CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Frauenthal Handel Gruppe Improves Storage Efficiency & Fault Tolerance through AWS Cloud

Critical business data must be available at all times in wholesale trade and more than ever protected from cyber attacks. The new backup strategy using NetApp Storage and AWS Cloud ensures the desired data security and is also efficient in operation.

In Austria, the Frauenthal Trade Group is the number one wholesaler for sanitary, heating, plumbing, and electrical materials. Due to the group's growth, storage needed to be expanded and the backup strategy redefined.

NetApp & AWS storage systems ensure fast access to critical business data and enable backup-to-disk security. Long-term backups are efficiently managed in the AWS Cloud, facilitating rapid disaster recovery.

Through the longstanding collaboration between NetApp and AWS, customers benefit from integrated solutions. With this project, Frauenthal has enhanced both storage efficiency and fault tolerance.

Disaster Recovery Concept: File Shares and Virtual Environment

„Although the project was squeezed in at short notice Despite our limited time resources on our end, everything went well because SNS and NetApp have long understood our needs. AWS joined the mix recently, and it's also functioning well. I'm confident that it will continue to do so.“

Günther Novak
Frauenthal Handel Gruppe

Number 1 in Wholesale for Sanitary, Heating, Installation, and Electrical Materials

The Frauenthal Trade Group consists of the two sanitary and installation technology wholesale brands SHT and ÖAG, the pipeline and civil engineering specialist Kontinentale, ELEKTROMATERIAL.AT, and the service company Frauenthal Service.

Their customers include installers, builders, developers, architects, and municipalities. For them, there are more than 20 Bath & Energy showrooms and over 80 ISZ pick-up markets. All independently operating brands and thus the approximately 1,700 employees of the group are centrally supported by Frauenthal Service. This includes services for logistics, product management, finance, HR, and IT.

Growth Requires a New Backup Concept

Our backup worked well, but space became insufficient due to growth. So, we evaluated the available options today," says Günther Novak from Frauenthal Service. He is responsible for IT in the area of Service Delivery Management for data center and cloud services, including security. Until now, the strategy was to use backup-to-disk, followed by backup-to-tape. Frauenthal Service faced the question of whether to expand the existing backup system or switch to a backup-to-disk, backup-to-cloud concept. Additionally, there was a requirement to utilize long-term backups for disaster recovery.

New Efficient Storage Strategy Combines NetApp and AWS

Together with their long-term IT partner SNS – Saturn Networking Solution, concepts were developed and tests conducted. At Frauenthal, all storage and backup solutions come from NetApp, leveraging this proven partnership for consultation. AWS came into play as the new cloud partner. NetApp and Amazon Web Services have had a longstanding collaboration for ten years.

The integrated data management functions of NetApp, combined with the scalability of AWS, allowed Frauenthal to find the best possible solution. Novak explains the decision for the new backup strategy: "Expanding our existing on-premise solution would have meant a complete replacement of storage and backup systems, which is not cheap. Here, the cloud offers more interesting options. We also wanted a fast, secure solution for failure scenarios, and for that, the data center must be backed up in the cloud."

Optimizing and Consolidating Together

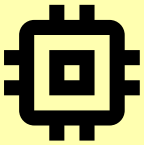
On-premise in Interxion's data center is a NetApp All Flash MetroCluster with high-performance SSD drives of Tier 1 category for business-critical and frequently used data, a NetApp 8000 series storage system of Tier 2 category for other productive data, and a backup system. NetApp Snapshot technology ensures fault tolerance and high availability. SnapMirror replicates data between storage endpoints, from flash to disk to cloud, speeding up recovery. Currently, 60TB of space is available for AWS cloud storage.

In Phase 1 of the project, all files located on shared networks were migrated from on-premise backup to the cloud, creating space again. In Phase 2, SNS and AWS are expanding the disaster recovery concept to include not only file shares but also the virtual environment. SNS brings its expertise in cloud and data center services, as well as security.

The collaboration between the various partners is working well, Novak reports: "Although the project was squeezed in at short notice and our time resources were limited, everything went smoothly because SNS and NetApp have long understood our needs. AWS joined the mix recently, and it's also functioning well. I'm confident that it will continue to do so."

New Efficient Storage Strategy Combines NetApp and AWS

Benefit: Restoration of Data and Entire Data Center



Benefit: Restoration of Data and Entire Data Center

The approximately 1,500 users did not notice the transition at all. As Novak says, "For them, the backup system only matters if they accidentally deleted data and need it restored. How that happens is irrelevant to them; it just has to work." With the initial steps towards the cloud, IT has already made a significant contribution to greater flexibility and digitalization. AWS provides the desired disaster recovery environment, along with increased flexibility and cost savings through the as-a-service model. For about two years, IT has been evaluating the advantages of the cloud and where it makes more sense.

The trend is towards the cloud.

Today, more than ever, it is essential to ensure that data is always protected from cyberattacks, and backup-to-cloud fits well for us here. The system only runs when it is actively backing up data or when I need it for data restoration; otherwise, it is offline." Another security factor is that it operates autonomously in a different network and not in Frauenthal's data center. Novak concludes: "You can't achieve this on-premise. This level of data security and the rapid startup of critical services in the event of a complete data center failure can only be accomplished with the cloud.