



Lafarge Morocco harmonises its HR department procedures and strengthens its group structure with HR Access.

Born out of the merger of several Moroccan companies, Lafarge Morocco is consolidating its group structure by harmonising its management procedures and its information systems. As part of the strategy, the deployment of a common HRIS, based on HR Access, will automate many processes and improve the quality of data and HR processes.

■ “Now with HR Access we have an integrated HRIS shared by our different subsidiaries, which is providing great satisfaction in terms of data quality and processing reliability,” explains Hicham Jaafari, Information Systems Director for Lafarge Morocco. “This HRIS supports Lafarge Morocco’s growth - 360 million Euros in industrial investment since the year 2000 - by promoting in particular the deployment of an ambitious training policy, facilitating the development of working in teams, increasing employee accountability, and expanding career prospects. However, in the beginning, there was no question of Lafarge Morocco launching a high profile HRIS; the system was developed in a natural sequence of gradual steps, to meet needs expressed directly by HR Access users as they discovered the possibilities their new solution had to offer.”

■ Following the merger of several companies in 1995, including 4 cement factories, Lafarge Morocco then found itself with as many in-house payroll and personnel management solutions as subsidiaries, with rules proper to each site. Under these conditions, it was difficult to consolidate HR information for decision-makers and corporate headquarters, or to put a truly consistent HR policy in place.

HR Access, selected for its flexibility and its ability to assimilate specific local features

■ The story begins in the year 2000 with Lafarge Morocco’s need to harmonise first these solutions, then HR management rules and procedures. The software package used at the time by the Lafarge group seemed to have been designed to achieve this objective. It soon became apparent that the product was not flexible enough to take Moroccan regulations and the specific characteristics of the new group into account, due to the variety and complexity of the rules in place. “We then launched a call for proposals to compare the leading solutions on the market and selected HR Access in 2000 for its ability to handle our particular characteristics, its technical architecture, and its integrated reporting tools,” emphasises Hicham Jaafari. “We installed the product in only 8 months, including 4 months operating in parallel with the former system.”

■ As early as January 2001, payroll for the different subsidiaries was issued on a decentralised basis with HR Access. This project enabled the current regulations to be formally adopted and made homogenous, along with major gains in productivity, thanks mainly to the automation of numerous processes, such as corporate returns.



More relevant training management, in support of group strategy

■ At the users' request, the HR Access training module was implemented by the Lafarge Morocco teams with the aim of automating procedures performed by hand and in Excel. The benefits obtained: gains in efficiency that was put to perform analyses and generate statistics, and to search for new quality training organisations. Finally, shared by all the training management stakeholders at the various sites, HR Access promotes the deployment of the training policy needed to evolve the group's operating methods.

■ The Lafarge teams, working together with HR Access consultants, enriched the solution with new functions integrated with HR Access. The first concerns management of the loans that the group has occasion to make to its employees (housing loans, consumer loans, etc.) the monthly payments for which are deducted directly from wages.

The second concerns the management of medical files -- like a number of companies in Morocco, the group acts as an intermediary for health insurance - - so that reimbursements of medical expenses may be added to the pay check. Lafarge Morocco was also able to automate, via an interface, data exchange flows between the Gestor time management solution and employee activity, linked to badge readers, and HR Access. "Managing loans, medical files and time spent previously required that data be re-entered manually in order to issue payroll, with considerable risk of error," continues Hicham Jaafari. "We not only gained in efficiency since this re-entry no longer needs to take place, but also in reliability and in quality of the data processed."

Self-services to provide employees with greater autonomy

■ In 2006, Lafarge Morocco decided to upgrade its version of the HR Access solution in order to take advantage of its "Self-service" capabilities. Beyond the thirty or so users from the various HR departments, HR Access (henceforth accessible via the company's internal HR portal) concerns some 1100 employees.

The first Self-service function made available to employees was the face book. Supplied by administrative data from HR Access, it allows each employee to access an up-to-date organisation chart for the company and to follow job transfers and changes. The second Self-service function was the management of leave requests. This digitisation of the former paper-based procedure accelerates and increases the reliability of the approval process since decision-makers are notified of requests waiting for approval. And employees can access their own leave histories, check their balances in real time, and track their latest request by date. Quite recent, this Self-service is already used for 25% of requests, a success that has led Lafarge Morocco to move ahead with the "Expense Receipts" Self-service by the end of 2008.

■ "This version upgrade will obviously open up other possibilities, and HR projects will continue in the direction of constant enrichment, due to the high potential of HR Access," concludes Hiram Jaafari. "On the list: centralising payroll within a single department, in order to free up time locally for analyses of the payroll or for budget preparation, the implementation of the recruitment module in order to process our campaigns, but also to capitalise intelligently on the hundreds of unsolicited applications we receive each month, and finally, the implementation of the HR Warehouse module to track several different critical HR indicators or to automate new reports."

Lafarge Marocco in Brief...

50% owned by the international group Lafarge and 50% by the leading Moroccan industrial group SNI (Société Nationale d'Investissements - National Investment Company), Lafarge Morocco is present through 4 business activities: Cement, Aggregates & Concrete, Plaster and Lime. Leader in building materials in Morocco, the group holds 42% market share in cement. Lafarge Morocco, which has approximately 1100 employees, including 800 in its cement factories, generated sales revenues of 4.4 billion dirham in 2007. Out of a concern for sustainable development, Lafarge Morocco devotes 15% of its investment to saving the environment, in addition to its special programs such as the windmill park or quarry rehabilitation.

To learn more: www.lafarge.ma