

CASE STUDY

DLRG DECIDES ON ETERNUS DX STORAGE SYSTEMS

»THANKS TO VIRTUALIZATION AND FUJITSU'S STABLE STORAGE SYSTEMS, OUR IT RUNS SECURELY AND SMOOTHLY – AND THE PERFORMANCE IS EXCEPTIONAL. WE FELT THAT WE WERE IN GOOD HANDS DURING THE CONSULTING PROCESS.«

Frank Rabe, Acting National Chief Executive DLRG



THE DLRG SECURES ITS DATA ON ETERNUS STORAGE SYSTEMS

Oddly it's only the Steinhuder Meer, a modest inland lake, which provides the world's largest voluntary lifeguards' organization with its closest waterway. Here in Bad Nenndorf, in the province of Niedersachsen, the German Life-Saving Association e.V. (DLRG) manages its 600,000 active members and 400,000 sponsors. The amount of data to be dealt with is similar to a mid-sized company. Because the 50 staff members who work at headquarters have to co-ordinate not just the collection of membership fees, but also the nationwide deployment of lifesavers, not to mention managing the 2,000 subsidiary organizations. The IT environment in Bad Nenndorf additionally comprises databases that contain the training courses for the countless lifeguards who provide an essential service at Germany's coasts and inland waterways. Their distinctive red and yellow uniform has been seen at these locations for nearly a century – the DLRG was founded in 1913.

A BIG GAMBLE

The famous association's previous IT was, in the end, unable to meet the necessary standards for performance and system stability. It was also taking up too much administrative time. So to prevent the IT sinking beneath the weight of expectations, a comprehensive new solution was required. „We took a big gamble by introducing a high-performance storage system and the comprehensive virtualization which that enabled,“ says Frank Rabe, the DLRG's Acting National Chief Executive. „Previously, almost everything ran on just a single server. If we had problems with one application, that immediately had an effect on other applications. Thanks to virtualization and Fujitsu's stable storage systems, that's no longer the case. And the performance is exceptional. Beyond that, we've gained additional resources to develop our own applications.“

STORAGE AND SERVERS: AN IT DOUBLE ACT

Even in the early stages, everything worked out satisfactorily. „We felt that we were in good hands during the consulting and planning stages of the project,“ Frank Rabe reports. „We had already been using Fujitsu servers, notebooks and PCs for quite some time, but what was missing was the large-scale technology.“ Exactly this was now delivered in the form of two ETERNUS DX storage systems and three PRIMERGY RX300 servers – as a high-capacity, secure double act.

THE CUSTOMER

The German Life-Saving Association e.V. (DLRG) is the world's largest voluntary lifeguards' (OR: coastguard) organization with more than a million members and sponsors. Founded in 1913, its headquarters are in Bad Nenndorf. www.dlrg.de



Deutsche Lebens-Rettungs-Gesellschaft e.V.

THE PROJECT

To increase both performance and system stability, the DLRG required a central storage concept plus virtualization, coupled with updating the IT infrastructure technology.

THE SOLUTION

Fujitsu delivered high-performance ETERNUS DX storage systems, which provide a secure and stable platform within the framework of a Storage Area Network (SAN), plus a virtualization solution from VMware.

ADVANTAGES FOR THE CUSTOMER

- Reduced time/costs for installation and maintenance
- Cost-savings due to minimal hardware investment yet with substantial appliance capacity utilization
- Reduced time/costs thanks to rapid software updates during ongoing operations

HARDWARE, SOFTWARE, SERVICES

- Storage: 2x ETERNUS DX90, each with 12x 300GB hard disk capacity
- Servers: 3x PRIMERGY RX300
- Virtualization: VMware ESX

A PERFECT OVERVIEW THANKS TO VIRTUALIZATION

„Thanks to our extremely competent contact partner at Fujitsu, this was a wonderful project,“ Marc Kastler, the DLRG’s system administrator, confirms. The environment, virtualized with VMware ESX, makes his job a whole lot easier. „The whole IT is now centralized in the Virtual Infrastructure Center. We can move virtual machines here and there exactly as we want to. That means I always maintain a perfect overview. Plus our server resources are now being optimally employed.“ Thus the DLRG profits from reduced administrative input and a major increase in performance:

“Our network has become significantly more flexible. We can shift individual virtual machines onto another server and therefore power down the host and conduct maintenance work. Before, this resulted in shutting down the network for as long as a whole day. Now downtime is basically non-existent.”

A STRONG HARDWARE FOUNDATION

With the ETERNUS DX90, the DLRG now has an ultra-modern disk storage system. Two of these „data safes“ now form the DLRG’s storage foundation within the virtualized environment. The systems are characterized by extremely fast data access with an excellent price-performance ratio. Marc Kastler and his colleagues can combine different types of hard disk here as they choose, along with moving data or even switching off individual disks to save energy. Another advantage of this system is the high level of data security, since in the event of a loss of power the cache contents are secured in a flash storage medium.

DESIGNED FOR GROWTH

The DLRG has equipped each of their two ETERNUS DX systems with 3.6 Terabytes (12x 300 GB) of disk storage. „That means we’ve increased our storage capacity ten times,“ Marc Kastler explains. „And also we now completely mirror the data and so we’ve achieved a very high degree of system stability.“ The DLRG has also gained extensive reserves, since each ETERNUS DX90 storage system can be equipped

with up to 120 hard disks with a combined capacity of up to 240 Terabytes. So there’s room for plenty of new DLRG members. The ETERNUS DX systems comprise a proven dream team in the DLRG computing centre with the tried and tested PRIMERGY RX300 servers from Fujitsu. These servers are certified for all important virtualization applications and also boast an innovative cooling concept and optimal efficiency.

SERVICE FROM A SINGLE SOURCE

For the DLRG, the entire package made sense. As Marc Kastler says: „Even if something should go wrong, Fujitsu’s service is second to none. With Fujitsu, we’ve got everything from a single source: servers, clients and the virtualization solution.“ His boss, Frank Rabe, the DLRG’s Acting National Chief Executive, contentedly sums it up: „A few of my colleagues now want to buy Fujitsu computers for private use, because they’ve had such a good experience here in the office with the whole, high-performance environment.“



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