opentext ™

Success story

SNCF

Industry
• Transportation

Solutions
• OpenText™ Document Management
• OpenText™ Extended Collaboration

Results

⇆ Ability to **share best practices**

🔒 **Content security**

🏅 **Quality assurance** of the corporate document library

☑ **Simplicity** and ease of use

👥 Improved ability to **leverage corporate knowledge**

SNCF Infra shares best practices via a single portal

The French rail infrastructure group finds a way to manage documents and help staff collaborate to better serve customers catching 13,600 trains a day

"Our ECM system is based on criteria such as quality assurance of the document library, controlled access, and security and recovery of content via rapid backup systems, typically in less than 24 hours. It also had to allow access via Windows and Office interfaces and be compatible with a browser such as Internet Explorer… We needed a third generation Intranet."

Joël Royer
Intranet project manager
SNCF Infra

The infrastructure division of SNCF has successfully restructured its electronic document management (EDM) system, thanks to OpenText™ Document Management and is now ready to energize its professional communities via a single portal.

With 178,000 employees and 13,600 trains operating each day on the network, SNCF requires a huge infrastructure: its trains run on 30,000 kilometers of electric lines, including 1,391 km of lines for the high-speed trains. With figures of that magnitude, it goes without saying that documentation—technical or otherwise—is very important to SNCF. The infrastructure division comprises 10 departments, 80 different professions, 57,000 agents (one-third of the total workforce) and generates sales of EUR 4 billion (18 percent of global sales).

Operational challenges

This division of the French rail group had to manage an increasing volume of electronic documents. Information was department-oriented and decentralized, document status was difficult to identify, and means of exchange were not uniform and were based principally on email. The same proliferation of information could be seen on the intranet, with independent sites outnumbering departments, and with autonomous control of content.

Other operational challenges faced by SNCF Infra included:

• Amalgamating and using all available information

• Capitalizing on and sharing best practices

• Setting up spaces dedicated to professional communities

• Consistent presentation of information on the intranet

The new Infra @net portal

On this basis, SNCF Infra set itself a target of constructing an effective EDM system. *"This involved creating a structure based on criteria such as quality assurance of the document library, controlled access, and security and recovery of content via rapid backup systems, typically in less than 24 hours,"* explained Joël Royer, intranet project manager within the infrastructure division. *"It also had to allow access via Windows® and Office® interfaces, and be compatible with a browser such as Internet Explorer."* Clearly, SNCF Infra needed a third generation intranet.

With these clear and precise objectives in place, market research began in November 2003 and, by December, a shortlist of providers had been drawn up. The solution was acquired in March 2004. Migration of the existing intranet took place between April and June. September to November saw a change of platform, from Windows/SQL Server to Unix/Oracle®. By the end of December 2004, Document Management was up and running and accessible from the internet, Office and Windows, thanks to the Explorer Pro module.

Open to public users

The next stage was to successively increase the system's capabilities: On February 1, Document Management was opened to public users, and on March 1, the ECM system was launched. This was followed by steps to streamline the processes involved in recovering, indexing and archiving existing documents. Similarly, the existing operational processes had to be adapted so that they were compatible with the ECM solutions. After only six months in service, 700 contributors had been trained to use the tool and 20,000 documents were already on the intranet.

"Today, sharing of best practices is a reality, and response to information has improved significantly."

