

Streamlining certificate management for a French municipal IT environment



Ville de Montrouge, a municipal government in France, manages a diverse and highly heterogeneous IT environment that supports city services, internal operations, and citizen-facing applications. With a relatively small IT team responsible for a wide range of technologies, the city faced growing challenges around certificate management as industry-wide certificate lifecycles shortened and operational risk increased.

To address these challenges, the city adopted Sectigo Certificate Manager (SCM) to centralize certificate management, automate renewals, and reduce operational complexity—allowing the IT team to focus on delivering reliable digital services to the municipality and its citizens.

The challenge

Managing certificates in a complex, resource-constrained environment

Like many public-sector organizations, Ville de Montrouge operates with a small IT team responsible for a broad and diverse infrastructure. Historically, certificates were purchased and managed individually and renewed once per year across the city's environment.

However, this approach became increasingly unsustainable due to several converging factors:



Shorter certificate lifecycles across the industry



Increased reliance on wildcard certificates, which introduced higher security risk in the event of compromise



Growing awareness that certificate leakage could result in unauthorized server access



An expanding number of certificates (approximately 30–50 certificates across the environment)

The city recognized that continuing with manual or loosely coordinated certificate management would increase operational risk and place unnecessary strain on an already small IT team. The priority became finding a solution that would provide visibility, automation, and predictability, while allowing sufficient time to test and identify issues before certificate deadlines became critical.



With renewals happening more frequently, what used to be manageable once a year became much more complex." explained Gaël Vinot, deputy director of digital innovation and information systems at Ville de Montrouge.

Why Sectigo

The vendor evaluation process revealed several key criteria areas that quickly emerged as essential:



Ease of use for a small IT team



Ability to support a wide variety of technologies



Automation to reduce manual effort and human error



Confidence in working with a large, established certificate authority (CA)



Compatibility with public-sector procurement processes

While Let's Encrypt and Certbot were already used for some servers, the city's goal was not to replace every existing process immediately, but rather to unify and centralize certificate management where possible.



We didn't want to move toward a smaller or less established player," said Vinot. "Sectigo was a known, credible certificate lifecycle management provider, and the overall offering made sense for our environment."

Implementation experience

Ville de Montrouge began deploying SCM across its environment with a focus on the most common and time-consuming use cases.

What worked well:



Sectigo's network agent proved particularly valuable

- Minimal manual effort required
- Seamless deployment in Windows and IIS environments



SCM integrated seamlessly with Ville de Montrouge's existing ACME-based certificate automation, enhancing established workflows without requiring process changes.



Apache environments were simple to configure, with automation policies implemented quickly and deployments completed efficiently even at scale.



For many systems, once Sectigo Certificate Manager was set up, there was almost nothing left for us to do," Vinot noted.

Challenges and Complexity

As expected in a heterogeneous municipal environment, some challenges remained:

- Non-standard configurations—such as Tomcat running on Windows—introduced additional complexity and helped explore the solution’s flexibility.
- A few edge cases could not be fully automated on day one, which is typical in environments with long operational histories, legacy systems and varied application stacks.

Rather than being a blocker, these scenarios highlighted the reality of supporting many technologies within a public-sector IT landscape. ACME-based tools continue to complement SCM, and the city is actively working to close remaining gaps over time using other options offered by SCM such as DevOps integrations and APIs.

The result is a steadily improving certificate management posture—and growing confidence in long-term automation.

Support experience

During the early stages of deployment, the city encountered a time-sensitive situation related to an expiring wildcard certificate. This created a heightened sense of urgency early in the project.

Sectigo responded with a calm, structured approach, leveraging close collaboration between the sales team, PKI advisor, and onboarding engineer to guide the city through a situationally critical starting phase. Clear processes, proactive communication, and hands-on engagement ensured continuity while administrative and contractual steps were completed.

Key elements of the experience included:

- Direct, hands-on involvement from the sales team and engineer team during a critical phase
- High responsiveness and availability, even outside of pre-scheduled meetings
- A coordinated onboarding approach that prioritized operational continuity



“There was always someone available to help us” said Vinot. “Even though the situation was complicated at the beginning, support from Sectigo was consistently strong.”

Results and Impact

Since adopting Sectigo, Ville de Montrouge has seen meaningful operational improvements:



Reduced anxiety around renewals: Once certificates are issued, the team no longer needs to constantly monitor expiration timelines



Faster, simpler workflows: Certificate management is easier and more predictable



Operational efficiency gains: Processes that previously happened once per year now scale smoothly to multiple renewals per year



Improved risk posture: Automation reduces the likelihood of expired certificates and service disruption



Increased visibility: Certificates are now fully tracked leaving the guess work out of where they reside, allowing for audit readiness

The ability to manage certificates more centrally and consistently has had a positive ripple effect across the IT team's workload and priorities.

While the city's technology stack remains diverse, Sectigo provides a foundation for continued improvement and greater unification over time. As automation expands and certificate lifecycles continue to shorten, the value of a centralized management platform becomes even more critical. For Ville de Montrouge, the goal of IT remains clear: supporting the municipality—and ultimately, the citizens who rely on city services every day.

Vinot offers clear guidance for other organizations considering Sectigo:

If you have a large environment with different technologies, Sectigo Certificate Manager is extremely fast to deploy and very easy to manage. When renewals move from once a year to several times per year, automation becomes essential.

About Sectigo

Sectigo is the most innovative provider of certificate lifecycle management (CLM), delivering comprehensive solutions that secure human and machine identities for the world's largest brands. Sectigo's automated, cloud-native CLM platform issues and manages digital certificates across all certificate authorities (CAs) to simplify and improve security protocols within the enterprise. Sectigo is one of the largest, longest-standing, and most reputable CAs with more than 700,000 customers and two decades of delivering unparalleled digital trust.