

## ICI Deco Paints wins in a changing market with IBM

---

### Overview

---

#### ■ The Challenge

- To provide consolidated business and customer intelligence across the business units of ICI Deco Paints France.
- To select a data toolset to analyse, cleanse and migrate data efficiently to support the ICI Paints Decorative drive to consolidate systems across Europe – especially the rationalisation of 20 ERP systems.

#### ■ The Solution

*IBM WebSphere Data Integration Suite was used to integrate and consolidate information from diverse sources within ICI Deco Paints France.*

#### ■ The Benefits

- Improved reporting to give management an overall view of performance across country operations
- Improved data quality with automatic processing to ensure consistency.
- A single customer view of cross-company, cross-platform transactions.
- A proven data integration tool kit to support multiple ERP migration projects across the European business.



Business growth presented challenges to ICI Deco Paints business in France. The company had acquired several companies and was confronted with a variety of different information systems which needed to be integrated to give management a comprehensive view of performance across the enlarged business. The market was changing, too, with DIY retail chains and sales reps wanting to have a consolidated view of dealings across all the supplier's divisions in France. ICI Deco Paints France selected IBM WebSphere Data Integration Suite to provide management and customers with a single source of quality information. This solution is now available to other country businesses and will be deployed by ICI Paints Decorative in multiple migration projects as the company rationalises its 20 ERP platforms across Europe.

Switch on the television or open a newspaper and almost every day you will hear of a change in the retail marketplace: a brand leader acquiring a competitor; an established retailer expanding internationally; a switch in consumer buying habits; or a fresh promotion or product launch to grow market share in an increasingly hostile competitive environment.

The rapidly changing consumer market does not only impact retail chains. Companies supplying goods that flow through retail outlets must be equally quick and adept in adjusting to changes in consumer markets. The situation at ICI Deco Paints in France illustrates the challenges facing suppliers to the retail DIY sector. The actions taken by the company's IT team to consolidate information, improve data quality and implement a business intelligence (BI) architecture demonstrate just how a brand leader can stay ahead of the pack.

*“We had to address structural changes in our own business resulting from mergers and acquisitions as well as changes within our retail customer base.”*

Patrick Ucles  
IT Project Manager, ICI Deco Paints France

“We had to address structural changes in our own business resulting from mergers and acquisitions as well as changes within our retail customer base,” explains Patrick Ucles, IT Project Manager at ICI Deco Paints France. “That created huge pressures to consolidate data held in several heterogeneous systems and improve the quality, organisation and presentation of business information for our management, our sales teams and our customers. We could not have achieved those objectives without the functionality of the WebSphere Data Integration Suite.”

### **Dealing with acquisitions**

ICI Deco Paints is the French operation of the ICI Paints Decorative business in Europe. The Group operates in twelve European countries and manufactures paints, woodcare, filler and metalware products. Products are distributed principally through DIY retail stores. The company is readily identified for its brand leading names, which include Dulux, Cuprinol, Polycell and Hammerite.

Over the years, the ICI Paints Decorative business in Europe has accelerated its growth in various countries through the acquisition of companies which provide complementary products and supply them through the same DIY retail chains.

From an internal business viewpoint, this has created a need to consolidate information from separate business units so that management could see and manage the overall performance of the business.

The need to consolidate data has been accentuated by demands from large DIY stores to have a single view of all the business it conducts with a particular supplier within a country, regardless of the number of operating units.

ICI Deco Paints in France had identified this need for data integration and had progressed further than other countries in pursuing a solution. So European management decided to support the French operation in finding and implementing a solution, which would subsequently be made available to other country businesses of ICI Paints Decorative across Europe.

A second prime objective at the European level was to identify and prove an effective and efficient toolset for the analysis, cleansing and migration of data to support the rationalisation of some 20 ERP systems.

“These systems had been acquired over the years by individual country businesses or acquired as we bought companies,” explained Joan Rogers, IT Project Director, ICI Paints Decorative Europe. “Even where these systems are from the same vendor, each has been heavily customised and uses different data structures, which makes data consolidation difficult. Based on the experiences with WebSphere Data Integration Suite in France, we plan to use this software to support our ERP migration projects during the next few years.”

### **Data integration priority**

To respond to requests from management or customers for information spanning several locations, ICI Deco Paints staff in France used to spend days manually extracting information from operational systems and creating spreadsheets. The process was slow and it was impossible to provide either the frequency or range of analyses that the internal executives or external customers required – for example, to breakdown daily sales by product, customer, region and even by store.

*“IBM was the only vendor to offer a fully integrated suite of products.”*

Patrick Ucles  
IT Project Manager, ICI Deco Paints France

“We had to address two issues,” says Patrick Ucles, IT Project Manager at ICI Deco Paints France. “Internally we needed to consolidate information spread across multiple disconnected systems within the ICI Deco Paints businesses. Secondly, we needed to track, match and integrate information for customers who may themselves have grown by merger and acquisition, or undergone business transformations which would make data aggregations and analyses complicated.” The company decided that a Business Intelligence System would be the answer, and quickly recognised that a pre-requisite and key enabler for this would be an integrated toolset to define information requirements, extract data from operational systems, cleanse and match the data, before populating the data warehouse.

### **Proof of concept**

This was the first time that ICI Deco Paints in France had undertaken a BI system implementation. The company recognised that it would need to partner with a specialist data integration vendor to facilitate the extraction, cleansing and migration of data.

