Ministry of Education, France

From communication to collaboration.

ABOUT THE MINSTRY OF EDUCATION AND THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

With over a million staff members, the Ministries are some of the largest employers in the world. Their organizational structure consists of a centralized administration and decentralized departments. Shortly after the year 2000, the central administration set up an intranet portal for its departments, with the aim of improving the dissemination and sharing of information. This was the first version of the Pléiade intranet.

The intranet was designed to foster interaction between departments via its publishing functionalities for institutional information and document-sharing functionalities. After changing its maintenance provider in 2007, together the Ministries and CGI entered into a new phase of considerable transformation of the portal. In the last four years, Pléiade has undergone many technical and functional changes to make it a more comprehensive and powerful tool. The adoption of this technology is helping the Ministries attain their goal of improved communication between central administration staff and the regional education authorities.

THE CHALLENGE

The challenge was to create a dynamic platform which supported staff from various departments working together.

Project Pléiade was a step forward from document management to a real collaborative workspace. This change was put in place gradually. First, maintenance was carried out on the existing document management portal. Then from 2009, the existing collaborative layer was replaced by a Microsoft SharePoint infrastructure.

This technology aims to orchestrate exchanges, enable the free-flow of information, and simplify collaboration.

The portal facilitates the creation of collaborative workspaces for the various education professions, mainly between the central administration and all the regional education authorities, as well as other ministries, service providers and suppliers.

Each collaborative workspace allows ideas and documents to be exchanged and shared on large projects and on the administration's work such as regulations, procedures, purchases or human resources.

CASE STUDY

GOVERNMENT
Central and Federal Government

Key benefits

- Pléiade has become a reference in the education field
- Used by 6000 central administration officials
- Promotes collaboration and access to information

"The partnership with CGI helped stabilize third-party software maintenance operations. Due to its capacity to mobilize the necessary skills and expertise, CGI ensured successful completion of the new version of the intranet portal, which was a highly-complex project both technically and functionally"

Valérie Farolfi, Project Manager
Pléiade Ministry of Education

OUR ANSWER

Upgrading Pléiade required carefully-controlled technical transformations, as Pléiade is not just one simple communication site. Primarily it is aimed at a very important user group, including all central administration officials, regional education authority staff, and external partners. This called for a seldom-implemented technical architecture with heavy data transfer, affecting key elements of the infrastructure, for example authentication procedures and high-availability.

The challenge created by such technological complexity was particularly arduous at the launch of the new version. All components had to be up-and-running on the launch date for all project participants, without any service disruption for users. Other aspects of this transformation included the change in graphic identity and ergonomic changes to facilitate user acceptance of the tool. The aim was to define the templates that needed to be implemented in the publishing solution, as well as browsing principles within the portal.

A SUCCESS STORY

Today, Pléiade is a key communication tool between central administration staff and regional education authorities. Each of them can:

- Set up collaborative workspaces per project team or per theme
- Manage participants
- Share documents and calendar
- Contribute to mailing list discussions
- Set up think-tanks.

This collaboration platform, which has become a reference in the education field, is today used by 6,000 central administration officials, and is going to be deployed to 150,000 employees in the regional education authorities. Pléiade responds to the Ministry's ambition to promote collaboration and access to information, both valuable resources. This portal opens up the attractive possibility of improving group efficiency, by facilitating process automation.

The ambitions of the Ministries do not stop here. In the future, Pléiade will be equipped with new publishing functionalities, and become an information tool for all involved. In particular, new modules are to be integrated to allow increased access to external information and to new web 2.0 services such as blogs and wikis.

CGI continues to work with the Ministries supporting their strategy for the future, using technology to enable increased exchange and sharing to ensure group efficiency.

For more information, please contact us at government@cgi.com or visit www.cgi.com/government.