

TRANSFORMING RETAIL OPERATIONS AND ANALYTICS AT SCALE WITH SEMARCHY AND SNOWFLAKE

Retail | France

Cora France, a leading hypermarket chain founded in 1969, operates over 60 stores across northeastern France and employs more than 17,000 people. Cora faced mounting challenges like many traditional retailers due to shifting consumer behavior as a result of COVID-19, e-commerce competition, and legacy IT infrastructure. In 2019, the company launched a multi-year digital transformation initiative aimed at revitalizing in-store operations, accelerating e-commerce capabilities, and modernizing its entire data ecosystem.

As part of this Renaissance Program, Cora replaced legacy systems with a modern cloud-native stack built on Snowflake and powered by Semarchy xDI for real-time integration. Facing pressure to improve commercial reporting, customer analytics, and compliance tracking, the company needed to unify fragmented systems and siloed data across financial, reference, loyalty, and e-commerce domains.

Semarchy xDI became a strategic enabler of this transformation. The dual-ingestion approach centralized data from on-prem and cloud apps, enabling better sales analysis, more accurate receipt tracking for compliance, and daily reporting on commercial performance. This included automating the daily ingestion of millions of receipts, optimizing the management of a 15-billion-row sales table, and providing access to high-quality, governed data to employees across departments.

Together, they achieved a scalable, governed, and modernized solution that powers Cora's reporting, analytics, and operational decision-making, while unlocking critical capabilities like GDPR-compliant data cloning, e-commerce performance analysis, and receipt tracking for improved regulatory compliance.

CHALLENGES:

Cora faced a complex and aging IT infrastructure that hindered its ability to adapt to shifting market demands. Like many large retailers, the company struggled to modernize while managing a vast volume of legacy data scattered across siloed systems. This complexity made giving business users autonomy difficult. Additionally, access to timely reporting and cross-functional visibility and traceability seemed impossible, especially in the wake of growing e-commerce activity and intensified competition.

Key challenges included:

- **Fragmented data systems:** Each business line maintained its own data silos, particularly customer and receipt data, making unified insights nearly impossible.
- **Limited real-time analytics:** Bottlenecks in the legacy environment slowed data processing and access, with key reports arriving late or inconsistently.
- **Legacy technology constraints:** Older tools like SAP IQ and Oracle ODI were inflexible and resource-intensive, creating technical debt and limiting scalability.
- **E-commerce expansion:** As digital sales channels expanded, the lack of centralized data created hurdles in managing and analyzing online performance.
- **Compliance and governance gaps:** Existing systems lacked modern governance and auditability, making GDPR and internal policy enforcement a manual and error-prone effort.

"Thanks to the excellent integration of Semarchy and Snowflake, we have improved the satisfaction of our users, who now receive the information they need via an automatic report sent around 2 a.m. This way, everyone can start their day with reliable and up-to-date data, such as revenue, for example."

— Sylvain Tarillon,

Head of Data at Cora

Archived 15+ billion receipt lines

for improved traceability and reliability in regulatory audits

Improved commercial performance management

with real-time analysis of sales, promotions, and stock levels across stores

Enhanced e-commerce sales analytics

with a unified data environment

BUSINESS DRIVERS:

To meet its transformation goals, Cora launched the Renaissance Program, a strategic initiative to modernize its data stack, regain market competitiveness, and support more agile decision-making across the business.

Primary drivers for change included:

- **Support operational reinvention:** Create a modern foundation for evolving in-store and digital experiences, fueled by timely, trusted data.
- **Enable unified customer insight:** Build a “golden customer” profile to improve targeting, marketing, and loyalty program outcomes across physical and digital channels.
- **Accelerate reporting and decision-making:** Empower business units with self-service analytics, reducing IT dependency and delays.
- **Strengthen regulatory compliance:** Implement better traceability and secure long-term storage of receipts and sensitive data for compliance and audit readiness.
- **Enhance cross-functional data sharing:** Simplify and automate external data sharing and internal collaboration, especially around e-commerce, inventory, and financial data.

SOLUTIONS:

Cora France had already been working with Semarchy since 2018 for in-store flow management. Recognizing the success of this initial collaboration, Cora chose to deepen the partnership as part of its broader data modernization strategy under the Renaissance Program.

To support greater scalability and performance, Cora expanded its use of Semarchy's xDI solution alongside Snowflake, creating a unified and cloud-native ecosystem for operational and analytical workloads. This combination gave Cora the agility and speed needed to transform its data infrastructure while reducing the burden on internal IT teams.

With Semarchy's no-code data modeling, built-in governance, dual ingestion model, and automated workflows, Cora could centralize fragmented data from SAP, cloud, and legacy systems while ensuring data quality and lineage. At the same time, Snowflake offered elastic, real-time computing power for large-scale analytics, enabling business teams to make faster, insight-driven decisions.

Key capabilities and outcomes of the solution included:

- **Cloud-native data stack:** Integration of Semarchy with Snowflake enabled modern data architecture without the overhead of maintaining on-premise infrastructure.
- **Unified, governed data:** Cora consolidated reference, customer, and receipt data from multiple systems into a governed hub with traceability and validation rules.
- **Real-time reporting:** Business users could now generate daily, even hourly, reports across e-commerce and in-store performance with faster load times.
- **Improved data sharing:** Automated pipelines allowed teams to share trusted datasets with external partners and internal departments in a fraction of the time.
- **Accelerated innovation:** With agile data governance in place, Cora was able to explore advanced analytics, including machine learning pilots and dynamic pricing strategies.
- **GDPR-compliant data cloning:** Semarchy enabled secure cloning of sensitive datasets for analytics and compliance purposes, including receipt tracking and customer behavior analysis.

"At Cora France, we have a large number of applications. With the launch of Big Data projects, it became clear that we needed to centralize data sources in one place, in order to make them available and consumable by as many people as possible, whether they come from on-prem or cloud sources. Implementing this dual method in our Snowflake environment with a single tool (xDI) saves us a lot of time."

— Sylvain Tarillon,
Head of Data at Cora

It's not what we say about Semarchy Data Platform that matters. It's the recognition of our industry and the success of our customers — from business leaders to data teams — that confirms our value.