LibreOffice Successes: Case Studies from Across Europe

LibreOffice has successfully been implemented in across Europe and these case studies, from 6 different countries, show the reasons behind those implementations.

![LibreOffice logo]

The following case studies are handled in this document:

1. **Administration of the Italian region Umbria moving to LibreOffice (2012)**

   The Italian region Umbria is migrating a first group of 5000 users to using LibreOffice, in order to get rid of IT vendor lock-in.

2. **Denmark: 25,000 hospital staff Copenhagen region to use open source office suite (2011)**

   A group of hospitals in the Copenhagen region is phasing out a proprietary alternative, 'for long term strategic reasons', which at the same time saves the group some 5.3 million euro.

3. **LibreOffice at Hungarian Courts (2015)**

   LibreOffice is currently used on 8000 desktops country-wide within 158 court buildings.

4. **Greek municipality of Pilea-Hortiatis migrating to LibreOffice (2012)**

   Pilea-Hortiatis is migrating all of its PCs to the free and open source suite LibreOffice. The primary reason is to escape from the usual IT vendor lock-in.

5. **Valencia region government completes switch to LibreOffice (2013)**

   The administration of the Spanish autonomous region of Valencia has completed its switch to LibreOffice on all of the 120,000 desktop PCs. The migration will save the government some 1.5 million euro per year on proprietary software licences.

6. **Moving to LibreOffice saves Toulouse 1 million (2014)**

   Toulouse, France's fourth largest city, has saved 1 million euro by migrating all its desktops to LibreOffice.

1. Administration of the Italian region Umbria moving to LibreOffice (2012)

The administration of the Italian region of Umbria has started a project to migrate a first group of 5000 users to using LibreOffice, a free software suite of office productivity tools. Getting rid of IT vendor lock-in is one of the major motives for the migration, says Osvaldo Gervasi, president of Umbria's Open Source Competence Center.

To improve the public administration's use of IT, says the CCOS president, it is necessary to switch to LibreOffice and to adopt open document standards. "This allows us to refresh the most important office tools, at the same time carrying out the government's policy on the use of public resources."

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> – CCOS president

For the region's civil workers, this so-called LibreUmbria project will be the most visible part of an overhaul that started six years ago. The legal basis for the migration is a 2006 regional law, promoting the use of free and open source software in the administration.

CCOS will be involved in providing training and assist in a "participatory process that will simplify and greater quality in the office work of the regional public administrations", Osvaldo told the Italian newspaper La Stampa last August. A communication campaign is scheduled to explain to the region's civil staff why the administration is moving to free software, and to counter any prejudices.

CCOS has involved many administrations in the regions in the move to open source. The coalition included a consortium of Umbrian authorities (Consorzio SIR Umbria), the administrations of the regions of Umbria and Perugia, a local health authority and the administration the province of Terni. Also involved is the Document Foundation, representing the developers of the LibreOffice software.

The Umbria project group is maintaining a blog on the progress.

Source:

Gijs Hillenius
October 2, 2012
https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/news/administration-italian-region-umbria-moving-libreoffice

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2. Denmark: 25,000 hospital staff Copenhagen region to use open source office suite (2011)

Almost all of the 25,000 workers at thirteen hospitals in the Copenhagen region will over the next year begin to use Libre Office, an open source suite of office productivity tools. The group of hospitals is phasing out a proprietary alternative, 'for long term strategic reasons', which at the same time saves the group some 40 million Kroner (about 5.3 million euro) worth of proprietary licences.

The ditching of the proprietary alternative is a consequence of the group's move to virtual desktops, allowing staff members to log in on any PC or thin client. The group found that deploying this new desktop infrastructure would "trigger unacceptably high costs" for proprietary office licenses, says Vivian Thomsen, responsible for IT at the group, quoted by the Danish IT news site Computerworld.

> "Over time, all of the staff will switch to Libre Office"
>
> – Vivian Thomsen, IT manager

Even a single user of the proprietary office suite would force the group to purchase licences for all fifteen thousand desktop PCs. "We have spoken to the proprietary vendor about this for over a year, and they acknowledge the problem."

The hospital group will not move all of the users to Libre Office at once. The group will use its current ten thousand proprietary office licences until they run out. The group will renew some licences for 'heavy users', until further notice. Over time, says Thomsen, all of the staff will switch to Libre Office: "apart from those few with advanced spreadsheet tasks."

Some 2500 virtual desktops have been rolled out and a small number of the hospital workers is now testing Libre Office. According to Computerworld, Thomsen says the feedback so far is positive. "Although users are not keen to lose the familiar interface of the proprietary office suite." To overcome these hesitations, the hospital group is providing trainings.

