

FSC's technology partner Anubex successfully delivered a migration project to Ministry of Finance France

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The DGCP of the Ministry of Finance France went live with its migrated NDL application in Bordeaux in December 2006. The NDL system was created in the early 1980's and significant development investments have been put into this core DGCP system over the past 25 years.

Background

NDL stands for «Nouvelle Dépense Locale» or in English «New Local Spending» and is a system that is highly important for the daily operations of DGCP and for the ministry in general. By choosing Anubex to migrate its IDMS based application the DGCP has opened up an easy access to its data and maintains the value of the NDL application itself by reassuring its continued well functioning in the new modern environment. It has also disposed of the non-strategic IDMS platform in a rapid manner.

The Ministère des Finances, de l'industrie et de l'Economie (Minéfi) is responsible for the economy, budget and the industry of France. It is one of the largest public organisations of France with a staff of 185.000 civil servants. DGCP, the public treasury of France, is one of the organisations of the Minefi with the responsibility over five main activity areas, namely:

- Recovery of state income
- Control and execution of public spending
- Production of budget and accounting information
- Expertise and financial advise
- Management of public money

The DGCP includes a decentralised network of in total about 57.000 staff spread over more than 3000 offices. 205.6 billion Euros of public income were recovered in 2005 and 176.4 billion Euros were paid to creditors of the local communities and 459.9 billion Euros were paid to state creditors that year. The NDL application is one of the core systems that enables the functioning of the DGCP operations including the management of these transactions. NDL handles the processing and data collection of all public expenditure throughout France.

The users of the system are the 'Ordonnateurs' which are regional and departmental chief administrative officers as well as the accountants of the French public treasury. These Ordonnateurs, are ministry-exterior institutions with the authority to prescribe, schedule and execute the payments and receipts.

The accountants are charged with receiving and transmitting the funds and with controlling and describing the operations carried out.

In practical terms: The Ordonnateurs creates expenditure entries in NDL on a daily basis and the system is updated by nightly batch jobs. The accountants can access the NDL database but cannot modify any of the data directly in the system. Every night there is a transfer of updates to other systems interfaced to NDL. The accountants control and verify the correctness of the expenditure entries and validates these. So in summary NDL is the principal application used by the Ordonnateurs and the public accountants for the execution of their work with the local spending at a decentralised level.

NDL unites the totality of the actors involved in the execution of local spending in one single shared system. The system includes a large amount of interfaces to various Minefi applications such as the Finance, the Regulations, the Budget and the Accounting systems of the ministry. It is in other words a core application of significant importance not only to DGCP but for the totality of the ministry.


The NDL business analysts and some of the programmers are based in Paris, other NDL programmers are located in Clermont-Ferrand and Bordeaux. The system is operated from two IT Operations Centres, one in Tours and the other one in Bordeaux.

Story

When the DGCP started investigating solutions to migrate the NDL system they were faced with many challenges that were listed down as key aspects in the public tender they published. The context of the tender was the migration of the NDL IDMS application to an Oracle RDBMS while continuing to use the CASE tool repositories built in Pacbase for application maintenance. The migrated application should remain on the IBM mainframe environment but now with a relational architecture utilising Oracle.

Some main challenges described in the public tender was:

- To enable that the developers would be able to continue maintaining the application after migration. In fact the development and maintenance environment should remain Pacbase.
- The impact of the migration should not degrade the performance or disturb the operations of the NDL users in any way.
- Production of budget and accounting information
- Avoidance of any end user re-training whatsoever.
- Data migration and going live with 26 databases during 2007.



Madame Grosman, the Minefi project leader that managed the request for tender put a strong focus on certain key project prerequisites. With regard to the tender she comments that one of her key concerns was that *"We certainly wanted to avoid the hassle of retraining our approximately 14.000 users across France"*.

So one of the main requirements in the tender should be that the migrated system could be put into production without any user retraining. Also, she continues, *"To rewrite the 3.4 million lines of MVS COBOL would cost a significant amount of money and the timeframe required for a rewrite exercise would be too long for us to focus on"*.

Anubex won the tender process against some of the main players in the IT industry. The project started soon thereafter. The first project step involved the tuning of Anubex migration tools to client specific requirements. The second step was the delivery and acceptance of an isolated set of the IDMS application including migrated data and code running on Oracle RDBMS with CICS and Cobol.

The third milestone and the first tangible result for the users was the delivery of the migrated database in Bordeaux for the Aquitaine region. This milestone was successfully delivered end December 2006.

The migration project was executed by a team constituted of Anubex IDMS migration experts and a small group of DGCP technical staff including a system specialist and a developer, as well as representation from the Pacbase administration team. The Anubex migration method enabled a practically fully automated process of code and data migration with some minor manual intervention in the area of Pacbase code.

Mr. Philippe Le Brumant, the Director of the IT department of Bordeaux, early described the project as a challenge for the DGCP and that he really wanted to make sure that the project could be completed successfully and according to plan despite the various challenges involved.

He recently remarked that *"all my teams have full confidence in Anubex"*. And *"Going live in Bordeaux was the first concrete step that proved for the DGCP that the technical solution of Anubex works out really well"*.

When commenting on the Anubex staff he *"congratulates the Anubex project management for it's commitment and full availability throughout the migration"*.

He adds that *"I am extremely satisfied with Anubex as a business partner for this project"*. And *"it is also clear that the strong project commitment from my teams in Bordeaux and the technical, analysts and development staff from the various departments in Paris and elsewhere in France made this project step possible and successful"*.

Mr. Tony Van der Beken, the Anubex project manager comments that *"the technical part of the project challenges is now past us"*. The remainder of the project is in fact only about duplicating the successful data migration that was recently executed for the Aquitaine region in Bordeaux since the application program migration is already fully completed. The roll-out of the migrated system for the 26 remaining administrative regions will take place in a stepwise approach during 2007.

About Anubex

Anubex is an industry leader, specialising in the renovation of large or complex legacy application software for companies and government organisations. Anubex uses specialised and extendable software conversion tools, and today is helping several Global 1000 companies reduce risks and costs in converting mission-critical applications to newer platforms.

More information on Anubex can be found at www.anubex.com

About Ministry of Finance France

More information can be found on their website <http://www.minefi.gouv.fr>

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