L'OLIVIER ASSURANCE

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Julien Bouverot

CEO

L'olivier ASSURANCE x NORD FRANCE INVEST HAUTS-DE-FRANCE REGION

ADMIRAL GROUP L'OLIVIER

Next-Generation Insurance

Founded in 1993 in Cardiff, Admiral Group was a **pioneer in direct insurance in the United Kingdom**. The group has more than 15,000 employees across 8 countries worldwide. Listed on the London Stock Exchange, the company generated revenue of over 5 billion pounds in 2024 (approximately 6 billion euros). In France, it has a subsidiary known as L'Olivier Assurance, which has been based in the Lille metropolitan area in the Hauts-de-France region since 2015. It offers direct auto and home insurance policies. Named "Customer Service of the Year 2023" in the **"property insurance" category**, the digital insurance company has nearly 600,000 customers and reports a **96% satisfaction rate among its auto insurance policyholders** following a claim. A Look at the Return on Investment with CEO Julien Bouverot.

L'olivier ASSURANCE x NORD FRANCE INVEST

JULIEN BOUVEROT
CEO
L'olivier Assurance

How did the L'Olivier Assurance brand begin in France?

The Admiral Group, which is particularly well established in the United Kingdom, was looking for new growth opportunities in Europe. In 2010, it noticed that insurance comparison websites—which had contributed to its success in the UK—did not exist in France. The group therefore launched Lynx, the well-known brand that originally focused on comparing car insurance policies and was acquired in 2023 by an Italian group. Since its launch, L'olivier Assurance has attracted significant interest from Internet users in its products. The 2014 Hamon Act, which allows policyholders to cancel their insurance policies at any time without waiting for the policy anniversary date, has boosted our business. Our growth then accelerated thanks to our competitive pricing and our commitment to quality.

> ***We are part of a British group that has been incredibly successful, with an average growth rate of 30% over the past 30 years.***

Why did you set up offices in Paris before expanding to the suburbs of Lille as well?

We chose Paris because we initially worked with a wholesale broker and only handled pricing and underwriting. So it was easier for us to recruit candidates with a background and expertise in insurance, actuarial science, or data science while based in the capital. We still have offices in Paris that are home to about 100 employees who work in support roles. When we decided to create our own customer relations platform, we chose a site in Lille that now has 300 employees.

What made you choose Hauts-de-France rather than another region?

The short distance between Paris and Lille is a major advantage. Both cities offer direct access to the United Kingdom and therefore, to our headquarters in Wales. The Hauts-de-France region also has numerous customer service centers. It has a wide range of academic programs, with many schools that produce highly qualified graduates. Last but not least, the person who set up our center is from the Hauts-de-France region. I think that played a part too!

This culture of human contact is clearly evident in the region." The locals are polite, friendly, and warm. These are crucial assets in our business!

How does innovation manifest itself in an industry like yours?

It is an integral part of our online business. Moreover, many insurance companies and mutual insurance societies have been in business for much longer than we have. This represents a challenge for us, so we need to be more efficient, agile, and responsive than they are. We have 70 robots that support our staff in batch processing, meaning they perform repetitive tasks involving large volumes of data. We are also beginning to implement the most advanced LLM (Large Language Model) technologies into our operations, which are becoming increasingly adept at mimicking human language1. We have also implemented a sophisticated OCR (Optical Character Recognition) system that we have customized to suit our business and organizational needs. It can analyse documents and, after verifying and cross-referencing information from various databases, initiate certain procedures, such as sending a quote or opening an insurance claim, for example.

Our region is home to many insurance companies. Are you close to them?

We have a good relationship with Meilleurtaux, a comparison site for mortgage rates, loans, and insurance. However, we have no contact with traditional insurers or their representatives. It's important to understand that even though we do the same job as they do, the way we operate is very different. This is partly why we don't necessarily have much synergy to build together. In addition, the customer service industry is under pressure due to intense competition. In fact, the labor shortage is prompting us to turn to customer relationship management partners such as Majorel, Amicio, and Armatis, which are also based in the Hauts-de-France region.

