



Vidéotron Ltée & CONNX Case Study



Vidéotron Ltée is a leader in new technologies, thanks to illico, its interactive television system and its high bandwidth network allowing it to offer, among other services, high-speed cable Internet access, analog, and digital TV services. In Quebec, Vidéotron serves 1,450,000 million cable customers; more than 165,000 also subscribe to interactive TV on its digital service illico.

Industry

Telecommunications

Location

Quebec City, QC

Objective

With CONNX for VSAM, Vidéotron was able to upsize order entry and invoicing applications from the UNIX format to their IBM mainframe. They were also able to replace an obsolete VSAM adapter in their data warehouse, and Web-enable monthly usage reports, digital channel selection, e-mail services, and user account summary.



Web-Enabled VSAM Data With CONNX

Vidéotron and CONNX? As a leader in new video technologies, Vidéotron Ltée was clearly a perfect match for CONNX, a leader in new database management and Web-enablement technologies.

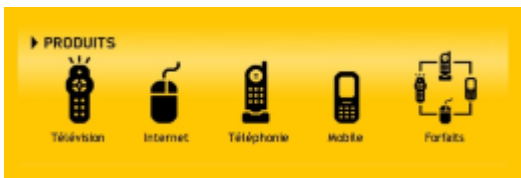
The goal was to find a way to provide real-time access to their legacy VSAM files stored on an IBM mainframe. The problem was that there was no database running on the mainframe, so the information was locked up and not easily accessible by Windows or UNIX servers. They wanted to use the information to Web-enable monthly usage reports, digital channel selection, and account summaries, among other things, in order to reduce the heavy load on their call centers.

CONNX solved the problem with one easy answer: CONNX for VSAM. In the words of Pierre Allard, Senior Technology Architect at Vidéotron, "We were faced with three choices: to either install DB2 on the mainframe and convert our order entry and billing applications from VSAM to DB2; to duplicate the VSAM files in DB2 on the mainframe or some other platform; or to use a product like CONNX that simulates a database on VSAM files. The most economical choice was the third one, and it was also the most practical one ... CONNX provided a quick-and-easy way to access the information from different sources. The relational view and the SQL language made it easy for programmers to access VSAM files as if they were database tables ... Using CONNX was very easy for programmers since it is basically a relational view over flat files, and since...

"CONNX is economical, it pays for itself in development because other solutions were more expensive and required more resources. Moreover, it enables us to develop faster transactions for our customers. These transactions save us money every time they are used." - Pierre Allard | Senior Technology Architect

Summary

- ◆ Using CONNX, Vidéotron Web-enabled monthly usage reports & other types of statements & transactions.
- ◆ Vidéotron was able to make their VSAM data available in an easy-to-read format.
- ◆ Web access reduced phone call volumes to customer care center.
- ◆ Web entry of data reduced time-consuming and error-prone manual processes.
- ◆ Cost-effectiveness of product enabled Vidéotron to recover expenditure in very little time.



Internet
High-speed cable modem access and Dial-up access

Identification
User name :

Your period of usage starts the 15th day of each month.

Period	Cable Modem		Dial-up		Duration
	Received (Download)	Transmitted (Upload)	MB	GB	
2003-11-18 to 2003-11-25	1289.96	1.17	42.95	0.04	1:13:00
2003-11-18 to 2003-11-25	1341.00	1.31	40.88	0.05	

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About CONNX

CONNX Solutions is a leader in data access, migration, integration, virtualization, and replication. Their solutions enable quick, secure, and scalable SQL access to legacy, non-relational, relational, and cloud data wherever it resides, however it is structured, without any change to your core systems. CONNX is quick and easy to set up and use and offers easy standards-based tools that are accessible, flexible, and scalable.

Since 2001, CONNX solutions have been installed in more than 3,200 organizations worldwide and across a range of industries including government, manufacturing, education, technology, human resources, financial services, and telecommunications. CONNX's solutions unleash the power and value of information, providing organizations the ability to make confident, evidence-based business decisions.

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the language is SQL."

After discovering the benefits of using CONNX, Vidéotron began using an ODBC-to-ODBC bridge for programs that handle cable-modem provisioning. The programs had originally been written in the PERL language and were accessing a Sybase database running on UNIX servers. The bridge was used to link the UNIX ODBC within PERL to the CONNX ODBC driver running on a Windows NT server.

"We used views extensively to provide information in a format similar to what we had on the Sybase database even though the data structure had changed."

The simplicity of adding CONNX to the mix came as a surprise to Allard, who said, "Changes to the PERL applications programs were minor, and our programmers did not have to use a different technology."

Vidéotron also found extra benefits in cash savings as a result of using CONNX.

"CONNX was part of the infrastructure for upsizing order entry and invoicing applications from UNIX to the IBM mainframe. The savings in development costs easily covered the cost of CONNX. Moreover, CONNX was used to replace an obsolete product ... that was used for our database warehouse. It was also used to Web-enable transactions for our clients ... (they) can change the channels they are subscribing to directly on their TV set, without making a call to the call center ... they have access to many more transaction on the Web, including changing their e-mail address, changing their password, viewing their Internet usage, and viewing summaries of their bills and their payments."

CONNX security features were another attraction to Allard and Vidéotron. "The only security feature that we do not use is the access security by column that is available in CONNX. We use all the other security features, including integrated logon ... We also experimented with all features available for connection sharing and pooling before choosing which one best suited us."

Vidéotron is also using CONNX internally to access corporate data. Provisioning of e-mail addresses, passwords,

modems, follow-up applications, Web applications, and applications feeding the data warehouse system have all been created through the use of CONNX. Allard says that, "Without CONNX, we would not have been able to achieve these results. (CONNX) is economical, it pays for itself in development because other solutions were more expensive and required more resources. Moreover, it enables us to develop faster transactions for our customers. These transactions save us money every time they are used."

In comparison to alternative VSAM products, Allard says that, "Considering its price and available functions, I am still convinced that CONNX was the best solution to our problem ... and CONNX does it well ... CONNX is now part of our infrastructure."

To view more samples of the results of the CONNX and Vidéotron VSAM data access and Web-enablement project, go to the Vidéotron Web site at www.videotron.com

About Vidéotron

Vidéotron is a leader in Canadian telecommunications. A wholly-owned subsidiary of Québecor Média inc. and partially owned by Capital d'Amérique CDPQ inc., Vidéotron is an integrated communications company engaged in cable broadcasting, interactive multimedia development, Internet access services, telephony and wireless telephone services.

Vidéotron has had, for many years, a great reputation thanks to its network of coaxial and fibre-optic cables (HFC) in which millions of dollars are invested each year to ensure it stays at the forefront of technology. They offer customers unparalleled services that are always reliable. The Vidéotron network reaches more than 90% of Québec households, and includes close to 36,700 km of coaxial cable and 19,300 km of fibre-optic cable.