

A NEW CHAPTER

Leading medical publisher cuts costs by 25% with virtualized datacentres



With fierce competition from the online world, print alone no longer satisfies customers looking for instant, easily accessible information. So, to retain market share, publishing houses are providing publications online. But this places additional demands on a company's IT infrastructure and significantly increases the amount of content that needs to be stored and made easily available to customers.

SOLUTIONS:

- BACKUP, ARCHIVING AND RECOVERY
- DATA CONSOLIDATION AND MANAGEMENT
- GREEN IT
- VIRTUALIZATION



CUSTOMER PROFILE

COMPANY: Georg Thieme Verlag KG

INDUSTRY: Publishing

COUNTRY: Germany

FOUNDED: 1886

EMPLOYEES: 950

WEBSITE: www.thieme.com

CHALLENGE

Leading medical publisher Thieme wanted to optimise its datacentre to cope with continued business growth. But the company wanted to introduce an e-business platform to appeal to a greater number of customers. This meant significantly increasing data capacity and ensuring high availability, at a sustainable cost.

SOLUTION

Working in close partnership with Dell, Thieme virtualized existing servers as well as creating an e-business platform based on PowerEdge servers together with a Dell | EMC storage area network (SAN) and a Dell/EMC IP storage gateway.

BENEFITS

Get IT Faster

- The IT team can deploy virtual machines in hours rather than days

Run IT Better

- Maintenance costs cut by up to 30 per cent
- Energy costs reduced by 25 per cent due to greener IT
- Employees provide better customer service with faster access to information
- Customers have instant access to online publications

Grow IT Smarter

- Virtualization cuts number of servers by 40 per cent



With an annual turnover of €148 million, the Georg Thieme Verlag KG is a leading international medical and science publisher. Based in Stuttgart, Germany, Thieme employs around 950 staff in eight offices worldwide, including New York, Beijing and Delhi. The rapidly expanding group has served health professionals, researchers and students for more than 120 years.

Thieme has long recognised the immense potential of establishing an e-business platform to provide customers with products and resources through an online portal. Ralf Buttermann, chief information officer at Georg Thieme Verlag KG, says: "IT is part of our business strategy and fundamental to our growth."



But supporting a new line in e-business was a challenge. The company had two identical datacentres, housing altogether 140 servers. While these maximised system availability, this created extremely high maintenance and hardware costs. In addition, the datacentres had reached maximum capacity and could not accommodate additional servers for data growth.

To create the capacity, Buttermann and his team decided to extend server virtualization and centralise the company's applications and storage. The new architecture also had to integrate with the company's existing content and knowledge management solution.

Buttermann and his IT team assessed four major IT solution providers on innovation, vision and value for money. Following a rigorous assessment process, Dell came out on top in all areas. What's more, Thieme has confidence in Dell based on an ongoing successful relationship. "Over the years, our partnership with Dell has grown continually. All our projects use Dell solutions and we know we can rely on them as a provider," says Buttermann.

Dell Infrastructure Consulting Services (ICS) assessed, designed and implemented a new solution. Smoothly and efficiently, the Dell experts virtualized the company's existing servers and installed a new, centralised Dell/EMC SAN environment across both datacentres.

"WITH DELL/EMC TECHNOLOGY, THIEME HAS A RELIABLE ENVIRONMENT, DELIVERING OPTIMISED AVAILABILITY WORLDWIDE."

Ralf Buttermann, chief information officer, Thieme

All core applications are shared between the datacentres, with one providing backup for the other.

Each solution consists of two Dell PowerEdge™ 2900 servers, while a further two Dell PowerEdge R900 servers operate the e-business platform. All run VMware® ESX server software and are connected to a Dell/EMC CX3-20 SAN, which uses EMC MirrorView®, EMC SnapView®, EMC PowerPath® and CommVault technology to support management and backups.

The Dell team replaced the previous storage system with the Dell/EMC CX3-20 SAN connected to an EMC Celerra NS40G dual IP storage gateway. The new system provides higher availability and advanced functionality for important core services such as file,

email and print servers. In addition, team implemented a Dell PowerVault™ ML6020 Premier Modular Tape Library to support SAN backup tasks.

For assured business protection, Thieme opted for Dell ProSupport for IT*, choosing the Mission Critical option which includes a guaranteed response time of less than four hours for any engineer call-out.

STORAGE SOLUTION FOR THE FUTURE

The company now has an additional flexible and scalable storage area network (SAN) that can be easily and cost-effectively adapted to meet its increasing data needs. Buttermann says: "With Dell/EMC technology, Thieme has a reliable environment, delivering optimised availability worldwide."

HOW IT WORKS

HARDWARE

- Dell™ PowerEdge™ 2900 and R900 servers with Intel Xeon processors
- EMC Celerra NS40G Dual IP storage gateway
- Dell/EMC CX3-20 storage area network (SAN)
- Dell PowerVault™ ML6020 Premier Modular Tape Library with CM LTO3

SOFTWARE

- EMC MirrorView®, SnapView® and PowerPath®
- VMware® ESX server software
- CommVault

SERVICES

- Dell ProSupport for IT*
- Infrastructure Consulting Services

“WE’VE REDUCED OUR SERVER ESTATE BY UP TO 40 PER CENT, AND, ONCE THE VIRTUALIZATION PROJECT IS COMPLETE, WILL HAVE ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE EXPANSIONS ”

Ralf Butterman, chief information officer, Thieme

Thieme is pleased with the results achieved as part of its ongoing relationship with Dell and is already discussing future projects, such as client virtualization.

NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

The company now also has an e-business platform, called Thieme-connect, where customers can access more than 100 online journals, e-books and reference works covering medicine. By providing fast access to information, together with convenient search and reference options, the platform meets user requirements and appeals to a wider customer base.

Crucially, the e-business platform will retain customers – and potentially attract new ones. The system also improves access to information and services within the business so that employees can carry out critical tasks and services much faster.

In short, Thieme offers improved and target-oriented services for customers that help the company retain a strong position in a highly competitive market.

IT TEAM CUTS MAINTENANCE TIME BY 30 PER CENT

The virtual environment has simplified maintenance for the IT team. It can now deploy virtual machines in hours rather than days. Butterman says: “We’re looking at saving up to 30 per cent in maintenance costs on hardware alone.”

With EMC SnapView, Thieme has slashed IT backup times. The software takes system snapshots while EMC MirrorView replicates data between the two datacentres for fast recovery. If one fails, the other automatically

takes over. EMC PowerPath – a server-resident tool – enhances system performance and availability with multiple path input/output capabilities, path failover functions and automatic error detection and data rerouting.

Simply put, these tools reduce work for the IT team and give valuable reassurance that systems will continue to run. As a result, IT personnel have more time to focus on other areas of the business.

SERVER CONSOLIDATION AND GREENER IT SET TO ACHIEVE RAPID ROI

The new infrastructure has more than halved the number of servers at Thieme. Butterman says: “We’ve reduced our server estate by up to 40 per cent, and, once the virtualization project is complete, will have additional space for possible future expansions.”

By consolidating its architecture, Thieme has cut running costs. In particular, the company benefits from greener IT that brings reduced energy costs. “We’re expecting energy savings of up to 25 per cent thanks to our virtualized Dell server environment,” says Butterman.

For more information on this case study or to read additional case studies, go to www.dell.com/casestudies and www.dell.de

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