



PRACTICE ABSTRACT
Digital technology

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THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF ‘LORMES’

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Lormes is a village (1 300 residents) located in the Morvan area, in the county of Nièvre, Burgundy (France). It is a good example of a digital transformation pathway for small villages, and the timescale and steps that are required to become a ‘player’ in a wider digital ecosystem.

Lormes began its digital and social journey with a groundbreaking district-level digital policy to foster the economic and social potential that ICT and the internet could bring to remote rural areas. This was followed by investments in the digital capacities of the population in 2003. With enhanced digital capacities, the creation of a ‘Rural Hub’ enabled Lormes to maximise the potential of local skills by providing office spaces, Fab-Lab, fibre-optic connection, etc. The success of the Rural Hub triggered other complementary initiatives, such as the enhancement of the broadband network in the village, and the creation of a ‘competence centre’ for the business, public and community sectors to deliver training and mediation services on behalf of the county and regional government. Several ICT projects, companies and services emerged in the territory as a result of these initiatives.

Every village is at a different point in their digital transformation path, but they can all get inspired by the process carried out in Lormes. Digitalisation at village level goes beyond the technology deployed, it also relies on the support provided to achieve digital and social transformation.

<p>Application scenario</p> <p>Smart Villages: services for a digital ecosystem supporting/promoting local economy</p>
<p>Digital technologies</p> <p>Web, fast internet connectivity, sensors, with support of Digital Hubs and Fab-Lab</p>
<p>Socio-economic impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic: Business and village development ▪ Environmental: Efficient resource management ▪ Social: Digital capacities, social inclusion
<p>More info: https://bit.ly/2WmgJ52</p>



Purpose of the tools

The combination of a series of different ICT tools has enabled the small village of Lormes to transition from a digitally-excluded territory to a digital player with an enabling digital ecosystem built around the needs of its population.



Description of the tools

Starting with the development of a common vision, the village as a whole was able to move from a stage of ‘digital exclusion’ to become a key digital player for the territory. Lormes set up the first ‘Digital Mission’ association in 2003, to provide digital inclusion and education support services to the community and initiated the ‘Digital passport for every one’ programme.

Source : <http://paysnivernaismorvan.com>

In 2007-2008, Lormes created the Rural Hub. This provides eight offices with connections to the high-speed broadband network (FTTH fibre-optic 100 Mb), technical support, meeting rooms, videoconferencing facilities, loan of equipment, VoIP telephones, a network server, and expansion of digital inclusion and mediation services. By 2016, the first rural FTTH pilot was conducted in Burgundy, together with a community consultation to prioritise new digital services to accompany the deployment of FTTH. The expansion of Rural Hub and the launch of the ‘Villages of the Future’ process focused on wider community-led social and economic regeneration. In 2017, the Rural Hub or ‘Mission’ started to act as a competence centre for the business, public and community sectors by delivering training and mediation services on behalf of the county and regional government through two agreements. Lormes Rural Hub has inspired others to follow a similar digital transformation pathway.

Areas of socio-economic impacts

Social	Enhanced the digital capacity and skills of village inhabitants; strengthened the social dynamic and capital of the village to work collectively on their development.
Economic	Created an enabling digital infrastructure and ecosystem for the emergence of digital initiatives and projects for the private and public sectors.
Environmental	Triggered projects related to management of natural and public resources.