

AN ONLINE PLATFORM TO BOOST THE COLLECTIVE USE OF DATA AND DOCUMENTS BY PROJECT PLAYERS

HIGH SPEED LINE (HSL) PROJECTS ARE, BY NATURE, AMBITIOUS AND COMPLEX, INVOLVING A WIDE RANGE OF DIFFERENT PLAYERS ACROSS TERRITORIES. THE CHALLENGE IS TO LINK UP ALL THESE PLAYERS AND ENABLE THEM TO SHARE ALL THE DATA IN REAL TIME. AND ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT ASPECTS OF SUCH A PROJECT IS HANDLING THE THOUSANDS OF DOCUMENTS INVOLVED. TO EFFICIENTLY MANAGE ALL THIS PAPERWORK DURING ITS CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS, RFF USES A WEB-BASED, COLLABORATION SOLUTION.



High Speed Line projects are complex - they involve many documents and a vast amount of data that all needs to be processed, organized, studied and tracked

Rémi Coulanges,
RFF project manager and assessment assistant for the SEA HSL project

What are the defining features of major renovation or construction works for new lines?

These projects are technically complicated and involve many different players across the country. For example, for SEA HSL, the 25 different market studies in the APS phase (technical and environmental studies, socio-economic and general studies, etc) were carried out by consultancies in Grenoble, Toulouse, Nantes, Paris and Bordeaux. This involved a total of 200 players across the whole of France.

THESE PROJECTS ARE TECHNICALLY COMPLICATED AND INVOLVE MANY DIFFERENT PLAYERS

What problems would you face without an EDM [electronic data management] system?

Given the sheer quantity of paperwork and increasingly heavy documents produced, if you carry out a HSL project without an EDM system, you're going to face some major problems at some point down the line. Namely, pinpointing and obtaining the latest version of specific documents, and distributing them, considering how data-heavy they are. For example, a geo-referenced aerial photo of the HSL alone is 97M and its linear coverage is 192 slabs. And that's just one example.

YOU CAN'T SEND HEAVY FILES BY EMAIL

Without an EDM system, the only way of distributing the files is by burning them to CD-ROMs or DVDs and sending them by post, which is less reliable. Plus, users often have trouble reading the files (different software, faulty players, damaged formats, etc). You can't send heavy files by email.

Why use an EDM system?

THE PROJECT RUNS MORE SMOOTHLY

This kind of system helps resolve the particular kinds of problems we face. It is vital all the project data is shared by all the players involved. Using such a system means we can work together more efficiently.

Why did you select this particular tool?

We chose BuildOnline after issuing a call to tender. This solution fitted our needs best. Plus, we received extremely positive feedback from the RFF team working on the Rhine-Rhone HSL. Two hundred team members started using the solution in October 2003, and it has performed well.

When did you implement the solution?

We introduced BuildOnline during the 36-month, APS phase. It enabled us to centralize production of paperwork from the players involved. The main objective was two-fold - to draft the technical project and administrative documents at the same time, so we could then submit the paperwork for consultation and approval by regulatory bodies. We produced a consultation document (2,000 A3 pages), then a pre-approval document (1,500 A3 pages). For the 24 different market studies, a team of about 200 (including 12 members of RFF's SEA HSL team) were involved in this task.

How is the data organized in the system?

BuildOnline was programmed to respond to measures in regulatory documents, in particular, circular N°2000-98, December 28, 2000, which controls the content of files produced. But the specific features of the project itself were also taken into account. For SEA, for example, in the document folder tree, there are two focus points - the first is organizing by market study or service provided, where the person in question manages the task in their zone using their own methods, without any particular constraints; their only obligation is to deliver the paperwork with their results to RFF; the second is theme-based and concerns parallel files/paperwork that can be consulted by all players (i.e., sub-files of the consultation file or APS file submitted to the Government for approval).

How was the system received?

For the Tours-Angouleme section of SEA HSL, all the steps of the ASP phase had already been contracted out, so RFF could not impose the use of the BuildOnline platform to its suppliers. Nevertheless, the solution was immediately adopted by the suppliers when they started noticing the benefits.

