

WINDEV: it's SMART!

MLT and MCT have fully computerized all the logistics for SMART vehicles worldwide. WinDev, WebDev and AS/400 steered these projects to success.

The Company

MLT and MCT handle the logistics of all SMART vehicles worldwide from the factory gate through the transport chain.

Project leader



Alain Gabriel is MLT's project manager.

WinDev: Open and Flexible

In addition to the commercial and technological challenge that manufacturing and distributing SMART vehicles worldwide represents, the team faced another vital challenge: efficiently manage the back office operations (manufacturing, transport, storage, maintenance, and so on).

AS/400 was chosen for handling data. Constantly changing requirements highlighted the need to opt for a development tool that could improve productivity. "We opted for the PC SOFT solutions. Where else could we have found such operational depth and such ease of use? AS/400 native access meant that we



could maintain the full integrity of our data on the AS/400 with optimal performance", states Alain Gabriel.

He adds: "Given the incomparable development flexibility offered by WinDev, users behave more like system designers, constantly asking for new elements or improvements. WinDev always enables us to keep up with such demands and this is essential".

Components for live updates

In light of this, MLT/ MCT set up new developments in its client/server architecture. The project was broken down into operational modules. "We fully exploit the concept of WinDev components. Application updates are carried out in real time and do not disrupt the company's operations", enthuses Alain Gabriel.

Projects developed to date include logistics, transport, quality (with automatic mail generation), workshop management, sales management, maintenance, invoicing, decision making (optimization of storage turnover, truck loads and more), real-time vehicle tracking, parking management (7000 spaces).

The project as a whole represents nearly 30 man/months of development to manage data from over 100 files.

Just in time with PDA in GPRS mode

With the same objective of flow efficiency, drivers responsible for vehicle movements upon leaving the factory are equipped with PDAs.

These have bar code readers and communicate all the required information (identity and position of the vehicle) via GPRS to the computer system. "A multithreaded WinDev application analyses the data received via a procedure that uses the Soap protocol. This gives us the freedom to deal with other Firewall configuration problems in the ISP.", explains Alain Gabriel.

This "just in time" method is incredibly efficient.

In addition to handling the movement of Smart vehicles, the mobile part also handles the

maintenance jobs on vehicles in stock (maintenance orders, registering quality data such as the battery tension, pressure, etc.)

Intranet with WebDev

At the request of Daimler Chrysler and Smart, MLT developed an Internet-based logistics management tool for Smart vehicles (LIS: Logistic Information System).

"WebDev is the perfect complement to WinDev: same ease of use, same logic and above all, the same language: WLanguage", pursues Alain Gabriel.





This site enables us to track all our vehicles in real time, from order to delivery. ("Tracing and tracking"). He adds: "WebDev enabled us to deploy the site in record time and without having to integrate complex technologies. The site shares data with the AS/400".

Worldwide use

This site is used by Smart Centers, Mercedes garages, transport companies, Smart and Daimler Chrysler. Given the global nature of the project, the internal applications and the Intranet site are multilingual. "WINDEV was well thought through for multilingual projects", notes Alain Gabriel.

Data communication all the way up to the customer

The logistics chain of Smart vehicles is completely automatic from production all the way up to the customer, no matter where in the world he is.

An alert tool was created in WINDEV in order to handle automatic mail sending (for additional control a mail is sent to the freighter, the transporters and the team leaders). The system also lets you send information or

alert messages to managers regarding their activities (the number of trucks on the site, in loading, a truck taking too long to be loaded,...) or a possible malfunction (a temporary stop of the Internet site for maintenance or of the transfer servers).

"It's hard to highlight one WLanguage function more than another one, it surprises me every day. I have to admit though that the email functions are a real extra", said Alain Gabriel joyfully.

WINDEV for its responsiveness and its openness

And he continues with a little anecdote: "After one of our managers was relocated to Germany, he had to have his mail redirected to the new address. Also, some of the associates wanted to be able to send an automatic message when they were on holiday. Our central office wanted us to use a solution involving MS Exchange to respond to this request (the mail server is on Linux but we don't master all its

features). The result: I developed a solution within a day's time and I was able to avoid a heavy investment in Exchange".

Alain Gabriel enthusiastically concluded this testimonial on the projects he is so proud of: "In a constantly evolving environment, we can only congratulate ourselves on the choice of WebDev and WinDev. These products really do meet our goals and our users' requirements and have enabled us to provide a reliable and efficient computer system", concludes Alain Gabriel.



A 7,000 space parking lot to manage in real time.