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LIVING IN MONACO

...dents' Magazine

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WILLIAM VAROUX
Mr Solution Architect

Store your data in the digital vault of the Prince of Monaco

"Mr. Solution Architect", William Varoux is the permanent cybersecurity expert of the Principality of Monaco, working closely with the Monaco Public Administrations, as well as with local businesses and residents.

Biology student, William Varoux was born in Lille, in the north of France. With a continuous eagerness to learn, he built his first computer in 1981, just seven years before he started to work in Monaco. William learned at university how to acquire new knowledge and since then, he never stopped to dive into new things.

"In 1988, I was visiting the Graphic Service in Monaco to understand the know-how they were providing in the new-born digital graphic arts business," - remembers back William.

For William, Monaco was not just a transit destination to learn about digital graphic arts, it became his home when he decided to move to Monaco.

In 2019, William decided to be independent and he established a company called SOCMC, known today as Munegu Solutions.

"**The idea was to fill the gap between companies and IT partners. One has problems and the other one sells materials and solutions. I realised that they need to be able to talk. Therefore, I decided to build a bridge to bring together the two worlds. This is the true DNA of Munegu Solutions.**"

Backed by 30 years of numerous and enriching experiences to share, William and his team have since then helped management teams, companies, and administrations, mainly Monégasques, to accelerate their digital change of critical documents processes but also to "smart" the management of workspaces while reducing the risks associated with change.

What is the greatest satisfaction in your job?

"**To share the happiness, once a problem has been solved,**" - laughs William.

William Varoux

> "THE GOVERNMENT HAS GREAT AMBITIONS FOR THE DIGITISATION OF SERVICES FOR BUSINESSES, COMMUNITIES, AND RESIDENTS, IN PARTICULAR WITH THE CREATION OF MONACO CLOUD AND SOVEREIGN FUNDS TO SUPPORT THE DIGITAL AND ENERGY TRANSITION IN THE PRINCIPALITY."

Jean-Luc Lasquellec (Wallcrypt) and William Varoux (Munegu Solutions)

Monaco is a small country but does not back down from the big metropolitan cities in terms of security and IT infrastructure.

The Digital Transition of the Principality started back in 2018, when the Sovereign Prince, H.S.H. Prince Albert II appointed Frédéric Genta to serve as minister for Digital Transformation for the Principality. At the time, a United Nations ranking of the countries' digital activity, placed Monaco near the bottom.

Realising the missed potential, the Sovereign Prince wanted Genta to position Monaco as the world's most digital state. In order to accomplish this goal, Genta overseas 5% of the State budget. William and Munegu Solutions are important local actors in this transition, ailing for digital improvements in smart city initiatives, education, and health care, as well as programs and partnerships benefitting the business community, especially banking and fintech, real estate, sports, and tourism.

"**The government has great ambitions for the digitisation of services for businesses, communities, and residents, in particular with the creation of the Monaco Cloud and sovereign funds to support the digital and energy transition in the Principality,**" - says William.

When we think about IT and data security, we automatically assume it is mainly for big corporations. Why is it important on a smaller scale as well?

"**Cybersecurity and computer systems are a core element of every successful business. Often the growth of small businesses can be hindered by a lack of adequate support. That's why we take the challenges of businesses of all sizes very seriously,**" - explains William.

What is the typical service that residents request in Monaco?

"**Securing their computers and mobile phones which today represent a working tool for the majority of residents.**"

"**For over seven hundred years, the Principality of Monaco has been able to develop, reinvent itself and meet the challenges brought by major global developments in order to preserve its independence and prosperity.**

Today we face a new challenge, that of the advent of digital technology, which is redefining the international equilibrium, transforming our economies and having a far-reaching impact on society. Digital technology impacts the behavior of the individual, regardless of his status. It challenges our perceptions, renews our ideas, and is causing profound transformation for all of us in all aspects of our lives. Governments must seize the opportunity of these upheavals to give them positive meaning, to improve their public policies and to develop and reposition their economies.

As an attentive observer of the changes in our world and its environment, I have become convinced that this revolution is irreversible, and of the need to bring my country firmly into the digital age.

We must therefore equip the Principality with the necessary means to take its rightful place in this new world and to write the next chapter of our history, thereby perpetuating our uniqueness, which is more relevant than ever.

Monaco in a digital world is a country that derives a unique advantage from its size, namely the capacity to coherently transform its economic and social model.

Monaco in a digital world means making the most of all our talents, those of both our community and those of the men and women who come from far and wide to live, work and create wealth here.

