Press Release

The Chomarat Group migrates its whole information system to Hardis' private cloud

The international textiles group originating from the Ardèche in France decided to move its whole information system to Hardis' private cloud. This migration has made its IS more modern, powerful and scalable.

Grenoble, September 10, 2013 – Services, business software publisher and facilities management company Hardis has announced that the Chomarat Group has migrated its whole information system to its private cloud. The international textiles group used this migration as an opportunity to modernize its IT infrastructure and application portfolio. The migration means that Chomarat's IS department can now concentrate on making functional upgrades to business applications while Hardis' teams take care of operating and upgrading the whole infrastructure.

A family-run international textiles group

Founded in 1898, the Chomarat Group is now an international textiles group with 1,500 employees, operating on four continents. The independent company, which has been owned and managed by the Chomarat family for four generations, has gradually forged a solid reputation in the development, design and manufacture of technical textiles solutions used in numerous sectors (transport, marine, building, energy, civil engineering and sports, etc.). Despite being little known to the general public, Chomarat products feature highly in everyday life: road reinforcements, reinforcements for buildings or boat sails and protective clothing (for building and public works or personal safety for instance). The group has also developed real expertise in the luxury goods sector (fine leather goods, clothing) and the off-the-rack clothing sector. It owns the women's fashion brand Chattawak and its 115 retail outlets. Loyal to the region in which it was founded, the Chomarat Group employs nearly 600 people in the Ardèche where its operational head office and three main production sites are located.

A necessary information system upgrade

Built over time and according to requirements, the group's information system was based on an aging IT architecture: despite being shared, the twenty or so services deployed were not virtualized and were starting to show their limits, particularly in terms of power. In addition, the IT team of fewer than 10 people did not have the highly specialized experience required to manage certain environments (particularly Linux), and were regularly called out at night or on the weekend.

A new IT framework plan was put in place in 2010. At the end of July 2011, after studying several options, the textiles group's IS department decided to outsource the information system to a private cloud. "It was too expensive to upgrade the existing system from both a hardware and software point of view. Also, because of our small team, we did not have all the skills required to manage the new architecture," explained Patrick Champalle, Chomarat Group IS Department.

Hardis' private cloud: a better price/service ratio

After inviting bids from eight companies, we chose Hardis' private cloud offering: "It was the most relevant and specialized offering and also offered the best price/services ratio," explained Patrick Champalle. In addition to Linux and Windows skills, Hardis' teams were able to win over the

Chomarat Group's IS department with their expertise in IBM AS/400 environments which the in-house ERP ran on. In January 2012, after three months of preparatory work (migration to Active Directory, VM testing and migration procedures, etc.), the first server to switch to Hardis' private cloud was a production AS/400. This was followed by the rest: at the end of February 2012, the whole of the textiles group's infrastructure was migrated to Hardis' private cloud and was operational in production.

Redundant architecture and an operational DRP
In addition to implementing redundant very-high-speed broadband (Orange optical fiber), "Hardis recommended disk bays designed for real-time replication of hosted data, whichever the environment: AS/400 and Windows," explained the IS Director. "A less complex and more satisfactory solution than the software tools recommended by most of the companies we consulted." Since the migration, regular real-conditions exercises have enabled the textiles group to ensure that the Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) is fully operational in all the environments within a few hours or days. The maximum time for moving from the production site to the back-up site and vice-versa for all the servers and with 100% of data up to date, is less than two hours.

Gradual information system modernization
Today, Hardis' teams handle the optimization of Chomarat's whole IT infrastructure while the internal IS department focuses on replacing or making functional upgrades to applications and managing the workstations. Although some of them are still running on AS/400, particularly the in-house ERP, the textiles group took advantage of the migration to modernize its applications portfolio by replacing obsolete applications with software package solutions. "Hardis' teams are responsible for integrating these new applications," explained Patrick Champalle. "We can now concentrate on upgrading our business applications, our real added value, without worrying about infrastructure integration and management," he continued.

The status reports provided by Hardis give Chomarat's IS department an overview of the IT infrastructure: disk and processor occupation rate, available power, SLAs, etc. "We are fully satisfied with our choice: by putting our IS on Hardis' private cloud, we have acquired external skills in fields we are not familiar with and the call-outs have stopped. We also benefit from a pay-per-use structure and no longer have to handle maintenance and updates," concluded Patrick Champalle.

About Hardis
Hardis Group was created in 1984. It is a software publishing, consulting and IT services company which helps its customers to digitize their services. Ever since it was created, this company has built growth in a resolutely different way, based on pragmatism and the core values of local presence and a strong commitment to both customers and employees. The founding directors still run the company, 25% of employees are shareholders, and all the personnel is based in France.

Hardis focuses on seven major sectors: infrastructure and facilities management, development and Third-Party Application Maintenance (TPAM), consulting and project owner support, business intelligence, logistics and transport (Reflex solutions), development tools (Adelia Studio), and payroll outsourcing (Saphyr software).

As a software publisher, Hardis is capable of integrating its own solutions and can also call on the services of a network of partners. Its consultants are experts in high-quality IT project methodologies (such as ITIL and CMMI).

Hardis posted turnover figures of €54.7 million in 2012. To date, the Group has more than 2,500 customers and employs 630 people. Its head office is located in Grenoble, with four other branches in Lyon, Paris, Lille and Nantes.
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