

Lenzing turns to IBM and Linux for stronger server infrastructure.

Overview

■ **Application**

Custom production and shipping application for cellulose fiber manufacturer

■ **Business Benefits**

Increased application availability; high server performance; lower costs

■ **Servers**

IBM @server xSeries™ 360 and 342

■ **Software**

Red Hat Linux® Advanced Server, Version 2.1

■ **Services**

IBM Global Services

■ **Business Partner**

SteelEye Technology, Inc.



A world leader in cellulose fiber technology, Lenzing AG produces environmentally friendly fibers, which meet strict ecological requirements for production.

Austrian alpine majesty is to the glamorous world of tourism, what Austrian-based Lenzing AG (Lenzing) is to the international world of textiles—an icon. Headquartered in the beautiful surroundings of Lake Attersee, Austria, Lenzing (www.lenzing.com) is the world leader in cellulose fiber manufacturing.

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–Werner Arnitz, CIO, Lenzing AG

Succeeding with a high-performance Linux computing environment



Lenzing leverages the low-cost Linux environment to ship viscose fibers, which the company offers in more than eight thousand colors.

A cutting-edge innovator, Lenzing observes sophisticated, controlled procedures to produce its Lyocell, Modal and ProViscose fibers. With more than 4,500 employees worldwide and an annual turnover of €623 million (US\$668 million), Lenzing adheres to strict ecological standards—which earned it the prestigious EU Eco-Label.

To ensure that the strength of its business processes keeps pace with the quality of its fibers, Lenzing uses a proprietary application called Betriebsdatenerfassung Produktion (BEDAP), to collect and process production and product quality data. Until recently, this Oracle9i-based mission-critical solution, which contains millions of data records, ran in a Hewlett-Packard (HP) Alpha environment. A long-time Alpha customer, Lenzing was disheartened when the server began performing sluggishly. In fact, as its BEDAP database continued to grow, performance became that much worse.

“We were aware of production and shipping delays as a result of our systems being down,” says Werner Arnitz, CIO at Lenzing. “That’s why we wanted to update our IT environment to a cost-effective and reliable clustered Linux system.”

To meet its IT objectives, Lenzing worked with IBM Global Services to migrate from HP to IBM @server xSeries 360 systems running Red Hat Linux Advanced Server, Version 2.1. Additionally, Lenzing chose IBM Business Partner SteelEye’s LifeKeeper solution for automatic failover. The company viewed IBM as a reliable vendor with extensive Linux experience that could craft a complete solution. “We considered several options when looking to move from the Alpha environment; but in the end, we decided to standardize with Linux running on an Intel-based platform. We felt that the open and robust Linux operating environment running on scalable IBM servers would deliver flexible, high-performance computing options—at a reasonable price,” says Arnitz.

“We wanted to ensure that our production and shipping staffs had 24x7 access to our BEDAP applications. And with our new Linux-based IBM system running LifeKeeper, we have experienced very high server availability.”

—Werner Arnitz

xSeries servers can provide a high-performance computing environment

Lenzing considered staying with the HP Alpha platform; however, it wanted a more cost-effective Linux high-availability (Linux-HA) cluster solution. Familiar with IBM's commitment to the Linux operating environment and impressed with IBM's Linux expertise, Lenzing decided to work with IBM Global Services to make the switch. "We decided to move to Linux to leverage our in-house open systems knowledge," says Arnitz. "We are committed to Linux and wanted a reliable server platform for our installation—and we found it with the xSeries."

Working with IBM Global Services for consultation and to manage the system upgrade, Lenzing created a LINUX-HA server environment consisting of two x360 servers to support its BEDAP application. One server runs the database that collects production data from the manufacturing floor and the other server runs a customs database.



Production and shipping departments can leverage @server xSeries servers for its operations.

Lenzing employees utilize on these servers to keep the company running smoothly. "If our database servers are down, then we experience production and shipping delays," explains Arnitz. "For instance, we can't produce shipping documentation without accessing our database. And if this occurs, then our shipment is delayed and our production costs can rise because we have trucks and drivers sitting idle."

IBM Global Services and the Lenzing IT team collaborated to migrate Lenzing's applications to the newly implemented Linux-HA cluster, which minimizes downtime in the production environment. "We wanted to help ensure that our production and shipping staffs had 24x7 access to our BEDAP applications. And with our new Linux-based IBM system running LifeKeeper, we have experienced very high server availability," says Arnitz.

Optimized for xSeries servers, LifeKeeper software helps companies streamline IT operations, by providing uninterrupted data access to clustered applications. Before using LifeKeeper, Lenzing IT professionals had to physically switch cables on the old HP servers during a system failure, from an inactive server to an active server, to restore system functionality. LifeKeeper running on xSeries servers completes this process automatically. "LifeKeeper monitors our system and application health while helping to maintain the high availability of our applications," says Arnitz.

Leveraging Linux on xSeries for limitless success

The system upgrade and application migration were completed in just four months, and Lenzing is now seeing marked server performance improvement and increased application availability. In addition, Lenzing used the money saved by choosing xSeries instead of staying with Alpha to investigate new IT opportunities. "The price/performance of the xSeries is excellent," notes Arnitz. In fact, we were able to purchase two additional x342 servers to use as test machines for BEDAP upgrades. As a result, we are now able to test changes to BEDAP before we deploy them, which has decreased our chance of introducing errors into the system."

Arnitz concludes: "IBM Global Services helped us weave together a Linux-based server solution that will help us maintain our position in the marketplace—and will be with us for years to come."

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Route 100
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03-03
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