



DigiTool

Digital tools for complaints analyses used by European Press and Media Councils

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Foreword

While digitisation is very advanced in the press and media sector in Europe already, this is not yet the case for the work of press and media councils. The majority of press and media councils handle the complaints submitted to them in a paperbased procedure. However, many press and media councils are presently looking at further digitising their work, and some have already moved to a fully digitised and paperless process.

The aim of this review is to show examples of digital complaint handling already in use, to explain different approaches and technical arrangements, and to outline the costs of digitisation. It is intended to compile basic information on specific digital complaint handling tools and to help press and media councils find a suitable model once they decide to digitise their work.

The digital tools examined in this review are those of the Norwegian Press Association (Norsk Presseforbund), the Swedish Media Ombudsman (Allmänhetens Mediaombudsman) and the German Press Council (Deutscher Presserat). All of these organisations started digitisation at similar times, but have taken different approaches to their implementation.

The solutions they have found based on their individual interests and requirements can serve as examples for other press and media councils in Europe that want to address the digitalisation of their work now and in the future.

The three press and media councils mentioned in this review have gathered experiences over several years. They agree that digitalisation is not only inevitable, but also offers great opportunities in terms of efficiency of complaint handling and flexibility of the important work press and media councils do.

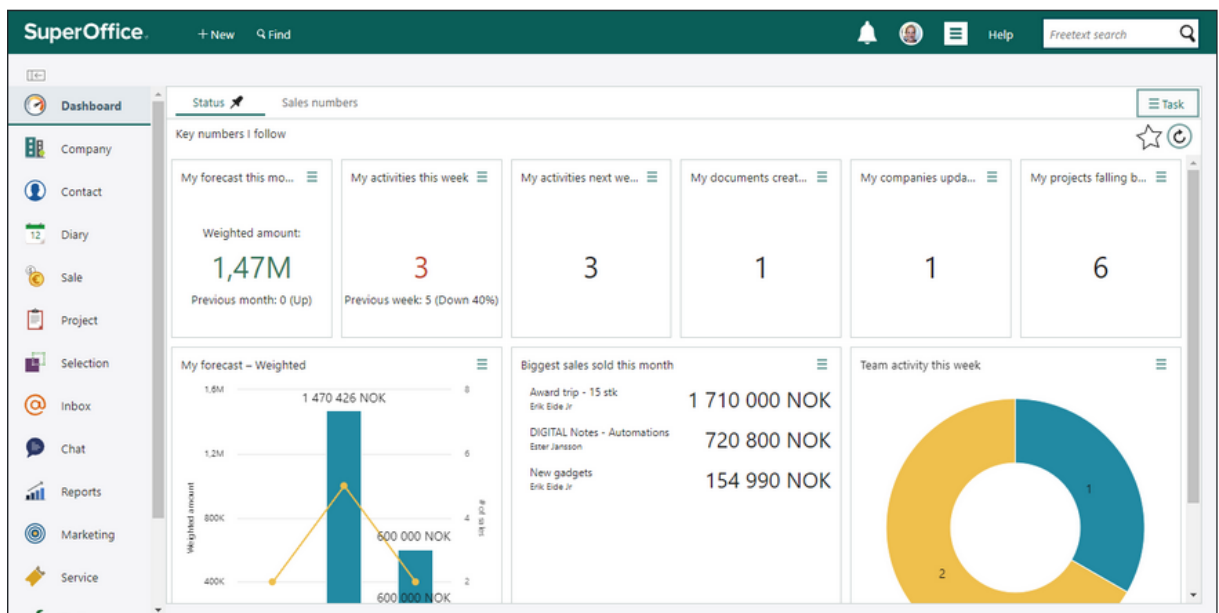
I. Norwegian Press Association (Norsk Presseforbund)

1. System

The Norwegian Press Association uses a system called SuperOffice Service. The product is designed by SuperOffice Norge AS from Oslo, Norway.

The product was originally created as a customer service tool. It was built to receive, track and monitor customer queries, but is flexible and customizable and allows to set up special workflows, automated responses and ticket routing. It was customized by a developer according to the specifications of the Norwegian Press Association.