Jacques Couvert
Director
SNCF Infra
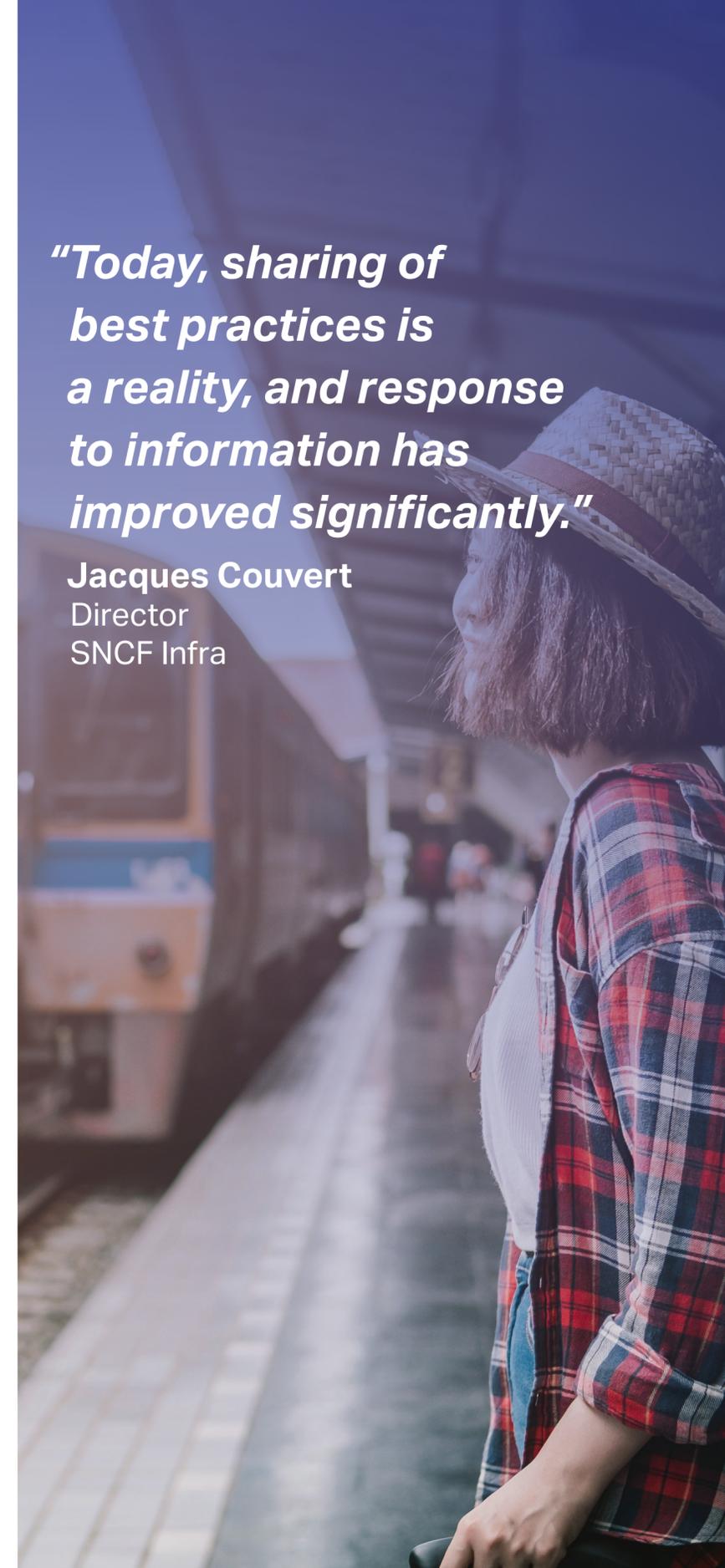
Management involvement was critical

Beginning in the project's early phase, a communications manager was nominated for the project. *"We needed to respond to significant oper-ational requirements by providing technical documentation, while at the same time supplying fresh information,"* explained Royer. In addition to operational monitoring, the manager's mission was strategic: *"Along with other media, the job entails presenting, explaining, and really selling the product and its content, as well as establishing a network of coordinators to bring the tool to life".* The increased responsibility of these coordinators was, in fact, a crucial requirement identified during the early phases of the project.

Energizing professional communities

In October 2005, the first online community of professionals was launched. Structured around the professions within the infrastructure division (signalling, tracks, tools, catenary systems, etc.), this commu-nity enables genuine cooperation through sharing best practices and using IT tools developed on a local level. Experiences can be quickly shared among users and conveyed to the management level. Twenty-five practical communities have already been created within the OpenText™ Extended Collaboration solution for the most specialized professions, and they include 1,000 members out of the 15,000 potential members forecasted for 2007. SNCF Infra is now looking to use these communities to unlock the various skills of its employees and capitalize on all the expertise contained within the company.

