporting, our research indicates it makes up 1.5% of the entire market demand, or USD 1.1 billion. South America stayed level at USD 1.0 billion as economic challenges in Argentina are stabilizing and Brazil and Chile see continued GDP growth. Oceania is at USD 1.4 billion.

Change in Demand by Geography

Survey respondents remarked on the global trade shifts and the change in demand by geography. Asia and the southern hemisphere are in need of more language services and products whereas European and North American demand is down overall.

● DECREASE OR STRONG DECREASE
 ● NO CHANGE
 ● INCREASE OR STRONG INCREASE



06

TECH TRENDS

It's impossible to overestimate the impact of language technologies. The vast majority of language demand would simply not be fulfilled if machines weren't here to help. Without language AI, the industry would not have grown to the size and relevance where it is now. In this section, we highlight several key technology trends and driving forces that stood out from our analysis and predict how these will shape the market for language services in the coming years.

Language Technologies and AI

The language technology space has been intricately interwoven with the broader AI and tech landscape. The introduction of the internet, mobile telephony, cloud computing, and, most recently, (Gen)AI have consistently resulted in business models, value creation paths, content distribution channels, customer interactions, and consumption habits, each leading to a new wave of demand for language services. The new generation of GenAI and agentic AI tools don't break this rule of thumb, but puts language technologies smack in the center of the latest paradigm shift.

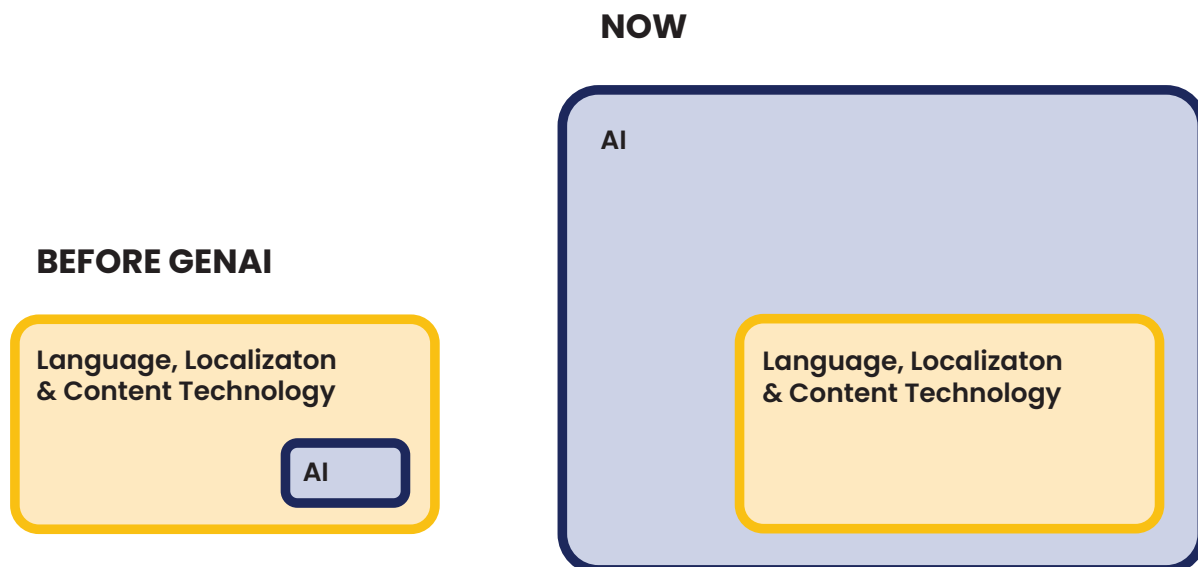
While new technology paradigms have always consistently resulted in demand increase for new services, tooling, and workflows, AI offers a more subtle but impactful shift. This shift is the rewiring of old coordination constraints, whereby competitive advantage shifts from owning resources to designing and governing intelligent coordination mechanisms. In other words, platforms powered by AI rather than traditional

hierarchical organizations are likely to be more agile, responsive, and even proactive in finding new ways of success in markets.

This narrative keeps fueling the AI war as big AI labs are racing to announce their latest top-of-the-chart achievements. That said, their focus is typically concentrated on productivity use cases in English, software code, or (sadly) military applications rather than on the language problem – leaving room for language industry actors to fill the gaps and create value for their clients via tailored products and custom solutions.

In 2024, LLMs annulled all previous technology trends and predictions. Last year, we said that LLMs are the trend and all predictions revolve around them. In 2026, the picture is compounded by agentic and edge AI capabilities, and we expect to see on-device, on-premise launches, as well as massive surge of (partly) agentic AI solutions from language platforms and automated translation and interpreting tools alike.

