



DER SPIEGEL relies on a&f systems and the WoodWing product range for its “Workflows + Systems” project

DER SPIEGEL has been working with WoodWing Assets since 2019. Plans are to roll out WoodWing Studio throughout the group in the summer of 2021. The print and online editorial offices merge at the content production level in the “Workflows + Systems” project. a&f systems supports the entire technical change-over process.

Der SPIEGEL is a German news publication published by SPIEGEL Group in Hamburg. Politically independent, unrelated to any economic groups, obliged only to itself and its readers and users – DER SPIEGEL has thus been known for its investigative journalism for over 70 years.

The printed SPIEGEL is Germany’s biggest news publication with the largest circulation. SPIEGEL.de is the online publication platform of the SPIEGEL editorial office where all of the SPIEGEL’s editorial contents are stored. The SPIEGEL brand has a weekly readership of more than 16 million. DER SPIEGEL is therefore one of the most important news publications in the German-speaking region. According to a reader analysis in 2020, almost two third of the decision-makers in the economic and administrative sectors refer to the magazine. DER SPIEGEL is also unique because of its shareholder structure. Half of the company is owned by its staff. The print and online editorial offices have been merged into one central editorial office since 2018 in the “Orange” project. a&f systems has supported the technical change-over.

### Initial situation

DER SPIEGEL has been pursuing the objective of project "Orange". The previously independent print and online editorial offices were merged in one organisation. Key steps have already been completed. The editorial office now runs under one chief editorial office and with a joint unit management. The employees write and produce digital contents for the SPIEGEL.de website and for the printed SPIEGEL version. The merger is now being realised at the level of the production processes in the "Workflow + Systems" project. In the future, the around 800 employees will work in joint systems. The contents will be produced according to the "story first" principle. All of the editorial systems were also updated as part of the change-over. One of a&f's tasks is to develop and deepen the magazine production structure in line with customer requirements.

### Project schedule

The cooperation started in 2018 with an enquiry to the German subsidiary of a&f systems ag – CoreLab GmbH, now a&f systems gmbh. The former objective was support for WoodWing Elvis DAM (now "Assets"), which was launched as the group-wide image system. It soon became clear that a&f was the ideal partner to provide 24/7 support. Great WoodWing and publication know-how, flexibility, customer proximity both in Germany and Switzerland and sufficient resources impressed all involved.

Together, the entire WoodWing system landscape was consolidated and established with a new hosting partner in 2019. Since the start of 2020, WoodWing Assets has been integrated as an image system in the CSM for the new SPIEGEL website.

Right from the start of the "Workflows + System" project, great importance was placed on the future operation of the production environment and a cooperation was the result for this project as well. The project quickly gained momentum. Together, SPIEGEL Lab was developed which "simulates" future workflows and can be presented live to employees in 2020/2021.

**"The SPIEGEL Lab was great and created some important impulses. I was particularly impressed by the option in WoodWing to consolidate contents into dossiers and the perfect expansion options. That is perfect for the SPIEGEL."**  
– Stefan Schärer, Head of Sales & Marketing a&f systems ag

SPIEGEL Tech Lab GmbH, a SPIEGEL Group company registered in Hamburg, was the central unit responsible for creating all of the new content platform. In other words, from the editor plus the entire topic planning and task management to linking online advertising systems, integration of paywall solutions and finally, delivery of the pages.

Comprehensive preliminary concept work and project support was carried out in 2020 for the impending change to the full WoodWing product range [WoodWing product range] (Assets and Studio). New workflows, options and working methods were designed and set up in a LAB system and reconciled with the units and divisions. An important aspect was to transparently display the entire process throughout all of the systems involved for the editorial office. The systems had to stand up to the dynamics of the digital requirements and merge them with the technical print requirements. This required a perfectly interlinked workflow between the various systems. WoodWing provides this as a standard, including numerous connection and integration options.



Alexander Thiel, Head of Editorial Systems and Workflows SPIEGEL-Verlag

"We are glad to have a partner such as a&f by our side. The project is complex with numerous requirements as a result and a great number of concepts had to be developed. We are very satisfied with the jointly developed workflow and are optimistic about the go live."

– Alexander Thiel, Head of Editorial Systems and Workflows SPIEGEL-Verlag

The "Workflows + Systems" project will go live in the second half of the year and the new editorial processes and systems will be used for producing the contents. The technical environment has been in development since the start of 2021 and gone through corresponding user tests. Comprehensive training sessions took place in the second quarter of 2021 where around 800 employees were instructed in the new workflows and tools. The go live at the end of summer will take place with intensive support at the start of production. In the months thereafter, SPIEGEL derivatives will also change over to WoodWing Studio.

"The cooperation with the employees and project managers at SPIEGEL-Verlag is brilliant. All those involved showed great interest and the atmosphere is always pleasant, open and transparent. The focus is on the partnership at all times."

– Priska Stephani, Management Assistant and Project Manager at a&f systems ag

#### Conclusion

The cooperation was a total success for both sides. Deadlines and targets were met and a&f, together with WoodWing, were entirely convincing. There were restrictions with regard to the Coronavirus measures and therefore the site visits. The training sessions and change-over support had to be designed for all situations of the pandemic. The targets were nevertheless met thanks to the open and transparent communication at all times, also coming from the SPIEGEL-Verlag.

"We would like to sincerely thank the entire SPIEGEL team for the great cooperation. The project is an important milestone for us as well and everyone involved had a lot of fun. Obstacles and challenges were met together and the exchange was very friendly."

– Stefan Schärer, Head of Sales & Marketing a&f systems ag

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Want to find out more about the project or WoodWing?

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