Lightweight glossary solution: Interplex for ipad

Interplex is what I used for years to manage my glossaries on my laptop. Then last year I started getting tired of the weight of my computer bag and the space a laptop takes up in the booth. As soon as I heard that the iPad version of Interplex was about to be launched, I headed straight for the Mac store to get an iPad. And am I glad I did!

You may be wondering why I chose Interplex in the first place.

Compared to paper-based glossaries, with Interplex there are no loose pages piled up in the booth and then being spread all over the desk and/or decorating the floor as you frantically search for that term you scribbled in the corner of one of the sheets at the last session - you have all the terms of your glossary before you on the screen.

For those who have moved on from paper to digital glossaries, Interplex allows you to do a search in the glossary, which is impossible in Word and Excel, where the only solution is to scroll up or down the entire list of terms. With Interplex, enter a few letters of a given expression in the search box and the results appear instantaneously in all languages.

Then there is that feeling of dread that many interpreters are familiar with, when a technical term comes up in a meeting and their mind goes blank: “I know I have that in some glossary, but which one?” This is where Interplex truly makes a difference, with its Multi-Glossary Search. Click on the MGS button and type a few letters of the term or expression. Interplex searches all the glossaries in the database in a split second, and up come all expressions containing those letters, in all languages.

Why iPad?

The main advantage of Interplex for iPad is just that: it runs on an iPad, a tool that many of us have opted for because it is small and light - no more thick folders or heavy computer to cart around, just your iPad with everything on it, which to my delight fits in my handbag. Gone are the days of walking to meetings with both shoulders weighed down with various bags.

An interesting feature introduced with the latest version is that glossaries can be modified on either your computer or the iPad, then saved directly to Dropbox and picked up from there directly on the other appliance, thus bypassing the need for cables.

Additionally, Interplex for iPad is very user-friendly, and it doesn’t take long to find one’s way around its many functions:

- Copy databases from the iPad to a connected computer and vice-versa
Wirelessly exchange databases with other Interplex users
Synchronise databases with Dropbox
Add or delete databases – though personally I find that one database with all my glossaries in it is sufficient
Add/delete expressions in a glossary
Add/delete glossaries
Import all your Excel and Word glossaries with the click of a button
Have as many languages as needed for each glossary
Sort expressions in a glossary by whichever glossary language
Either search for an expression in a given glossary, or do a multi-glossary search

One word of caution however: once you turn up in the booth with a small, flashy iPad containing absolutely all of your glossaries, be prepared for a few disbelieving looks followed by endless questions. One solution could be to hide it behind a pile of your old paper-based glossaries.

Recommended citation format: