

Sdu Helps Businesses Perform Routine Legal Work In-house

**Ebbo Haantjes Discusses Partnership/Collaboration with
Berkeley Bridge and Van Brug Software**



NotaFlow, a Technological Solution for Increasing Demands on Notary Time

When you speak to Ebbo Haantjes, you get the sense that he lives about five years ahead of his time. From his training in Notarial Law at the VU in Amsterdam onwards, he continues to fine-tune his approach to making legal work simpler, quicker, and more efficient. After sixteen years at NautaDutilh, which in recent years won several mentions in the Financial Times Innovative Lawyer awards, he joined major legal publishing house Sdu in 2018. His experience working with Sdu from a client's perspective during his time at NautaDutilh, has allowed him – in less than a year – to set the course for Sdu to transform from legal publisher to wholesale provider of legal services. Using the Lean Six Sigma management method, Ebbo has established a quick cycle between the development, content, and practice of Sdu's products.

Haantjes thinks 'legal tech' is not just about implementing technological gadgets to solve individual problems. "It is about changing your business model" Haantjes says. He wants Sdu to tap into the wealth of knowledge it can access as a publisher in order to automate common legal work. At Sdu, that means organising information in a different way and providing legal services that are traditionally associated with lawyers, notaries and legal counsels, for example drafting contracts. For many businesses, these basic services are becoming too expensive to outsource to law firms. Sdu helps businesses perform routine legal work in-house using a smart combination of content and software applications. That, in turn, helps the pricier legal professional to do what he is trained for: deliver expert advice, instead of transferring data from spreadsheets to documents and back. And it helps clients pay for a bespoke service, not for another hours work done.



Ebbo Haantjes

Ebbo Haantjes serves as Publishing Director Legal at Sdu, a major Dutch publishing house with a history going back over 200 years. Sdu has an innovative portfolio that supports professionals in legal, fiscal, and compliance roles as well as government professionals. In 2013, Sdu joined Lefebvre Sarrut, an ambitious group of European publishers in eight countries and with over 2,500 employees.

Ebbo studied Notarial Law at the VU in Amsterdam and before joining Sdu worked for 16 years at NautaDutilh, fulfilling such roles as Staff Director in Knowledge Management, Innovation, and Process Optimisation.

He has worked for Sdu since 2018, and together with his team he is transforming the division from "traditional" publisher to (legal) service provider focusing on Legal Operations. In addition, Ebbo is a firm believer in the Lean Six Sigma management philosophy, in which he is Black Belt certified.



NotaFlow helps the pricier legal professional to do what he is trained for: deliver expert advice.



The first Sdu product in this spirit is called Sdu Arbeidsrecht, an online platform Sdu launched in 2018 that assembles practice notes (practice oriented content), flowcharts, case studies, models, and calculation tools according to various themes in labour law.

Closer to his notarial roots, Haantjes is doing interesting work for notaries by delivering models to automate documents in corporate, real estate, and family law. The tool, called [NotaFlow](#), will integrate Sdu's legal content with software from Berkeley Bridge and Van Brug Software. Haantjes knows that by joining forces this product combines the best of both worlds; the quality content and knowledge of Sdu and the best software for document generation by Berkeley Bridge. The partnership with Van Brug Software means that the NotaFlow can be embedded in the notarial software system most notaries use on a daily basis.

The technical solution is elegant in its simplicity: to break down the boundaries between these software systems. When notaries use Van Brug Software's new Codex software, they can access models in Berkeley Bridge to generate documents. Through the intelligent connection between Berkeley Bridge and Van Burg Software the model documents automatically collect data from a range of often used sources, as well as the client's individual file. This eliminates time spent tinkering with data input and preserves sensitive data that might otherwise get lost or corrupted in translation. The software is also capable of generating documents in numerous languages. Sdu, in turn, delivers the legal backbone of it all. When a final document is generated, it can be saved in Van Brug Software's familiar working environment.

Haantjes explains how the project came to be: "I have known Rob van de Plassche for years, as Berkeley heads the market in document generation. One day we started talking about how we could conquer the market. We realised we needed each other; Berkeley Bridge has the engineering, Sdu has the content. The result is a unique partnership that does not yet exist in the Dutch market." NotaFlow has taken off with Haantjes' characteristic speed: "It is an exciting project that started only last year. In January and February we closed the deals with Van Brug Software and Berkeley Bridge. We plan to release NotaFlow in August. All three companies are established names in the notarial market, and we expect to reach about 75% of that market within a year."

