



Summary

CUSTOMER

Les Voies Navigables de France

CHALLENGE

Centralize data to unify a fragmented information system and adapt to new government mandates.

OUTCOME

Les Voies Navigables de France now relies on its Data Hub, powered by InterSystems IRIS, for data exchange among applications and databases. Interoperability has made it possible to unify seven different information systems, while providing the agility and responsiveness to meet government mandates.

Les Voies Navigables de France + InterSystems


Les Voies Navigables de France selected InterSystems IRIS® to power its Data Hub, which facilitates information exchange and integration of new use cases.

Les Voies Navigables de France (VNF) is leveraging InterSystems technology to transform its information systems with a focus on data. VNF's mission is to manage, operate, maintain, and develop more than 4,163 miles (6,700 kilometers) of French waterways (canals, streams, rivers), 4,000 structures (locks, dikes, dams), and nearly 100,000 acres (40,000 hectares) of land.

VNF's recent work with InterSystems began after a change in government policy led to the consolidation of seven territorial agencies into one: Les Voies Navigables de France (VNF). With this change came the need to centralize management of business processes and develop a long-term solution for its information system.

Restructure & Centralize Data to Improve Business-Process Management

VNF collaborates closely with external stakeholders, including ports, professional associations, and public bodies. To facilitate information exchange, however, it had to build applications to respond to each organization's information request. With every new request, a new application had to be created to communicate with yet another database. VNF soon found itself with a siloed information system that was also very difficult to maintain.



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Benoît Hollebecq, deputy to the DSIN and digital transformation manager of Les Voies Navigables de France

VNF initiated two major projects to remedy its lack of agility and correct its siloed database architecture. First, it would create a master plan to re-evaluate its business processes and the performance of its information systems. Second, and concurrently, it would centralize data in three unified repositories.

With the launch of this modernization project, VNF needed an interoperability platform to enable these repositories to interact with existing databases and applications. The objective was to create a scalable, more efficient information system better able to meet the needs of VNF’s 4,000 agents. As part of its Master Data Management plan, VNF called on InterSystems to meet accessibility and access-management challenges involved in setting up its repositories.

“We wanted an economically viable, interoperable solution that was easy to maintain,” says Benoît Hollebecq, Deputy to the DSIN and Digital Transformation Manager, Les Voies Navigables de France. “InterSystems was the company that best met our needs in terms of data-driven information system integration, with a real-time approach essential for implementing innovative services.”

Single Data Management Platform Unifies Fragmented System

Partnering with InterSystems for this digital transformation project, VNF wanted to consolidate seven existing datacenters to ensure the flow of data among its systems and repositories, while paying close attention to reliability, availability, and security obligations. VNF scoped the project according to data use, dismantling the seven existing systems as work progressed on the new centralized system. The latter, accessible via a portal based on InterSystems IRIS, would ensure complete consistency with updated services for all 4,000 agents.

Information exchange between VNF and its partners and stakeholders is now supported by a single platform, which simplifies database maintenance, security, and reliability. Structured data is readily available, which not only improves the quality and credibility of reporting, but also the management and performance of the information system over the long haul. Thanks to InterSystems in-depth know-how, VNF now has a robust, unified information system with its Data Hub bringing interoperability for both applications and databases.

“The InterSystems IRIS data platform is today at the heart of our new information system,” says Hollebecq.

Birth of New, Future-Oriented, Data-Driven Services

Just as the new information system was designed to provide large-scale automation, thus ensuring complete flexibility and agility, the centralization of the data centers will facilitate implementation of new services based on organizational experience.

Moving on from an approach based on applications, VNF has adopted a data-centric approach, which, based on services rendered, will simplify exchange between applications via APIs. With the launch of a large “API-zation” project designed to expedite the integration of new use cases and services, the long partnership with InterSystems is focused on digitalization—the normalization and aggregation of data for exchange with new, national-level players. This long-term modernization could transform use cases in a sustainable way, for example, by activating terminals where boats can refuel with pre-paid cards or by cross-referencing with geolocation data on waterway vessels to improve traffic flow and avoid congestion.

There is also the recent introduction of InterSystems API Manager.

“The recent addition of an API manager in InterSystems IRIS will also allow us to strengthen our “API-zation” strategy,” adds Hollebecq.

The InterSystems IRIS data platform also enables replacement of old tools as the new ones are implemented. The 4,000 field agents are experiencing improved user experience thanks to a 100% data-centric strategy. Indeed, during this productive collaboration between Les Voies Navigables de France and InterSystems, many projects have been successfully implemented: the overhaul of information systems, the implementation of an interoperable tool, the digitization of data on structures such as earthen constructions and closed locks, and even the design of a new data architecture. A partnership based on trust is a guaranty of success.