Advanced features

Dagens Medicin, a news site for local and regional administrations, quotes Thomsen explaining that most of the hospital workers, doctors and nurses, will have little trouble using Libre Office. "Most of them do not need the advanced features of these suites."

Apart from the office suite, the group is using several other open source tools. It is using for example Apache Camel and JCaps to integrate its enterprise applications. "Naturally, one does not rush headlong into using open source within a hospital. We are not replacing the most critical systems, such as those for patient data. But we are gaining experience by using open source in less critical areas."

> "In many cases, the open source community is faster in fixing issues than proprietary vendors"
>
> – Vivian Thomsen, IT manager

Thomsen says it is not the group's intention to move to a complete open source IT environment. "There are plenty of good and important proprietary applications that we will continue to use."

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The hospital group's IT manager says that one of the advantages of switching to free and open source software is that 'in many cases, the open source community is faster in fixing issues than proprietary vendors'.

Third largest project

The move is Europe's third largest migration project involving public administrations using an open source office suite. The largest is the French Gendarmerie, moving some 80.000 users to Open Office, a suite similar to Libre Office. Second largest is France's Caisse Nationale d'Allocations Familiales (CNAF), employing Open Office on about 36,000 desktops. The fourth largest is the ministry of Justice in Finland, where 10,000 staffers are using Open Office.

Closely involved in the project is the Danish open source IT service provider Magenta, that almost two years ago helped set-up and manage the first Libre Office pilot in the Bispebjerg Hospital in Copenhagen. The company is also involved in training users in other hospitals and with the integration of Libre Office with reservation systems and ERP applications.

Source:

Gijs Hillenius
August 18, 2011
https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/news/dk-25000-hospital-staff-copenhagen-region-use-open-source-office-suite

3. LibreOffice at Hungarian Courts (2015)

The Hungarian Court System has a long history of open source software use. In the early 2000's several courts introduced it to save costs and from from 2013 the use of LibreOffice is mandated by National Office for the Judiciary. LibreOffice is currently used on 8000 desktops country-wide within 158 court buildings.

The history starts when the Metropolitan Court purchased 2000 Sun Ray thin clients with StarOffice 5.2 in the year 2000, for judges, clerks and court rooms. The experience was good, so when new PCs had to be bought in 2003, the decision between Microsoft Office and an Open Source Office Suite was easy. And to continue with open source, in 2005 Linux desktops from Novell were introduced. All these decisions made impressive savings on license cost possible and between 2003 and 2010, 870.000 euro was saved.

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Other courts in Hungary were also working with open source software, but there was no central IT procurement in place. So, in 2013, a new organization for central administration of courts was created, under the name "National Office for the Judiciary", also know as NOJ. The head of

IT of Metropolitan Court, Norbert Laky, who lead the successful OpenOffice.org/ LibreOffice migration project became the head of IT of NOJ and the use of LibreOffice became mandated in all court buildings.

The migration to LibreOffice in all court buildings was found to be easy

The migration to LibreOffice in all court buildings was found to be easy. E-learning material in Moodle was created and in-house competence was built for L1/L2 support. Alfresco was chosen as the document management system, thanks to good LibreOffice support. While less then 5% of the PCs still have MS Office (for special applications, such as accounting), LibreOffice is now used on 8000 desktops and special applications have been developed as LibreOffice extensions.

Source:

Andras Timar, Collabora Productivity
September 18, 2015

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4. Greek municipality of Pilea-Hortiatis migrating to LibreOffice (2012)

The Greek municipality of Pilea-Hortiatis, just east of Thessaloniki, is migrating all of its PCs to the free and open source suite LibreOffice, with the help of the Greek Linux User Group. Greeklug explains in a statement published on 27 March that it has finished the migration from a proprietary office suite on 91 PCs. Still to be migrated are 45 PCs.

The group reckons that replacing a proprietary office suite with LibreOffice helps the municipal administration to save some 70,000 euro this year alone. The user groups helped the municipality by consulting it on specific language options, spell checking features and extensions.

> "The primary reason is to escape from the usual IT vendor lock-in"
>
> – Kostas Mousafiris, chairperson of the Greeklug

According to Kostas Mousafiris, the chairperson of the Greeklug, the primary reason, for the administration to switch to LibreOffice "is to escape from the usual IT vendor lock-in. The move to LibreOffice obviously lightens this burden. The move is also relatively easy."