Its is based on a dashboard which gives the user an overview of tasks and communication:

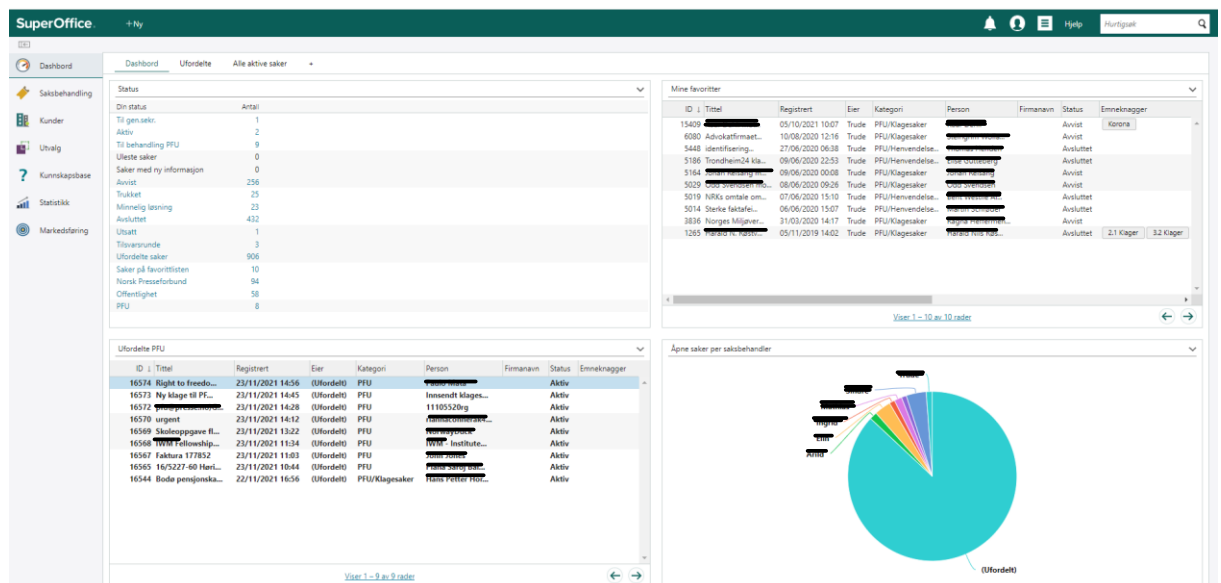


The system is cloud-based, so users can log in and access it from anywhere.

2. Functionalities

The Norwegian Press Association receives complaints by email or via the complaint form on its website. The complainant receives an automatic confirmation that the complaint has been received. At the same time the complaint is automatically assigned a case number (a Case-ID). This ID accompanies all communication in the complaint handling process from here on. The Case ID also makes it easy to look up cases later.

The main page –dashboard – in the version of the tool customized for the Norwegian Press Association consists of four fields which give the user an overview of the work:



The screenshot shows the SuperOffice dashboard with the following sections:

- Status:** A table showing counts for different statuses: Til gensøkt (1), Aktiv (2), Til behandling PPU (9), Utekte saker (0), Saker med ny informasjon (0), Avvist (256), Trukket (25), Månedlig løsning (23), Avsluttet (432), Utsatt (1), Tilvarerunde (3), Ufordele saker (906), Saker på favorittlisten (10), Norsk Pressforbund (94), Offentlighet (58), PPU (8).
- Ufordele PPU:** A table listing cases with columns: ID, Tittel, Registrert, Eier, Kategori, Person, Firanavn, Status, Emneknagler. It shows 10 rows of data.
- Mine favoritter:** A table listing favorite cases with columns: ID, Tittel, Registrert, Eier, Kategori, Person, Firanavn, Status, Emneknagler. It shows 10 rows of data.
- Åpne saker per sakbehandler:** A pie chart showing the distribution of open cases among handlers, with a legend indicating '(Ufordele)'.

The procedure starts from an inbox as in a regular e-mail system. Another field shows basic information about each case. The user can enter the relevant information. Correspondence with the complainant and other parties related to the specific case, mostly emails that have been received and emails that have been sent out, is displayed. Keywords can be entered to tag a certain case. The tool enables the user to create elaborate and up-to-date statistics.

