Your Digital Newsroom
Working side by side with journalists is the best way to build tools.
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Superdesk is a powerful headless content management system designed for the modern newsroom, with capacity for end-to-end news creation, production, curation, distribution and publishing. Built alongside journalists on open source code, Superdesk has a modular, API-centric design that enables news organisations to add and adapt the functionality most relevant to their business as and when they need.

Why Superdesk?

- Easily integrate existing systems with Superdesk
- Customisable content templates to fit your newsroom’s needs
- Trusted by news organisations across the globe, from Norway to Australia
- Improve workflows by automating elements of production
- Create a content item once and distribute it to multiple platforms, automatically adjusting the delivery format
- Manage access to your system with fine-grained user roles
Impact of Superdesk

Our open-source headless CMS is delivering content to news agencies, publishers and their customers around the world.

+80 million READERS per month

+300,000 NEWS ITEMS per month

4 Continents
Maximum functionality, minimum clutter

Powerful Content Search
Search queries based on simple filters or multiple parameters can be saved for reuse in the future.

Newsroom Automation
Automate elements of news production to speed up your workflow, including ingesting content from external sources and routing articles for publication.
Planning Module
Organise your event coverage and editorial planning with the Superdesk Planning Component.

Workflow Freedom
Define your own workflow and assign specific roles and privileges to different users.

Customisable Content Templates
Adjust content profiles to suit the needs of your newsroom.
Superdesk extensions

Add-on publishing and planning extensions

Superdesk Publisher

Distribute multimedia content across multiple outputs and manage all your assets from a single point of editorial control with Superdesk Publisher. Publisher is designed to complement Superdesk, which converses in formats as diverse as the legacy ANPA 1312 all the way to media-rich NewsML G2. Publisher can also be extended to handle content created in third-party systems, even in exotic, custom formats. But whether you author and produce content in Superdesk or not, Publisher gives you the real-time multi-tenancy overview you need to ensure that it performs optimally, everywhere.

WordPress Plugin

Make publishing to your WordPress site easy with our plugin for Superdesk. This plugin will allow content to be sent from your instance of Superdesk to the WordPress instance it’s installed on. Users can publish to multiple WordPress channels from Superdesk and will find a settings menu which allows customisation for how WordPress handles content from Superdesk.
Superdesk Planning Component

Integrate editorial planning with your content management for more efficient events coverage. The Superdesk Planning Component allows newsrooms to incorporate editorial calendars, resource allocation, assignment preparation and task creation into content workflows. Setting tasks for journalists in the calendar will trigger the creation of actual content items in Superdesk, saving valuable time later down the line.

Superdesk Newshub

Distribute content to your subscribers on Superdesk Newshub, with powerful search capabilities for creating custom packages and a homepage for teasing new content. This plugin for Superdesk allows your customers to download articles in NewsML G2, NITF or plain text, as well as giving them the option to flag up items of interest to their colleagues. They’ll also be able to set up notifications to trigger alerts for stories they are covering, so they’ll never miss a beat.
AAP, the national news agency of Australia, needed to upgrade its newsroom software. The main production platform and offshoot editorial systems were out of date and difficult to use. These technology bottlenecks were not just frustrating for journalists in the newsroom – they also stood in the way of AAP’s prospects for growth and modernisation as a news business.

Operating in an environment of increasing cost pressure and growing demands for products and services related to digital journalism, AAP required a forward-looking solution to support its future evolution. This digital newsroom software would also have to be cost-effective and scalable to cope with greater volumes of data, faster delivery and new media formats.

Enter Superdesk.

Robustly combining editorial workflows with content management, Superdesk is a newsroom management system designed to meet the needs of progressive media organisations. Its modular design allows features to be continuously added in response to changing business conditions or editorial requirements.

AAP identified two additional advantages in Superdesk’s open source code base. First, no licensing costs and commercial headaches that are typically associated with proprietary software. Second, it offered the freedom to modify the code to integrate with existing systems, without the need for middleware.

With developers from AAP and Sourcefabric sitting alongside journalists in the newsroom, the Superdesk project was a chance for reporters and editors to dictate how their publishing software worked, rather than the other way around.
With the digital arm of news media continually creating new challenges, managing a platform that allows you to enhance, add and remove functionality without a fuss is essential. You simply have to answer user and business needs if you want to keep moving forward – if you can’t answer them, you’re in trouble.

Brook Thomas
Chief Technology Officer,
Australian Associated Press

Results

In less than two years, Sourcefabric and AAP co-developed an implementation of Superdesk built for AAP. With the complexity of its legacy systems consolidated on a single platform (at least partially, at the point of release), AAP’s managers and journalists were able to plan, produce and distribute higher volumes of content more efficiently, thanks to blazing search speeds and improved visibility across content in progress or in archive. Superdesk also positioned AAP as a news business innovator. Today the news agency is poised to thrive in the media landscape of the future, delivering more relevant products and services through a platform that moves with the times.
Development timeline

The first line of AAP-specific code of Superdesk is written. AAP dedicates five full-time developers to the project.

October 2014

High-level demo of Superdesk presented to AAP management.

