Consol Glass

As its manufacturing operations continued to grow, Consol Glass found it increasingly challenging and costly to guarantee the smooth running of its extensive SAP application landscape. By migrating to the T-Systems Dynamic Cloud Platform and running SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server as its strategic operating system, the company has maximized performance and uptime for vital business systems, while cutting IT operational costs by approximately 25 percent.

Overview
Africa’s largest manufacturer of glass containers, Consol Glass produces everything from drinks containers for international beverage companies to glass containers for the pharmaceuticals and cosmetics industries. The company operates four manufacturing facilities and employs more than 1,800 people.

Challenge
Consol Glass produces up to a million tons of glass annually—the equivalent of around 4 billion glass containers. To gain a clear view of its supply chain across multiple locations and ensure that processes run efficiently at all times, the company relies on a comprehensive suite of SAP ERP, logistics and analytics applications.

“We serve many fast-moving consumer goods companies, who work on a just-in-time basis and expect us to stick to very precise delivery schedules,” said Johan du Plessis, IT Director at Consol Glass. “Our SAP systems play a critical role in ensuring that we deliver the right products at the right time, and we cannot afford even minor errors or downtime.”

Previously, Consol Glass ran SAP applications in a virtualized environment at its own data center. With operations expanding rapidly, the company found that it was becoming increasingly costly and complex to guarantee the high levels of performance and availability demanded by the business.

“Even though we were running a virtualized environment, we were beginning to hit the upper limit of our available capacity, which prevented us from reacting flexibly to the needs of the business,” said du Plessis. “We started to look for a new operating mode, which would allow us to lower IT costs, improve availability, increase flexibility and cut time-to-market for new solutions.”

Solution
Consol Glass decided to migrate its SAP applications and other business systems to a private cloud infrastructure, selecting long-term IT partner T-Systems as its cloud service provider.

“It was evident that T-Systems had a long history of supplying cloud services to customers on a global basis,” said du Plessis. “Moving to a highly standardized, enterprise-grade cloud architecture, backed by a strong provider like T-Systems, would...
“From a total cost of ownership perspective, we saved around 25 percent on IT operational costs over a period of two years by moving to the T-Systems cloud platform, running SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.”

JOHAN DU PLESSIS
IT Director
Consol Glass

Du Plessis said, “From a total cost of ownership perspective, we saved around 25 percent on IT operational costs over a period of two years by moving to the T-Systems Dynamic Cloud Platform, running SUSE Linux Enterprise Server.”

The combination of the T-Systems cloud platform and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server provides Consol Glass with a highly reliable and available platform that maximizes uptime for critical SAP applications. In the first year, the platform experienced just five minutes of downtime (or 99.999% uptime).

The flexibility of the cloud model makes it easy for Consol Glass to dynamically scale compute and storage resources up or down as its requirements change, while providing near-limitless capacity for the company to grow without impacting its capital budget.

“The flexibility we have gained by moving to a cloud platform allows us to better support our growing business,” said du Plessis. “And the rock-solid reliability we get from running our applications on a highly secure, top-of-the-line cloud platform gives us total peace of mind.”

“Since we started running our SAP on a SUSE Linux platform, we have been able to achieve great performance and reliability, and have been able to scale our business as needed. The T-Systems Dynamic Cloud Platform provides us with the flexibility to grow our company without any issues.”

Results
By moving from an on premise computing environment to a cloud computing platform, Consol Glass has significantly reduced the time and effort spent on IT administration, and achieved impressive cost savings.

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