Press release

Hardis Group helps MDS France to modernize its AS/400 information system

The publishing logistics specialist opts for the Adelia multi-platform development solution and relies on Hardis Group's expertise to help upgrade its AS/400-based IT facilities.

Grenoble, September 30 2015 – Hardis Group, a digital services company and software publisher, is working with MDS to help the company modernize its AS/400 applications and open up its information system to its client ecosystem. The publishing logistics specialist has recently invested in Adelia Cloud Studio, the latest version of its Adelia multi-technology development platform. This latest release is capable of transforming AS/400 applications into rich web applications based on the Java, HTML5 and CSS3 standards.

MDS: logistics specialist for publishers and bookshops
MDS is a subsidiary of Média Participations, based in Dourdan, in the Essonne region of France. The company handles the entire logistics chain between publishers and bookshops, covering order management, inventory management, shipping and returns, and billing. MDS also produces POS display materials. As well as covering France, the company also has operations in Belgium and Switzerland. The group's French subsidiary employs 180 staff, and manages some 50 million titles and more than 450,000 orders each year.

MDS uses a range of specific applications built around an AS/400 to manage its business activities. The company's IT department has been using various Adelia development platform modules (Adelia Visual, Adelia Visual Studio, and Adelia Cloud Studio) to design, upgrade, and modernize its AS/400 applications since 1994. Initially intended to design native 5250 applications, Hardis Group's software engineering tool can now be used to develop Windows client/server, J2EE Web and HTML5 applications via a single tool.

MDS opens up its information system to publishers and distributors with Adelia Visual Studio
In 2005, MDS's IT department worked with Hardis Group and Adelia Visual to develop a set of user-friendly, ergonomically designed Windows screens, replacing the AS/400's green screens. It deployed Adelia Visual Studio in 2007 with a view to developing web services for its clients (publishers and distributors), enabling them to view inventory and sales data and place orders.

In September 2014, MDS installed and configured Adelia Cloud Studio in the space of just two weeks, rolling the solution out across its development, testing and production environments. This latest version marks the beginning of a new phase. As well as introducing remote access for the company's Belgian and Swiss subsidiaries, the IT department is now able to continue modernizing its applications, including overhauling its item records, managing sales rep targets, simulating POS display production runs, rolling out e-billing, producing KPIs, and managing bugs. *"With the support of Hardis, we're using this opportunity to entirely overhaul our screens,"* explains François Benet, CTO at MDS. *"In the past, anyone with sufficient permissions could edit any field in an item record, for example. Our new item record management process better reflects the item's life cycle."*

Hardis Group: third-party application maintenance partner

Since 2010, MDS has also employed Hardis Group to meet its third-party application maintenance needs. *"We decided to let Hardis do our development work for us, giving our project managers more time to focus on their core tasks,"* explains François Benet. *"This also gives us greater flexibility to absorb peaks and troughs in our activity."*

For its internal operations, the IT department plans to migrate all of its application modules to Adelia Cloud Studio over time, redesigning both the ergonomics and navigation functions. For external purposes, it intends to expand the range of services available to its clients. *"Over time, Hardis Group has become one of our key partners. The Adelia solution and the day-to-day support they provide have become indispensable to our business. Since we both develop logistics solutions, the two companies speak the same language. This has really helped to cement our relationship,"* adds François Benet.

About Hardis Group

Hardis Group, a digital services company and software publisher, assists its customers in their move to digital and omni-channel. The company helps them transform their information systems, their supply chain and their customer relationships to create value and increase operational performance. With its dual historical positioning, Hardis Group has developed business expertise in the areas of banking, insurance and e-health, distribution (CPG and luxury goods), industry and energy, logistics and transport services. This expertise now allows it to provide its clients with global responses to their needs, in an agile approach characterized by co-construction, innovation and continuous improvement.

Since its creation in 1984, the company has built its growth on a pragmatic approach and values of efficiency and firm commitment both to its 2,500 clients and its 700 employees (25% of whom are also shareholders). Hardis Group posted turnover figures of €62.1 million in 2014. The Group, whose headquarters are in Grenoble, has four other agencies in Lyon, Paris, Lille and Nantes.
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