Press release

**Harbour launches collaborative web native document editing for contracts**

For all the capabilities of the modern browser, the experience of editing documents on the web continues to be difficult. This is especially true when needing to embed a collaborative document editor inside one’s own web application.

Enter Harbour – a company specializing in business collaboration tools for contracts – who just introduced native DOCX editing for the web named SuperDoc. When the team could not find an existing solution meeting the needs of modern businesses, they knew they had to build it themselves. The goal is a modern, open source document editing experience that provides pristine DOCX formatting upon import/export and empowers real-time collaboration. How the document looks offline and online is exactly how it looks when imported or exported.

**Why did we build this?**

Harbour is acutely aware of the challenges around bringing online document editing to your own web application since many of its customers are modern legal teams. Their customers need to go from document drafted to signed as quickly as possible, which requires streamlining their version tracking, approval workflows and integrations in the process.

Documents can now be imported and exported with precise formatting, while easily editing, collaborating, approving, and automation of the processes surrounding these documents (e.g., Salesforce updates, background checks, Google Sheets project tracking, and much more) are all made possible by SuperDoc.

**Key differences**

*Formatting quality*

In previous attempts at this, the “document editors” provided by other companies just use an internal intermediate format or HTML pretending to look like a DOCX file and then just-at-the-end send the output into an inconsistent conversion service which mangles the formatting of the final exported document, leading to wasted time and work to spot and correct these differences.

For the first time, Harbour’s SuperDoc provides truly web-native DOCX editing where each edit immediately and directly saves into the actual underlying DOCX file – delivering excellent formatting quality for the important-and-nuanced needs of real-word documents: preserving lists, columns, line spacing, headers/footers, tables, comments, and more. **How the document looks online is exactly how it looks when exported.**

*Bring-your-own-backend collaboration*

On top of that foundation, Harbour's workflows get amplified with secure, fast, real-time collaboration including live editing with granular permissioning and tracked changes, internal-or-external commenting, extensive internal-only revision history, and more.

The team wanted a flexible approach here where all this functionality could be used across different backend providers and configurations, so they created a frontend-only component that is readily pluggable into any backend. Tools or platforms needing collaborative DOCX editing (e.g., building a new invoice app in Salesforce) can then easily leverage the solution with their own server, database, and permissions setup. Keeping the project a frontend-only component ensures the experience is always fast, secure, and easily embedded anywhere (e.g., a new invoicing app someone wants to build into Salesforce).

*Completely extensible*

The team at Harbour will also open source their document editor for wider community use (and dual-licensed for other commercial uses). The team is excited to build a community around SuperDoc and ensure radical transparency to ensure security given the sensitivity of documents to organizations and truly hopes it uplevels many products. With its modular architecture and truly open nature, it is optimized to be easily extended by the community!

This truly sets the stage for new and modernized document workflow experiences across the web.

**Technical TLDR**

* ✅ View and edit DOCX natively online
* ✅ Excellent MS Word compatibility supporting importing/exporting, advanced formatting, comments, tracked changes, and more
* ✅ Can be entirely self-hosted (with fully in-browser DOCX rendering/editing)
* ✅ Supports optional real-time collaboration with multiplayer editing, live updates, commenting, sharing, and revision history (and pluggable into any backend)
* ✅ Integrates well with any frontend JS library: Vue, React, vanilla JS, more
* ✅ Architected for modularity and easy extensibility
* ✅ Fully available under both an Open Source license (AGPLv3) for community use and a Commercial license for enterprise use
* ✅ Created and actively-developed by ⛵️Harbour - Superpowered contract management and the SuperDoc community