

Joint Systems GmbH faced unacceptable delays in the performance of its primary database and its key fund-raising application because of the lagging performance of its hard-disk storage system during certain business-critical application scenarios. With an all-flash solution from Pure Storage, the company has eliminated all the performance problems, freed up valuable IT resources, and created an infrastructure that can accommodate future growth in demand for many years.



BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Joint Systems was able to massively improve the performance of its fund-raising system and the speed with which end-users can access its database infrastructure, while the IT department can once again concentrate on advancing and supervising the fund-raising system.

GEO

Austria/Germany

INDUSTRY

Non-Profit Services

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Michael Jegle,
Head of ICT Services and Infrastructure

PURE STORAGE DELIVERS HIGH PERFORMANCE FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Joint Systems is an international IT and fundraising-services company headquartered in Innsbruck, Austria, and Munich, Germany. Joint Systems provides its roughly 700 users at 25 locations worldwide with a fund-raising system it has developed in-house. When migration to a Microsoft Dynamics customer relationship management (CRM) solution was due to take place, it was demonstrated in the Microsoft test laboratory that because of the increasing number of read/write operations, in particular with large databases, the existing hard-disk-based storage system had reached its limits and, without sufficient performance reserves, had become a bottleneck.

In the search for an alternative storage solution for migrating the biggest customers, an all-flash system was chosen, because a hybrid system could not satisfy the high performance requirements. “Following exhaustive research, Joint Systems decided to implement a small all-flash system from Pure Storage, and the result was impressive,” explained Michael Jegle, Head of ICT Services and Infrastructure, Joint Systems.

ACCELERATING APPLICATIONS AND SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

When the main storage systems at Joint System were then scheduled to be replaced, it was clear that flash should be used, because the hard-disk-based storage system, which initially proved adequate after the migration, rapidly reached its limits with the bigger databases under Microsoft Dynamics. This was noticeable above all to the IT team. In the past, a lot of time was invested in system analysis and troubleshooting for the storage system which was then not available elsewhere. It was also intended that the database performance should be considerably enhanced in order to improve the user experience and, for example, accelerate business intelligence applications. In addition to the performance-hungry applications, the in-house software development department also required access to high-speed storage in order to support new projects. Not least of all, those responsible in Michael Jegle’s section also anticipated that the new system would be future-proof to a level they had not experienced before, because the existing HDD system no longer reflected the state of the art either in terms of performance or administration.

Together with the IT service provider Bechtle AG, Joint Systems decided to consider solutions from four vendors, including Pure Storage. “We evaluated both all-flash arrays and hybrid systems, conducting not only a performance analysis, but also a thorough cost analysis, above all with respect to the costs per terabyte,” Jegle recounted.

COMPANY:

Joint Systems GmbH
www.joint-systems.net

USE CASE:

- Database – Microsoft® SQL Server

CHALLENGES:

- Obsolete hard-disk storage system did not offer sufficient performance reserves for migrating to Microsoft Dynamics CRM.
- Performance bottlenecks were due to high latencies.
- The costs of storage administration were unacceptably high.

IT TRANSFORMATION:

- BI and software-development teams accomplish more in less time.
- Lower operating costs through smaller footprint, less power consumption.
- Taking system snapshots takes only 1/6th of the time previously needed.

“Pure Storage has kept all its promises. We are satisfied in every respect.”

Michael Jegle,
 Head of ICT Services and Infrastructure

Although the hybrid solution offered slight cost benefits, the IT department chose the Pure Storage FlashArray™//M20 with 40TB. “The future-proofness and planning security which Pure Storage can offer us ultimately convinced us. With the Pure Evergreen™ Storage model we will always have the latest technology in operation without having to replace the entire storage system every four years, as was previously the case,” Jegle said. Factors such as simple administration, low power consumption, and performance features like deduplication also spoke in favor of Pure Storage.

SIMPLIFIED MANAGEMENT, LOWER OPERATING COSTS

The switch to Pure Storage FlashArray as the central storage system soon became apparent when using the IT every day. “We now have a single, homogeneous solution, which makes our work a great deal easier, particularly in terms of administration. The all-flash solution from Pure is simple to manage, compared to other storage systems,” Jegle noted.

As a result, the team now also has time to concentrate on the further development of the CRM and fundraising systems. The greater speed of the Pure Storage FlashArray is of enormous benefit in the development department. The performance enhancements also improve batch-processing jobs. “We have many background jobs which run overnight,” Jegle explained. “A high-speed storage system is extremely important for these. If these jobs took more than 12 hours, that would cause a massive disturbance in our daily operations.” The enhanced performance of the Pure Storage system can also be noticed in data backup. For example, it takes only one-sixth of the time needed by the old system to create a snapshot.

In the computer center the new storage system demonstrates its leanness. It requires 75 percent as much floor space as the old system, and the power consumption is also appreciably lower. With the new storage system, the data center uses 17% less power. Not only does this save on costs — it also enables a significantly greater autonomous time to be achieved with the uninterruptible power supply (UPS).

The new Pure Storage system is even more efficient than anticipated. “At present we register a utilization rate of 52 percent,” Jegle noted. “The data reduction is even higher than we had initially expected. We now have sufficient reserves to ensure that we can accommodate additional demand in the years ahead.”

Not just the IT team profits from the new storage system. The performance enhancement is also appreciated by end-users. The business intelligence applications now supply results quicker, thanks to a data throughput of nearly 200 MB/s, and the wait times when creating reports are considerably shorter. And the IT department can finally focus on the core business of Joint Systems, namely software development.

“Pure Storage has kept all its promises. Their support leaves nothing to be desired, the performance fully meets our expectations, and thanks to the impressive data reduction we still have plenty of capacity to support future growth. Consequently, we can concentrate entirely on enhancing the fund-raising system. We are satisfied in every respect,” concluded Jegle.



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