The IT team pulled together a complete specification of requirements for ICI Deco Paints in France and also considered what might eventually be needed for the ERP migration projects in Europe. The specification covered data investigation, data cleansing, data quality, data migration, and extraction, transformation and loading (ETL) tools and metadata management. ICI Deco Paints set out to find the best supplier of a suite of integrated products to address all of these needs.

Joan Rogers and Patrick Ucles undertook a thorough evaluation of all potential suppliers, issuing a request for proposal, seeing demonstrations and choosing three vendors to show a proof of concept during 3-5 day visits to ICI Deco Paints offices in France.

The proof of concept was extremely detailed, and included seventy exercises that three short-listed vendors had to tackle using ICI Deco Paints’ data. In the exercises, vendors had to demonstrate how they would address three main issues - data quality (in particular, cleansing data from BPCS ERP and Siebel CRM systems); data migration (proving the ability to migrate data from any of the ERP and other operational systems); and ETL (the ability to extract, transform and migrate a range of data into the data warehouse to enable the BI system).

“We scored each vendor against the seventy items, and also evaluated them in terms of financial stability, European coverage, price and the degree of integration between the components of the data toolset,” explains Ucles. “IBM was the only vendor to offer a fully integrated suite of products. It was mid-priced but scored highest in the proof of concept exercises and ranked best in terms of functionality.”

### **Importance of data quality**

ICI Deco Paints knew that a big factor in the success of the BI project would be data quality. The company has some 5000 customers in France, handles over 3000 products and issues more than three million invoices a year. It would not be sufficient simply to transfer existing data from operational systems into the data warehouse. For example, it was not uncommon for six separate customer records to exist for a single DIY store, created over the years in different systems to support individual brands or particular sales teams.

*“IBM has proved very successful in matching, cleansing and integrating data within our French operation.”*

*Joan Rogers  
IT Project Director, ICI Paints Decorative  
Europe*

*“Now that we have experienced the power of this integrated toolset in one country, we are planning to use the WebSphere Data Integration Suite to support our systems rationalisation across Europe”*

*Joan Rogers  
IT Project Director, ICI Paints Decorative  
Europe*

Well in advance of commencing the BI design and build project, ICI Deco Paints France used the WebSphere Data Integration Suite to investigate what information and reports management and customers would require. Global metafiles were created to define the nature and structure of data, and processes were put in place to match and cleanse data coming from several different sources. Regardless of any errors at the original data entry stage and the different data definitions used in source systems, it was important to ensure that all data referring to the same customer, product or store could be consolidated and integrated within the BI system.

For ICI Deco Paints business in France, data comes from three distinct sources – from ICI Deco Paints' own systems, from CEP Julien (a company acquired by ICI Deco Paints that manufactures metalcare and filler products), and from market sources external to the company. The external sources include market intelligence companies, such as Nielsen and Trade Dimensions, which provide corporate intelligence about DIY retailers and details of the layout and composition of individual stores. Different data sources tend to use different definitions and nomenclature for customer or store records, so the matching process has to be flexible and carefully managed.

ICI Deco Paints France uses the WebSphere Data Integration Suite to build dataflows to standardise information coming from different sources, so that it can be matched, and a unique, single and comprehensive view of each customer or DIY store created. Now that the BI system is fully operational, information is pulled from the data sources on a daily basis and automatically processed through the software suite to ensure consistency and quality.

"The data matching is very sophisticated. It allows us to track the details and performance history of individual DIY retail outlets, even when ownership changes," says Ucles. "This is very powerful in supporting customer service, and for tracking and directing the activities of our sales and marketing teams."

The benefits to both ICI Deco Paints and its customers of having high quality, consolidated information about each customer, each store and each product are immense. Sales executives can talk to a DIY retail chain using data analysed and presented to match the customer's own definition of sales regions and store breakdowns. This provides high levels of customer service and is invaluable in comparing performance across a customer's business operations. It allows ICI Deco Paints' representatives to work more closely with customers to identify areas of business opportunity and implement promotions.

"IBM has proved very successful in matching, cleansing and integrating data within our French operation," says Rogers. "Now that we have experienced the power of this integrated toolset in one country, we are planning to use the WebSphere Data Integration Suite to support our systems rationalisation across Europe. Particularly important are the series of planned migration projects aimed at standardising our 20 ERP platforms. We will also be cleansing data held in our Siebel customer relationship management suite, and making the IBM suite available to other country businesses seeking to use the same BI systems architecture."



**IBM United Kingdom Limited**

PO Box 41  
North Harbour  
Portsmouth  
Hampshire  
PO6 3AU

The IBM home page can be found at **ibm.com**

IBM, the IBM logo, ibm.com and WebSphere Data Integration Suite are trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation in the United States, other countries, or both.

Other company, product and service names may be trademarks, or service marks of others.

References in this publication to IBM products, programs or services do not imply that IBM intends to make these available in all countries in which IBM operates. Any reference to an IBM product, program or service is not intended to imply that only IBM products, programs or services may be used. Any functionally equivalent product, program or service may be used instead.

This case study illustrates how one IBM customer uses IBM products and services. Many factors have contributed to the results and benefits described. IBM does not guarantee comparable results. All information contained herein was provided by the featured customer and/or Business Partner. IBM does not attest to its accuracy.

This publication is for general guidance only. Information is subject to change without notice. Please contact your local IBM sales office or reseller for latest information on IBM products and services.

© Copyright IBM Corporation 2005  
All Rights Reserved.