Monaco in a digital world is also a model based on attention to the needs of all, on excellence of quality of life and the invention of new standards – a human-focused, ethical, responsible and secure model that is protected from the risks of digital excess.

Monaco in a digital world is the opportunity to start a new cycle of prosperity by boosting our areas of economic excellence, and also by creating new drivers of growth, particularly through the unprecedented opportunity of freeing ourselves from our territorial boundaries.

Monaco in a digital world is, finally, its entire community actively united in a single goal, that of finding our Principality a new place in this world, which is reinventing itself. This goal is backed by the "Extended Monaco" program.

Welcome to a responsible and sustainable digital model! Welcome to Monaco!"

- H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco

And what is the typical service that businesses request in Monaco?

"**The services most requested by companies in Monaco are the settings of their printers, which are often not used well enough, the optimisation of printing costs through our digital printing management solution, which also has a Forest Positive program to which we have very seriously committed, to securing and optimising their IT networks; we often come across companies with equipment that is not suited to their needs.**"

What is the biggest challenge at the moment in your career in Monaco?

"**I think that the biggest challenge at the moment is to convince more residents and businesses that digital solutions are essential to improve the quality of life and the efficiency of work because barely 10% of companies in Monaco have started to take action for their digital transition.**"

In order to build strong and profound foundations, Genta also introduced the Extended Monaco back in 2019, with the celebrated Fonds Bleu financial grant for local actors of the Principality.

Through the Fonds Bleu program, the Government of Monaco offers to co-finance between 30% to 70% of IT software, hardware, digital transition, or digital marketing activities.

Among the authorised partners, one can find Munegu Solutions as the permanent IT infrastructure and cybersecurity provider (as well as Niche Media for digital marketing promotions).

"**We have many projects in progress and wish to develop further in the Principality because we share the same values and desires for an efficient and exemplary Digital Transition,**" - explains William.

Can locals still benefit from the Fonds Blue program? And if yes, then how?

"**Each company and resident in Monaco can benefit from the Fond Bleu depending on the desired digital project. Munegu Solutions is one of the main players in support and project studies for local businesses and residents. Companies and residents should feel free to contact us for more information and advice.**"

What would your best advice be for a Monaco resident in terms of IT and on a personal level?

"**My advice for residents of Monaco is to think more about the protection and storage of their personal information to avoid any incidents following a virus attack which can be quite costly. We encounter many of these examples every day. Often the software that people use is not efficient enough.**"

The Principality of Monaco was the first country to launch 5G in 2019 and has also introduced the Monaco Cloud.

Although the Monaco Cloud was created in partnership with Amazon and Dell, it is operated by a Monégasque company to ensure sovereignty. Additionally, Monaco's own digital security agency handles all encryption.

Why would someone want to store their private data on the Monaco Cloud? What are its benefits versus some other Cloud?

"**Most people today are using the Cloud to store their personal information. On the Monaco Cloud, you can recover old versions of your files, unlike other storage solutions on the market where you only have access to the latest version. In terms of personal data protection, the Monaco Cloud is the most secure solution worldwide. In case of loss of information, our technical support is very fast, and the user can recover his or her data within hours of the request.**"

William Varoux (Munegu Solutions) and Rob Schols (Discreet Advisory) at the Monaco Residents' Meeting

There is a lot of talk about digital signature. Why would someone have such a thing and what is its benefit?

"**The electronic signature is a device that finds its place more and more in our dynamic daily lives. First of all, it helps to use less paper to protect the environment, as well as to save time as contracts or any other documents can be signed remotely in complete safety. We saw during the Covid crisis that large parts of the work processes were done remotely and the companies which had adopted digital solutions such as the electronic signature, were able to do their work more easily than those which had not put this device in place.**"

Where do you see changes happening in the next 5 years?

"**The changes that I see in the next 5 years are in the improvement of the quality of life at work for the companies in Monaco, which now place the well-being of employees at the heart of their concerns. We are constantly working on digital solutions that will allow all the economic actors in Monaco to be supported to succeed in their digital and energy projects. Our company puts a lot of attention on ecology given the lack of natural resources which worries our society more and more.**"

Pioneering the IT infrastructure, William is working closely with small, medium, and key accounts of the Principality. Some clients cannot be disclosed due to national security concerns, but William loves to talk about his restaurant clients such as GAIA, Maison FONFON, or the GIRAUDI Group. Munegu Solutions is not limited to specific industries, as William is the key cybersecurity advisor in many fields, including the bank, industry, health, legal, security, medical, and many more kinds of businesses of different sizes. What drives him is, "*not what these businesses do, but the need to find pain point reliefs in our digital world.*"