Mousafiris says that the group discussed the migration at length with politicians and the local IT staff. "We convinced them that LibreOffice would meet all their needs, it would ensure the use of open standards with all the benefits of interoperability, safety of the data and guaranteed accessibility in the future. And it would save them significant amounts of money."

- All the benefits of interoperability

- Safety of the data

- Guaranteed accessibility in the future.

- Save significant amounts of money

In its statement, the Greeklug explains that it hopes that Pilea-Hortiatis's move to LibreOffice will be an example to other Greek public administrations. "This is a promising initiative. It results in substantial savings for the visionary Greek public administration. Not only does it adopt free software on a substantial scale, but it does so using the knowledge and the contribution of a volunteer free software supporting organisation."

Source:

Gijs Hillenius
April 30, 2012
https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/news/greek-municipality-pilea-hortiatis-migrating-libreoffice

5. Valencia region government completes switch to LibreOffice (2013)

The administration of the Spanish autonomous region of Valencia has completed its switch to LibreOffice, a free and open source suite of office productivity applications. Last week Friday the region's ICT department announced that the office suite is installed on all of the 120,000 desktop PCs of the administration, including schools and courts. The migration will save the government some 1.5 million euro per year on proprietary software licences.

"Apart from economic benefits, the commitment to free and open source software brings other advantages, including having the solutions available in the Valencian language as well as in Spanish, and IT vendor independence, which encourages competition", the ICT department's Director General, Sofia Bellés, said in a statement. "We also have the freedom to modify and adapt the software to our every need."

> "Apart from economic benefits, the commitment to free and open source software brings other advantages"
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> – Sofia Bellés, ICT department's Director General

Director Bellés says that the Valencia region's migration began in the second half of 2012. It has already helped to save 1.3 million euro that would otherwise have been spent on licences for a proprietary office suite. The switch is part of measures taken by the region's council to reduce the cost of ICT, in particular by saving on proprietary software licences.

Emblematic

In its statement, the ICT department points to other exemplary free software initiatives by the region, such as the implementation of the Linux distribution Lliurex on 110,000 PCs in all schools in the region. "This has generated saving of more than 30 million euro since its inception in 2005."

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"Installation of free office suite is part of the regional government's strategic commitment to its use of free software. It will not only help save costs for licences, but also boosts the development of the local ICT sector, promotes the use of Valencian in the digital world and improves interoperability and security of the administration's IT systems."
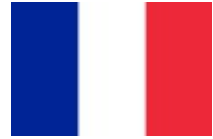
6. Moving to LibreOffice saves Toulouse 1 million (2014)

Toulouse, France's fourth largest city, has saved 1 million euro by migrating all its desktops to LibreOffice, an open source suite of office productivity tools. "Free software and open source in general is now an established part of the city's comprehensive digital policy, and the open model promotes economic development and employment in the region", according to a study published by the Open Source Observatory and Repository today.

Moving to LibreOffice is one of the key projects in the city's IT strategy, the study reports. Currently several thousand people out of the 10,000 who work for the city and Toulouse Métropole use LibreOffice daily. The migration started in 2012, following the political decision in 2011. The switch took a year and a half, and 90 per cent of the desktops now run LibreOffice.

> "One million euro has actually been saved in the first three years"
>
> – Erwane Monthubert, responsible IT policy

Switching to free software results in cost-savings, the study quotes current and former city officials as saying. "Software licenses for productivity suites cost Toulouse 1.8 million euro every three years. Migration cost us about 800,000 euro, due partly to some development. One million euro has actually been saved in the first three years. It is a compelling proof in the actual context of local public finance", the study quotes Erwane Monthubert, who was responsible for the city's IT policy until April this year, as saying.

A popular move

The city's open source IT approach has not changed following the elections in April, when the city government changed from the Socialist Party to the centre-right Union pour un Mouvement Populaire (UMP).

Toulouse started working on its free and open source software policy in 2008, the study reports. The creation of Toulouse Métropole resulted in the merger of the city's two IT departments, for the city and the city's suburbs, with the new CIO taking an active approach towards open source. The use of open source stepped up to a higher level, though this was done very gradually. At the political level, the position of open source software was debated regularly.

The city now has several websites, web applications and intranet portals (toulouse.fr, toulouse-metropole.fr, data.grandtoulouse.fr) that are supported by free software. Collaborative tools and electronic document management portals are based on Liferay and Alfresco. Joomla is also used to accelerate the development of small websites, Bertrand Serp, who is currently resonsible for Toulouse and Toulouse Métropole digital policy, said in the report.

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