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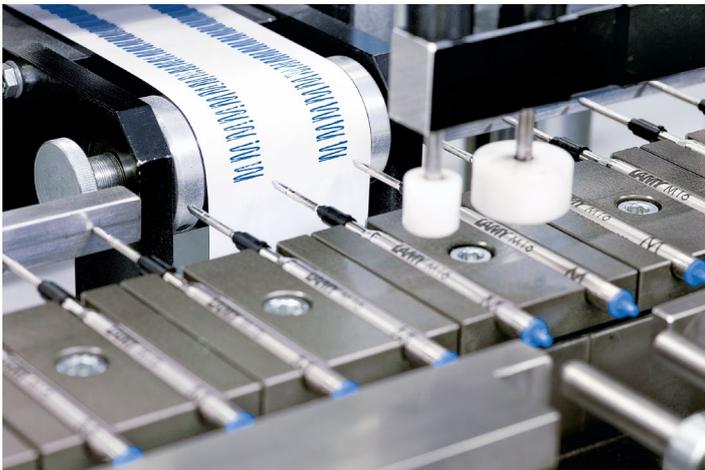
Case Study
LAMY

» The new storage infrastructure, comprising ETERNUS DX systems and DataCore SANsymphony, has allowed us to significantly improve redundancy. Transferring data from one data center to another is now an entirely automated process that takes a matter of seconds. «

Albin Schänzle, Process & IT Management, C. Josef Lamy GmbH

THE CUSTOMER

Country: Germany
Industry sector: Writing instruments
Founded in: 1930
Employees: 320
Website: www.lamy.de

LAMY

CHALLENGE

To make the company's IT systems highly available with an automated failover concept and to improve performance for zero clients.

APPROACH

Further expansion of the Fujitsu PRIMERGY servers, expansion of the storage infrastructure plus DataCore storage virtualization.

The customer

The LAMY brand is synonymous with premium quality writing instruments both within its native Germany and internationally. C. Josef Lamy GmbH, which is based near Heidelberg, has been an independent family company for over 80 years. The LAMY brand was established in 1952 with the innovative Lamy 27 fountain pen. Since the sixties, the company has been known for its distinctive "Lamy design". Today, the company, which produces over six million writing instruments every year and has an annual turnover of over €50 million, is not only the market leader within Germany, but also counts among the German designer brands that hold a special position within the global market.

The challenge

Lamy had already invested heavily in the development of a virtualized server and client infrastructure, helping it to increase the flexibility of its IT systems while at the same time reducing energy costs and administration requirements. Lamy operates a split data center separated over two zones at the company's Heidelberg headquarters. Previously, however, the PRIMERGY servers and ETERNUS DX storage systems had not been mirrored, but had instead simply been shared over the two zones. Two PRIMERGY RX300 servers in each zone had become responsible for delivering the performance of 170 virtualized clients (Fujitsu Zero Clients). In the event of a failure of one half of the data center, 85 clients would therefore have been left without data. The storage components themselves were not redundantly designed either. *"We were then given instructions by the senior management to deliver constant IT system availability,"* explains Albin Schänzle, Head of Process & IT Management at LAMY. *"We therefore had to find a solution for enhancing our already highly virtualized environment."* Another objective was to improve the performance of the zero clients in use.

THE BENEFIT

- Greater availability (>99.99%) thanks to automatic failover
- Automatic load balancing across storage systems
- Improved application performance

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- Servers: 2x PRIMERGY RX300 S7 (DataCore Storage Domain Servers)
- Storage system: 1x ETERNUS DX90 S2 (the second storage system for synchronous mirroring)
- Storage virtualization: DataCore SANsymphony-V (as part of the Bytec ETERNUS DX+Appliance)
- Service: Sizing and installation by Fujitsu SELECT Expert Partner idicos GmbH (Schriesheim, near Heidelberg, Germany)

The solution

The first step toward greater availability was to mirror the hardware. To supply the processing power required for the double load that would be placed on the respective zero clients, it was sufficient to upgrade the RAM of the existing PRIMERGY servers. The existing ETERNUS DX90 storage system was given additional shelves and a counterpart was set up in the now mirrored data center. As the third form of virtualization, IT service provider idicos GmbH installed the DataCore SANsymphony solution, which permitted virtualization and acceleration of all the storage capacities.

The benefit

In the new, extended environment, all of LAMY's data center resources are fully redundant. However, this was not in fact the most compelling argument. *"Standard mirroring cannot protect against downtimes,"* explains Dr Michael Melter, Managing Director of idicos GmbH, a Fujitsu-certified SELECT Expert Partner. *"A data center that is mirrored using a conventional storage system still requires manual intervention should a disaster occur."* To resolve this issue for LAMY, idicos therefore opted for the DataCore solution, which, in the event of disaster, performs automatic failover. *"The storage environment at LAMY is therefore fully redundant and intelligent, not to mention fast,"* adds Dr Melter.

The realization of this concept would not have been possible without the ETERNUS DX+ appliance from distributor Bytec. This appliance comprises two PRIMERGY RX300 servers, an additional ETERNUS DX90 storage system as well as the SANsymphony-V storage virtualization software – at a special bundle price that makes the DataCore solution affordable even for smaller SMEs such as LAMY.

The storage systems have been given a genuine performance boost thanks to the many features offered by SANsymphony that optimize use of the individual disks. Auto-tiering, for example, allows the software to automatically assign frequently accessed blocks to faster disk types and move the less active blocks to slower, less costly hard disks.

High-speed caching is another beneficial feature. This feature moves data written to or read from disks swiftly into and out of the cache, which is 20-50 times greater than that of a conventional storage system, harnessing the full potential of the DataCore servers (Storage Domain Servers) and thereby significantly improving performance.

Conclusion

Thanks to its new environment with fully redundant storage capacities, LAMY is completely protected, which is very important for this traditional family company, especially as it becomes more globalized. Albin Schänzle*: "There are now even LAMY shops in China and Singapore, established exclusively for the retail of our premium writing instruments. We also have 40 field sales employees worldwide, who require constant access to our data center; after all, they are the ones who generate the sales."* From its experience to date, LAMY couldn't be happier with its robust Fujitsu systems. The concept of combining powerful PRIMERGY servers with efficient, virtualized zero clients has clearly paid off for the company. Thanks to SANsymphony, the company has taken a further important step towards achieving high availability. As Schänzle explains:

"With our previous solution, disaster recovery would have required manual intervention, and the migration of around 6 terabytes of data and 170 zero clients to other systems would have taken around a day. Thanks to the new, mirrored Fujitsu systems and the simple handling of the DataCore solution, this migration process takes a matter of seconds. At the same time, all applications now run much faster on the zero clients. We have seen around a 25 percent improvement in the performance of Microsoft Office applications."

About Fujitsu

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