The place of AI in the language industry before and after GenAI



The Build-or-Buy Challenge

We observe a newly powered focus on engineering-first efforts and the resulting power shift to CTOs over marketing, sales, and operations – the typical customers of localization work. “AI-first” strategy pivots are announced by enterprises every week, and startups are at the helm with this paradigm change. Large enterprises might be more cautious to disrupt their well-set organizational and operational principals, but function by function the mandate to build with or on top of AI is spreading out from AI coding copilots to broader platform initiatives.

Undoubtedly, the build-or-buy dilemma has resurfaced due to agentic AI. The SaaSocalypse of early 2026, where the SaaS platform market value dropped by 20-30% triggered by the announcement of a new level agentic AI tools by Anthropic, the rise of Lovable, a vibe coding app, or the viral popularity of OpenClaw, an open-source personal AI agent platform, all signal the potential of agentic AI. The appetite among engineers and software developers to rethink and build technology solutions has never been greater. This in turn has impacted processes and workflows that were already supported with primarily algorithmic platforms seen as soon-to-be obsolete unless they are based on AI.

The right question is not “Can we build our own TMS, glossary, speech translation, or reporting tool with AI?” (the answer is basically ‘yes’ every time), but rather “Does replacing working systems with AI bring more benefits than using AI expertise and capabilities to create new value and win on the market?” This is a much more complex question to answer, so many organizations resort to answering the easier question with that unequivocal “Yes, we can!” without a clarity on business goals and expected outcomes.

2026 will likely see two major, conflicting directions on language technology space. On the one hand, new, innovative capabilities launched by language platforms in rapid succession, and on the other, a defensive narrative on behalf of platform owners with their engineering-forward, AI-first minded customers. We strongly believe that expertise and experience built over years and decades by language tech developers will not be easily replaced by vibe-coded in-house initiatives – in the vast majority of the market.



*Large enterprises might be more cautious to disrupt their **WELL-SET ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL PRINCIPALS***

Industry Effects of Generative AI in 2025

As GenAI is moving from pilot projects into production deployment, AI is also driving an explosion in total content volume. Because the cost of translation has dropped, enterprises are capable of localizing vast amounts of content that previously went untranslated. However, generic technology alone does not solve the enterprise language problem. Innovation capability and the ability to safely orchestrate human-in-the-loop AI workflows have become the primary indicators of future success for the language industry.

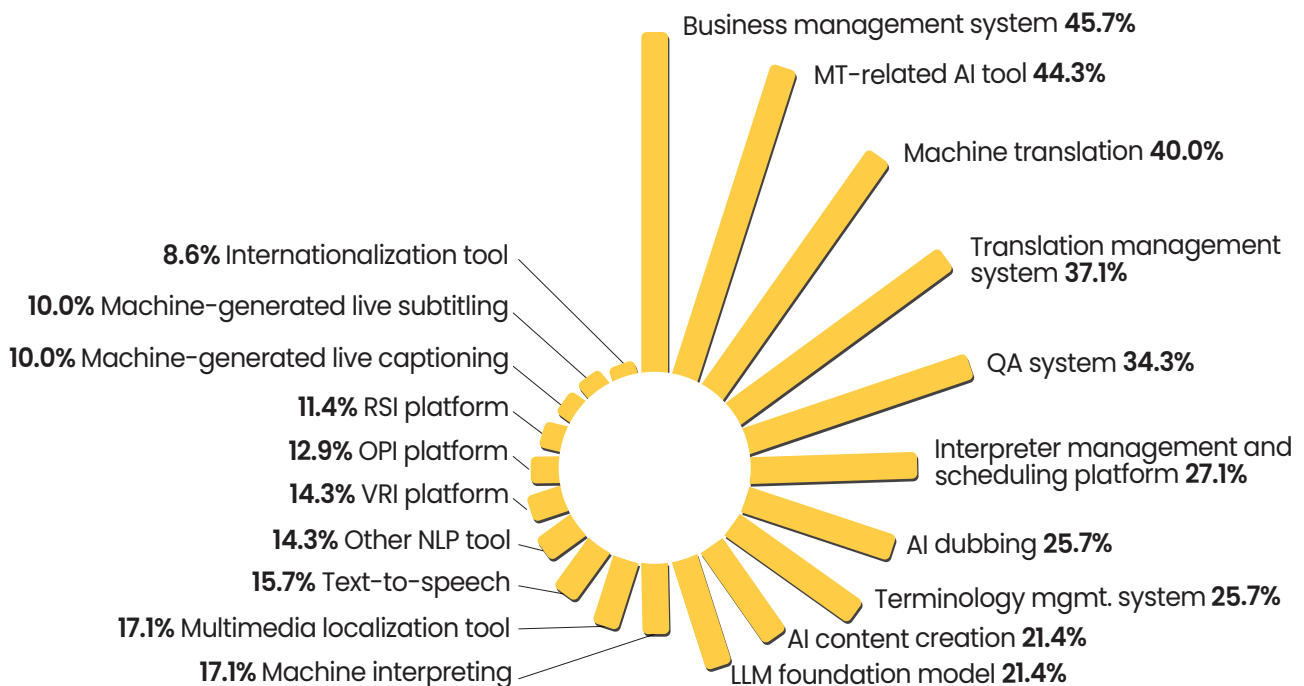
In our research, we asked industry providers what technologies they developed in 2025. Interestingly, a non-AI tool, business management system took first place, filled by – as expected – translation related use cases, including MT, MT-related AI, and translation management systems. AI dubbing and AI content creation are in the top 10, and other high-impact technolo-