3. Benefits

The Norwegian Press Association considers as benefits of the system:

- remote work is possible from anywhere;
- all documents, information and correspondence in a case are archived automatically and in one place;
- documents are saved automatically and correctly;
- colleagues are able to get an overview of a case they haven't been working with;
- templates allow for an efficient, easy and fast communication with the parties;

- automatic alerts and reminders help to set and meet deadlines;
- the system helps to streamline the process so that every complaints handler uses the same standards.
- fixed categories and tags make it easy to file cases correctly and coherently;
- the system provides many opportunities for search and statistics.

4. Pricing

Prices start from 48.00 EUR per user/month. There were additional costs for development and customization of about 18,000.00 EUR.

II. Swedish Media Ombudsman (**Allmänhetens Mediombudsman**)

1. System

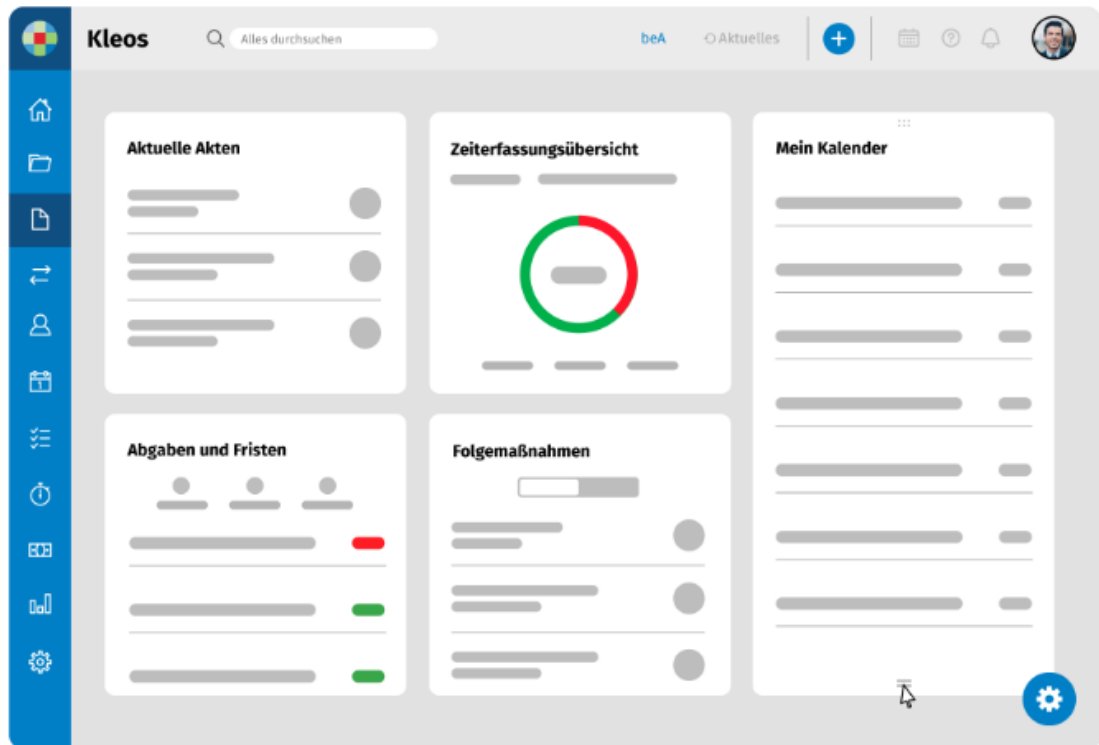
The Swedish Media Ombudsman has a digital only office and a complaints procedure that has been digitalized since 2019. He uses Kleos, a cloud-based software created for the use in law firms by Wolters Kluwer N.V. from Alphen aan den Rijn, Netherlands.

The product is cloud-based and designed for remote use on different devices. It offers simple sorting and filtering of content, an individual folder structure depending on the file type and additional features according to the users' needs. The tool allows to manage and organise documents, emails, appointments, tasks, contacts, timesheets and invoicing in one file.

