

Collaborative Scientific Authoring at CERN: A user-centered approach

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For over a year we ran a CERN-wide trial of collaborative authoring platforms, understanding the authoring habits of the CERN community and gathering user requirements. As a result, the Overleaf cloud platform is now fully available to the CERN Community.

We first explain our user-centered approach, how it led us to a decision and why it was important to follow this approach. We then highlight the usage growth of Overleaf at CERN since its adoption and we finally look into the future of CERN Authoring.

Jan 1955

The first ever CERN Report is published.  CERN Reports, often called Yellow Reports, are published to this day.

Sep 2011

The new E-Publishing service is established.

Jan 2015

In view of the technical challenges of collaborative authoring, we start evaluating authoring platforms.

Jan 2016

We launch a CERN-wide trial of collaborative authoring platforms where **45** participants from **9** departments evaluate **3** platforms:



Apr 2017

After **45** initial interviews, **39** evaluation questionnaires and **11** follow-up interviews we identify the user requirements:

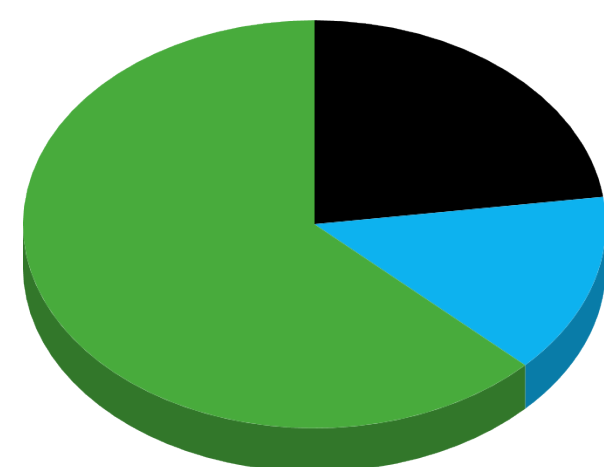
 **LaTeX**

Efficiency

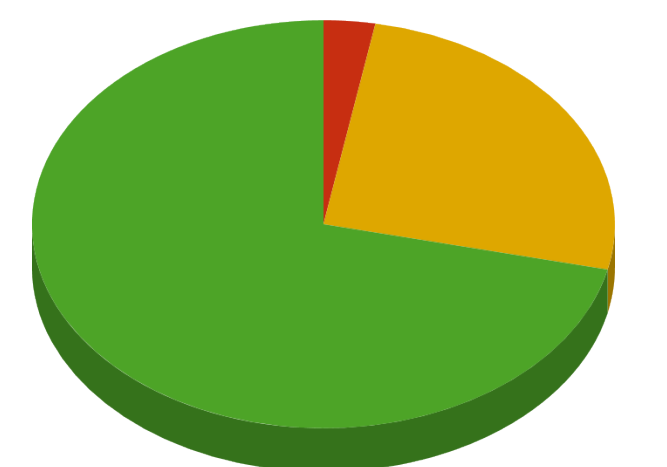
Collaboration

Versioning

63% of the trial participants chose **Overleaf**, **23%** chose **Authorea** and **14%** chose **doDOC** as their preferred platform.



71% of the trial participants **fully agree** that "A CERN Authoring Platform would be useful", **26%** **somewhat agree** while only **3%** **somewhat disagree**.



Dec 2017

Overleaf is fully available to the CERN Community.

The CERN Authoring service is established.