Generic technology alone does not solve
THE ENTERPRISE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

gies such as machine interpreting, multimedia localisation, and text-to-speech solutions are just outside the 10 most frequent technologies developed.

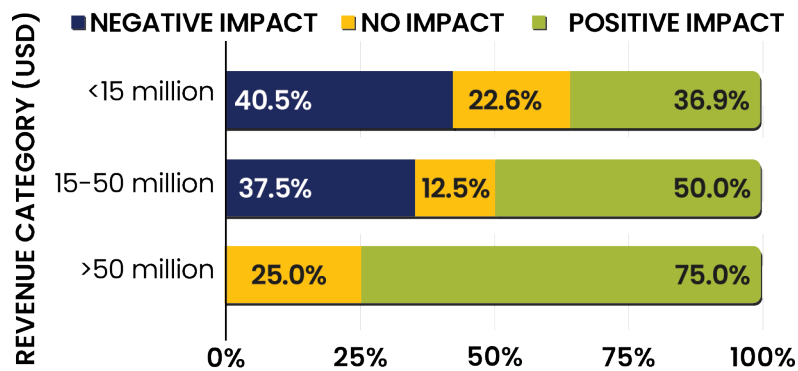
Types of technologies developed in 2025



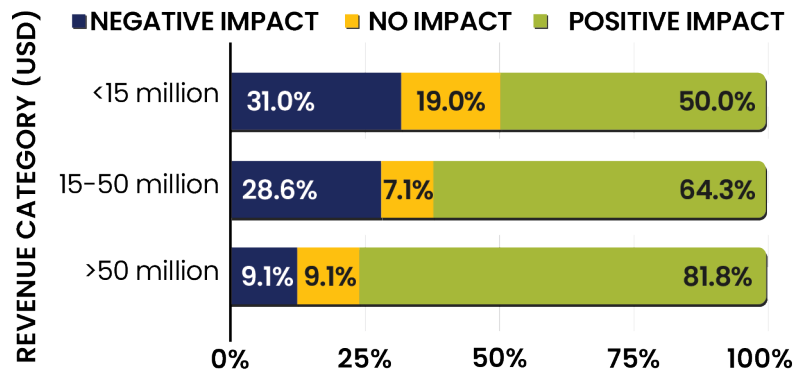
When asked about the impact of GenAI on their business, our respondents were more optimistic about 2026 than the results from 2025 indicate. Analyzing the data by provider size, we see that more providers are optimistic for 2026 in each revenue bracket, than they feel about 2025 in hindsight. This indicates that the time for experimenting with AI is yielding results for those who do it deliberately. Indeed, provider leaders who were interviewed as part of our research all expressed a very positive outlook for the future, not despite, but specifically because of AI in the language industry.

That said, and perhaps unsurprisingly, smaller providers – on average – have a less optimistic view of the future. This is likely because investment and successful experimentation with AI is both demanding on budgets and requires a sufficiently large customer base with whom to validate and refine the implementation drafts with. These two factors are more readily available for larger providers, who are also more likely to have leadership teams and professional technology staff to drive the tech-forward transformation.

How did GenAI impact your business in 2025?



How will GenAI impact your business in 2026?



