

Syncsort helps PagesJaunes to get the most out of Big Data



PagesJaunes, France’s reference beacon when it comes to local search and local advertising, is migrating to a Hadoop platform to optimize its business decision tools. Syncsort’s ‘ETL for Hadoop’ proved to be the most robust solution – both in terms of volume and in speed – to respond to new business needs in a radical, digital transformation.

PagesJaunes is a branch of Solocal (listed on Euronext Paris) and is the leader in France in the market for local advertising and local information (pagesjaunes.fr, pagespro.com) on the internet and mobile apps and in print, where its annual listings publications (PagesJaunes and PagesBlanches) have a solid reputation. Besides being one of the leaders for information requests (by phone and SMS) and small online ads (annoncesjaunes.fr), PagesJaunes is also the number-one website builder in France.

PagesJaunes is undergoing a thorough digital transformation and was looking for agile analytics solutions that allow commercial teams to make the right decisions quickly.

“The company is in the middle of a transformation of its decision support platform, saying farewell to traditional Business Intelligence and taking full advantage of all the advances in Big Data. Our ambition? To make data talk,” says Abed Ajraou, responsible for the Business Intelligence domain in PagesJaune’s Business Solutions division.

He joined the company a year ago to implement a Big Data strategy, moving from an IBM database infrastructure with the Netezza appliance towards the Hadoop framework. This migration will help the company face the technical challenges in terms of capacity (an explosion in the volume of data), the storage of unstructured data and reporting data in real time.

Syncsort as a pioneer in the market

“ETL for Hadoop allows the optimization of our business intelligence strategy,” Ajraou explained. The challenge was to provide the sales managers with granular analytical capabilities, allowing them to optimize their commercial teams by geographical sector.

The DMX-h solution supplied by Syncsort is used for the extraction, transformation and loading (ETL) of data into Hadoop, and for a number of data import and export tasks. “We heard very positive comments in the market about the performance of Syncsort’s

Hadoop ETL tools. A great deal of progress has been made in the last two years. The tests and ‘Proof of Concept’ that we set up were very conclusive. Syncsort has a good track record in the mainframe market and bears a high reputation for robustness. They are the first to deliver this kind of tool for Hadoop,” emphasized Ajraou.

Although the main aim of the Hadoop project at PagesJaunes was to improve the quality of data and boost commercial performance, and not necessarily to reduce costs, a fair pricing of the solution was also a criterion in finally choosing Syncsort and its solution. “We wanted to do more with less. So a substantial reduction in the cost of the software solutions was a bonus,” Ajraou confirmed. PagesJaunes is aiming for a return on its investment in two to three years.

AT A GLANCE:

Industry

Digital & Print Media

Challenge

Optimize financial reporting by migrating to Hadoop

Solution

- Cloudera Hadoop Distribution
- Syncsort DMX-h for Hadoop ETL

Advantages

- Syncsort is a Hadoop pioneer, combining robustness and performance both in response times and volume of data.
- A good cost-performance ratio

Financial reporting in real time

Half a dozen web applications are being put into production gradually. Most of these applications are aimed at improving the performance of sales and marketing teams, and optimizing financial reporting. Some of these applications are used on mobile platforms, and heed the principles of 'responsive design'. "It is very important to us to get a refresh of the sales numbers every five minutes, both on a product, segment, geography or even agency level," said Ajraou.

Most challenges concerning technical performance are linked to the speed of response times, the granularity of the analyzed data, as well as the volume of that data. "We are talking about 45

million lines of code. This may not seem too impressive now when compared to other Hadoop implementations," Ajraou commented. "But the platform will allow us, in the future, to manage large volumes of data, which may well reach 15 or 20 terabytes of data."

The 'Big Data on Hadoop' project is crucial to the company, setting up a strategy that delivers IT as a service to the business. It does not stop short at catering to the needs of sales teams and delivering them tools that allow them to be more proactive. "There's a good reason why the 'information systems' department at PagesJaunes has been renamed 'Business Solutions'. Its mission is to go a lot further than just operational support. This type of project clearly convinces General Management of the added value that IT can bring to an enterprise", Ajraou concluded.

ABOUT SYNCSORT

Syncsort provides enterprise software that allows organizations to collect, integrate, sort, and distribute more data in less time, with fewer resources and lower costs. Thousands of customers in more than 85 countries, including 87 of the Fortune 100 companies, use our fast and secure software to optimize and offload data processing workloads. Powering over 50% of the world's mainframes, Syncsort software provides specialized solutions spanning "Big Iron to Big Data," including next gen analytical platforms such as Hadoop, cloud, and Splunk. For more than 40 years customers have turned to Syncsort's software and expertise to dramatically improve performance of their data processing environments, while reducing hardware and labor costs. Experience Syncsort at <http://www.syncsort.com>.

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