kohlpharma

"Fujitsu delivers a very fast storage platform and is, in our view, ahead of the game in terms of technology. We were also convinced by the price-performance ratio."

Stefan Pistorius
Head of System Administration
Kohlpharma

Two FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS DX600 and one ETERNUS DX200 provide Kohlpharma with a storage infrastructure which will grow with its needs.

At a glance

Country: Germany
Industry: Healthcare
Founded: 1979
Employees: approx. 850
Website: www.kohlpharma.com

Challenge

Kohlpharma was looking for a provider able to meet anticipated high performance requirements for data storage and backup in the data center. At least 155,000 IOPS were required during the test run.

Solution

Two FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS DX600 systems were installed as a high-availability storage solution for the VMware environment. This is in addition to a FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS DX200, configured as a virtual tape library.

Benefit

■ Storage cluster with transparent failover without further virtualization layers

■ Uses the most affordable storage media each time by using automated storage tiering

■ High performance with over 200,000 IOPS

■ Further expansion and cascading possible

shaping tomorrow with you

FUJITSU

Customer

In Germany substantial savings in pharmaceutical costs can be realized by importing inexpensive branded medicines from EU member states. Since 1979, Kohlpharma has been purchasing branded drugs produced by multinational drug companies in EU countries at low cost and importing them into Germany. These imported pharmaceutical products are on average around 10 percent cheaper than German branded medicines. Patients and health insurers benefit from the savings that are being made and doctors protect their budgets.

Products and Services

- 2 x FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS DX600, each with 100 TB
- ETERNUS Storage Cluster for high availability through transparent failover
- 4 x Brocade 6520 SAN Switches
- Quantum Scalar i6000 (8x LTO 6 LW)
- FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS DX200 (204 TB net) as virtual tape library with FalconStor OBD and Commvault software
- 5 years of 24/7 support
- Installation

Challenge

In total, Kohlpharma supplies around 770 products in around 2,700 dosage forms. Despite the increasing competition of recent years, Kohlpharma has been able to maintain a solid 23 percent share of the market. Alongside the increase in the variety of products, the volume of data has grown rapidly in recent times and will continue to do so.

The development of the market in imported pharmaceutical products demands a stable and growth-orientated IT infrastructure, which must also be capable of integrating existing structures. For the new acquisition of a storage solution, that meant that it was also necessary to connect IBM p-Series servers, alongside others, in addition to the Fujitsu PRIMERGY server. During the load test, manufacturers had to prove in advance that they could deliver a minimum performance of 155,000 IOPS per storage system. The load test was carried out on site before the storage systems went live. At over 200,000 IOPS, the benchmarks required by the customer were exceeded by a significant margin.

Solution

The solution comprised the installation of two FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS DX600 for data storage and a FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS DX200 System as a component of the backup solution. In order to guarantee uninterrupted operation around the clock, data is mirrored on both ETERNUS DX600 systems; transparent failover secures the availability of data and applications even in the event of a total system failure of one of the systems. "We are using the ETERNUS DX600 as storage for our virtual machines and database systems. The ETERNUS DX200 is configured as a virtual tape library," reports Franz-Josef Röder. As project manager, he was responsible for implementing the solution. "At the start, we had assumed that problems would arise when the existing AIX systems were integrated. In fact, these questions were cleared up very quickly when we spoke to Fujitsu's technical team," explains Röder.

For fast and secure backups, the company uses the FalconStor OBD with Commvault software in combination with the ETERNUS DX200. Data is initially backed up onto disks, before being stored on tape. "This media conversion is important to us, ensuring that we can access our data from a variety of media," stresses Röder.

Data deduplication has advantages; in particular, post-processing deduplication is possible. This means that when there is high memory access, data can be saved first and checked later for duplicates when processing capacity becomes available again.

In addition, Fujitsu customized Kohlpharma's computer firmware, enabling the generation of data snapshots directly from storage using Commvault's IntelliSnap solution.

Fujitsu also handles the support for the entire new storage infrastructure. The system ensures that Kohlpharma is well equipped for the future, even with an anticipated data increase of 30 percent per year.

Benefit

The company's performance requirements are delivered using only two storage systems. "Fujitsu delivers a very fast storage platform and is, in our view, ahead of the game in terms of technology. We were also convinced by the price-performance ratio," says Stefan Pistorius, Head of System Administration, Kohlpharma. IOPS is high and latency remains low even at 100 percent capacity. "Integrated transparent failover makes administration of the solution easy, straight 'out of the box', without further visualization layers. Only this solution gives us that," stresses Franz-Josef Röder. "As a result, configuration expenditure is much lower, which is a huge advantage for us," adds Stefan Pistorius. Automated storage tiering is also a definite plus. For the pharmaceutical distributor, this has the advantage of realizing very high performance using affordable hardware, while at the same time providing the option to scale. The most affordable medium is chosen each time for each application. Furthermore, with Fujitsu, the complete solution, including software, comes from one source and there is a contact person for questions.

Fujitsu convinced Kohlpharma with its sound technical advice in advance of the project, the best price-performance ratio and the willingness to put their solution through a challenging IOPS test.

FUJITSU

Email: cic@ts.fujitsu.com