

Le Pain Quotidien : We urgently needed help and advensys was able to help us immediately!

For more than 30 years, Le Pain Quotidien, born in Brussels, has been opening bakeries and restaurants around the world, to reach more than 200 points of sale today. LPQ is a highly successful recipe for artisan bread, healthy products and a rustic table d'hôte, all in a warm wooden setting. Alain Coumont, the founder, sums up his concept as follows: "My idea was simple: to have a place where I could feel at home... away from my home".

Today, I'm off to the prestigious Tour et Taxis building to interview Annick Van Overstraeten, who has been steering the destiny of Le Pain Quotidien for the past 2 years. Naturally, I'm greeted with freshly baked viennoiseries. Annick Van Overstraeten arrived at LPQ in 2020 with many challenges, and IT was clearly not her priority. However, it was in December 2020 that the destiny of advensys crossed that of Le Pain Quotidien. Indeed, LPQ suffered a violent Ransomware attack just before Christmas 2020.

Annick Van Overstraeten tells us: *"The company was already coming out of a difficult period, like the rest of the Horeca sector, following the various confinements, and a few days before Christmas, at the height of activity, our cash registers were blocked following a cyberattack. The M80 fund, which had invested in Daily Bread, works regularly with advensys, so it was on this occasion that we met Philippe Dekerpel and Jan-Charles Van Hall. We urgently needed help and advensys was able to help us immediately!"*



At advensys, Philippe Dekerpel has mobilized 5 full-time staff to support the 95 stores. He explains that the most complicated part is, of course, understanding the vocabulary and lexicon specific to LPQ's environment.

"We have set up a process so that we can measure the work we've done to improve the situation and ensure we're always making progress. This involves activating a ticketing system to open a complaint that we need to resolve and close as quickly as possible. We've also gotten to know each other better over the 2 years we've been working together, we trust each other and we're able to make certain decisions ourselves without waiting for the green light from Le Pain Quotidien to loosen up blocking situations."



Alain Coumont and Annick Van Overstraeten.

The CEO of LPQ explains that this attack precipitated things:

*"We became a **secure** organization thanks to advensys. Advensys defined a roadmap that they implemented in the workshop and in the restaurants. We migrated to new cash registers, started standardizing applications around Microsoft, and they **supported** us in this migration. Restaurant staff don't like change very much, and they're not necessarily the best-trained users of IT tools, but they can now find modules in Sharepoint for placing orders, reporting and sharing new recipes. You could say we've come a long way together in the last 2 years, and it's a **world of difference**."*

Benoit Hage, E-PoS Global Manager, joins us in the meeting to provide more operational information on the day-to-day relationship between LPQ and advensys teams.

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"advensys currently supports around **sixty** restaurants in France, the UK, Belgium and the Netherlands belonging to the group. We're in talks to harmonize our franchisees' IT systems, so that advensys can support them **in the future** too. The aim of the relationship with advensys is for IT to be a continuous thread so that Le Pain Quotidien staff can work without hindrance, particularly for cash registers and telephony."

Benoît Hage tells us that since advensys staff have visited all the restaurants, the managers can now put a face to the people, and humanize the relationship: *"It's not just an impersonal hotline more or less far away from us. advensys is based in Wavre and I personally know the 5 people dedicated to Le Pain Quotidien. I have them on the line almost every day, and as I'm also an IT specialist, I speak their language too, so I understand some of their remarks better."*



Annick Van Overstraeten repeats: "At LPQ, we look for partners, not suppliers! This means we have to think as far upstream as possible. We can't be faced with the same problem 20 times. We need to put **sustainable solutions** in place quickly to prevent the same problem recurring. What's more, 2023 will focus on the **customer experience**, and in particular on greater **fluidity** in restaurants. IT must enable us to order faster (order kiosks), and to order and pay without leaving the table (order & pay), to reduce our customers' waiting time to a minimum."

Annick Van Overstraeten concludes the interview by summarizing the relationship built together:

- *2021 was the year of cybersecurity and e-commerce (ransomware and containment),*
- *2022 was the year of standardized applications,*
- *2023 will be the year of stability and the development of new digital resources for a better customer experience.*