Rheinland**Pfalz**
FINANZVERWALTUNG

"With the SE700 business server, we now have a stable platform that will be able to cope with the growing demand for resources in Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland for years to come. The managed BS2000 model keeps the solution cost-effective."

Patrick Klaus
Mainframe Operations and Print Center
Consultant at the State Tax Office
Koblenz, Rhineland-Palatinate

The SE700 platform enables the State Tax Office in Koblenz to provide the tax administration resources for its own state and for its partner authority in Saarland.

At a glance
Country: Germany
Industry: Government
Founded: 1950
Website: lfst-rlp.de

Challenge
The neighboring German states of Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland have agreed a contract to combine their computing power for tax administration. Since late 2015, the hardware for Saarland's tax processes has been located at the data center in Koblenz, Rhineland-Palatinate, although Saarland continues to manage its own system administration. As the system now covers two states and the demand for resources continues to grow, a more powerful, scalable platform was needed.

Solution
The managed BS2000 model enabled the State Tax Office to switch to a new generation Fujitsu SE700 business server without a high start-up investment. This has ensured the necessary capacities for both states' tax administration processes for years to come. The calculations also now run more quickly.

Benefit
- State-of-the-art SE700 business server adapted to the states' growing requirements
- Managed BS2000 model lowered the initial investment cost
- 20 percent faster calculations have increased efficiency
- Energy savings
- Compact devices save space in the data center

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Customer

Originally founded as the Koblenz Superior Finance Directorate in 1950, the State Tax Office in Koblenz is today a superior state authority under the responsibility of the Federal State Tax Authority of Rhineland-Palatinate. It is responsible for the administrative and technical supervision of the state's 24 tax offices, including the State Cashier's Office. The Office employs around 7,000 people to ensure that it offers an appropriate, closely connected service to residents. As part of a cooperative agreement, the states of Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland recently decided to work together to make their processes more efficient.

Products and Services

- FUJITSU Server BS2000 SE700
- Maintenance and support services – remote and local
- Extended service hours (24/7) for hardware and software
- Service optimization – monitoring, analysis and performance management
- Proactive services – regular system health checks

States partner together on mainframe tax operations

The tax authorities need around 15 percent more resources every year. As well as new tax requirements, they also have to make sure that any changes in the law are reflected in their tax calculations. The State Tax Office in Koblenz, Rhineland-Palatinate, saw a jump in demand in 2015 due to a new partnership with the neighboring state of Saarland.

Saarland had decided to work with a partner to increase efficiency and agreed to operate a joint mainframe platform alongside Rhineland-Palatinate. The two states are now also working together on inheritance, capital transfer, and land transfer tax.

Unlike in the field of software development, where taxation processes are gradually being standardized, modernized, and developed on a nationwide basis as part of the KONSENS (Coordinated New Software Development for Tax Administration) project, the actual processing of taxes remains the responsibility of the individual states. The two states agreed that Saarland's IT systems would be operated in the State Tax Office's data center, while the administration of the system would continue to be managed by Saarland itself for the time being. This also included the mainframe systems that were brought together to form one mainframe platform as part of the contract. The agreement meant that the State Tax Office had to find sufficient resources to handle the system environments of its new partner quickly.

Powerful servers without the start-up investment

As a managed BS2000 customer, the switch to a new generation model was simple. Upgrading from the S175 to the larger SE700 server came with a number of additional benefits for the State Tax Office, including with regard to the new cooperation with Saarland.

For the public authorities, the flexible adaptation options and staggered financing throughout the contract were very beneficial. "We didn't have to put up a massive investment at beginning. Instead we make intermediate payments based on our annual needs," explains Patrick Klaus.

The mainframe expert is particularly pleased with the SE700 business server as it has a much higher mono-processor performance. The SE700 server enables the tax administrations of Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland to continue to grow with regard to computing resources.

The large SE700 business server fits the two-state model very well. The platform is designed to last at least five years, and as demand increases, the original level of 1,650 RPF can still grow by more than a factor of three.

Despite this increase in performance, the SE700 uses less energy and generates less excess heat than its predecessor. An advantage not to be overlooked in operating a data center.

20 percent faster

The efficiency gains for both states are clear. Processing times for sample calculations – tax calculations triggered manually by officials – have decreased by more than 20 percent. The tax software also notifies those processing the calculations of any flags and missing information. A large proportion of the tax calculations are carried out automatically with no manual intervention.

The partnership between the IT teams in both states went like clockwork during the conversion to the new business server in Koblenz. "The migration was completed incredibly quickly," says Klaus. The new SE700 was installed on the day it arrived, and the test and reference systems were migrated and started before the day was out. The productive systems followed the next evening. And the following morning, the staff at the authorities in Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland could start work as normal without interruption. "The conversion was, as it should be for the end-users in the IT team, completely transparent," says Klaus. The successful migration of both states within just a few days proved to him that the partnership between the two states and the external Fujitsu team had worked well.

Klaus also praised Fujitsu's reaction times. "The time from the order to delivery and commissioning of the new SE700 infrastructure was less than eight weeks, so extremely quick. It worked very well," he adds.

Klaus also sees Fujitsu as an important partner in another respect. With the Fujitsu Academy, the company helps to train administrators on how to work with the mainframes, because specialists with the right expertise are becoming increasingly hard to find.

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Get in contact with a sales representative at: cic@ts.fujitsu.com