



Press Release
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MIGRATION

SODIFRANCE* migrates a strategic application for the French Yellow Pages from an IBM Mainframe to an Open Source Solution using COBOL-IT

- *PagesJaunes, the French Yellow Pages, undertook an IS evolution project with the goal of achieving significant cost savings on both the hardware and software level.*
- *The migration of its legacy COBOL MVS/DB2 applications to Open Source COBOL was successfully completed by SODIFRANCE allowing PagesJaunes to achieve its objectives!*

PagesJaunes is the leader in France in local advertising and information on the Internet (pagesjaunes.fr, pagespro.com), mobile (sites and applications) and printed media (the PagesJaunes and PagesBlanches directories). PagesJaunes is also one of the leaders in on-line small ads (annoncesjaunes.fr) and the primary creator of internet sites in France (75,000 sites created to date).

PagesJaunes manages a vast database which grows daily as a result of the development of the services it supplies to its clients. This information is made available to them via multimedia services such as its printed directories, its call-centres and its fixed and mobile internet services.

■ Pressures to move to open systems

In the pursuit of its business objectives, PagesJaunes has deployed, over time, a series of IT applications designed to manage, maintain and manipulate this large volume of data. The oldest of them are written in the COBOL programming language, with a DB2 database manager on an IBM MVS mainframe platform.

However, PagesJaunes has observed that its MVS/DB2 legacy applications were becoming more and more complex and expensive to run. As well as the risk of finding it difficult to open them up to the web-based applications needing to be connected to the system, there was also the fact that the increased costs related to the renewing of its maintenance contract were not acceptable to PagesJaunes.

To solve these problems, PagesJaunes undertook a project which included both a datacenter consolidation, and a migration from MVS/DB2/VSAM to Sun Solaris 10 using an Oracle 10g database. At the beginning of 2009, PagesJaunes put out an RFP for a Proof of Concept (POC) with the aim of confirming the feasibility of a migration to JAVA of the application managing the core database which handles all the information that can be found via the various paper and web-based PagesJaunes services: in itself, a business-critical migration.



■ A consultancy phase to establish the most appropriate target technology

“Budgetary constraints demanded change and the contractual aspect imposed rigid timescale constraints. If the project was not finished before the end of the maintenance contract, cost rises would have been inevitable for PagesJaunes”, explains Fabrice Fontaine, Solution Centre Manager, PagesJaunes.

“We contacted several large IT service companies. We chose SODIFRANCE for its expertise in automated IS migration. It was the most convincing company with its experience accompanying major accounts in the reduction of their costs by modernizing their applications. SODIFRANCE stood out by its audacious approach, proposing an alternative solution using an Open Source COBOL and a technically proven methodology”.

The study carried out by SODIFRANCE compared a migration to JAVA and a migration to Open Source COBOL. The latter proved an effective alternative in response to the budgetary requirements and the technical context at PagesJaunes.

To reinforce its proprietary migration toolset, SODIFRANCE chose the source compiler marketed by software supplier COBOL-IT, that is to say, a solution which renders the source code executable by the operating system. The transfer of the data, the migration of the production environment and the automation of the modernization process were all carried out by SODIFRANCE group solutions.

■ Implementation of a proven and methodological process

SODIFRANCE organized the migration project in 6 phases:

1. Initial study to fix the project scope and detailed studies to understand the potential migration problem areas.
2. Installation of the solutions: adaptation and parameterization of the standard migration solutions and processes to the specifics of the client and the project.
3. Pilot migration package: definition of the subsets to be migrated in an initial “small” migration package, representative of the problem areas to be addressed in the overall project.
4. Industrialization of the migration by migration package with the solutions used on the Pilot.
5. Technical support during the integration of the applications within the new PagesJaunes production environment.
6. Technical support during the cut-over rehearsals and the cut-overs themselves, reusing the migration and data transfer processes.

To control all the project phases, SODIFRANCE deployed its migration solutions, processes and workflow tools, specifically designed for migration projects. They optimise the management of the project procedures and facilitate collaboration between teams.

In September 2010, as per their contractual obligations, SODIFRANCE completed the migration of more than 800 COBOL programmes and the JCL. In addition, SODIFRANCE migrated more than 30 VSAM files and 130 DB2 tables to Oracle 10g. In effect, the SODIFRANCE teams migrated the programmes, data and procedures and scripts executing the programmes. Rigorous tests executed by the teams and validated by PagesJaunes confirmed the project’s successful completion.



■ Tangible benefits

“Thanks to SODIFRANCE, our transition from an MVS/DB2 platform succeeded within tight contractual timescales. With this modernization, the implementation of our DataCenter consolidation project and the move to COBOL-IT’s Open Source, PagesJaunes will benefit from cost reductions enabling an ROI of less than 18 months. In addition, the implementation of our DataCenter consolidation project and the move to COBOL-IT’s Open Source will allow PagesJaunes to divide by 5 the production costs of that part of its IS and that, with no impact on the service provided by to critical back-offices domains”, explains Fabrice Fontaine.

In reality, the fact of keeping the same programming language, but in Open Source, capitalises on the existing teams’ knowledge without having to re-train them. As a result of this successful experience, SODIFRANCE were chosen for another project of the same type for a different PagesJaunes department. This time the applications to be migrated are for managing commercial services. This second project was successfully carried out between September 2009 and November 2010.

*About SOFTMAINT – SODIFRANCE GROUP

SOFTMAINT is a wholly-owned subsidiary of SODIFRANCE Group, an IT services company created in 1986 with 900 staff in 12 offices in France, listed on the EURONEXT Stock Market (Mnemo code : SOA)

SOFTMAINT is Europe’s leading provider of automated legacy modernization solutions. For over 15 years, SOFTMAINT Legacy modernization expertise and solutions have been dedicated to helping numerous large companies efficiently modernize their IT systems. Our expertise and automated solutions include:

- Architecture evolution to .Net, Java, Flex: our FAST - Future Architecture System Transformation - solutions
- Platform migration, database and language conversion
- Reverse documentation and technical urbanization

With over 150 projects successfully delivered and longstanding experience, SOFTMAINT provides the most comprehensive modernization approach combining solutions, methodology, industrial delivery and quality engagements through CMMI.

For further information, please contact SOFTMAINT : contact@softmaint.com / www.softmaint.com