GRDF

Modern and mobile websites, offering genuine customer experiences
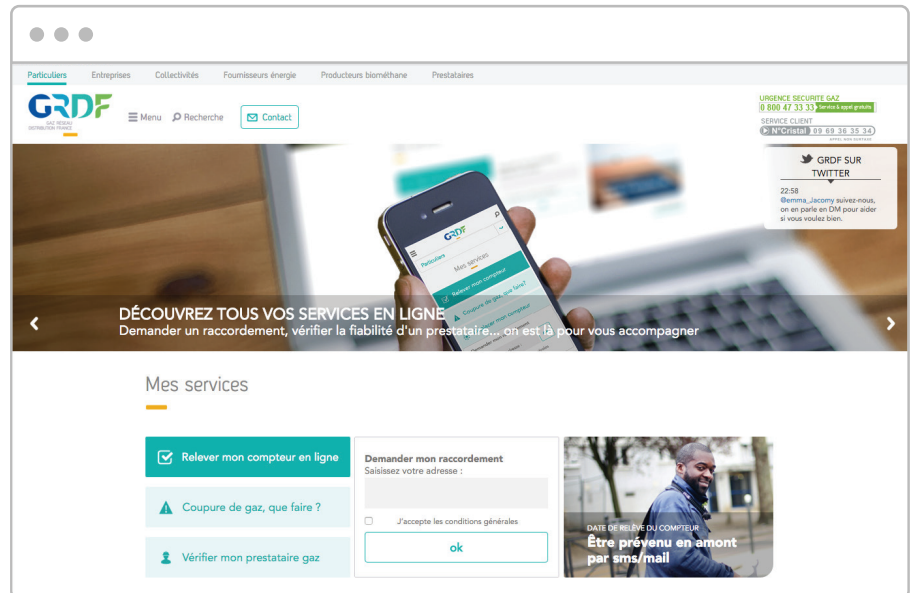
www.grdf.fr

Organization

Founded on December 31, 2007, GRDF (a subsidiary of ENGIE, formerly GDF SUEZ) brings together all of the natural gas distribution facilities in France. As a strategic player on the energy market, GRDF acts neutrally to assist suppliers, subsidiary partners, local communities and customers.

With 11,500 employees, GRDF performs its public service missions daily by managing the downstream gas network, connecting and delivering gas to around 11 million customers, thanks to the 196,940 kilometer network of natural gas pipelines, the largest natural gas network in Europe. GRDF designs, builds, operates, and maintains this grid in more than 9,500 cities while guaranteeing safety of people and property, as well as quality of delivery.

Challenge

Previously, a range of small websites was designed regionally without any real graphical or technical continuity. Calls for tenders imposed significant requirements in terms of budget and lost time, for results that were ultimately disparate, with little value created. For national websites connected to internal GRDF information systems, the ambition to respond more rapidly to new requirements or developments required a paradigm shift.

As a result, a decision was made in 2013 to acquire a complete digital experience platform to manage all of the web channels. "The objective for this 'Factory as a Service' was to offer business teams an out of the box solution and agile methodology to support the creation of new websites and the redesign of existing websites," relates Franck Biet, Communication and Collaboration Manager.

This required the creation of an infrastructure platform with cross-functional services, as well as the choice of a single service provider to facilitate dialogue. SOFIT (SOcle Fonctionnel Internet et Technique - internet and technical operating platform) was therefore created internally to centralize the design and maintenance of all GRDF websites.

> GRDF has acquired a complete digital experience platform for managing all of its web channels. With this "Factory as a Service", we are providing our business teams with an out of the box solution and agile methodology for designing modern, mobile websites with significant added value.

Franck Biet
Communication & Collaboration Manager

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"By choosing a single service provider, establishing SLAs, an agile methodology and a private Cloud for hosting, SOFIT has provided itself with the resources for designing easy to use websites, offering a genuine customer experience and adapted to mobile use," Franck Biet explains.

Decision

Liferay was chosen according to a number of criteria to redesign the *www.grdf.fr* website and to create a web factory.

"We wanted a modern portal that's flexible and adapted to mobile use. With the gradual integration of Gazpar smart meter, it also had to be reliable and scalable to reach a target of 11 million users," Franck Biet continues. From a financial point of view, the team was looking for a reasonable solution with a controlled model for growth in the number of licenses. "It's important, particularly for communication campaigns where it might be necessary to establish additional servers as a temporary measure," Franck Biet indicates.

Finally, Liferay was appealing for its strong user community. It is a proven solution on the marketplace, supported by IT developers and architects.

Business Added Value

With its new digital experience platform, GRDF now offers websites that meet customer needs whilst maintaining technological and graphical uniformity. SOFIT has successfully completed over 15 different projects over the past two years. For example, these two flagship projects:

RAPID'SITES

First SOFIT's project, this web factory allows business teams to create event websites in line with the GRDF design guidelines. Using on-demand "workflow", the user completes a form, selects the desired template from a catalogue and monitors their order progress online. "Our users are very satisfied with this solution especially now that creating new websites is very quick. Each request moves from *request initiated* to *undergoing personalization* in just 24 hours. Then the live stage follows rapidly," specifies Franck Biet.

The simplicity of the back-office has also played a major part in the success of the tool. The user is free to modify content to their liking without any training required.

Over 200 sites have currently been created.

GRDF.FR

The website previously recorded a drop-out rate of 43% from the home page. The user needed to know exactly what they were looking for in order to find it. Business teams made little contribution to editorial content, which was organized in a compartmentalized and hierarchical fashion. "For the redesign, we have involved the business teams as well as an ergonomist and a web designer. We wanted to establish relevant customer experiences to attract and retain customers," Franck Biet specifies.

The new website is launched only four months after and attracted 140% more visitors compared to 2014. The solution's native features offer more extensive business services that are easier to use. "For example, an existing gas customer can check their meter online or request a safety assessment. If they are not currently using gas, they can request a connection. The services can also be adapted to very specific needs. The customer can view advice on how to choose an economical heating system and plan their renovation project budget or get information about regulations for a construction project," Franck Biet concludes.

The contact-us section was also improved and led to a significant increase in incoming contact requests.

Tomorrow, the team would like to implement a search engine for all GRDF websites. Personalized areas and e-services integrated into the customer journey are also being developed for the 11 million users.

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