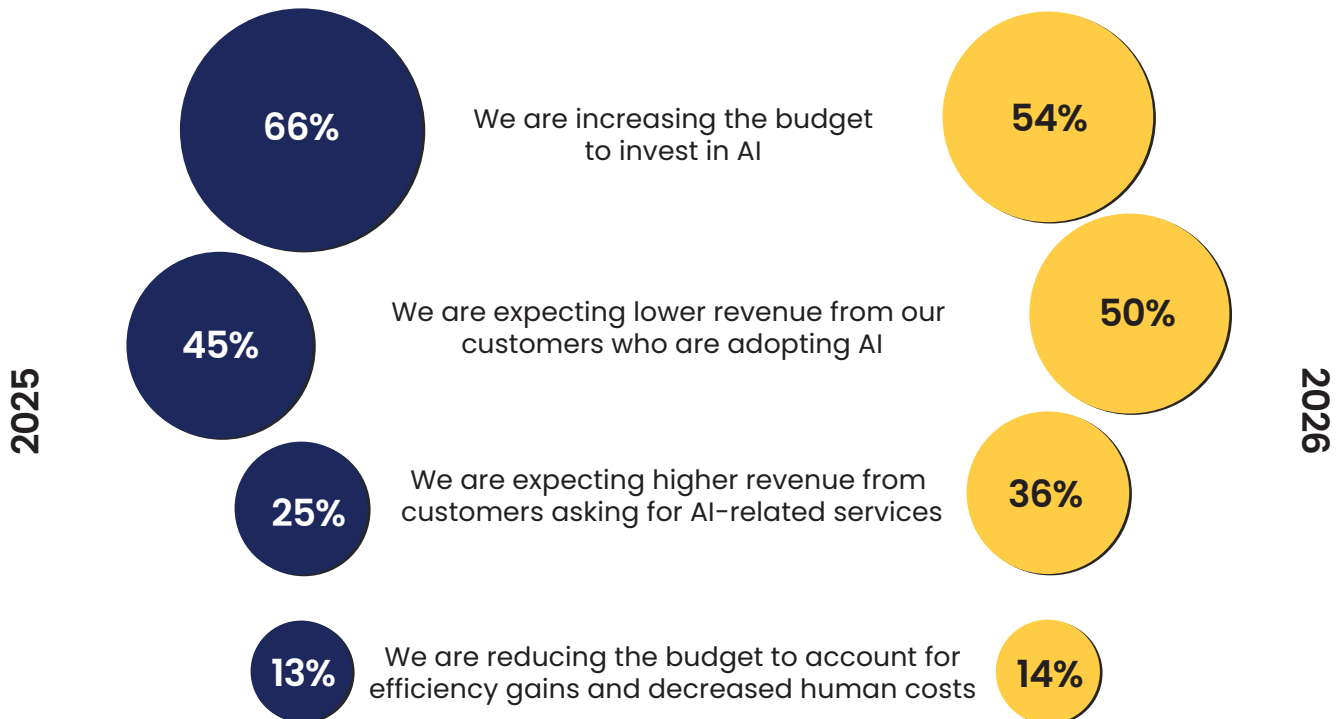
Generative AI Effect on 2026 Budget

According to our research, nine out of 10 survey respondents are concerned about the impact of generative AI on client behavior. Security risks, misunderstanding this new powerful technology, and a perception that AI-powered translations ought to be free, are contributing to pressure on providers. One positive result of this pressure can be found in the push to innovate, dictated both by shifting demand and the diminishing of traditional translation revenue streams.

In their budget planning for 2026, more than half of all survey respondents say they will in-

crease their budget to invest in AI, but a similar number are preparing for lower revenue from clients who are adopting AI into their own workflow. At the same time, opportunity arises elsewhere. According to a third of respondents, higher revenues are expected from clients who request AI-related services, provided of course that the provider is capable of meeting such demands. About one in eight respondents say they are reducing their budget to account for efficiency gains and decreased human cost – another confirmation of the staffing shift in our industry.

Budget effects of generative AI 2025–2026



Data-for-AI – Sector Analysis

The data-for-AI space keeps booming simultaneously with the multilingual side of that sector. The leaders in this space include Transperfect, RWS, Centific, Welo Global, and DATAmundi, competing with the generalists such as Scale.ai, Appen, TELUS, and gig-economy players such as Uber and DoorDash in a highly competitive environment. While entry to this space seems easy for language industry players, factors such as the necessary technology platforms or diverse performance metrics for the myriad of use cases (from translation to robotics) need careful consideration and upfront investment.

This service line has become important enough for some companies to create separate brands for data-for-AI technologies and services such as RWS's TrainAI, Centific's Flow, Lilt's AI DataStudio, Argos Multilinguals' Data, or Welo Global's (previously Welocalize) Welo Data. These companies have a few key ingredients

to realize success: vast pools of freelancers for collecting, validating, and annotating data for AI, internal AI expertise for services such as consulting, prompt engineering, model hosting, and fine-tuning in the LLM space, and a long tenure with multilingual data – something that generalist providers are often in lack of.

