



**Company :** STX France

**Business sector :** Complex shipbuilding sector

**Software :** *MEDIACONTACT*

**Use :** Databases synchronization

### Presentation

STX France SA's shipyard is an icon of the French city of Saint-Nazaire. It builds complex vessels such as cruise ships (Queen Mary 2, MSC Fantasia), LNG carriers (Provalys, Gaselys and Gaz de France Energy) and military vessels. Since 2008 it has been part of the STX Europe Group, which employs over 16,000 people in 15 shipyards across the world.

### Requirements

For STX France, it was essential to have an information system that could be accessed from any location at their various construction sites (Saint-Nazaire, other partner sites, etc.). Therefore, various tasks within the company called for the deployment of mobile information solutions.

The first step in the deployment of these new tools was the completion of a functional prototype. The EMC (Electrical Mobile Commissioning) project was selected to serve as a prototype for the business-specific mobile applications, which required bidirectional synchronization with the shipyard's back office.

The objective of the EMC was to round out the functional scope of the electrical tests conducted onboard the ships being built. These tests involved ensuring that the fire detection system, loudspeakers and onboard telephony system worked properly. The fire detection system included loops or "sub-systems" of wires and detectors in different areas of a ship. Each detector had an address code. The loudspeakers and telephones were identified according to their geographic location.

Using mobile terminals (Tablet PCs), EMC needed to give testers the ability to:

- access the nomenclature (characteristics of the devices),
- access construction progress reports, tests and the protocol for delivery to the ship-owner,
- update progress reports by entering information in the ship,
- enter "non-conformity" notes during equipment inspections,
- update shipyard back-office applications,
- view ship plans in PDF format.

Production sites do not always have network coverage. A WiFi network covers the manufacturing and assembly areas of the Saint-Nazaire site.

However, this network is not available inside the ships being built since the metal hulls are a natural wave barrier (Faraday cage).

### Solution

To overcome the constraints related to the absence of a network, STX France implemented a store-and-forward mode synchronization solution. After investigating the various software tools on the market, STX France selected *MediaContact* to handle the synchronization of its business-specific databases (10,000 records) between Tablet PCs (Microsoft SQL Compact Edition) and the central information system (Oracle).

*MediaContact* also automatically synchronizes all file directories and transfers and updates ship plans, which can be viewed directly on Tablet PCs.

Following this initial project, STX France decided to use *MediaContact* as an infrastructure solution for other mobility projects: deployment of a fleet of PDAs using RFID technology to communicate and manage their construction equipment fleet (welding stations, lighting, scaffolding, etc.).

### Reported benefits

For testers:

- The ability to work from any location within the site (eliminates back and forth trips)
- Paperless processes:
  - no more lengthy and time-consuming note taking
  - faster access to information
  - no more manual data re-entry

Benefits for the computer department:

- Synchronization:
  - of heterogeneous databases
  - of large volumes of data
  - transparent for users
- A single tool to manage:
  - synchronization and administration needs
  - PDA, Tablet PC and Laptop terminals
  - WiFi, 3G and ADSL networks

For the shipyard:

- Increased efficiency leading to faster ship turnaround

*"The mobility aspect was tremendously beneficial. Having information in real-time is so critical, especially in the final stages of ship-building"*