"We want to create buffer spaces between the regions/establishments and management, where professional information can be gathered, and locally-conceived best practices can be exploited," said Royer. Thanks to the OpenText solution, the online professional communities are simple to use and highly innovative—they constitute a rapid and prag-matic exchange system that guarantees confidentiality based on profiles. Anyone can post useful information about SNCF Infra activities here, and it can then be accessed and used by everyone. *"Today, sharing of best practices is a reality, and response to information has improved significantly,"* affirmed Jacques Couvert, director of the Infra division.

Compatible with Windows, Office, Sun, Unix and Oracle

The aim of SNCF Infra was to unlock corporate skills and capitalize on all of the expertise contained within the company. This has been made possible thanks to the OpenText solution, which manages and presents information on the intranet. The current challenge is to introduce new applications on this basis to serve the 100 different professions and 25,000 users. Staff members who are not yet familiar with the system must also receive relevant training. OpenText ECM is compatible with Windows® and Office workstation environments, as well as with Sun, Unix and Oracle® servers.
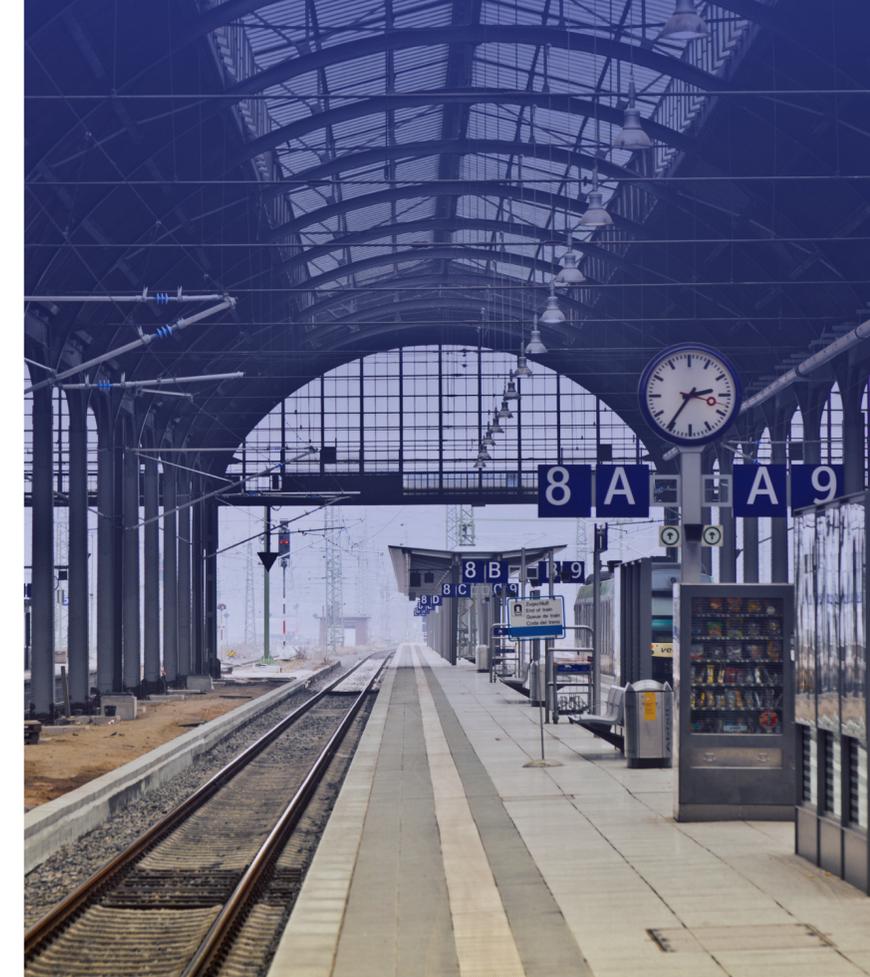
About OpenText

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