

Success Story



Company

Service de l'Informatique
du canton du Jura

Sector

Public administration

Number of locations

19

Customer since

2002

Services in use

- Connect LAN
- Connect Ethernet
- Connect Internet

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Public-Private Partnership: Canton of Jura Sets the Tone

Switzerland's youngest canton has developed a very modern and streamlined concept for its IT systems. In order to utilise effective services at the lowest possible cost, the canton pursues a policy of targeted and selective outsourcing of competencies and IT resources through public-private partnerships with specialised service providers, including upc cablecom, for the deployment of its network. An example other public organisations could follow? upc cablecom business posed this question to Matthieu Lachat, Manager of the IT Department of the Canton of Jura.

With respect to the organisation of its IT systems, the Canton of Jura has taken on a leading role, particularly with its partnerships with private providers. - What is the significance of IT for the Canton of Jura?

Our canton has changed its IT concept significantly since 2006: previously, information systems were considered as a purely supporting function. Today, they are strategically important for our administration and facilitate cost savings, increases in productivity and better service for its users as well as our citizens and businesses.

What types of information do you need to manage and who are the users?

We manage information for all government services: the police, the courts, the fiscal authorities, the Department of Immigration, the Residents' Registration Office, etc. and for ten government-related institutions. In total, we are talking about 1,500 jobs in 80 locations in the canton. And this does not even take into account the development of electronic administration and the new services that are in the process of being offered to citizens and companies through the Internet.

One can only imagine how critical the information is that you have to manage ...

Yes, absolutely! Just imagine if the police or courts couldn't work anymore because of an error in the IT system. What would make this all the worse is that the telephony is fully processed through our data network. The network is unquestionably crucially important



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“ As a result of outsourcing certain elements of our IT system, we benefit from economies of scale and our partners' experience. ”

Profile

Matthieu Lachat, 36, has been the head of the IT department of the Canton of Jura since 2006. Since he assumed this role, he has played a crucial part in defining the canton's new IT strategy and the fundamental reorganisation of its information systems. Originally from Porrentruy, Matthieu Lachat completed his training as telecommunications engineer in Neuenburg. Prior to taking over the IT department of the Canton of Jura, he was a member of the management of two telecommunications network operators in Switzerland.



for us. A network breakdown lasting several minutes is unacceptable today. In addition to this, we have to ensure that the information is treated with the utmost confidentiality and have to safeguard against data loss and leaks.

What performance criteria apply in IT?

Primarily, user satisfaction, high service quality and reasonable costs.

How did you achieve your goals in terms of IT rationalisation and optimisation?

We restructured our IT organisation and strategy by using resources together with partners wherever possible whilst staying in control of our systems and continuing to cover key competencies internally. This rationalisation prompted us to cooperate closely with other cantons in developing tools and applications, and to centralise our data management in a professional data center to which all locations are linked through an efficient network. Instead of reinventing the wheel, we decided in favour of public-private partnerships with top-grade IT partners.

What are the benefits of this solution?

The benefits are the costs, availability and reliability of the new environment as well as data security and quality of service. As a result of outsourcing certain elements of our IT system, we benefit from economies of scale and our partners' experience. On the other hand, pooling our data in a state-of-the-art data center with a second redundant site enables us to offer a quality of service that we could not achieve at such affordable costs using our own resources.

Service de l'Informatique du canton du Jura

The IT department of the Canton of Jura is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the information systems of almost 80 administration sites and administration-related (semi-public) institutions all over the canton. IT supports all services for citizens and businesses in the country - ranging from the police to tax administration, the judiciary or Residents' Registration Office, through to the education system. The IT Park managed by the IT department of the Canton of Jura comprises 1,500 workstations and 120 servers that are used by 1,600 people.

“ We are enjoying excellent cooperation. upc cablecom is a true partner who offers us innovative, flexible and reliable solutions with significant added value, time and time again. ”

Which partners did you choose for the implementation of your new IT strategy?

We are collaborating with the Bedag company which is owned by the Canton of Bern and specialises in IT services for public administrations and administration-related organisations. Bedag has supported us in this undertaking in accordance with the principles of best practice IT (ITIL), and we have entered into a selective outsourcing agreement with the company for the operation of the systems. This partnership enables us to add to our competencies and at the same time stay in control internally, to create synergies and to benefit from the experience of the market. Since November 2009, our data has been hosted in the new, state-of-the-art CDROM (Centre de données romand) data center in Noirmont in Jura and replicated in a secondary data center in Delémont. Most of our locations are replicated through an extremely fast optical fibre network, which we set up together with upc cablecom, one of the canton's preferred partners for ten years.