March 2015

More UI features are added, including story history and article preview.

September 2015

Two Sourcefabric developers join the AAP newsroom to work alongside the team in Sydney.

February 2015

Content monitoring feature introduced, providing editors a continual overview of newsroom production.

July 2015

15.000 Articles edited

11 million Readers reached

4.000 Unique stories produced each week

22.000 Photographs distributed

AAP went into full production mode with Superdesk in October 2016, covering all of its bureaus in Australia and around the world. With Superdesk, AAP produces more than 4,000 unique stories each week, edits another 15,000 articles, distributes 22,000 photographs and reaches over 11 million readers.
First public release of Superdesk, including workflows, desks, content views, ingest sources and user management.

**April 2016**

All desks go live. Superdesk powers the entire AAP newsroom.

**October 2016**

Prototype development of next content editor begins.

**November 2015**

Finance becomes the first desk to go live at AAP.

**July 2016**

**About AAP**

*Australian Associated Press* (AAP) is the national news agency of Australia. Founded in 1935, it employs more than 600 people and provides a comprehensive domestic and international news service to the Australian media, business sectors and beyond - 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
Joining a community of news industry innovators

The Challenge

It’s a dilemma faced by many corporate newsrooms: buy prepackaged newsroom software or develop a CMS in-house? Neither was a good option for NTB, the national news agency of Norway. As a small news agency, NTB did not have the leverage to dictate terms to a commercial software provider. At the same time, it also did not want to sink time and money into commissioning an in-house system that might be obsolete by the time it was delivered. NTB was looking for a third way. The goal was to find purpose-built newsroom software that would multiply the effect of existing resources and effort rather than consume them.

The Solution

Superdesk had many of the features NTB was looking for, including workflow management and tools for collaboration. But Sourcefabric’s agile development process and the open source code base also represented a chance for NTB to become a development partner, and join the Superdesk community of news innovators.

The process began with a technical team from Sourcefabric spending several days at NTB’s Oslo newsroom, having formal conversations as well as observing journalists in the newsroom. Once they identified the main features of NTB’s Superdesk implementation, they started creating them.

At every stage of the project, input from NTB was key. Concepts developed into functions were modified or refined in response to editors’ feedback. In some cases, features were removed or a working item was revised completely over the course of the project. The roadmap was always oriented toward NTB’s needs. After 11 months of these two-week agile development sprints, NTB began rolling out Superdesk. The first desks went live in December 2016. The rest of the editorial production system was migrated to Superdesk by early 2017.
It wasn’t just Superdesk’s functionality that won us over, but also the benefits that come from being a part of a community of news agencies participating in an open source project. We can all share in ideas and new features that will help us become more competitive.

Helen Vogt
Head of Innovations, NTB

Results

Even as the efficiency and productivity gains enabled by Superdesk were still emerging, NTB had already benefited from joining a community of open source collaboration. The discussions about user experience, editorial workflows, and even future products that took place between NTB and Sourcefabric throughout the development process resulted in numerous new features and improvements. These not only work for NTB but also benefit the rest of the Superdesk user community. "We look forward to continuing this relationship of collaboration – with Sourcefabric and with the other newsrooms who are using Superdesk," said Helen Vogt, NTB’s head of innovations.
Development timeline

**October 2015**
Initial NTB Superdesk workshop and project discussion held in Prague.

**December 2015**
Project scoping, with a technical team from Sourcefabric on site in NTB’s newsroom in Oslo.

**January 2016**
Agreement for an Agile development project is signed. The implementation phase begins.

**December 2016**
Superdesk goes into production at NTB. The first desks to switch over are Science and a new Norwegian language service.

**January 2017**
Rollout of Superdesk begins for the rest of the NTB newsroom.
NTB (Norsk Telegrambyrå), the Norwegian News Agency, is the country’s leading news and picture agency, serving the Norwegian media industry since 1867. NTB delivers a wide variety of content services – in text, data, pictures, graphics, video and live streaming.

With a staff of 80 journalists, NTB produces 200-300 stories per day while continuously adding to an image database of 80 million-plus photos and videos via its NTB scanpix division.

80 Journalists on staff
300 Stories produced per day
80 million + Photos and videos in database
In September 2018, our team was delighted to welcome Belgian news agency Belga into the fold after they opted for Superdesk to replace their old editorial system.

Choosing the right newsroom software is one of the most important decisions a news agency has to make. It affects everything about the way a newsroom runs, from workflow to the final product, and even small weaknesses can cause huge headaches. Tom Wuytack, Belga’s CIO, touched on the issue of replacing both legacy systems as well as legacy thinking when explaining Belga’s need for a new editorial system, and why they landed on Superdesk as the right one to power their complex operations.

When Wuytack encountered Superdesk for the first time, Belga wasn’t actively looking for a new editorial system. Their old one was, in his own words “actually pretty well-functioning and stable”. The problem was that it relied on old technology, and as a result had a number of bottlenecks that were causing problems in the newsroom:

“These bottlenecks were, amongst other things, a missing link between agenda settings and production. We had a pretty high dependency on IT staff. We were able to create rich text and production items but not rich embedded text items. We managed to have workarounds for issues like this but these workarounds take some time, so it wasn’t always efficient.”