Based on our discussions with providers, we see two distinct trends emerging in the field:

- ◊ Requests for data-for-AI service are becoming more focused on high-value expert validation (up to PhD-level) instead of low-cost data gathering, as the focus of AI models is pivoting from general information to domain-specific capabilities
- ◊ Demand from AI labs is complemented by enterprises for expert, in-domain model retraining or fine-tuning that entails a rising need for language-related AI data services from new potential buyers.

Machine Translation – Sector Analysis

Since the launch of GPT-4, LLMs have been permeating the MT landscape, either in tandem with or replacing neural machine translation (NMT) solutions. Translated's Lara, DeepL's new system, Supertext's models, and even Google Translate (partially) run on LLMs under the hood. While all major providers customize and fine-tune open-weight LLMs for translation tasks, partnerships and acquisitions are also in the mix. Transperfect expanded their LLM-first capabilities by the acquisition of Unbabel, and RWS partnered with the Canadian AI lab Cohere to bring about the next, LLM-based generation of their automated translation solution, LanguageWeaver Pro. LLMs are also used widely in "sovereign AI" programs, from Europe (both EU and national initiatives) through Africa (such as by the African Languages Lab) to Asia (Sarvam's model family in India, Japanese, Korean, and other national initiatives).

Open(-weight) releases and local deployment narratives are re-segmenting the MT market.

TranslateGemma's open distribution and positioning for device-scale deployment expands the feasible deployment modes for translation (mobile/offline, local servers, fine-tuned private instances) and challenges the paradigm that high-performing translation must be consumed as a hosted API. Cohere's Tiny Aya similarly targets multilingual capability in a small footprint, reinforcing a trend where "good enough + controllable + locally runnable" competes with "best possible + cloud-only."

Language coverage in the MT space has also observed another step in evolution, indicating that expanding the number of languages supported is a simpler and cheaper decision than previously. DeepL's new solution now supports more than 100 languages, Meta's OmniTranslate targets 1,600 languages, and Google's TranslateGemma (while officially for 55 languages) was created to be adaptable for low-resource languages easier than ever before.

Translation Management – Sector Analysis

Some say the TMS is dead.

We say: “Long live the TMS.” Every few years, there is a paradigm shift that prompts the death of the TMS. With AI, the TMS as we knew it got a

makeover and a new business card: “Multilingual content platform”, “AI-powered localization hub,” or something similar.

A few truths:

Statement	Rebuttal
TM leveraging is obsolete.	Caching content for reuse isn't.
Context is king.	Injecting context is neither easy, nor cheap.
Building an agentic language platform is easy.	The shiny bit is easy. Making it enterprise-grade is not (routing, workflows, assignments, vendors, verification, language asset management, all the plumbing).
Orchestration means API calls.	Complexity lives in the 20% outliers, not in the 80% bulk.

Users in most modern TMSs now can use AI to identify linguistic issues, explain terminology choices, and suggest improvements. Automated post-editing emerged as a new capability, with AI refining machine-generated translations to improve fluency, consistency, and stylistic alignment before human review. There isn't really anything new about model-agnostic AI layers, machine translation quality estimation (MTQE), or AI post-editing.

That said, the TMS landscape is shifting fast. Builders are integrating AI solutions, both off the shelf and self-developed ones, and experimenting quickly with a wide range of clients (a luxury in-house built solutions can't do). Some of these experiments (such as MT/AI use detectors or AI QA tools) are made public as lead magnets as vibe coding makes these features accessible but not monetizable. Others focus on major upgrades such as more composable builds and contextual AI translation. But none of these fea-

tures really build moats, at least not for the long term. The moat of successful translation platforms is in the general complexity hidden under simple interfaces, easy-to-deploy packages, and predictable costs.

The next generation of TMSs will certainly focus on agentic behaviour. This is enabled by comprehensive orchestration capabilities, championed by Blackbird and Phrase, and built into most platforms by now, including XTM, Intento, and Smartling. Translation management is (slowly) moving from TMS and glossaries toward a unified data pool (such as Blackbird's Blacklake or ETeam's LangOps Core) and an intelligence layer that can be accessed by agentic AI or algorithmic systems in harmony across modalities and content types. AI agents are envisioned to support workflow decision making, audience simulation, and integrated multimodal processing. We expect these developments to speed up and come to first fruition in 2026.