What are the benefits of this solution?

The platform triggers the distribution of data and files using a structured, collective and centralized approach. As a result, key indicators for RFF can be quickly accessed (full background information, easy tracking, action taken, etc). The data provided answers the question - who did what and when?

Has the platform met expectations?

As asset owner, RFF must run the project as efficiently as possible. BuildOnline helps us

RFF - MANAGING ITS HIGH SPEED LINE DOCUMENTS

meet this challenge. The RFF teams run HSL projects, as well as participating in others. The platform means they can focus on doing their job and studies, without worrying about the distribution and availability of data. Benefits of the BuildOnline solution include:

- no physical limits to the amount of data shared;
- no administrative limits on the computer - everything is managed by the platform (24/7 access, saving data, etc);

- user-friendly interfaces ensure successful adoption of the system across the project team. Finally, the greatest benefits of the BuildOnline solution are better quality results - the seamless flow of data and its availability means time saved - and this time is now spent on studies, which delivers a better quality, end product.

Are you satisfied with your choice?

Yes, totally. Unlike more technical solutions,

often heavier in functionalities, which makes it difficult to share data across the project stakeholders, BuildOnline meets the specific needs of the RFF project team and its external contributors. The wide adoption of the BuildOnline solution by RFF is testament to the team's satisfaction. Using BuildOnline every day, they naturally promote the system throughout the rest of the RFF organization



A secure hosted and cost-effective solution

Xavier Gruz,
assistant project manager, Rhine-Rhone HSL.

During the launch of the Rhine-Rhone HSL project in 2003, to cope with the ever-increasing number of players involved, Xavier Gruz chose the BuildOnline solution and its SaaS "Software as a Service" model to handle the data. In this interview, he tells EURAILmag why.

No initial outlay for hard or software

By using this model, we avoided having to acquire a host server for the application. Plus, as part of the contract, CTSpace committed to providing 99% minimum availability and to carry out any maintenance outside of office hours.

A basic Web navigator and Internet connection

The BuildOnline solution is incredibly simple to set up online, and even easier now with high speed Internet. This has greatly improved access for providers.

Secure storage of data and automatic archiving

Three years after launching the project, almost all our documents are stocked and exchanged using BuildOnline. Even contractual documents, with a hard copy kept for legal purposes, are now digital and can be accessed via this tool. We don't save anything ourselves, preferring leave this to our service provider. In addition to saving data on its own servers, CTSpace regularly provides RFF with hard copies of archived documents on DVDs.

Swift implementation

We are extremely satisfied with the system in place. The solution is incredibly intuitive. The half day training session provided for the RFF teams proved amply sufficient, and we haven't had any negative feedback from the service providers.

Immediate return on investment

A hosted and extremely cost efficient solution compared to the high financial stakes of a TGV line. The benefits of the tool immediately justified the investment, i.e., the ability to track data when resolving disputes, plus the time saved in distributing documents and following them up.



The CTSpace solutions are ideal for the rail sector

Franck Meudec,
managing director, Southern EMEA, CTSpace

CTSpace is a collaboration company providing global solutions to manage documents, data and business processes to improve communications. CTSpace provides SaaS (Software as a Service) solutions for team work in the construction industry. Today, its tried and tested solutions are used by over 100,000 players in 10,000 projects. Rail transport is one of our target areas, and we aim to meet the specific needs of this sector.

RFF isn't the only CTSpace customer working in the rail sector. Other CTSpace projects include modernizing two thirds of the London Underground (with Metronet), the TCSP Val de Marne (France), the automatic train in the city of Ghimae in South Korea, etc.



An intuitive and user-friendly interface

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Visit: www.ctspace.com
Contact: Lydie Francart - lfrancart@ctspace.com

Or call:

- Southern Europe: +33.1 4629 2960 (CTSpace, Paris office)
- Northern Europe: +44.1628 597 800 (CTSpace, London office)
- Eastern Europe: +49.69 686 0230 (CTSpace, Frankfurt office)