The product runs an automatic data backup and time recording from any end device. It offers a secure and immediate file exchange and has a simple file management and communication options in one application.

2. Functionalities

The application is based on a dashboard which gives the user an overview of tasks and communication:



The Swedish Media Ombudsman uses the product as a classical file management tool without further customization according to the specifications of his complaints procedure.

3. Pricing

The license fee for the basic version of Kleos is 49.00 EUR per month/person. The Swedish Media Ombudsman uses a business version for 80.00 EUR per month/person.

III. German Press Council (Deutscher Presserat)

1. System

The tool used by the German Press Council was specially developed in 2018 by CCVOSEL from Berlin, Germany. It operates an IIS web server and an SQL database server. The data is stored in an MS Access database.

The database runs on a server and can be accessed from outside using an Virtuel Private Network (VPN).

The system is mapped according to the entire complaint procedure of the German Press Council, from the submission of the complaint to the statistical evaluation of the complaints in their entirety.

2. Functionalities

The German Press Council receives complaints by email or via the complaint form on its website. The complainant receives an automatic confirmation that the complaint has been received. This step also includes information on data protection and the rights and duties of the complainant.

The complaint is transferred into an inbox, to which all case handlers have access. There it is examined for completeness. Missing documents are requested. When complete, it receives a case number and is assigned to an owner.

The screenshot displays a web-based application for managing complaints. The interface is divided into several sections:

- Top Menu:** Includes 'Datei', 'Start', 'Erstellen', 'Externe Daten', 'Datenbanktools', and 'Hilfe'. A search bar is present with the text 'Was möchten Sie tun?'.
- Navigation Area:** A vertical sidebar on the left lists 19 steps of the complaint process, such as '1 - Posteingang (25)', '2 - Unvollständig (13)', and '8 - Sachverhalt 4 Auge (5)'. The current step is highlighted.
- Main Form:** Contains various input fields for case details:
 - Daten:** Aktenzeichen (BF, BG), Artikel (Versprecher-Verbrecher überführte), Ergebnis, Ziffern.
 - Beschwerdeführer:** Anrede (Frau), Titel, Vorname, Nachname (Kornmann-Schuck), Firma, Straße (Müllerstraße 5), Postleitzahl (22222), Ort (Musterstadt), Land, E-Mail (kornmann.schuck@presstec.de), Datum (30.09.2022), Typ (Privatperson).
 - Beschwerdegegner:** Name (Sybil Swierczyńska), Mitarbeiter.
 - Dokumente:** A list of documents like 'Beschwerdeschreiben', 'Screenshot', and 'Einwilligungserklärung'.
 - Anmerkungen:** A text area with the note: 'ah: Anonyme Beschwerde? VS: Das ist eine Probe-Beschwerde, die ich für die AIPCE-Konferenz brauche. Ich präsentiere dort die digitale Akte. Bitte hier stehen lassen, danke!'.
- Buttons:** 'Beschwerde löschen', 'Beschwerdeschreiben erzeugen', 'Einwilligung manuell erzeugen', and a set of navigation buttons at the bottom like 'Oben stehendem Aktenzeichen zuordnen'.

All procedural documents and information on the case is gathered in the database. The case handler enters his or her evaluation of the case into the text fields.

All necessary documents are generated from the database. This includes

- all communication with the parties involved;
- the agendas and factsheets used in the sessions of the complaints committees;
- protocols of the sessions;
- the decisions of the complaints committees;
- Reactions of the media outlets involved.

Keywords can be entered in order to tag a decision for later use. Various statistics can be created at the push of a button.

3. Benefits

The benefits of the system are

- remote work is possible from anywhere via VPN;
- all documents, information and correspondence in a case are archived automatically and in one place. Documents are saved automatically and correctly;
- colleagues are able to get an overview of a case they haven't been working with;
- standardized templates allow for an efficient, easy and fast communication with the parties;
- the system provides many opportunities for search and statistics.

4. Pricing

The costs for the development of the software were about 40,000.00 EUR. No monthly fees apply apart from the costs of regular soft- and hardware maintenance of about 1,500.00 EUR per year for 10 users.

This overview was prepared and published in June 2023 on the basis of the information available from press and media councils in Europe.

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