



European Parliament

Fully Automated Server-Based Document Conversion and Publishing

The Benefits

- Automated rules based processing through Job Tickets
- Multi-server resource offering multiple platform independent access points, load balanced processing and robust fault tolerance
- Secured documents with password restricted access
- Support for multiple languages including double byte characters
- Automated document publishing - watermarking the agenda point number, adding footers with dynamic page numbering, filenames and version codes

The supporting cast for the 785 elected Members - who represent 492 million citizens of the 27 Member States of the European Union of the European Parliament (EP) is almost a nation unto itself. The EP operates in 22 official languages (plus gaelic, russe turc, etc) and twice per month changes locations from its sittings home in Brussels, Belgium to its other home in Strasbourg, France. Though it does not replace the national governments of its Member States, the EP is responsible for legislating in areas like environmental protection, consumer rights and plays an important role in development of the annual budget of the European Union. Much of the legislative business conducted by European lawmakers takes place in the 22 parliamentary committees. Further complicating matters, committee members have access to the official documents required for committee business available in their native language by the time the committee meets.

To meet this demand, the EP employs over 700 translators and 170 "lawyer-linguists" to ensure that these documents are quickly and accurately translated. However, to ensure that these agenda, reports and other records of official business are where lawmakers need them to be when they need them, it all comes down to one department - the Distribution Service. That is where Paulo Larish does the needed support and development that his colleague, now retired, Tomas Romeo, has developed and deployed into production. It might seem like a job bigger than one man could handle, but Mr. Larisch does have some help in this Herculean task - he has a complete Publishing Solution from Adlib Software.

Supporting document needs of European Lawmakers

Not surprisingly, designing and running a document workflow to support the work of the 22 legislative committees of the European Parliament takes some creative thinking and an innovative approach. "Every committee meeting has a set of documents that must be drafted, reviewed, translated, converted, sent to a web server, printed, debated and amended," Mr. Larisch explained. "Sections of each document can come from many different authors and are often in different document formats. And of course the content can be in any of the 22 official languages."

Adding urgency to this complexity, final documents must be in place within two working days of when the meeting is scheduled. "Sometimes," Mr. Larisch Adds, "sections of the documents have been completed days or even weeks in advance and we have to account for those as well in the final output." In the course of a legislative sitting there can be as many as 1,000 to 1,500 of these documents in play, each of about 10 pages in length, for up to 50 internal "client" groups who produce the content. Keeping all of this running smoothly on EP's homegrown systems was proving too formidable a task.

"There were three main things we knew we needed when we decided to replace our system," Mr. Larisch recalls. "We needed a solution that was reliable, flexible and robust." When it came time to select a partner to provide a solution to this challenge, according to Mr. Larisch, only Adlib Software could answer the call.

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Paulo Larisch

Software Developer &
Systems Analyst

European Parliament

How do you get 22 languages talking to one voice? Simple, just Adlib it!

Working with his partners at Adlib, Mr. Larisch deployed a complete conversion and publishing solution powered by Adlib Express Server 3.06, running on six servers and single server running Adlib Express Server with the EFTS and Advanced Publishing add on module. Adlib's uniquely powerful XML Job Ticket capability was a deal maker for Mr. Larisch. Job Tickets - customized electronic scripts that contain the processing instructions for the production of a document - are like the nerve signals sent by the brain to control the functions of the body. "Adlib's Job Ticket technology was the key for me," Mr. Larisch believes. "It means that as long as my scripts are written properly, my documents are always processed correctly."

Today the EP's document workflow runs smoothly and is virtually problem-free. Every committee meeting is created as a unique event in the their database of events, and each document and language has a unique pathname. Users simply upload their content, in virtually any format, to that path and it enters the workflow. When he first began managing the system, Mr. Larisch explained that he relied on the content contributors to convert their documents and send them through the workflow via email.

Adlib's solution allows for documents to move automatically and powerful batch conversions and assembly to PDF. XML Job Tickets then automatically watermark the language, create footers with dynamic page numbering, filenames and version codes. The finished documents are sent to a web server for access by the committees and later by the public on the EP's website (see here for example: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2004_2009/documents/oj/717/717996/717996en.pdf). Job Tickers also automatically direct the print servers to create perfect hard copies that adhere to EP pagination and binding standards.

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The EP recently upgraded to version 4.0 of Adlib ExpressConversion & Adlib ExpressPublishing Servers, and Mr. Larisch is exploring new ways to accelerate his workflows and add even more value to the work of the Europe's Parliamentarians. Indeed, their experience with Adlib has already had a number of unintended benefits. "The Parliament has a number of foreign delegations to improve relations and exchange information with parliaments in non-EU countries," Mr. Larish described. "Once or twice a year, a delegation visits a developing nation in Africa and we need to support their document needs. Adlib is so flexible that we are able to simply add a few scripts to an Adlib installation on a laptop and we can bring our workflow with us anywhere in the world. It removes a lot of the headaches you get when you are away from your headquarters and lets the delegation focus on the important diplomatic work they are doing."

About Adlib Software

Adlib Software is a leading producer of document conversion, transformation and publishing software. Its products integrate seamlessly with enterprise application software as part of a strategic content management workflow or collectively act as a framework for a stand alone solution. Adlib's Document Transformation Framework has a modular architecture allowing for single feature adoption or an entire end to end document conversion and workflow automation solution.



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