Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Scout24 Switzerland starts journey towards Big Data analytics

HPE storage and server technologies transform Swiss online marketplace landscape

Objective
Deploy an advanced data warehouse solution to enable the collation of business intelligence gathered from information generated by four classified marketplaces

Approach
Engaged the services of a local HPE partner, researched the storage marketplace and compared the functionality and price-performance of several data warehouse solutions

IT Matters
- Provides a highly reliable, high-performance and scalable data warehouse solution, satisfying business intelligence gathering needs

- Processes and stores all information relating to each marketplace's activities, safeguarding mission-critical data

Business Matters
- Generates standardized monthly management reports about activities on four classified portals, leading to better decision making and accelerating new services time-to-market

- Empowers a data-driven organization to use Big Data analytics, helping to maintain the business's position as the country's leading classified marketplace company

- Supports future plans to understand end-user behavior and needs, improving the customer experience and delivering a competitive edge

Challenge

Preparing for the future
The development of e-commerce in general has transformed the way organizations do business. Over the last decade, e-commerce has become more prevalent as an increasing number of people purchase goods using classified marketplaces rather than shopping at traditional retail outlets.

Analyzing the information generated when customers and prospects visit classified marketplaces is therefore an important tool as businesses seek insight into customers' requirements. This was the long-term challenge faced by Scout24 Schweiz AG as the business sought a data warehouse solution to gather and retain business intelligence.

"We build, run and maintain online marketplaces for the automotive, real estate and classified advertisement sectors," explains Andreas von Ballmoos, head of business intelligence, Scout24 Schweiz AG.

"Each portal has a different technical solution with a web server and a database but we couldn't provide our management team an overall view of the data.

"Two years ago, we were asked to build a company-wide data warehouse to gather all the information from our four marketplaces and support other essential business systems such as accounting, customer relationship management and web analytics," continues von Ballmoos.

Case study
Scout24
Schweiz AG

Industry
Classified

Page 2

Customer at a glance

Hardware
• HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7200c

• HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7200c All-Flash Starter Kit

• HPE ProLiant DL380 Gen9 servers

• HPE SN3000B SAN Switches

• HPE 5820 Switches

HPE services
• HPE Proactive Care Pack

Scout24 Schweiz AG
Owned by Ringier Digital AG and the Swiss Insurance Group Die Mobiliar, Scout24 Schweiz AG develops online platforms and is the country's leading classified company. Operating 18 kilometers south-west of Bern in the village of Flamatt, Scout24 offers four digital marketplaces for the sale of motor vehicles, motorcycles, real estate and classified advertisements under one single organization. The company's four classified portals typically receive more than 28 million visits every month.

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"This project was a major IT challenge as it was the first sizable IT system we had to build especially when you consider AutoScout24, our vehicle marketplace, handles some 11 million visits monthly."

Solution

Heading towards Big Data analytics
Scout24 planned the data warehouse project in distinct phases. During the first phase, the company built up the system using Microsoft® SQL Server to automate monthly management report generation. Subsequent phases will see the business use the data to better understand the customer and end-user experience. "Long-term, we'll certainly be looking at the behavior of our website users, finding patterns as we move towards delivering end-to-end Big Data analytics," comments von Ballmoos.

The Swiss company engaged the services of a local HPE partner that specialized in building data warehouses. Both parties researched the storage marketplace and compared the functionality and price-performance of several data warehouse solutions. The contractor's consultants helped to define the new system's hardware and software requirements. After due consideration, Scout24 selected Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE).

Advanced data warehouse solution
The advanced HPE data warehouse solution comprises two HPE ProLiant DL380 Gen9 servers, an HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7200c two-node storage system with All-Flash technology and a capacity of 16TB as well as HPE SN3000B SAN and HPE 5800 switches. HPE Proactive Care Pack provides comprehensive support. On top of that Scout24 uses an end-to-end BI and analytics solution built into Microsoft SQL Server. Together with Scout24's other IT infrastructure components, the new data warehouse solution is collocated at two nearby data centers.

"We chose the HPE data warehousing solution for its functionality and performance," says von Ballmoos.

"We've valued the reliability of HPE servers for many years while finding the storage configuration software much easier to understand and use, saving a considerable amount of time.

Benefit

Standardized reporting
Today, Scout24 processes and stores all information relating to each marketplace's activities on the HPE data warehouse solution, safeguarding important mission-critical data for business intelligence purposes. The company currently uses the business intelligence capabilities built into SQL Server to generate standardized monthly management reports, leading to better decision making and helping to add value to business offerings.

"After deploying the HPE data warehouse solution, we're producing all our monthly reports by the end of the first day of the next month," declares von Ballmoos. "Generating reports this quickly provides the information we need to accelerate time-to-market and therefore maintain our position as the country's leading marketplace provider. We've also experienced significant improvements to Input/Output Operations Per Second rates and bandwidth."

Within the next year, Scout24 will start using the information held by the data warehouse to understand end-user behavior and gain insight into clients' needs. These capabilities will improve the customer experience, boost satisfaction and deliver a competitive edge.

"Moving to a Big Data analytics environment is a very exciting change as this technology empowers our organization to further understand our customers. HPE is helping us to put in place the necessary technology to maximize this capability," concludes von Ballmoos.

Learn more at
hpe.com/storage/3PAR

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