

Case study

Financial services provider EOS benefits from a virtualized storage environment

»When it came to the renewal and virtualization of our SAN environment the price-performance ratio of the PRIMERGY servers and ETERNUS storage systems genuinely convinced us. And Fujitsu’s overall professionalism most certainly impacted the project success positively.«

Volker Haack, CIO, EOS IT Services GmbH



The EOS Group directs worldwide activities in over 20 countries from its Hamburg-based headquarters

For every company, data of all kinds naturally constitute an important basis worthy of protection. The EOS Group regards security as a key issue, and a glance at its activities shows why: EOS is a globally operating financial services provider with more than 40 subsidiaries and associated companies in over 20 countries and offers a comprehensive portfolio of services that involves qualifying and processing customer-sensitive data pertaining to customer acquisitions, accounting, arrears billing, debt collection and debt purchase. Moreover the EOS business model comprises customized solutions dealing with marketing information, risk information, receivables management and payment services. More than 5,000 employees all over the world offer services to the customers of the Otto Group-owned EOS Group. In Germany, which is the largest market, the Hamburg-based EOS Group has a workforce of approximately 1,700 employees.

Future-proof SAN virtualization

As a subsidiary company EOS IT Services GmbH, based in the Hanseatic city on the Elbe river as well, is in charge of the IT concerns of the EOS Group. As many as 100 employees operate and manage the group’s data center, are in charge of IT development and support, run a printing center and are responsible for address investigation processes in cooperation with partner companies. EOS IT Services GmbH draws upon long-standing experience when it comes to the efficient processing of large data volumes, the management of debt collection systems and the development of tailor-made IT systems. To be able to cope with the ever growing amounts of data EOS was searching for a scalable and easily manageable storage solution. After the strong growth in recent years the hardware of the two Hamburg-based data centers had started running against its capacity limits, making massive expansion and modernization measures necessary. For Dr Thorsten Kleinwort, Data Center Manager at EOS IT Services GmbH, it was clear that only a storage virtualization solution would ensure sustainable benefits. It is the technical flexibility of the storage area network (SAN), virtualized with a DataCore solution on the basis of energy-efficient server and storage systems by Fujitsu, that offers EOS the future reliability it requires.

The customer

The globally operating EOS Group ranges among Europe’s leading providers of financial services outside of banking and insurance transactions subject to licensing. www.eos-solutions.com



The challenge

EOS required capacity expansions in the Storage Area Network (SAN) coupled with a decrease in energy and maintenance costs. Top requirements were also imposed on high availability.

The solution

Due to storage virtualization with DataCore on the basis of ETERNUS DX80 storage systems and PRIMERGY servers, EOS now benefits from performance enhancement, the highest security standards and reduced maintenance efforts.

The benefit

- Boosted application performance
- Reduced maintenance efforts
- Simplified administration through integrated analysis tools
- Significantly lower energy costs

Products and services

- Servers: 4 x PRIMERGY RX600 S4
- Storage systems: 8 x ETERNUS DX80 with 288 TB disk capacity
- Switches: 4 x Brocade FC-Switch 5300 48/80 Port
- Virtualization solution: DataCore SANsymphony 7.0
- Management software: ServerView Suite, ETERNUS SF Express

Savings target exceeded

Dr Thorsten Kleinwort's team no longer manages only 30 TB: The new SAN now disposes of a net capacity of 288 TB and is optimally prepared for the steady data growth of the EOS Group. This massive expansion is based on eight ETERNUS DX80 storage systems with 36 TB disk storage capacity each and four PRIMERGY RX600 servers. "We chose the Fujitsu systems because they are in the right ballpark," explains Jens Böhm from Fujitsu SELECT Partner antauris. "These redundant systems are noted for their expandability and performance. But also in terms of manageability they clearly outperform other systems – and all at a very reasonable price-performance ratio – hence, our genuine recommendation to our customer." And that's not all: Dr Thorsten Kleinwort has been able to meet the objectives of the group management, i.e. to cut energy consumption by at least 30 percent. An easy challenge with Fujitsu systems, Volker Haack, CIO at EOS IT Services GmbH, is pleased to summarize:

"The efficiency of the Fujitsu hardware is trailblazing. With rival systems our energy consumption would easily exceed our present values by as much as 45 percent. In addition we are very satisfied with the assistance, the service and the personal support provided by Fujitsu. That is also true for Fujitsu's SELECT Partner antauris from Hamburg."

However, their energy efficiency alone is not the only advantage of the PRIMERGY servers and ETERNUS DX disk storage systems. Both the servers and storage systems feature top manageability tools (ServerView and ETERNUS SF Express) that enable quick installation and simplify administration. In case of power outages the ETERNUS systems even save the Cache content in a flash memory – and thus ensure the highest possible level of data security and a quicker recovery of data than conventional systems.

Virtualization with DataCore

To make sure that the existing hardware can be used even more flexibly and efficiently EOS relies on storage virtualization with DataCore. Due to the SANsymphony storage virtualization software all physical storage devices are now freely scalable and can be combined under a common, centrally managed storage architecture. Capacity allocations can be performed without disruption, resulting in improved workloads. However, SANsymphony has even more to offer, as the solution boosts productivity. Together, the servers and the DataCore software form a dedicated appliance, the so-called Storage Domain Server (SDS), which is located directly in the data path between disk and application. DataCore provides not only the virtualization services, but also a certain Cache intelligence, which results in enormous performance boosts of the underlying storage systems.

On the agenda: synchronous mirroring

In order to obtain an even higher level of security and remain operable in the event of disaster or large-scale IT outages EOS is planning to move away from asynchronous mirroring towards fully synchronous data replication. After all, a key functionality of SANsymphony lies in mirroring data over long distances, as the software automatically creates updates of identical virtual storage devices located on different drives at any distance. Thus the five kilometers separating the two Hamburg-based EOS data centers that are connected via Fibre Channel are no obstacle. EOS will deploy the hardware equipment for the data center expansion so that each location is provided with four ETERNUS DX80 storage systems and two PRIMERGY RX600 servers. "The outage of a data center will no longer involve the risk of data loss and we can keep our applications running with little to no disruption," says Volker Haack. "In the future this will enable us to offer our customers within the rapidly growing EOS group scalable and highly available IT services."

For further information about Fujitsu ETERNUS please refer to: ts.fujitsu.com/ETERNUS



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