Multimodal Language Technologies – Sector Analysis

Media localization technology (especially AI dubbing) is advancing quickly. Still, it remains constrained by consent and quality failure modes. YouTube’s extended launch of automated dubbing or Amazon’s Prime Video’s pilot in AI dubbing are examples where cost of failure is relatively low, paving the way for wider adoption. The likely near-term equilibrium is not full automation, but scaled hybridization: AI expands what can be localized, while human experts arbitrate identity, tone, and culturally sensitive topics.

There are new players on the block when it comes to voice technologies, as well. For instance, Cohere launched their own speech-to-text model, DeepL Voice is an impressive new real-time voice translation solution, Centific’s Flow offers well-controlled AI dubbing, and Translated is working on Meetween as an EU-funded multimodal AI solution for virtual meetings.

In the meantime, translation management

platforms are all integrating third-party solutions. AI dubbing, subtitling, and captioning (with the possibility of human oversight) is available in practically all of these platforms, be it GlobalLink Media from Transperfect, PaperCup with RWS (to be integrated into Trados), VCC in XTM, or integrations such as Captionhub, ElevenLabs, or Voi-seed in Phrase, Crowdin, or memoQ.

As voice solutions are gaining popularity and become more accessible, they fuel the need for data-for-AI services for domain or accent adaptation. At the same time, governability of these systems (be it subtitling, voiceover, or lip-synced AI dubbing) by human experts remains critical for high-profile content. The knobs and dials for tuning or fixing AI output during generation, within the workflow, are still critical (considering how many times we have seen ‘Nimdzi’ misspelled by straight-through transcription tools), and so is the deliberate training of experts who train, supervise, and adjust these solutions.



*The likely near-term
equilibrium is not
full automation*

**BUT SCALED
HYBRIDIZATION**

The Human Aspect in the AI Age

At this point in time, it is important to acknowledge that language technologies, including AI, do not fully solve the overarching “language problem” in their current state. The ongoing and significant improvements in the quality of language technologies has opened up new markets by creating opportunities for use cases and is attracting buyers that previously would not have considered using language services due to complexity, lack of expertise, or budget constraints. Here too, human oversight will continue to be much needed, especially when it can achieve strategic business outcomes such as user engagement, brand recognition, and customer loyalty.

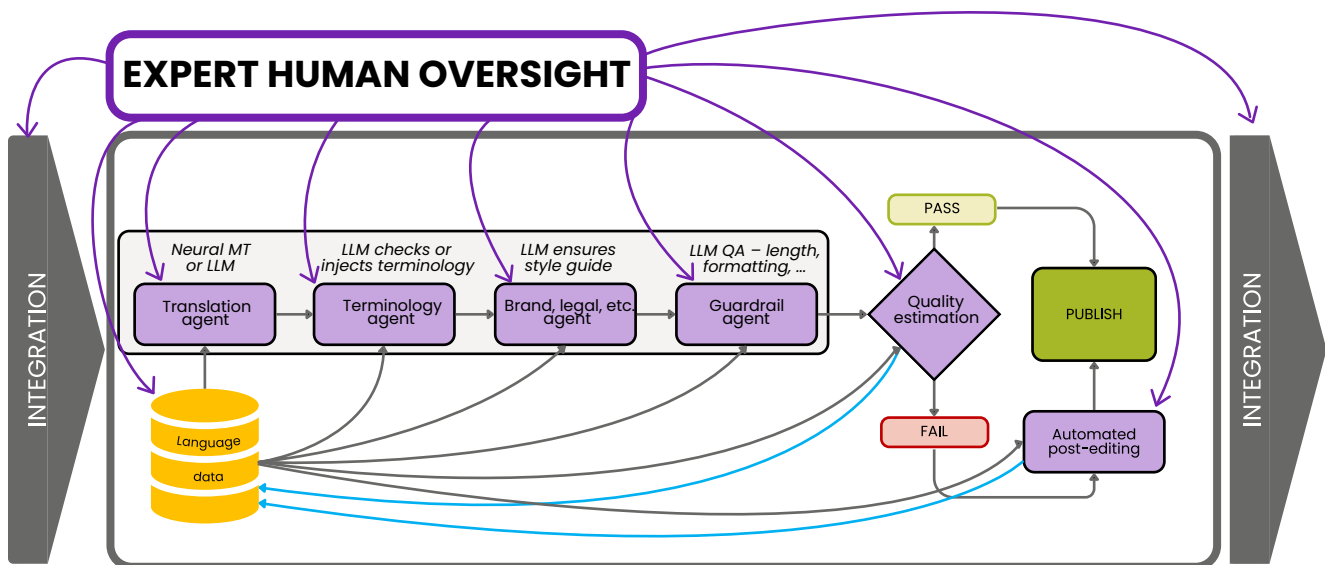
The number and variety of technical and linguistic tasks needed in the AI age is far more than in the – in hindsight, simpler – machine translation and post-editing world. Considering agentic AI translation or dubbing workflows. The number of sub-agents, their interactions, data preparation and consumption, prompt mechanisms, and the overall orchestration is more