<https://www.overleaf.com/org/cern>

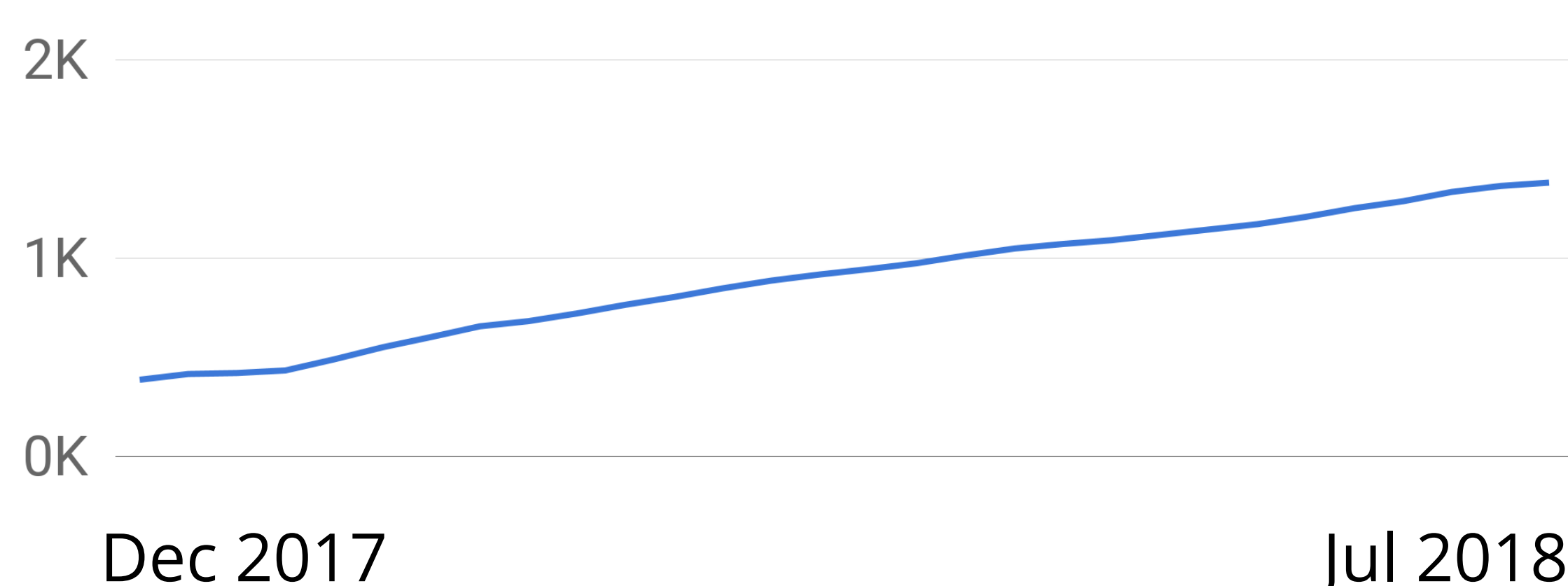


<https://cern.ch/authoring>

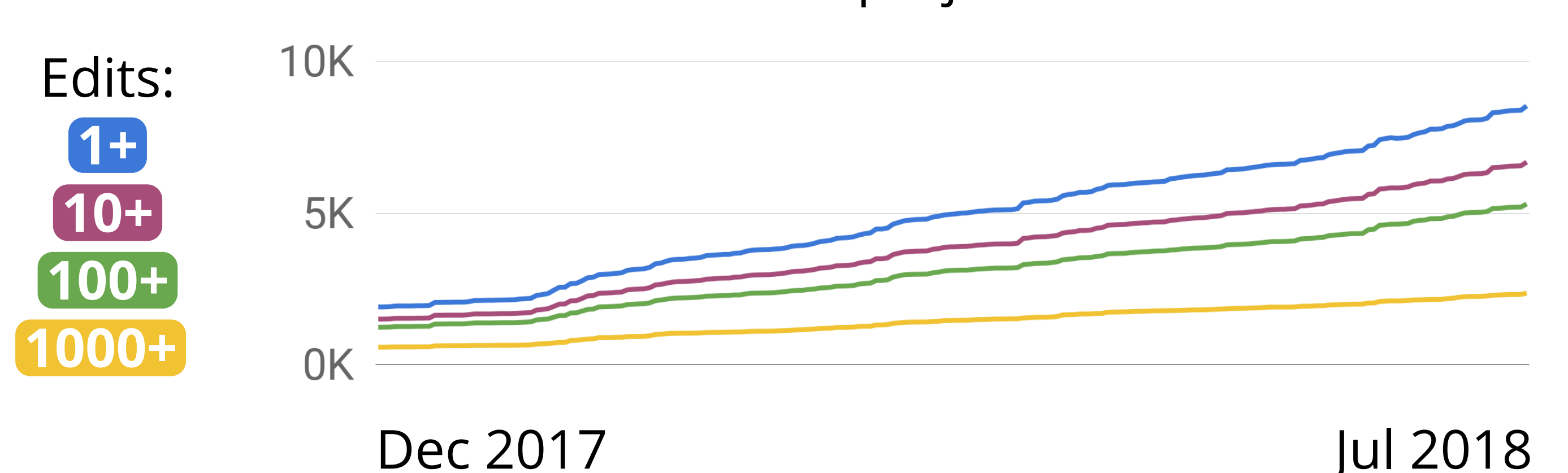
Jul 2018

The usage of Overleaf at CERN is steadily increasing.

Number of CERN users on Overleaf



Number of CERN projects on Overleaf



Community discussions and engagement help us enrich the existing platforms (templates) and discover new ones.

<https://cern.ch/discourse/c/authoring>

Overleaf, after joining forces with  ShareLaTeX, is working on Overleaf v2. A public beta version is already available.

<https://v2.overleaf.com>