[1] Such as chatbots, text generators, predictive analytics...

L'olivier ASSURANCE x NORD FRANCE INVEST

How does being part of an international group benefit you in terms of innovation, and how is AI changing your industry?

In addition to the group's strength and resources, we benefit from the pooling of expertise, and each entity shares its experience with the others as part of a process of sharing best practices. Most of the developers who work for the group are based in Spain, but that doesn't stop us from having our own small technical team specialized in robotics. As for artificial intelligence, we use it as a tool to assist our employees, particularly those who interact with our customers. AI is also very useful for fraud prevention, if only to verify the authenticity of a photo or the consistency of an accident report. In fact, we have a competitive advantage because we use it for our pricing, which is still a novel approach in our industry. Innovations are advancing so rapidly that we need to undergo continuous training to keep up with these changes. I recently asked my teams to develop skills in GNI (Google News Initiatives), also known as generative AI. Given this technology's performance and potential for improvement, it is clear that we will need to hire fewer people than we do today. But more broadly speaking, I think it will revolutionize the way we work in the future and will therefore require different skills than those we have today.

You brought up the topic of recruitment and candidate profiles in your industry several times. Why is this so important?

That is indeed the case, since our ambition is to capture a significant share of the French online auto and home insurance market over the next five years, which raises the question of recruitment. We have strong candidates for support roles. However, customer service attracts many young people who view this profession as a temporary job, which leads to high turnover—a problem we've managed to address by focusing instead on candidates who are a bit more mature. I pay close attention to this because we managed to grow from 50 to 400 employees fairly quickly while maintaining our corporate culture, which is rooted in entrepreneurship, modernity, and a desire to "shake up" the insurance industry, which used to be very conservative. This energy and these values are very much alive in our "young" company, where the average age is 34. It's also important to note that, unlike other companies, we train our new hires: they undergo two months of initial basic training, followed by one month in the call center, where they learn to use the various tools at their disposal, and then one month taking calls alongside an experienced mentor, before they're ready to work independently.

Our management style is based on collaboration, kindness, and high standards." "This is how we achieve our goals and empower our teams to thrive and grow.

What does your group think about L'Olivier Assurance, Lille, and the Hauts-de-France region?

Even though we have nearly 600,000 customers, our results pale in comparison to the Admiral Group's success story in the UK. Nevertheless, we are seen as the fastest-growing entity right now—the one to keep an eye on. So we're doing well, and the outlook for L'olivier Assurance is positive. As for the region, we hosted about 100 managers from the group in October 2025. They loved their stay and saw for themselves how close Lille is to London. "The group's managers see the region in a positive light, and we're delighted about that!"

We strive to make our employees' work meaningful in order to prevent turnover. Skills acquisition through training, internal mobility to help them advance, and their voluntary participation in CSR initiatives all play a major role in this.

Social and societal commitment

L'Olivier Assurance has been awarded the "Great Place to Work" certification. This is an international certification that recognizes companies that are great places to work and that foster the personal and professional growth of their employees. To retain its employees in a highly competitive industry, this online insurance company is implementing a robust internal mobility policy that includes lifelong training within the company. This initiative enables employees with limited formal education to acquire new skills and advance their careers through a wide variety of training modules, including job-specific expertise, an open-access self-learning system, knowledge-sharing among colleagues, and scenario-based workshops. Working in synergy with its teams, L'olivier Assurance has also committed to a more structured CSR approach with the creation of "diversity and inclusion," "environment," and "solidarity" committees. A number of initiatives are being carried out in this regard: support for the Lille Foundation, the Second Chance School, and charitable organizations; employee-led initiatives to assist residents in nursing homes; and environmental awareness campaigns through site visits, etc.

A DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN HAUTS-DE-FRANCE?

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