



bickhardt bau
aktiengesellschaft

Bickhardt Bau

Proact transforms storage architecture with virtualisation solution.

Overview

Challenge

Deliver greater data and system availability with a storage solution that would also stand up to the growth of the business, without causing an explosion of financial and administrative effort.

Solution

A VMware vSAN platform designed by Proact.

Benefits

- High availability and reliability
- Flexibility
- Reduced storage requirement
- Time-savings

An efficient transport infrastructure is a key when it comes to ensuring prosperous economic growth. Bickhardt Bau Aktiengesellschaft has been active in the traffic infrastructure field for 45 years, and thereby makes its contribution to the positive development of economic areas. With an annual construction output of more than €400 million and over 1,600 qualified employees, Bickhardt Bau is now the largest medium-sized construction company in Hesse.

As a continually growing business, Bickhardt Bau required a storage solution which could efficiently handle increasing amounts of data. Availability was also a problem area for the construction firm as the IT infrastructure needed to be able to support continuous business operations.

The challenge

Bickhardt Bau previously operated a storage environment based on NetApp FAS systems – an approach which the company was satisfied with for a long time. However, overtime this infrastructure became associated with high maintenance costs, which would have continued to increase as capacity expanded. The company also saw further disadvantages such as time-consuming administration, a lack of control over availability and performance, and in the long-term, the inability to scale the storage architecture.

“Proact kept precisely to our tight schedule, and the implementation took place very quickly and smoothly thanks to good project management and close cooperation. The vSAN environment ran exactly as we expected, and we are completely satisfied with it.”

Michael Wildner,
Project Manager,
Bickhardt Bau

About Proact

Proact is Europe's leading independent data centre and cloud services provider. By delivering flexible, accessible and secure IT solutions and services, we help companies and authorities reduce risk and costs, whilst increasing agility, productivity and efficiency. We've completed over 5,000 successful projects around the world, have more than 3,500 customers and currently manage in excess of 100 petabytes of information in the cloud. We employ over 800 people in 15 countries across Europe and North America. Founded in 1994, our parent company, Proact IT Group AB (publ), listed on Nasdaq Stockholm in 1999 (under the symbol PACT).

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The team at Bickhardt Bau, headed by Project Manager Michael Wildner, examined various approaches that could future-proof the firm's storage environment. Despite this analysis, many of the considered solutions didn't offer the significant cost reductions that the IT department required.

It became clear: Bickhardt Bau needed a platform that was tailor-made for its data centre, and that offered a standardised platform for all workloads, combined innovative technologies. Such solution needed to be designed to meet the required service levels for performance and availability, while also reducing administration and facilitating long-term use. The company turned to Proact with this challenge.

How we helped

After being selected as a trusted partner, Proact immediately started the internal kick-off, as well as conducting an inventory of Bickhardt Bau's data centre. All engagements between the companies were coordinated by Proact's project management service which follows defined, established processes, set-up to ensure a smooth implementation.

Technical specialists from Proact developed a concept based on a vSAN software-defined storage solution from VMware, acting as a Stretched Cluster, which could be distributed over three locations with five physical server systems (including a dedicated quorum host). vSAN from VMware made it possible to logically bundle local storage resources, making it available through shared storage.

Unlike converged systems, which combine compute, storage and networking into a pre-determined package of discrete components, this hyper converged infrastructure system was realised through the combined use of VMware vSphere and vSAN. This made centralised management and high scalability possible, while also being energy efficient and future-proof to support the firm's business growth. According to analysts from Gartner, the market for hyper converged infrastructure solutions is set to grow to \$5 billion by 2019, thus demonstrating that the Proact approach has a great deal of potential.

The major requirements of Bickhardt Bau were met with the Proact solution: the platform used innovative technology which offered a uniform platform for workloads, it built on existing systems, and the solution offered a long-term infrastructure for storage operations. With Bickhardt Bau's goals in mind, Proact also outlined two ways in which the hard disk technology could be used: one with a traditional hard disk, and one based on SSD technology. The construction firm decided to use the All-Flash variant as this offered extremely high and reliable performance, simultaneously making it possible to use all the efficiency features of vSAN.

The benefits



High availability and reliability

Centralised administration with enhanced availability and increased performance.



Flexibility

The cluster can be expanded in the case of a growing server infrastructure.



Reduced storage requirement

Enterprise-class technology offers storage-efficiency functions for deduplication.



Time-saving

Fast and smooth implementation thanks to project management services.