

Thales Global Services

Secure and intelligent online services to increase operational efficiency for THALES Group's Customers.

Summary

Thales is a global technology leader for the Aerospace, Space, Transport, Defense and Security markets. The expertise of its 61,000 employees, outstanding technology and operational presence in 56 countries makes Thales a key player in the security of citizens, infrastructure and states.

With over 20,000 engineers and researchers, Thales has a unique capability to design and deploy equipment, systems, and services to meet the most complex security requirements. In a world that is increasingly mobile, interconnected and independent, the Group's technologies provide relevant information at the right time to make the best decision possible.

Thales reported sales of €13 billion in 2014.

thalesgroup.com

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Operational efficiency is critical for our civil and defense customers. With around 30 value-added online services, Customer OnLine facilitates their day-to-day operations. Case tracking, purchasing, 24/7 contact... everything is done to address the different needs of 3,300 active users, across 124 countries.

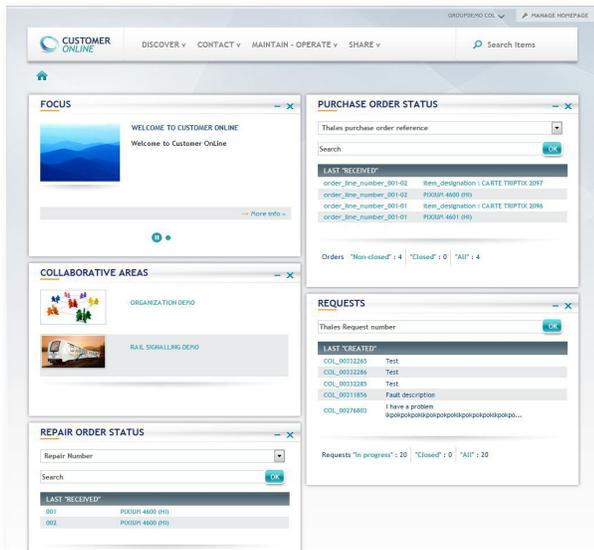
Didier Danthez, IS Manager, Portal & ITSM

Challenges

A Customer portal project was launched in 2005, following requests from certain Customers, such as the French Army. Its objective: to facilitate access to the different Thales services through a single point of access, thus replacing the individual portals used by separate entities within the Group. However, the number of Customers increased rapidly and the platform quickly reached its limits, particularly in terms of reliability. An audit was therefore carried out in 2009, looking at the existing technology as well as project governance.

“We were experiencing repeated technical issues such as unscheduled service interruptions. The existing platform was clearly no longer sufficiently reliable to meet with the quality of service levels expected by our Customers. We had also identified the need for an adequately resourced central team to lead a project of this nature. Consequently, a dedicated team was soon put together and a call for tenders was launched in order to seek a reliable and scalable portal solution”, explains Didier Danthez, Portal Applications and ITSM Manager.

But it was not simply a question of reusing the existing services. New functionalities, interactivity, improved user experience... every aspect was scrutinized in order to devise a new and innovative tool that was capable of supporting new income-generating services. For example, it was a requirement that each of the separate entities within the Group could offer its own services, including some as pay-for services, with a simple means of connecting to their back office systems.



Resolution

In 2009, various open source or proprietary solutions were evaluated. Liferay was selected because of its ability to meet the technical and budgetary requirements. Furthermore, it was a solution that had attracted positive Customer feedback, which was reassuring to the Group in making its decision.

“We were looking for a solution that was easy to implement, based on market standards, capable of integrating our existing applications and that could sit within the highly secure environment of our extranet hosted at Thales Services. We were also very mindful of the support quality. The level of responsiveness of Liferay teams was indeed in line with the commitments they had made”, details Didier Danthez.

In terms of organization, the French Information Technology Department is now carrying the project forward and coordinating its implementation at a global level.

Business Value Added

The Customer OnLine portal is a success, replacing all of the locally developed solutions that were in place. Cutting across the entire Group’s civil and defense activities, it has a constantly increasing visit rate. In 2014, 8,400 connections were logged per month, which is a 28% increase compared to the previous year.

The 3,300 active users, across 124 countries, personalize their space and access information and services that are relevant to their business activity. “They are provided with a personal, dynamic and collaborative solution that became a very effective working tool. We offer them support and/or operation of equipment or systems throughout their entire lifecycle as well as operational support”, states Didier Danthez.

This single point of entry masks the many different information systems within Thales and makes it possible to channel all relevant requests to each individual entity. “For example, if a Customer reports a product-related incident, their request will be automatically routed to the entity responsible for product maintenance in that area. A Customer using a radar supplied by an entity in the Netherlands and telecommunications equipment supplied by an entity in France will be able to interact with these entities via a single interface and identical procedures even though the tools that these two entities are using might be very different”, adds Didier Danthez.

The provided portfolio of services, some of which are available by subscription or billed on a per-usage basis, are organized into four categories:

Discover: this category contains all the information relating to shared interest communities as well as catalogues of products and services, such as training courses.

Contact: in just three clicks, Customers are able to confirm a new order. They can also send requests relating to their products or services and track the progress of a request in real time. Examples of such requests include incident reports, quotes, online training subscription, etc.

Maintain and Operate: among other features, Customers are able to look up maintenance documentation, find out about risks of obsolescence on their system, track the progress of repairs and orders for replacement parts, or access services that are very specific to the systems they use. For example, airline companies using a Thales flight management system on their aircraft can enjoy access to Thales databases in order to optimize their calculator according to the lines they are operating. A subscription is also available for receiving information about changes to navigation maps and for downloading updates.

Share: collaborative working spaces, forums, FAQ... users can share documents or discuss on common issues. A search engine as well as a role management

and document versions enhance these spaces. The services within this category are supported by native Liferay functions, whereas some other services are specific developments.

“The portal allows us to formulate innovative solutions to address the issues encountered by our Customers in order to make efficiency gains for them and for Thales as well. With Liferay, we have clearly improved our levels of responsiveness in terms of developing new services and adapting existing services to new requirements. The central project team develops and maintains the Group-wide and local e-Services. We also provide training and support for teams based in the international entities. The local teams carry out administration tasks for their e-Services, develop interfaces with their information systems, and manage access profiles for their Customers by applying the Group rules as defined within the project”, concludes Didier Danthez.

In 2012, Customer OnLine was rolled out to Supplier OnLine, a portal for suppliers featuring common and specific services. Going forward, the aim is to continue deployment of the solution, to address the regulatory requirements of new member countries, and to develop new services.