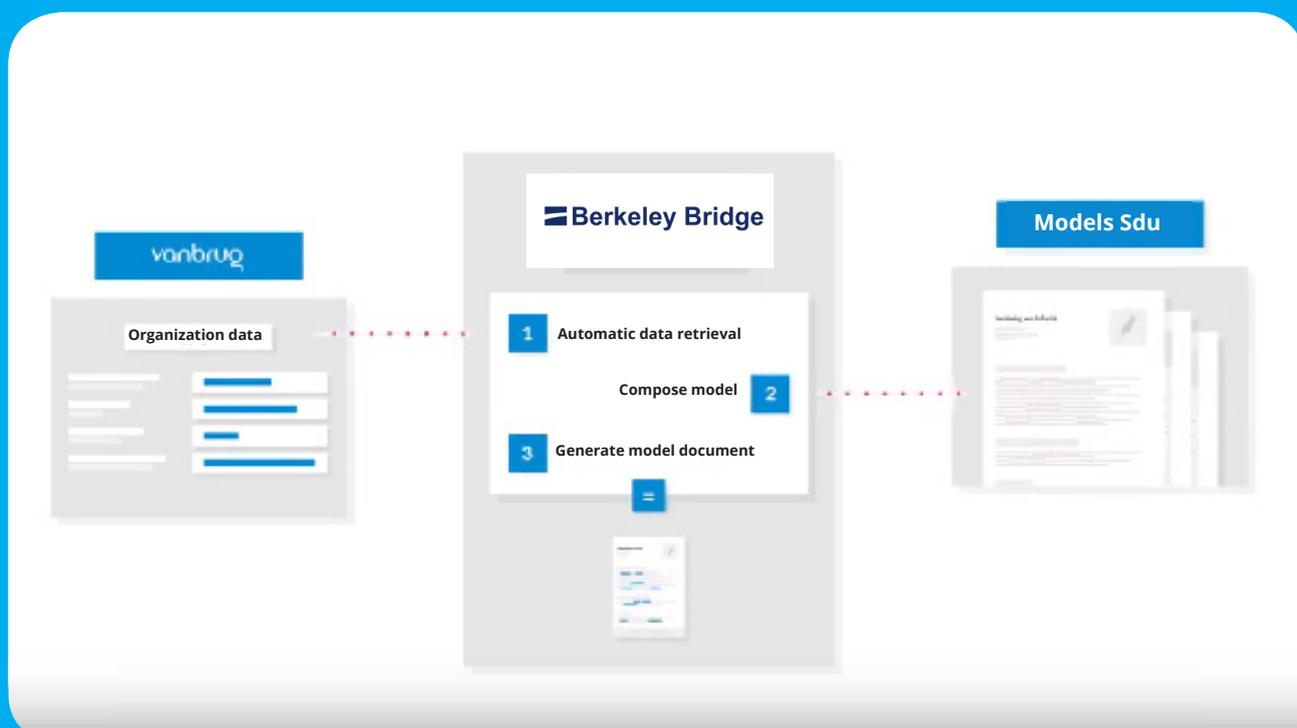
Haantjes emphasises that NotaFlow is about more than just a technological solution for increasing demands on notaries' time. One thing he is excited about is the potential NotaFlow holds for AI. "Standardisation allows us to keep track of what people actually use on a day-to-day basis. We are heading to preventive law, but we can only implement that if there is a standard in the market." Besides this, NotaFlow will also help train the next generation of notaries. Haantjes: "This fall, Sdu, Berkeley and Van Brug Software are delivering a comprehensive workflow solution for the Hogeschool Leiden. Students will be able to complete assignments using the software they can expect to see in when they join the workforce."

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Haantjes is also thrilled to reach a new market with NotaFlow: "The one-man practice. They are the ones who actually do most notarial work in this country: 60% of practices are a solo practice. They have neither the time nor the capital to implement automation (or develop models), and have been relatively untouched by the changing world of legal tech. That is an enormous untapped market, one that Berkeley has been unable to reach either." To solo practitioners, legal tech offers the same benefits – accentuating a practitioner's singular added value and the client relationship by eliminating rote work – with a much more immediate, visible impact on everyday life. NotaFlow will offer them a fixed price package. "It is affordable precisely because we standardise. And we can reach them easily, because everyone already uses Sdu's legal publications."

NotaFlow advantages:

- Contains the most commonly used models for the Notary.
- Provides an intelligent link with your notarial software system.
- Models are also available in 'uncoded' Word versions.
- English and Dutch translations are available for a selection of models.
- Create notarial deeds including underlying documents in only 7 minutes.
- Maintained by renowned editors who guarantee optimal practicality and quality.



Are you curious how NotaFlow can make legal work more efficient and effective for your organization? Please submit our [contact form](#). We will contact you as soon as possible.

About Berkeley Bridge

Berkeley Bridge believes that the existing knowledge & experience in organizations is the most important precondition for success. The effective use of all information available allows organizations to optimize processes and to serve customers better.

Berkeley Bridge has been supporting organizations for over fifteen years by advising them and inspiring them in terms of knowledge systems. We provide solutions for designing, managing, and sharing knowledge in, inter alia, the legal domain, in health care, for the government, and in many other sectors. We do so with a team of enthusiastic knowledge experts and experienced developers from our office in Alphen aan den Rijn .

Contact

Curious about what we can do for your organization? Please feel free to [contact us](#) for advice on how we can help you achieve your goals.



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