

360° IN THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF NORWAY: A FLEXIBLE RECORDS MANAGEMENT CENTER

The Office of the Attorney General of Norway's project group has customized 360° more than any other 'amateur' users have dared. "We're incredibly pleased that the product is so flexible," says attorney Amund Noss.

Just a stone's throw from Oslo's courthouse is the Office of the Attorney General of Norway with 40 highly skilled lawyers and 17 office employees. Their job is to handle cases in which the Norwegian state is sued over disputes on tax, benefits, property, expropriation, compensation, labor and service conditions, asylum cases and compulsory psychiatric care. Many of the cases end up in the Supreme Court of Norway.

As an employer, the Office of the Attorney General of Norway recruits the very best law graduates and is an extremely desirable workplace. The work is varied and young lawyers are given the opportunity to work independently and to appear before the Supreme Court at an early stage in their career.

Printed emails

For years, the Office of the Attorney General relied solely on the cumbersome SARA (Case Register for the Attorney General) database system, in which all new cases were registered by number and name. The lawyer in charge of the case would print out all relevant letters, Word documents and emails, place them in a case folder and send it to the records management center.

"The case folder for the compensation case for the Rocknes shipwreck contained several thousand pages of paper, as well as sound recordings, photographs, maps and over 7,000 printed emails," says records manager Cathrine Moe Kristiansen.

Time to replace SARA

"To simplify case management, we saw the need for an electronic records management system with simple registration of emails and good processes for record keeping," says Amund Noss, lawyer in the Office of the Attorney General's senior management team. "The system also needed to comply with the NOARK standard for records management. Expanding the SARA system was not an option."

Product: Public 360° with SharePoint 2010
Industry: Legal/public office



About the Office of the Attorney General of Norway:

The Office of the Attorney General of Norway is the Norwegian state's legal office, governed by the Prime Minister's office. The organization deals with civil cases (not criminal cases) on behalf of state agencies, processing 700 law suits and 300 advice cases each year. The Attorney General, Sven Ole Fagernæs is the head of the Office's 40 lawyers and 17 office employees.

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The challenge:

- Simpler saving, reporting and finding of documents
- Traceability in line with national archiving standards
- Integration with Microsoft SharePoint, Office and other relevant programs

The solution:

- Public 360° is customized as a case records management center for the recording of new documents and the storing of related documents that do not need to be recorded
- Word, Excel, Outlook and SharePoint are integrated into 360°

The result:

- KLARA is being implemented in stages with dual registration in hard copy and digitally, until the digital records management center takes over on 1 January 2012. KLARA simplifies the registration and recording of documents, automates processes and reports, chases deadlines and notifies about outstanding tasks.

Noss is the project manager for the digital case record management system that is now being implemented in the organization. The project group also includes the Office's two ICT employees, Trond Fosberg and Øystein Hansen, as well as the head of records management, Cathrine Moe Kristiansen. The customization of 360° started in 2010.

360° - best for oss

"We have two skilled ICT team members and were looking for a system that we could customize ourselves," says Noss. "We were already using Microsoft SharePoint 2007, so a system built on this platform offered numerous benefits. This is why Public 360° from Software Innovation was the best solution for our needs."

"We're doing it ourselves"

The project group wanted maximum involvement in the development of the new system.

"I think we are the first organization to customize 360° for the legal profession," says Noss. "It would have been harder to achieve our aims if we had left the project entirely in the hands of external consultants. By building our in-house skills, we have more capacity to correct errors and to improve the system as we become more experienced in its use."

Introducing KLARA

In an internal seminar in September 2010, Noss presented the plans for the replacement of the SARA system. A colleague suggested the new replacement system should be called KLARA – and the name stuck. She was even given her very own logo.

KLARA, which in Norwegian is an acronym for 'Complete Storage and Records Management System for the Attorney General' aims to ensure that:

- All materials that need to be recorded are stored in the system in compliance with the NOARK 5 standard
- All information relating to a case that does not need to be sent to the Norwegian National Archive is stored and linked to the case.

In this way, KLARA provides a complete overview of cases for the organization.

"We are extremely satisfied with the flexibility of the product. We have made a number of unique customizations, most of which were simple to achieve."

Project manager Amund Noss at the Office of the Attorney General of Norway

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Easy customization

In the spring of 2010, the project group began the customization of 360°. They received help and support from Software Innovation consultants, but did most of the work themselves.

"We have tried to be as creative as possible to get the most out of the standard functions in 360°," says Noss. "We have also made some configurations that are entirely unique to our organization. Many of these were easy to make by adjusting the settings or creating new fields. We are extremely pleased that we will be able to install updates for 360° without losing our customizations."

KLARA step-by-step

At the end of summer 2011 the staged introduction of KLARA began:

1. SARA is closed and case registration is transferred to KLARA
2. All emails are saved in KLARA
3. Employees are trained: "We run a two-hour course for up to four employees at a time. The most important thing to learn is which information needs to be recorded," says Cathrine Moe Kristiansen

4. New Word documents are opened, edited and saved in KLARA: "Our new process templates in Word automatically use key information from the system. In addition, short reports called Precedence Cards are automatically generated from previously registered information," says Noss.
5. The records management team scans and saves incoming and outgoing mail in KLARA. Letters are made available in the lawyers' pigeon holes in hard copy as well as digitally on their computers
6. 1 January 2012: New cases are recorded electronically in KLARA.

Simple completion

The Office of the Attorney General's project team focused heavily on making KLARA easy to use. The system can show case access, lawyers' portfolios, listings for hearings, judges and other information. KLARA can also track the progress of a case and even remind the lawyer to tidy up and ask the finance team to invoice case costs.



Amund Noss and Cathrine Moe Kristiansen at the Office of the Attorney General of Norway.

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Proud of the result

Amund Noss and Cathrine Moe Kristiansen say it has been an interesting and enjoyable process to develop the new case and records management system. The project group has made more customizations to 360° than any other 'amateur' users have dared. "All that remains to be seen is how KLARA will be received by the users," says Noss.



360° can be configured and customized easily to meet an organization's needs

360° is a standard application that can be customized and configured easily to meet the needs of an organization's industry specific processes for document, records and case management as well as collaboration and project work. It can also be adapted according to each individual employee's job role and tasks.

A broad range of options:

- Configure and customize without changing the source code or programming
- Configurations will survive new software versions
- Customize for individual users based on role, tasks and preferences (personal desktop, format of information, etc.)
- Expand the application with new fields relevant to the organization
- Expand the application with specific information vehicles relevant to the organization (document profiles, case types, activity and task types, project templates, etc.)
- Customize the registration form, displays and lists
- Re-use 360° elements in standard SharePoint rooms
- Customize the look and feel with colors, fonts, etc.
- Define process templates and workflows
- Integrate document templates and reports
- Define rules for access, disposal, downgrading, etc.

Software Innovation is a Scandinavian company and a leading international software vendor for document control, information and case management. With 25 years of experience and competence in business-oriented content applications, we are committed to delivering future-proof, flexible and highly user-friendly solutions for our customers and partners. Our application suites create excellent information sharing, efficient collaboration, business control and improved service for both private and public organizations. The packaged business solutions are built on Microsoft SharePoint and Office, the market leading platform for collaboration and business productivity.