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by

Staff Reporter

News | 03 September 2021



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NAVYA, a French autonomous driving system, has launched its first autonomous shuttle service on UK roads at the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus, a leading innovation center.

The self-driving vehicles will transport employees and visitors 24/7 around these UK science and technology hubs.

Located in Oxfordshire, England, the 700-acre Harwell Science, and Innovation Campus hosts more than 6,000 people and 240 public and private organisations in three areas of expertise: space, renewable energy, and health.

Partnership with AVIVA

The Pilot is being conducted in collaboration with AVIVA, which is developing insurance for autonomous vehicles and is operated by DARWIN, a British company specialising in the application of cutting-edge technological research in the field of terrestrial and satellite communications.

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DARWIN's focus is to enable reliable connectivity on the move by combining terrestrial and satellite communications, with the aid of the European Space Agency, mobile provider O2 and satellite operator HISPASAT.

Autonomous driving systems

Created in 2014, Navya is a French name specialised in the supply of autonomous driving systems and associated services. The company aims at becoming the leading player in level 4 autonomous driving systems for passenger and goods transport.

Since its launch, more than 180 units have been sold in 23 countries as of 31 December 2020. The Autonom Shuttle, the main development axis, is dedicated to passenger transport.

"We are delighted to have registered NAVYA's purpose-built connected autonomous shuttle for use on publicly accessible roads at Harwell Science and Innovation Campus in Oxfordshire. This is a significant regulatory milestone on the road to making CAV mobility a reality, and an exciting step on our innovative journey to realising the potential of ubiquitous communications. We now

look forward to announcing future trials involving this exciting new technology soon," says Sophia Ward, Operations Manager at Darwin.

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Pierre Lahutte, CEO of NAVYA, commented: "We are very pleased to be part of this trial at the renowned Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. This new deployment allows NAVYA to strengthen its technology with an additional use case in a complex environment and to contribute to the development of insurance practices for autonomous vehicles."

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Ignite Software Systems is a Manchester-based provider of insurance policy administration systems to brokers, MGAs, and insurers. It has signed an acquisition agreement with Sequel, a Verisk business.

The Sequel acquisition and investment will accelerate the expansion of Ignite's technology platform and form part of Sequel's digital ecosystem.

Ignite's Integrated Software as a Service platform includes policy administration, rating engine and digital engagement for brokers and MGAs with specific domain expertise in motor, property, and pet insurance.

Acquisition to fuel Ignite's growth

The deal was supported by FRP Corporate Finance and it enabled Ignite to become part of Sequel. The acquisition by the Nasdaq-listed data analytics group Verisk was worth \$33 billion (nearly £24 billion).

The acquisition will accelerate the expansion of Ignite's integrated Software as a Service platform. It targets significant organic revenue growth with the support of the wider group.

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This is a licensed platform supporting policy administration, rating engine and digital engagement for brokers and MGAs, with specific domain expertise in motor, property, and pet insurance. The business will benefit from full access to the significant technology, people and capital resources that Sequel and Verisk offer.

Sequel recognises that the Ignite platform plays with specialist insurance companies and will enable it to accelerate development and expand its capabilities. Ignite will benefit from the full support and access to the significant technology, people, and capital resources that Sequel and Verisk offer.

Notably, Sequel provides reinsurance software solutions to the global specialty market.

"Joining Sequel is a fantastic leap forward for Ignite, our clients and our team," said Ignite MD Toby MacLachlan. "For Ignite as a company it will mean winning more tenders because, whilst our technology has always outperformed the market, our balance sheet was historically that of a young company. For our existing clients, Ignite will now have access to all the world-class infrastructure, resources, security, and expertise that come with Sequel and Verisk."

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Ian Summers, CEO of Sequel, said: "Ignite has a strong management team and offers excellent business and technical capabilities to its client base of specialist brokers, MGAs, and insurers. The acquisition will enable us to accelerate the development of their digital platform and add a modular API driven SaaS platform to Sequel's portfolio. The combination of Ignite with Sequel's pricing, distribution and claims applications extends our unique and powerful capabilities for the insurance market. Ignite's client focus and deep domain knowledge will fit seamlessly into Sequel's business model providing new and existing clients with access to a broader expert advice and service. We look forward to welcoming Toby and his team on board at Sequel/Verisk at this exciting time."

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