What is the nature of your partnership with upc cablecom?

Since 2001, we have been in a public-private partnership with upc cablecom, which has been setting an example for other cantons. The original objective was to link the three districts of Jura - Porrentruy, Delémont and Franches-Montagnes - through a fast optical fibre network. upc cablecom has not shied away from investing greatly in our region to build up an effective network, which is linked directly to the carrier's national backbone. I don't know whether such an infrastructure could have been set up without our partnership. Since then, we have been gradually expanding our cooperation with upc cablecom. Some of the many milestones were a centralised Internet connection for all locations, the upgrade to Gold service level, redundant connections between our key locations and our data center via Basel and Neuenburg.

How would you rate the partnership with upc cablecom after ten years?

We are enjoying an excellent cooperation. upc cablecom is a true partner who offers us innovative, flexible and reliable solutions with significant added value, time and time again.

Which aspects of your partnership with upc cablecom do you value in particular?



Their prompt reactions and proactive approach, which upc cablecom has demonstrated continually within the framework of this cooperation. Everyone has always listened to our requests in order to deliver services that are tailored to our current and future needs. They have helped us to develop a real strategy for connecting our locations. In addition, the high efficiency of the upc cablecom IP network in our canton and throughout Switzerland enables us to adjust our bandwidths if necessary. Personally, I also particularly appreciate the informal and open dialogue with my points of contact at upc cablecom.

To what extent can the public-private partnership model of the Canton of Jura serve as an example for other cantons?

That depends on the scope of the resources of each individual canton. But I believe that a pub-



CDROM

CDROM stands for "Centre de données romand SA" and is a new hosting centre in "Creapole", the technology centre of the Canton of Jura in Noirmont. It is connected directly to the core network of upc cablecom and benefits from very high, redundant bandwidth, making it possible to offer top-notch services in Switzerland and even in neighbouring France. CDROM meets the requirements of the TIER2 standard and boasts a very high operational availability of 99.74% as well as a high level of security against any type of risks such as earthquakes, flooding, fire, terrorist attacks or piracy. The centre is located in a geologically stable area away from air corridors and has its own power generators. Its air-conditioning system utilises the fresh weather conditions of the Franches-Montagnes region, situated more than 1,000 metres above sea level (Free Cooling), which is both an economic and an ecological advantage. The centre also carries the "Minergie" label.

lic-private partnership with a company such as upc cablecom is particularly interesting for extensive infrastructure work and especially for building up a high-capacity optical fibre network. The same applies to the further development of the network and to services, particularly in terms of time, feasibility, costs and responsiveness. The idea is to set up an infrastructure together for the benefit of all partners.

How do you explain the leading role of the Canton of Jura in public-private partnerships in the IT segment?

I think that practical considerations are very important here, but so is political commitment. We are a small, young canton with limited resources. That is why we were looking for the most efficient solutions with a maximum of synergies. But reorganising our IT systems also benefited from major political support. Since 2007, IT has been overseen directly by the State Council and no longer by the State Chancellery. This political support has enabled us to place increased importance on the mission of our IT services and to develop transverse solutions.

In IT, outsourcing is often associated with job cuts and a certain loss of control over one's system. To what extent is that true in your case?

This does not apply in our case, as we have engaged in selective outsourcing with Bedag. We have not reduced our number of employees, since our requirements are increasing exponentially. We have simply managed to limit recruitment. Internally, we have retained strategic and, in part, operational control over our information system. We thus continue to manage our key competencies, and our IT staff can focus on the more important tasks. We also own the equipment components that are independent of our network. This is a win-win solution for all partners. Our objective here is to continually improve our performance and services.

What are your plans for the future of your IT network?

We are planning to expand our partnership with upc cablecom by connecting the communities of Jura to the cantonal IP network and thus creating the opportunity to offer additional services. Our plan is to set up the same cooperation model that we used back in 2001. upc cablecom has been our preferred partner for ten years now and will certainly remain so in the future.

Thank you very much for talking to us, Mr Lachat.

Interview: Grégoire Baillod, freelance journalis
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