complex than previous systems. The expert human oversight of agentic AI is fundamentally different from the work that a typical translator, linguist, or project manager got used to in traditional workflows. This necessitates a new wave of skills that can’t readily be acquired in standard courses, only via on-the-job learning.



Language technologies, including AI, do not fully solve the overarching
“LANGUAGE PROBLEM”
IN THEIR CURRENT STATE

Next: Agentic AI – where is the human?



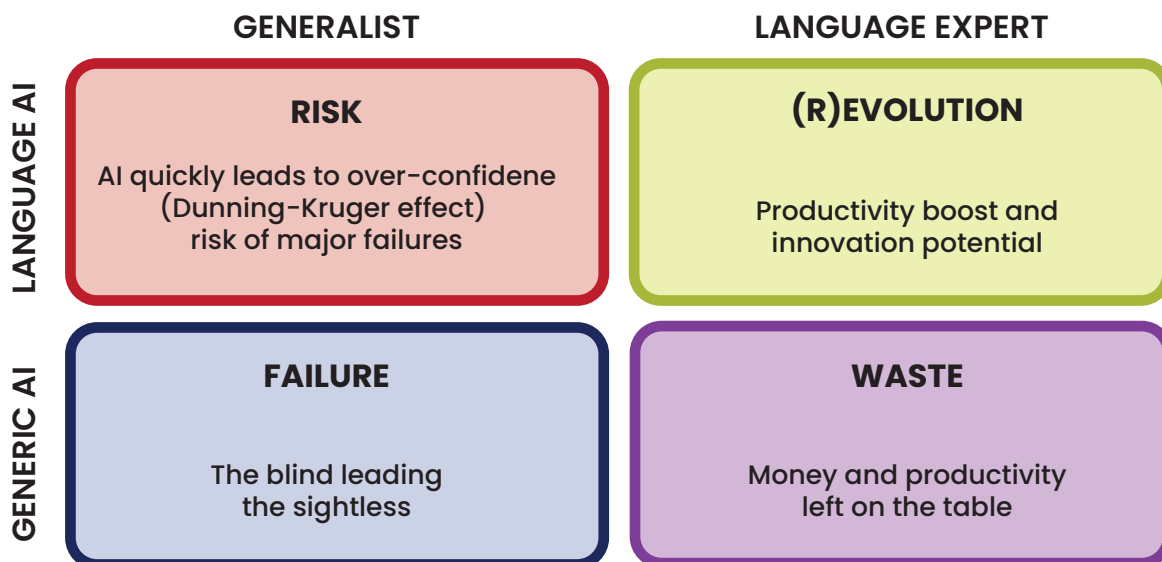
That said, human language talent is already scarce and limited in capacity for high-expertise jobs, and the stream of young entrants to the industry is thinning in the shadow of AI. While technology bridges many of these gaps, it creates new opportunities for those ready to show up with curiosity and a willingness to continuously learn and relearn. Ultimately, it's language, culture, or market experts that can best direct and work with purpose-built technologies for the right outcomes: increased productivity and continuous innovation.

The objectives haven't changed: the language industry facilitates the complexity of multilingual communication to enable positive business impact on the client side. The means to this end, however, are changing, and changing quickly. 2026 will be a pivotal year for providers of both language services and technologies to find and retain the right talent mix, provide on-the-job training, harness innovative platforms, and realign the service or product-market-fit for evolving client expectations.



2026 will be a pivotal year for providers of
BOTH LANGUAGE SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGIES

Finding the right combination of tech and talent



How We Create the Nimdzi 100

Nimdzi employs an investigative approach and commits hundreds of hours into intense research, data collection, and analysis in order to present insights that have previously been unavailable.

As the line between language technology and language services is blurring due to

the abundance of use cases enabled by AI, we make the case that LTPs are now in direct competition with LSPs to provide the same services. This qualifies companies like DeepL and Weglot to take a place in our rankings, and we anticipate even more tech-only providers to make the report in 2026.

