

Case Study

Deutsche Postbank International

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Eugen Sartoris, Head of IT - Infrastructure, Deutsche Postbank International



Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is

When your business is looking after other people's money, you need to be particularly careful about how you spend your own. A bank that can show it prioritizes cost efficiency across its own operations is much more likely to inspire the trust of its customers.

With this in mind, Eugen Sartoris, Head of IT - Infrastructure at Deutsche Postbank International (PBI), had some ambitious plans for one of its most critical assets. "We keep all of our customer data in a series of Oracle databases," he explains. "They're essential to almost every business process, so we need to ensure they're kept on an IT platform that's stable and powerful. The problem was that our SPARC Solaris platform was quite expensive to maintain." He and his team were eager to find an alternative that was more economical, and that ideally offered better performance too.

"It wasn't just the hardware costs that we wanted to reduce," Sartoris continues. "We were spending a lot on licences for our 20 or so Oracle databases, but it was often hard to track how efficiently we were using them. We wanted to know who was using them and in what way, so we could not only avoid over-spending on licences, but also to make sure we weren't using features we weren't entitled to."

Careful Analysis

The bank faced quite a challenge in seeking out the ideal mix of new IT environment and licence model to ensure that cost and performance were balanced. With so many options available, how could Sartoris and his team ensure they picked the right combination? And with so much precious customer data at stake, how would they avoid any downtime or data loss while carrying out the change over?

"We didn't have the expertise in-house to make this decision confidently," he says. "Luckily, we knew exactly who to ask for help. Having worked with Fujitsu on a number of other projects, we knew it had a deep understanding of our Oracle environment, as well as being able to provide an impartial but well-informed assessment of the IT platforms out there and their suitability for us."

PBI gave details of its current environment to the Fujitsu Business Services team, which assessed how licences were currently being used and how that aligned with the bank's business needs. It then worked out where improvements could be made to the licensing model and

The Customer

Established in 1993, Deutsche Postbank International S.A. (PBI) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Deutsche Postbank AG. It is an independent bank, based in Luxembourg. It employs 170 people and manages approximately 185,000 customer accounts, with a regulatory capital of about €726 million.

www.postbank.de/luxemburg

The Challenge

Migration of the database underpinning all core banking operations to a more cost-efficient and better-performing platform, without compromising the integrity of business-critical customer data. Visibility of and control over employee use of the database was also improved in order to make more strategic investments in licences.

The Solution

A workshop with Fujitsu identified the best combination of hardware technology and database licencing model to cut IT costs and improve business performance. Everything was installed and migrated within six months.

The benefit

- Cost of hardware renewal was cut by 50%.
- Increased hardware performance reduces number and cost of Oracle database licenses needed.
- Up to 10x increase in database performance boosts business productivity.
- Database batch processing time was cut from 50 hours to three.
- Greater visibility and control over Oracle licence use

what IT platforms would deliver the best performance to support them.

The two teams spent a day together, running through Fujitsu's recommendations and discussing PBI's questions. "By the end of that workshop, we had a roadmap for migrating our Oracle environment from our SPARC platform to an x86 platform with Linux operating system," recalls Sartoris.

Any organization that has undertaken a migration from SPARC to x86 platforms knows that this is not a small undertaking. If it is not properly planned and implemented, serious and costly problems can result. "We knew we couldn't get this project wrong or we risked impacting customer-facing and revenue-generating elements of our business," says Sartoris. "However, we came away with a clear vision of where we were going, and a specific to-do list to get us there."

Within six months, the migration had been completed and the bank had even gone one step further by upgrading its Oracle database to the latest version. "Fujitsu empowered us to get the project completed much faster, meaning we started making savings sooner," Sartoris comments. "Moreover, we know we've got the best combination of technologies in place as the assessment was entirely vendor-agnostic."

Cheaper, Faster, Safer

With all eyes on cost efficiency throughout this project, the team was pleased to see its efforts justified with significant savings emerging from the outset. "The x86 platform we migrated to was about half the hardware cost that it would have been to move to a newer version of the one we already had," explains Sartoris. "The increased performance of the new platform means we can do more with less, so our need for new licences could be significantly reduced as well."

The performance improvement has made life easier for everyone too. Across the business, projects are now completed up to 10 times faster, helping make every division more productive and able to deliver more accurate and timely services to customers. Sartoris continues: "Batch processing tasks that used to take 50 hours can now be completed in three, meaning the IT team doesn't have to work as much at

Products and services

Fujitsu Hardware

- 7 Fujitsu PRIMERGY RX300 servers powered by Intel Xeon processors

Fujitsu Services

- Analysis of current production and test environments
- Solution design and consultancy
- Roadmap development, implementation and migration support
- Ongoing fast-response support and consultancy

Additional Elements

- Database: Oracle Database 11g Enterprise Edition
- Software: Core banking application
- Operating System: RedHat Linux
- Storage: EMC Clariion, migrating to Fujitsu Eternus DX410

weekends – for us that's a real bonus. We're also not experiencing any issues with our storage slowing down, which we did previously."

And how about the bank's objective of gaining better control and visibility over its use of its Oracle licences? "Well, we have confidence now that we have the right licencing in place, and we've implemented controls to enforce compliance and block access to unlicensed features," reflects Sartoris. "We know now that if we're required to respond to a licencing audit, we'll be able to quickly prove exactly what we're using."

IT to Bank On

"With the integrity of customer data depending on us, we can't afford to make mistakes," Sartoris concludes. "Fujitsu's support was essential in helping us make the right decision, and in ensuring we could make more strategic investments with our IT budget. By both cutting costs and boosting performance with this project, I'm confident we're demonstrating the sensible approach to financial management that our customers expect from us."

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