

CUSTOMER STORY

STORAGE AREA NETWORK

Computacenter awarded Storage Area Network framework contract by the German Federal Employment Agency.

SERVICES

- Supply Chain Services
- IT Strategy & Advisory Services
- Cloud & Data Center
- Networking

USER EXPERIENCE

- Faster access to new features
- Simplified business processes
- Improved access to information

BUSINESS IMPACT

- Improves productivity
- Reduces costs

OBJECTIVE

The existing storage systems at the FEA's data centres in Nuremberg had hit the limits of their capacity. In the light of this, the FEA put out a fresh invitation to tender for the new infrastructure and various services as part of a framework contract. The key priorities were to speed up and modernise access to data. In addition, a central storage management system was to be introduced to make the entire storage infrastructure easier to plan and administer.

SOLUTION

The FEA decided to hire Computacenter as the general contractor. Computacenter's multivendor approach involved three different vendors and promised to deliver the best possible results in response to the required specifications. Under the framework contract, the IT service provider has been tasked with expanding and modernising the existing storage environment with hardware and software from Hitachi Vantara, Pure Storage, Brocade and NetApp. Only flash-based storage systems are to be used and all management tasks will be handled by the Storage Resource Management (SRM) solution, NetApp OnCommand Insight.

OUTCOME

Thanks to the new storage infrastructure, the Federal Employment Agency will be able to cut its operating expenses and other costs. What's more, there will be less management and administration work. The flash-based storage systems enable high-speed data access and now that storage resource management has been introduced, smooth operational processes are assured.

OBJECTIVE

Best of breed for the German Federal Employment Agency

Every four to five years, the FEA issues a new invitation to tender for the storage infrastructure at its central sites in Nuremberg. The data centres provide the central storage capacity to support the processes for more than 100,000 agency workstations across Germany. "The contract encompasses all sub-phases, from delivery and implementation right through to maintenance of the storage components and supplementary software products," says Ralph Engelhardt, Data Centre Account Manager at Computacenter.

The people in charge at the Federal Employment Agency decided to adopt Computacenter's best-of-breed approach, but at the same time wanted to minimise the amount of effort involved in implementation and operation. "We had our sights clearly set on a service provider that would supply and support all products as part of a comprehensive package and would act as our single point of contact for the duration of the contract," explains Falko Höltzer, Product Manager for Central Storage at the FEA in Nuremberg.

Given the vast amount of data involved and the need for smooth day-to-day operations at the Agency's branches, everybody involved found themselves faced with a challenging task. "Requirements in the area of data processing are increasing, with new ones being introduced all the time. This called for new approaches with regard to storage as well, such as higher speeds and new compression methods," explains Ralph Engelhardt.

SOLUTION

Delivery, implementation and service – all from a single source

At the end of the detailed tendering process, the FEA chose Computacenter. "Computacenter was the company that submitted the most cost-effective bid. It also possesses the knowledge required for the role of general contractor. As a result, this partnership delivers in terms of lightening the load for us in everyday operations," says Falko Höltzer.

Under the contract, Computacenter supplies and implements products from the following vendors: Hitachi Vantara, NetApp, Pure Storage and Brocade. To enable capacity management and the analysis of storage requirement trends, an SRM solution was introduced in the form of NetApp OnCommand Insight. The flash array storage systems from these vendors form a core part of the solution. They not only make it possible to achieve the necessary increase in data access speeds but are also low-maintenance.

"This is a first for FEA, in that it has now completely done away with mechanical disk storage systems," explains Ralph Engelhardt.

In its capacity as the general contractor, Computacenter has been coordinating the services of the various providers. Over the coming years, it will be the FEA's central point of contact throughout the period of operation. The IT service provider will use its own technicians to handle the majority of the maintenance work on the storage systems and will continue to provide the FEA with on-site technological advice.



Thanks to this new solution, we're making major improvements to our IT services for the benefit of employment agency branches throughout Germany.

Falko Höltzer,
Technical Product Oversight,
Central Storage, Federal
Employment Agency





Computacenter was able to contribute the knowledge that's critical here and it's the perfect partner to act as the general contractor.

Falko Höltzer,
Technical Product Oversight,
Central Storage, Federal
Employment Agency



OUTCOME

State-of-the-art technology delivered systematically

Thanks to the best-of-breed approach and concentration of competencies at Computacenter, the Federal Employment Agency is managing to achieve all objectives set for the project: The storage environment is being modernised by introducing the components that best meet the requirements from the FEA's perspective. Alongside this, the central services are being improved and data access is being accelerated.

"On top of that, we also benefit from clear cost reductions due to efficient storage technologies, and from a reduction in workload because contracts are managed centrally by Computacenter," says Falko Höltzer. In addition, FEA can overcome potential capacity and data processing problems by integrating the latest technologies (such as the flash arrays) and an SRM solution.

"Computacenter has adhered to all Service Level Agreements at every point. Another thing that we very much appreciate is the proactive approach adopted by our contact person at Computacenter," adds Falko Höltzer. As a result of all this, the Federal Employment Agency has succeeded in expanding and consolidating its existing infrastructure exactly as planned so that it can accommodate both current and future requirements.

ABOUT FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT AGENCY

From the HQ of the Federal Employment Agency in Nuremberg, 156 employment agency branches and 372 job centres are currently being overseen across Germany via the FEA's ten Regional Directorates. With approximately 100,000 employees and a budget of around EUR 36 billion, it is one of Germany's biggest federal agencies.

MORE INFORMATION

To find out more, please send a mail to communications.germany@computacenter.com