Methodologies used to create the Nimdzi 100 ranking:

- 01 We focused on identifying language industry providers with revenue of USD 1 million or more, with the assistance of in-country experts and more than a dozen associations. Once we identified the relevant providers, we researched information that could help us make more accurate estimates of their size and talked to the management directly, where possible, to verify our findings.
- 02 We're typically listing full company revenue, not just language services revenue. It can be difficult to separate these from external sources of information, such as annual reports, press releases, and stock listings, which provide the foundation for our work. However, in some cases – where meaningful, and if the data were available – we do list the company's language division's revenue.
- 03 We use data from the latest fiscal year for each company. This means the numbers for some companies will not reflect 2025 calendar year revenues. However, where possible, we aggregated quarterly or half-year revenue data to match the Gregorian calendar year of 2025.
- 04 Our definition of language services includes translation, localization, transcreation, multilingual DTP, language quality assurance, linguistic testing, multilingual copywriting, multilingual technical writing, language project management, interpreting, video remote interpreting, over the phone interpreting (OPI), linguist verification and staffing, media localization, versioning, adaptation, subtitling, voiceover, dubbing, machine translation, training machine translation engines, cultural consulting, data/AI services, and generative AI text creation and editing.
- 05 We use average annual currency conversion rates to convert reported amounts into U.S. dollars where applicable. These rates are published by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) of the United States for each day of trading in 2025.
- 06 Growth rates are calculated in USD. In some cases, due to currency exchange rate fluctuations, a providers' growth rate in their original currency may not match their growth rate in US dollars.

We are proud to provide broad access to our data. This ranking is offered to all who are interested – no paywall, no strings attached. Localization buyers, investors, job seekers, and analysts are welcome to use what is contained

in this document. We only ask them to reference Nimdzi Insights, LLC, as the source. Interested parties are free to reach out to us at nimdzi-100@nimdzi.com should they have any questions.

Glossary

ACRONYM	TERM	ACRONYM	TERM
AI	Artificial intelligence	LQA	Language Quality Assurance
AIOps	Artificial Intelligence for IT Operations	LSP	Language Service Provider
APAC	Asia-Pacific (Region)	LTP	Language Technology Provider
API	Application Programming Interface	M&A	Mergers and Acquisitions
B2C	Business to Consumer	MDR	Medical Device Regulation
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate	MI	Machine Interpreting
CAI	Computer-Assisted Interpretation	MT	Machine Translation
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	MTPE	Machine Translation Post-Editing
COO	Chief Operating Officer	MTQE	Machine Translation Quality Estimation
CSRD	Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive	NMT	Neural Machine Translation
CTO	Chief Technology Officer	OPI	Over-the-Phone Interpreting
DEIA	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility	PPW	Price Per Word
DTP	Desktop Publishing	QA	Quality Assurance
EBITDA	Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization	RCEP	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
EU	European Union	RFP	Request for Proposal
FY	Fiscal Year	RSI	Remote Simultaneous Interpreting
GenAI	Generative Artificial Intelligence	SaaS	Software as a Service
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement	TM	Translation Memory
LATAM	Latin America	TMS	Translation Management System
LEP	Limited English Proficiency	USD	United States Dollar
LLM	Large Language Model	VRI	Video Remote Interpreting

Infographics and Tables Legend

TITLE	PAGE	TITLE	PAGE
Market growth and forecast	9	Business challenges ranked	42
Revenue concentration	10	Interpreting technologies expected to gain importance	45
Where the largest providers are	12,58	Growth of select interpreting providers	45
How GenAI effects business considerations	15	Top interpreting services	46
Optimism chart	17	Staffing level changes	48
New product/service launches	18	Top five strategies to offset inflation	50
Nimdzi 100 [table]	20-28	New pricing models implemented	51
Just Shy [table]	29	Growth Services	52
Watchlist [table]	29	Growth Verticals	53
New arrivals [table]	30	What language providers say about M&A	54
Five year growth projection	32	2025 M&A activity [table]	55
Market concentration	33	Growth and market share by geography	60-61
Growth by ranking segment	34	Where the Clients Are	62-63
Most productive companies	35	Change in demand by geography	64
Fastest growing companies	36	The place of AI in the language industry before and after GenAI	66
Growth of select providers	37	Types of technologies developed	68
Woman-led compared to other indexes	38	Industry Effects of Generative AI	69
Woman-led providers in the Nimdzi 100	39	Budget effects of generative AI	70
Top services	40	Next: Agentic AI – where is the human?	74
Top verticals	41	Finding the right combination of tech and talent	75

The 2026
NIMDZI
100

The size and state
of the global
language industry





Nimdzi