

BNP Paribas strengthens its decision-making with help from the Financial Times

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The challenge

Deliver accurate, relevant business and financial news from around the world to financial professionals.

The solution

Integration of FT content within LEOnard, the company's information search portal, as part of an FT Group Subscription.

The benefits

Quicker access to essential business information and improved efficiency of decision-making.



The FT's commentators bring together developments from different markets and financial disciplines to highlight emerging trends or issues - before they become mainstream.



Eve Masson

Head of the Information Centre, BNP Paribas

Responding quickly to market conditions

BNP Paribas is a European leader in global banking and financial services and one of the six strongest banks in the world. It ranks highly in its three core activities: Retail Banking, Investment Solutions and Corporate & Investment Banking.

Faced with a challenging economic environment and continued market volatility, BNP Paribas has moved to strengthen its emphasis on delivering the highest levels of service and expert advice to its individual, corporate and institutional clients.

LEOnard and the decision-making process

Every day, economic and financial analysts within the banking group need the latest news on companies and markets, as well as broader macroeconomic data.

This strategic information is used to inform the decision-making process of the bank and its clients. The bank's relationship managers use the market intelligence to develop long term relationships with clients and identify cross-selling opportunities.

However, with over 200,000 employees operating in 84 countries, a major challenge was obtaining a global view of developments in business and finance. In addition, it was important to ensure only trusted and credible sources of information were used to drive the investment decisions made by its financial professionals.

Finally, the delivery of new data sources to meet these requirements had to fit within LEOnard, the company's proprietary knowledge infrastructure, and established workflows.

FT intelligence

The Financial Times was identified by BNP Paribas as an important source of information to meet these requirements.

With over 600 journalists around the world, the FT validates and distils information from hundreds of sources to deliver accurate news and analysis on global business, finance and politics.

As Michel Bernardini, Project Manager at BNP Paribas, explained: "The Financial Times is well known and popular amongst banking staff, particularly its European Edition. It has strong coverage of our markets and, critically, it is seen as a trusted source by our users."



The Financial Times is well known and popular amongst banking staff... Providing our users with access to the FT is a key step to improving the efficiency of our decision-making.



Michel Bernardini
Project Manager, BNP Paribas



Easy access to information

The FT worked with the project team to integrate FT content into the bank's in-house information search portal, LEOnard.

The LEOnard platform is the result of a project started in 2004 by the Economic Research Department of BNP Paribas. The sophisticated portal facilitates access to financial and economic intelligence by bringing together different types of content in one place, including internally generated data, international news feeds and other business information.

The flexibility of the FT's Group Subscription enabled close integration of FT content with user workflows and the supporting technology. Combining rich functionality with semantic analysis, the platform features advanced alerting tools and searching systems to deliver FT news and analysis to employees as and when they need it.

"The flexibility of the FT's Group Subscription was a major benefit for us," said Bernardini. "We were able to easily integrate the FT into our employees' workflow. The solution provides quicker access to relevant data from the FT, in the context of other qualified information sources used by the business."

About 10,000 users around the world currently have access to the FT via the portal, from the CIB, Investment Solutions and Retail Banking divisions of the group. Employees at BNP Paribas use the FT for different purposes depending on their job function.

Risks and opportunities

The Economic Research Department uses the FT's in-depth coverage of the world economy and financial markets to inform the strategic direction of the bank and perform risk and opportunity assessments.

As Eve Masson, Head of the Information Centre at BNP Paribas, commented: "Part of our role is being able to anticipate changes that might impact the bank. That's where the FT is invaluable. The FT's commentators bring together developments from different markets and financial disciplines to highlight emerging trends or

issues - before they become mainstream."

Research groups and analysts are heavy users of FT information, where the quality of the analysis by columnists such as Lex and Martin Wolf play an important role in challenging thinking and stimulating ideas.

The FT is also used to understand what is important in which markets. For example, the FT delivers valuable political and economic intelligence on developing countries which is used by BNP Paribas to speed decision-making and support its growth in these regions.



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Quality service

The Corporate Banking business is responsible for delivering a personalised service to clients, adapting what BNP does to suit local conditions.

Relationship managers read the FT to gain a better understanding of their clients' businesses and industries, so they can deliver a superior service. The FT's concise briefings have proved a real time saver in this context, helping the team to quickly research a topic or prepare for a meeting.

The FT is also used as a business development tool, so relationship managers can source information about prospects, identify new business opportunities and keep track of competitors.

"Providing our users with access to the FT is a key step to improving the efficiency of our decision making," concluded Bernardini. "When you consider the huge volume of documents available, the FT is a quick way to understand what's really happening and we believe that the FT gives us a competitive edge."



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