COUNCIL OF EUROPE

WEBSITE:	coe.int
USERS:	2,500
PRODUCTS:	**NetDocuments® DM**
	ndMail™
	ndThread™

About the Council of Europe

Founded in 1949, the Council of Europe (CoE), currently includes 47 member states, 28 of which are members of the European Union. The Council of Europe promotes human rights, democracy and the rule of law through international conventions and makes recommendations through independent expert monitoring bodies. The CoE's major bodies include the Committee of Ministers, Parliamentary Assembly, European Court of Human Rights, Commissioner for Human Rights and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities.

The Council of Europe Adopts Cloud-Based Document Management System to Efficiently, Securely and Remotely Store Its Assets

The CoE's main assets are its knowledge and expertise. It is crucial that the CoE has a solid IT platform in place to ensure that this capital can be stored, organised and easily retrieved in order to support the organisation's three main pillars: democracy, human rights and the rule of law in its member states.

The CoE's main working processes are producing documents, email management and collaborating with both internal and external parties. At the end of this process a final document is produced; be it a report, a recommendation, a study or a judgement. The documents the Organisation produces are highly sensitive, containing vital information on human rights topics and need to be accessed remotely from offices in over 23 countries and by over 6,000 external users.

As the CoE has grown over the years, the management, governance and security of documents has become an increasing challenge. The CoE had been using Microsoft Public folders, shared drives and SharePoint to manage and store documents, which resulted in documents being stored in

nine different repositories, which presented security and compliance issues. Moreover, some of the CoE's field offices were not directly connected to the organisation's main repositories, meaning that files were being saved on local servers.

With nine repositories, various field offices, and files being saved on local servers – the CoE was encountering a lack of version control, which meant it was difficult for staff to search for and determine where the final version of a document was located. Furthermore, having several disparate documentation systems made it extremely difficult for the organisation's infrastructure and security teams to guarantee a full and comprehensive data backup.

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>
> John Hunter, CIO - Council of Europe

To meet its growing requirements, the CoE made the decision to move to a cloud-based document management system (DMS) as part of the organisation's wider IT digital transformation.

"It was our aim to store all working documents in a single, shareable DMS that can be directly managed in terms of security, access and folder structure by the different departments within the organisation. Having a central DMS to store documents means that we will be able adopt common working methods and best practice," says John Hunter, CIO of the Council of Europe.

A Secure and Mobile-Ready Platform

After putting out a call for tender, which included an extensive and thorough proof of concept (POC) stage, the CoE selected NetDocuments as the DMS of choice and Tikit as its implementation partner. The Council has already adopted a Cloud First policy, and NetDocuments stood out as it was built for the cloud from the ground up. Furthermore, NetDocuments seamlessly integrated with the CoE's existing email system.

With at least 40 percent of the CoE's staff working remotely in different locations across its member states, the Organisation needed a secure and mobile-ready platform that would enable users to work flexibly. Moreover, the high levels of security and

encryption offered by NetDocuments ensures the proper safeguards for the CoE's data, guaranteeing that documents are protected and secure, from wherever staff are working. "The level of expertise and support demonstrated by NetDocuments and Tikit really stood out during the tender process. At a product level, NetDocuments' heritage in cloud and security was very convincing," says John Hunter.

A Successful Implementation During COVID-19

Tikit worked closely with NetDocuments on a phased implementation that would see 35-40 million documents migrated to the new cloud based DMS, which included the challenge of mapping a huge amount of unstructured data.

Moreover, due to Brexit, the CoE decided to move its data from the NetDocuments UK datacentre to their German datacentre. NetDocuments and Tikit went the extra mile to ensure that the datacentre in Germany was fully operational for the planned go-live date, effectively providing the Council of Europe with access to the German site three months prior to its public launch.

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The first phase of the implementation has seen NetDocuments being rolled out to 1400 users comprising of the 8 major administrative entities for example the Parliamentary Assembly, Directorate General I and Directorate General II. This occurred during the global COVID-19 pandemic, which presented its own challenges. To ensure a successful implementation, Tikit adapted its regular on-site 'floor walking' training program, to provide expert virtual support to the Council of Europe's IT Department Change Management team. The CoE's IT Department also extensively provided change management, support and regular communication to its user base. "After extensive testing, we successfully deployed NetDocuments to over 1500 under exceptional circumstances where 90% of staff members were teleworking due to the Coronavirus crisis," John Hunter continues.

A Future-proof Document Management Platform

The user feedback to date has been very positive and having 1,400 staff members now using NetDocuments, marks the halfway stage of the project, with the remaining users joining the new DMS by June 2021.

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Once fully implemented, NetDocuments will provide the CoE with a future-proof platform that will enable effective collaboration between internal and external stakeholders, while providing the required governance for security, compliance and data loss prevention.

"NetDocuments will ensure every document we manage, store and share are fully protected and secure. The platform will become one of the main pillars of our IT system helping to enhance productivity and ultimately contributing to the aim to enhancing human rights across Europe," states John Hunter.

ABOUT NETDOCUMENTS

NetDocuments is the leading cloud-based document and email management solution to securely store and organize documents on a single platform. Backed by 20 years of experience in cloud innovation, over 3,050 companies worldwide trust NetDocuments to secure their data while increasing productivity and team collaboration.

Make the move to the NetDocuments cloud to get the speed, mobility, and industry-leading security companies worldwide are already taking advantage of.

Visit **www.NetDocuments.com** or call us at **+44 20 3129 9324** to learn how NetDocuments can help your firm modernise your lawyers' work experience.