

 SWITCH

## How SWITCH integrated **ONLYOFFICE** into **SWITCHdrive** to create a complete alternative to Office 365

In this article, Urs Schmid, Product Manager of the academic cloud hosting service SWITCHdrive, talks about the experience with the integration of ONLYOFFICE Docs.

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## About SWITCH

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SWITCH is the competent and trusted partner for digitalisation issues that jointly concern the education, research, and innovation community in Switzerland. As an independent foundation, SWITCH helps universities and other partners within and outside the academic world to make effective and efficient use of the opportunities presented by digitalisation.

SWITCH has been managing the .ch and .li country-code top-level domains for Switzerland and Liechtenstein since the early days of the Internet. For now, the company counts more than 100 employees at its Zurich headquarters.

SWITCH is also operating the cloud service SWITCHdrive which is fully compliant with the Swiss data protection regulations. All data is stored on SWITCH servers in Switzerland.



*SWITCH offices in Zurich,  
source: switch.ch*

## When SWITCH met ONLYOFFICE

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Urs Schmid recalls that several years many SWITCHdrive users requested a web office solution to be able to use a single service without jumping back and forth between multiple applications. When ONLYOFFICE was presented at the [CS3 2018](#) in Krakow, SWITCH representatives were very impressed by its ease of use and performance as well as by the ONLYOFFICE team.

For SWITCH, all contacts at ONLYOFFICE were always very friendly, helpful, and goal-oriented, so a functioning pilot was soon available and testing started.

## **A perfect alternative to Google Docs and Office 365**

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SWITCH users didn't just ask for an online office solution, they rather wanted an alternative to Google Docs and Office 365 which were causing privacy concerns at Swiss universities.

When SWITCH found out that ONLYOFFICE could be run on their own servers and that it was nearly 100% compatible with Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, they realised it was a perfect solution.

### **When security matters**

Along with the aforementioned data location in Switzerland, the key challenge with the ONLYOFFICE integration in SWITCHdrive was to convince users that working with sensitive documents is just as safe as if they were editing them in their local Microsoft applications.

Since SWITCHdrive and ONLYOFFICE servers are located in the SWITCH data center connected to their own research network, the company can guarantee that no third party is able to access private data.

Urs Schmid explains that they also had to instruct the users to be extremely careful when sharing sensitive documents with other people and to avoid creating public links to such documents whenever possible.

## **Seamless integration**

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SWITCHdrive is based on the integration of ONLYOFFICE in ownCloud. The integration of ONLYOFFICE with SWITCHdrive as well as between the ownCloud app and the server works very smoothly. SWITCH uses Docker containers for ONLYOFFICE Docs (Document Server) which allows regular and carefree upgrades with no dependencies.

## **Making document collaboration effective**

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According to feedback from SWITCH customers, collaborative document editing is the most frequently used feature in ONLYOFFICE.

*“Although collaborative editing on the same document requires some precautions (e.g. users are required to work with ONLYOFFICE and not their local Office application, all users must close the web session after editing to save changes, etc.), it seems that these pitfalls have now been mastered by our users and we hardly get feedback any more about loss of edits. It is also a great new feature in ONLYOFFICE that allows new versions of a document without closing it which will hopefully further prevent users from losing their edits after a long editing session.”*

The most frequently used file types SWITCHdrive users are working with in ONLYOFFICE are the well known docx, xlsx, and pptx formats. Urs Schmid says they also see an increase in displaying pdf files in ONLYOFFICE because it's possible to send a link to other users which opens a pdf file right in the browser window without launching a local PDF-viewer.

## **SWITCH recommends ONLYOFFICE**

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Urs Schmid points out that the integration of ONLYOFFICE in SWITCHdrive allows them to successfully prevent most of their customers from storing sensitive data in data centers outside Switzerland. If there are still users who have multiple cloud services installed side by side, it's great to know there is a secure alternative which offers the same, if not a better user experience than Office 365 or Google Docs to co-edit documents.

SWITCH is quite happy with the ONLYOFFICE solution and would recommend it to others.

*“We also know there are users who have switched completely from Microsoft Office to ONLYOFFICE and use it for working with local files after having installed the solution on their desktops.”*

### Useful information

SWITCH official website: [www.switch.ch](http://www.switch.ch)

Official page of SWITCHdrive: [switch.ch/drive](http://switch.ch/drive)

More success stories from ONLYOFFICE customers:

[www.onlyoffice.com/customers.aspx](http://www.onlyoffice.com/customers.aspx)

ONLYOFFICE official website:

[www.onlyoffice.com](http://www.onlyoffice.com)

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