



ENSO Strom AG

Looking for a flexible platform for its SAP* software environment, ENSO Strom chose SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server on AMD* Opteron-based hardware. In addition to considerably reducing licensing costs, the Linux* solution provides a very powerful platform for ENSO Strom's MaxDB databases, reduces administration workload, and cuts batch processing times.

Overview

ENSO Strom AG, based in Dresden, Germany, is the electricity division of the ENSO group, which provides energy and natural gas to homes and businesses in the eastern part of Saxony. The company employs 1,173 people and achieved profits of € 673 million in 2005.

Challenge

ENSO Strom relies on its SAP enterprise resource planning (ERP) solution to handle many aspects of its business—including financial accounting, sales and distribution and human resources. The most important element of this landscape is the SAP for Utilities solution, which provides a number of industry-specific functionalities such as power accounting, counter administration and plant maintenance.

The company had been running its SAP software on OS/390 and Linux on an IBM* zSeries* mainframe, with an IBM DB2* database. As the business' SAP environment grew and acquired newer, more demanding SAP applications, this platform was running out of headroom.

"We wanted a more flexible platform which would offer better performance while keeping costs low," said Dirk Erler, Head of System Administration at ENSO Strom.

Solution

ENSO Strom worked out a concept for a system platform based on a total of 18 HP servers with AMD Opteron* dual core processors. After analysing a number of benchmarking tests executed by SAP, the company selected SUSE Linux Enterprise Server as the operating system for the new environment.

"We are very happy with the performance and stability of SUSE Linux Enterprise," said Erler. "We also have a great deal of in-house experience with Linux and we know there are many good open source applications available now. Most important, the price-performance of SUSE Linux offers us the opportunity to be competitive."

To be able to use new possibilities and to cut costs, ENSO Strom also migrated its SAP databases from IBM DB2 to MaxDB.

ENSO Strom AG at a glance:

German energy company

■ Industry:

Utilities

■ Location:

Germany

■ Solutions:

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server

■ Results:

- Lowered cost of hardware and software for SAP ERP environment by 30 percent
- Reduced maintenance and administration workload by 20 percent
- Cut batch processing times by up to 40 percent

"We had good experiences with SUSE Linux and the cost-performance ratio is also excellent from our point of view, that's why we retained this successful solution."

Dirk Erler

*Head of System Administration
ENSO Strom AG*

“The move to SUSE Linux Enterprise and MaxDB promotes flexibility and significantly cuts licensing costs.”

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“MaxDB offers us significant advantages regarding administration time because it is tightly integrated with SAP,” said Erler. “The combination of MaxDB and SUSE Linux Enterprise delivers high performance and offers very high availability for our SAP ERP environment, thus it is the best solution for us.”

The operating system and database migration was performed by REALTECH, a Novell® Gold Partner and SAP on Linux specialist.

“REALTECH worked both on the conceptual side of the project and actively on the migration,” said Erler. “The consultants worked closely with our in-house team. Thanks to good collaboration no major problems arose during the implementation of the new solution.”

Results

The combination of the new HP* hardware and MaxDB running on SUSE Linux Enterprise has significantly improved the performance of ENSO Strom’s SAP ERP environment.

“It is vital that our overnight batch processing is completed before our SAP systems need to come back to dialogue mode in the morning,” said Erler. “With the new solution for example, jobs that used to take 12 to 13 hours are now completed in 7 to 8 hours—a reduction up to 40 percent—so there’s no problem with overrunning.”

The reliability of SUSE Linux Enterprise and the tight integration of MaxDB with SAP have reduced the maintenance and administration workload for the IT support team by around 20 percent, enabling ENSO Strom to support a number of new systems without taking on additional staff.

“Overall, we estimate that the new solution has reduced the hardware and operating system costs of our SAP ERP landscape by up to 30 percent,” said Erler. “The move to SUSE Linux Enterprise and MaxDB has freed us from our dependence on proprietary hardware, promoting flexibility and significantly cutting licensing costs.”



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