

Data Center Provider Boosts Hosting Capability

Customer Case Study



Oetker Daten und Informationsverarbeitung speeds provisioning times by 40 percent with Cisco Unified Computing System

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Oetker Daten und Informationsverarbeitung

Industry: IT services

Location: Germany

Number of Employees: 100

Challenge

- Reduce costs while maintaining quality of service
- Attract new hosting customers
- Improve time to market

Solution

- Data center architecture transformation with Cisco Unified Computing System servers and Cisco Nexus switching

Results

- IT team productivity improved by 30 percent
- Provisioning time reduced by 40 percent and availability increased by 10 percent
- Hardware and cabling decreased by 25 percent and 85 percent respectively
- Customers see benefit of higher hosting capability with more reliable data center services

Challenge

Oetker Daten und Informationsverarbeitung (OEDIV) is a data center application hosting business belonging to Dr. Oetker, the German multinational conglomerate. Providing data center services to other businesses across the Dr. Oetker group and commercially to mid-sized enterprises, OEDIV focuses on SAP hosting, managed services, HR applications, and EDI systems. Balancing quality against cost is an ongoing challenge for the business.

“What we try to achieve is not the lowest cost, but a fair price for the services we offer,” says Simona Georgescu, of IT Marketing and Sales at OEDIV. “We try to be as efficient as possible and achieve a faster time to market while maintaining or improving our quality of service. That means we have to increasingly rely on automation.”

Historically, however, the company’s data center used rack servers from a range of vendors, which did not help towards the goal of efficient operations. Hence OEDIV sought to move toward a single-vendor, stateless computing model. This model would allow compute nodes with no set configuration to be reconfigured spontaneously using standard service profiles.

Solution

The company was already using Cisco Catalyst® 6500 Series Switches and Cisco Nexus® 7000, 5000, and 2000 Series Switches in its network and decided to include Cisco on its list of potential data center partners. “A series of factors led us to choose Cisco,” Georgescu says. “Our buzzword is the software-defined data center, and Cisco acknowledged this market gap. Other companies simply weren’t as innovative and tended to focus on their core products, whereas Cisco had started from scratch.”

The Cisco Unified Computing System™ (UCS®) was a new platform that broke away from the traditional mold to form a more flexible platform that was pre-configured to be compatible with storage and virtualization technologies.



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Martin Stratmann
Managing Director
Oetker Daten und Informationsverarbeitung



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In addition to the technical capabilities of the Cisco® UCS architecture, OEDIV was impressed by the quality of the account team, which was the only one offering equipment for testing. Following an 18-month selection process, a Cisco data center architecture was implemented initially to power three SAP High Performance Analytic Appliance (HANA) instances and for generic SAP hosting.

The OEDIV UCS architecture comprises eight Cisco UCS 6296UP 96-Port Fabric Interconnects, plus sixteen UCS chassis equipped with a total of 200 Cisco UCS B200 M3 Blade Servers. These are powered by Intel® Xeon® Processor E5-2690 chip sets with 256GB of RAM. Selected for their high-performance capabilities, they operate as VMware ESX hosts. These appliances include two HANA S-Size single nodes (C260 256GB) and a M-Size (C460 512GB) node used to support customer demonstrations for SAP HANA hosting.

The servers are attached to EMC storage arrays. Switching is by Cisco Nexus 5000 Series Switches, and the infrastructure is secured via Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliances, Cisco Email Security Appliances, and Cisco Web Security Appliances. UCS Director is also used. This arrangement improves automation through unified converged infrastructure management for administering computing, network, virtualization, and storage from one self-service web interface.

The Cisco equipment is covered by a Cisco SMARTnet™ services agreement and installed in two fully redundant active-active data centers located about six miles (10 kilometers) apart. The kit was purchased with finance from Cisco Capital®. Computacenter, a Cisco Gold Certified Partner, was engaged to help with equipment installation and configuration.

Results

OEDIV is relying on Cisco UCS to boost its hosting capabilities, a strategic focus for the business. Compared to its previous infrastructure, the Cisco UCS data center architecture affords a number of measurable benefits. Cabling requirements, for example, have dropped by 85 percent. “You no longer need different servers connected to a hundred cables,” says Georgescu.

The move to blade technology also allows OEDIV to provision new services 40 percent faster, since the hardware required can be slotted easily into an existing chassis and configured in minutes with pre-existing service profiles. “You have one big block with replaceable blades,” Georgescu says. “Having only one block and not different servers saves time and optimizes cost.”

This simplicity, plus the fact that about 25 percent less hardware now has to be managed, has also increased the productivity of the IT team by around 30 percent. Finally, the reliability of the Cisco UCS platform has resulted in a 10 percent increase in availability. Georgescu says: “The MAC address and the BIOS are not on the hardware, but on the software layer. So if a blade breaks, you just replace it, and the information’s still there. So customers enjoy much reduced downtime.”

Next Steps

With around 200 Cisco UCS blades already in production, OEDIV is planning to use Cisco UCS and Citrix technologies as a platform for customer virtual desktop infrastructure services. It is also planning to use Cisco technologies elsewhere in its business. Martin Stratmann, managing director, sums up: “Cisco changed our mindset and offered exactly what we needed in order to get to our goal, which is automation and reduced time to market.”



For More Information

To learn more about the Cisco architectures and solutions featured in this case study go to:

www.cisco.com/go/nexus

www.cisco.com/go/ucs

Product List

Data Center Solutions

- Cisco Unified Computing System (UCS)
 - Cisco UCS B200 M3 Blade Servers

Routing and Switching

- Cisco Nexus 7000 Series Switches
- Cisco Nexus 5000 Series Switches
- Cisco Nexus 2000 Series Switches
- Cisco Catalyst 6500 Series Switches

Fabric Interconnects

- Cisco UCS 6296UP Series Fabric Interconnects

Security

- Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliances
- Cisco Email Security Appliances
- Cisco Web Security Appliances

Processors

- Intel Xeon Processor E5-2690

Applications

- VMware
- SAP HANA (two S-Size single node C260 256GB and one M-Size C460 512GB)

Storage

- EMC



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