



Success Story

Server

SAGAFLOR AG

SAGAFLOR AG has embraced in-memory computing to give its staff instant insight into business performance and to streamline operations. Deploying SAP HANA on SUSE® Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications enabled the company to take advantage of a tailor-made distribution with a range of optimizations, paving the way for a wider move away from Red Hat Enterprise Linux to standardize on a single high-availability, high-performance platform with SUSE, ensuring simplified operations.



Overview

SAGAFLOR AG, headquartered in Kassel, Germany, is a trade cooperation of independent garden and pet shops operating across Germany, Austria and Switzerland. The company offers procurement, ERP and point-of-sales solutions, and marketing and e-commerce services. Its 600 independent businesses employ 10,000 people and run 900 stores, achieving a combined annual revenue of 1.2 billion Euro.

Challenge

To help drive sales, SAGAFLOR wanted to give managers real-time insight into customer purchasing habits, profit margins and stock levels.

Jörg Panthöfer, General Manager and Head of IT at SAGAFLOR, explained: "Our

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JÖRG PANTHÖFER

General Manager and Head of IT
SAGAFLOR AG

approach to standardizing and streamlining operations has been recognized by the industry, and we received an award in the Best Enterprise Solution category for our SAP-based ERP solution from the EHI Retail Institute. We wanted to continue building on this success."

Solution

Providing real-time insight into operations proved a challenge for SAGAFLOR's existing IT systems. SAGAFLOR decided to deploy SAP HANA on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications to better support transactional and analytical workloads on a single database.

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications is certified by SAP and hardware vendors that offer optimized systems, enabling SAGAFLOR to choose its infrastructure partner freely.

Jörg Panthöfer said: "The fact that SAP uses SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications as a reference development platform for its software was a key deciding factor. We discovered that SAP is also a SUSE reference customer and relies on SUSE for its SAP HANA Enterprise Cloud platform with over 16,000 virtual machines*. Seeing this level of commitment from both



SAGAFLOR

SAGAFLOR AG at a Glance:

SAGAFLOR AG, a trade cooperation of independent garden and pet shops, operates across Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Its 600 businesses run 900 stores, achieving annual revenues of 1.2 billion Euro.

■ Industry and Location

Retail, Kassel, Germany

■ Products and Services

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications

■ Results

- + Delivers a fast, scalable platform that is easy to manage
- + 40 percent faster deployment of new SAP systems
- + Provides a reliable foundation for SAP HANA to help business users optimize offerings based on products, margins and revenues analytics

*www.suse.com/success/stories/sap-se

“Setting up a system optimized for SAP software used to be tricky. Thanks to SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications, we can deploy a new SAP system 40 percent faster than before with Red Hat Enterprise Linux.”

RALF GERHARD

*Deputy Head of IT and Group Lead Development
SAGAFLO AG*

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vendors cemented our trust in the reliability and performance of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications.”

Results

With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications, the company now runs SAP software powered by SAP HANA, on a fast, scalable platform that allows SAGAFLO to roll out its retail solution to more partner businesses.

Ralf Gerhard, Deputy Head of IT and Group Lead Development at SAGAFLO, commented: “The tailored SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications distribution optimized to run SAP software has really simplified IT operations. Automated updates are smooth and all patches are thoroughly tested against SAP software. Keeping systems up-to-date and secure requires much less manual work.”

Today, SAGAFLO simply selects an option during deployment to ensure that all SAP-specific dependencies are installed and the system is automatically configured to official SAP recommendations. Ralf Gerhard said: “Setting up a system optimized for SAP software used to be tricky. Thanks to the SUSE solution, we can deploy a new SAP system 40 percent faster than before.”

The built-in optimizations go beyond SAP applications and include best-practice configurations to improve I/O, network and overall system performance, especially in virtualized environments. Jörg Panthöfer commented: “For maintenance, we sometimes move SAP applications from one physical host to another. SUSE fully supports VMware vSphere vMotion, so we can easily migrate SAP systems between servers without downtime.”

SAGAFLO has also been impressed by the support from SUSE. Jörg Panthöfer said: “Whenever we have a question, we can count on SUSE to help us keep systems running without issues or delays.”

Critically, the migration to SAP HANA running on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications enables SAGAFLO to offer managers real-time insight into buying patterns, helping to optimize product offerings and increase revenues. Store managers even get an anonymized benchmark to see how their shop and product portfolio is doing compared to other businesses using the SAGAFLO solution.

Ralf Gerhard said: “With SAP HANA running on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications, we can give managers recommendations on how to optimize their portfolio based on detailed analysis of products, margins and revenues.”

Jörg Panthöfer concluded: “With SAP HANA and SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for SAP Applications, information is available without delay. Being able to analyze large amounts of data in real time helps us respond rapidly to changing buying patterns.

“Getting real-time business insights is a huge advantage for SAGAFLO and will help us to remain a leader in our industry. Our positive experience with SUSE also paves the way for a wider move away from Red Hat Enterprise Linux to standardize on a single high-availability, high-performance platform across all systems and environments, ensuring simplified operations. This will help us simplify IT processes and reduce operating costs.”



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