FUJITSU

Case Study
The best bet for bwin.party is technology from Fujitsu

»Even in the world of gaming you need to have something that is not a gamble. PRIMERGY server technology from Fujitsu gives us absolute security and more performance in handling daily business. Thanks to the new solution, risks were significantly reduced, and we are well on the way to achieving our business objectives with this technology.« **Mark Sellors, Director of IT Infrastructure and Operations, bwin.party digital entertainment**

The customer

bwin.party was established from the merger of bwin Interactive Entertainment AG and PartyGaming Plc with the goal of becoming the world's largest market-listed online gaming provider. **www.bwinparty.com**

bwin.party digital entertainment

The project

Installation of a new database platform in connection with the optimization of the storage environment.

The solution

PRIMERGY RX900 and RX600 rack servers based on Intel® Xeon® X7560 processors, plus an ETERNUS DX80 storage solution.

On the way to market leadership

bwin.party digital entertainment plc is the largest market-listed online gaming corporation in the world. The new company was established in March 2011 through the merger of bwin, a sports betting firm founded in 1997 in Vienna, with PartyGaming Plc of Gibraltar. The goals of the merger were to position the Group to take advantage of future regulatory changes in Europe as well as to leverage potential synergies and expand the core business segments sports betting, poker, casino and bingo. The business model is based on IT to a very high degree. Therefore it came as no surprise that optimization of the company's enterprise IT was at the top of the agenda when the new business model was launched. Changes were necessary in the database environment: bwin.party operates one of the largest Microsoft® Windows® SQL Server® installations in Europe and is a reference customer for Microsoft. The platform architecture was still based on Itanium processors, which Microsoft no longer supported. This was an additional reason why the IT managers needed to find an alternative technology that was found in Fujitsu PRIMERGY rack servers.

Tested live and rated the best

Decisive factors in the selection process were a detailed feasibility study and benchmark tests that were conducted in the Fujitsu data center in Paderborn, Germany, and at Microsoft in Redmond in the United States. The online gaming company left nothing to chance when it came to choosing the best IT. The requirements for the system platform on which bwin.party runs its Microsoft SQL Database are extremely high. And these requirements continue to rise. The new systems had to be able to process billions of requests every day. Some 30,000 different kinds of bets daily, 3,000 bets per second and 45,000 poker players in simultaneous games are an indication of just how high the workloads are and how much top performance the bwin.party IT must deliver. That performance is now provided by PRIMERGY RX900 and RX600 servers from Fujitsu. The highly scalable eight-socket RX900 rack server is predestined to handle such high levels of data processing. With this PRIMERGY model bwin.party has chosen a platform that maximizes the economic benefits of the x86 industry server. The RX600 model series is the perfect addition to this scenario due to its huge storage capacity and integrated high availability.

Customer benefits

- Successful migration to servers having Intel® Xeon® processors
- Innovative technologies
- Improved performance of 50 percent compared to the previous system
- Lower maintenance costs
- Close and trustful cooperation with Fujitsu in product tests and implementation

Products and services

- Server Group I: 3x PRIMERGY RX900 S1 (8x Intel® Xeon® X7560 CPUs, 512 GB RAM, 2x Fusion-io drives 640 GB); 7x PRIMERGY RX600 S5 (8x Intel® Xeon® X7560 CPUs, 256 GB RAM, 2x Fusion-io drives 640 GB)
- Server Group II: 4x PRIMERGY RX900 S1; 8x PRIMERGY RX600 S5
- Operating system: Microsoft® Windows Server® 2008 R2 64-Bit
- Storage: ETERNUS DX80
- Database: Microsoft® Windows Server® 2008 R2
- Services I: Presales and performance test by team Paderborn
- Services II: Configuration, design and installation by team Vienna

Fujitsu wins the performance test

bwin.party initiated a Proof of Concept with seven vendors for its migration from the Itanium IA64 to the Intel Xeon x86 database environment for Microsoft SQL Server 2008 R2. Due to Microsoft's imminent end of support for the Itanium processors, the customer needed an alternative technology. The customer expected the new hardware to deliver the following:

- Higher performance
- Innovation
- Future viability
- Efficiency and economy

bwin.party was particularly impressed by the great cooperation among the development teams, especially their openness to innovative solutions and their integration competence in the area of Fusion-io cards. These cards are mounted directly on the computer's bus and deliver speeds that nearly match those of DRAM modules, thus reducing the time needed for compute-intensive operations considerably. The Fusion-io cards are especially suited for use with all database and data warehouse applications. Following the prequalification phase, testing began in the Fujitsu Performance and Benchmark Lab in Paderborn. The first candidate was the PRIMERGY RX600 server, designed to handle heavy workloads. And the test results proved this: The server's extraordinary database performance truly convinced the bwin.party IT decision-makers. The customer was especially interested in the PRIMERGY RX900 server based on the Intel Xeon 7500 Processor Series, which is setting new performance standards. The customer requested that this system be tested live at Microsoft in Redmond. Although the server had not yet been officially released, Fujitsu complied with this request and took care of all matters related to customs regulations in the United States. The pre-production PRIMERGY RX900 was shipped to the US to compete against a comparable machine from a leading competitor.

Successful all the way

According to the test results there was absolutely no doubt that the Fujitsu system was the winner. The PRIMERGY RX900 server achieved top scores in all disciplines. Its competitive edge in performance, already proven by the TPC_E transaction benchmark, was substantiated with the actual applications run by the customer on a daily basis. The server delivered 50 percent more performance than the old platform based on Itanium technology. And in the 1:1 duel with the competitor's machine, the PRIMERGY delivered 30 percent more performance by comparison. Some software products that will be released in the years ahead were also run on the Fujitsu server. These tests proved that the PRIMERGY server is ready for the future, which was also a key factor influencing the customer's final decision.

Future-centric innovation

The online games provider bwin.party has achieved new dimensions in performance by modernizing its database environment with a platform comprised of PRIMERGY rack servers. With the additional integration of the ETERNUS DX disk storage system, known on the market as the flexible "Data Safe," the company also benefits from secure and reliable storage operations. Mark Sellors, Director of IT Infrastructure and Operations at bwin.party digital entertainment, sees the close cooperation with the Fujitsu development team as an important success factor:

"In addition to the PRIMERGY servers, which passed all the tests with flying colors, we were also very impressed by the competence and collaborative attitude of the Fujitsu project teams."

Theory and practice went hand in hand during this project – and the solutions have proven themselves at bwin.party. The customer is fully satisfied with these top-performing systems and can also save money when it comes to system maintenance – an added plus in this solution.

→ http://ts.fujitsu.com/products/standard_servers/rack/primergy_rx900s1.html

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