

Case Study

Oskar Böttcher GmbH & Co. KG (OBETA)

»PAN Manager for FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY gives us the ideal infrastructure for our business processes. Its intuitive user interface enables us to configure the appropriate resources for our applications. The architecture is very stable and reliable.«

Christian Becker, IT Hardware & Service Manager, Oskar Böttcher GmbH & Co. KG (OBETA)



The customer

Oskar Böttcher GmbH & Co. KG (OBETA) is a leading regional wholesaler of electrical and installation equipment. Between the company itself and its subsidiaries, OBETA employs over 700 people at 60 different sites in the German states of Berlin, Brandenburg, Saxony-Anhalt, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Saxony, Thuringia, Hamburg, North Rhein-Westphalia and Bavaria. OBETA's many years of experience have helped it to develop an excellent professional reputation and its commitment to providing outstanding customer service has made it a reliable partner for the electrical trade in Germany. OBETA is a member of a number of professional associations, including the Bundesverband des Elektro-Großhandels (VEG) e.V. (Federal Association of Electrical Wholesalers).

The challenge

In 2008, OBETA installed a new ERP system based on IBM AS/400 servers. These machines proved to be incredibly reliable, and the company was now looking to achieve similar results from its Citrix XenApp servers. "Having an ERP system with 99.9 percent uptime is no use at all when the Citrix XenApp servers are only up 80 percent of the time," explains Christian Becker, IT Hardware & Service Manager at OBETA. "Our standard operational software may be running, but our employees can't access it." The challenge lay in developing a solution in which the infrastructure would be stable, cost-effective, and as simple to manage as possible.

The solution

Two FUJITSU PRIMERGY BX900 S2 devices, each with ten server blades and two PRIMERGY RX300 S7 rack servers, now provide the necessary stability and performance. The server nodes within the blade chassis provide a faster, dynamic server infrastructure that can be adapted to the company's ever-changing IT requirements.

The two PRIMERGY rack servers form the redundant administrative instance which runs the PAN Manager software. They form a logical level above the hardware that the IT team can use to manage and organize the entire infrastructure – everything from the physical and virtual components to the network and storage resources.

The customer

Country: Germany
Industry: Electrical and installation equipment wholesaler
Founded: 1901
Employees: 700
Website: www.obeta.de



The challenge

Improving the availability of Citrix XenApp servers during the introduction of a new ERP system. The company wanted the new solution to be stable, cost-effective and easy to manage.

The solution

A comprehensive IT infrastructure with two FUJITSU PRIMERGY BX900 S2 chassis, each fitted with ten server blades, two FUJITSU PRIMERGY RX300 S7 rack servers and PAN Manager for FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY. The integrated "virtual machine instance" function is a cost-effective solution for providing and managing both virtual and physical servers.

The benefit

- Lower investment, operation and software licensing costs
- Improved service level agreements due to higher uptime
- Integrated, free of charge hypervisor
- Intuitive user interface
- Simpler, faster administration processes relieve strain on IT team
- Fast integration into existing IT environments
- Fast, competent support from the manufacturer

"The administrator used the existing resources to create a server profile. PAN Manager was then able to use this to configure the entire system itself," explains Rui Manual Tavares, IT Architect & Business Development Manager for Data Centers and Servers at Fujitsu.

As the profiles are dynamic, high system uptime is guaranteed. "It's really easy to switch between the profiles," says Tavares, "from server to server, from chassis to chassis or even between different server form factors."

PAN Manager for FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY is now responsible for the entire Windows environment at OBETA. This covers a wide variety of applications – from electronic banking to the HR database and the service desk. "The systems PAN Manager keep our core systems up and running," explains Christian Becker.

The benefit

"There were two options available to us – we could either buy 20 rack servers or invest in two blade chassis," says Becker. But 20 machines would have required just as much time and maintenance as the company's current system. "We then looked at the option of combining the BX900 with PAN Manager and realized that this solution would enable us to fulfill the company's business requirements with relatively few IT employees and relatively little expenditure."

It also meant that OBETA was able to save on costs as less new hardware was required. And there were other financial benefits too. "The high uptime is free of charge," says Becker, "as is the integrated hypervisor." This feature is particularly important to Becker. "If I want to create a virtual machine, PAN Manager automatically installs a Xen hypervisor. The administrator then doesn't need to monitor anything or really do anything else," he says. "So we don't need any other hypervisors."

Products and services

- FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY BX900 S2
- FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY RX300
- PAN Manager for FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY
- Cisco Nexus switches
- FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS DX200

Another benefit the combination of PAN Manager and the Fujitsu server architecture offers is ease of use. "The system has a clear structure," says Becker, "and the interface is simple and well laid out." The process of introducing the solution also went very smoothly. "We were able to train our five administrators on the same day," he continues.

PAN Manager for FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY can carry out the majority of tasks itself, relieving a lot of the strain on the administrators. It can, for example, configure servers and LAN interfaces independently. Becker also praises how easy it is to control third party systems with PAN Manager when carrying out tasks such as connecting storage components.

Becker is very satisfied with the PAN Manager support services. "Regardless of which Fujitsu employee we talk to, they are always very competent and listen to us with open ears." He also highlights the way that Fujitsu values the feedback it gets from its users. If a user notifies the company of a problem, an update is normally released within a few weeks to resolve it. "No other virtualization solution provider allows its customers to get so close to the product," he says. OBETA is currently using PAN Manager 8 but is preparing to upgrade to version 8.2 in the near future.

Conclusion

"PAN Manager for FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY gives us the ideal infrastructure for our business processes. Its intuitive user interface enables us to configure the appropriate resources for our applications. The architecture is very stable and reliable. The new version will give us additional options to use different server types and form factors."

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