Like all news agencies, Belga has to keep a close eye on costs, and these lengthy workarounds were taking up valuable time. On the editorial side of things too, notes Wuytack, there was “a silent but diplomatic push from them to innovate as well”.

“We have this continuous pressure on journalistic efforts and journalistic means, mainly with the amount of journalists: fewer for more tasks. There was a need, or a diplomatic request to come up with something new.”

There were several reasons why Superdesk appealed to Belga, but a key one was that it offered a holistic solution to a number of different issues.

“For me it represents an entire ecosystem. I look at the one [ecosystem] at Belga, with ten components, which all have their added value, but they have been gradually added over time, not always optimally connected, so they have different pitfalls and bottlenecks. Having an entire ecosystem based on just a single technology and a straight workflow is really an added value.”
What is really appealing to me, is that Superdesk started from a white paper, really from a news agency logic.

Tom Wuytack
Chief Information Officer, Belga

Belga was also interested in Superdesk’s open-source code base, which meant no vendor lock-in and the chance to benefit from collaboration with other news agencies on an equal basis. “If you’re a small agency”, says Wuytack, “normally you have way less of a say than the big ones ahead of you”. With Superdesk, this isn’t the case. Open source also means that Belga gets to benefit from all its future evolutions: a big advantage for a smaller news agency. Superdesk being designed with news agencies initially in mind was another appealing part of the software:

“For Belga, however, the most vital factor was Superdesk’s flexibility, with the system allowing users to create desks on the fly - a gift to newsrooms dealing with breaking news stories:

“[in the event of a breaking news story] Superdesk would allow us to quickly create a specific desk ... allocate people to it, go through all the relevant sources and feed them to that desk. That will help us enormously, rather than journalists having to look everywhere for information about the story”. 
As media comes under threat in an increasing number of countries around the world, journalists must ensure that their technology is as solid as their sourcing. Vijesti.me, an independent news website in Montenegro, is a case in point.

Vijesti has been reporting on organized crime and allegations of crookery, and shady financial dealings by politicians from the Montenegrin ruling party, and others, for the past 20 years. A number of Vijesti staff have been threatened and assaulted in retaliation, including being beaten and shot.

In early 2019, the attacks went digital. Following the publication of articles in which one of President Milo Đukanović’s former business partners made claims of his own about government corruption, the Vijesti.me website was hit by a series of DDOS attacks. Its servers were inundated with up to one million requests per second at certain points.

The cyberattacks came at a time when Vijesti.me had just started using Superdesk Publisher as its digital output tool. Sourcefabric helped the newsroom respond, both with defense measures for the website as well as the technical support needed to keep publishing.

Despite the onslaught, Vijesti.me suffered only brief disruptions to its online operations. According to Srdan Kosović, Vijesti’s editor-in-chief, the website’s launch and Sourcefabric’s support gave his journalists the confidence they needed to keep publishing.

“One has to be aware that running an independent media outlet in Montenegro comes with a cost. For us it was extremely important to stay online during the heavy attacks we were going through, and the Sourcefabric team helped us to continue with our mission of informing the public in a relevant and timely manner,” Kosović said.

When we began our partnership, the goal was to help redesign the Vijesti.me website, switch to a new CMS, and migrate the database. Nimble publishing was more of a focus than circumventing censorship. At the same time, having over 150,000 registered users, and more monthly site visitors (about one million) than the country’s population (622,000), Vijesti wanted a software solution that was both reliable and robust.

Vijesti’s editor-in-chief Srdan Kosović said, “Apart from the usual challenges that come with big platform changes and redesign tricks ... working with Sourcefabric has been the right
Apart from the usual challenges that come with big platform changes and redesign tricks, working with Sourcefabric has been the right editorial choice as it has opened a huge set of new opportunities for our media house.

Srdan Kosović
Editor-in-chief,
Vijesti.me

Sourcefabric’s managing director Sava Tatić added: “No journalist or media organization should ever be attacked – either physically or digitally – for reporting the truth. But, as we have demonstrated through our partnership with Vijesti.me, innovative publishing tools can help brave journalists fight even the most powerful people. When the media does its job well, crooked leaders will try to silence the messenger. With the right technology, the messenger will always prevail.”
Company bio

Europe’s largest developer of open source tools for news media

Our diverse portfolio of clients and partners benefit each other.

Sourcefabric’s head office is in Prague, Czech Republic, and was founded in 2010 with the purpose of developing state-of-the-art tools for journalism. Since then, we’ve worked with media organisations worldwide, empowering journalism through software development and services.

Our team consists of around 50 people, with offices in Prague, Berlin, Toronto and Belgrade. Sourcefabric clients include international news organisations, radio stations, self-publishing and print-on-demand service providers as well as NGOs and news agencies. We deploy advanced news technologies in newsrooms across the globe and have run media development projects in challenging political and economic environments.

Our formula is simple. We want the best, not only for individual clients, but for the industry as a whole, from Basel to Bamako, Sydney to São Paulo.

29 languages
23 nationalities
14 countries