



Managed Private Cloud IKB Data GmbH

CASE STUDY

A MANAGED PRIVATE CLOUD FOR INTERNATIONAL BANKING

CHALLENGES

- Standardization and optimization of a Citrix server farm
- Consolidation of installed server systems
- Deployment of a managed private Cloud
- Optimization of IT operations and processes
- Realizing improvements in server reliability

SOLUTION

- ASG strategy, product, and technology consulting
- Migration to ITIL processes with ASG support

BENEFITS FOR IKB

- High-performance Citrix server farm with high availability
- Optimized server operations in a managed private Cloud
- Faster service provisioning and changes
- Lower operating costs
- Faster time to market and lower costs for customers

OVERVIEW

IKB Data GmbH is a modern IT infrastructure service provider with headquarters in Düsseldorf, Germany, offering IT services to banks and financial institutions. The technology leadership of IKB Data is reflected in its centralized services based on Cloud Computing for workplaces in banking environments. Within the scope of a managed services contract, IKB Data turned to ASG (visionapp at that time) for an evaluation of its Cloud infrastructure, in addition to strategic, product, and technology consulting.

Founded in 2004 as the Shared Service Center of IKB Deutsche Industriebank AG, IKB Data operates server-based infrastructures and portal solutions, as well as centralized platforms for application provisioning, based on Microsoft and Citrix technologies. To support its customers with managed services, IKB Data operates about 500 terminal and function servers, of which 100 are fully virtualized function servers. Worldwide the provider is responsible for around 2,500 IT workplaces and more than 450 terabytes of storage capacity.

To complement its own internal expertise, IKB Data relies on solutions and process know-how from ASG. "Our collaboration with ASG started in 2005 as we began focusing on server-based computing (SBC)," says Jörg Pauseback, General Manager at IKB. "Our SBC server farm was suffering from stability problems caused by the huge number of users, an extremely heterogeneous software landscape, and terminal servers that had not been installed according to consistent standards. We decided to consult with ASG because of its outstanding Citrix expertise, especially in banking environments."

The goal of the project was to deploy a standardized software concept for the Citrix server farm to support stable, high-availability server and application operations with a high degree of automation. "During the early phases our SBC server farm required quite a lot of manual intervention," explained Pauseback. "With support from ASG we were able to set up an operating model similar to that of mainframes, with roles, release planning, staging, and stringent security concepts." IKB Data appreciated the know-how provided by ASG, especially in regards to introducing IT operations processes. With the goal of achieving consistent process optimization, IKB Data aligned its internal processes with best practices according to ITIL V3 (IT Infrastructure Library) and ensured that all employees earned ITIL certification.

In mid-2007, IKB Data began to optimize its Citrix server farm. Microsoft technology was chosen as the standardized basis for servers. IKB Data completed this standardization process on time and within budget thanks to the support from ASG.



"The original, project-based cooperation has evolved into an ongoing partnership with ASG – with all kinds of positive effects in terms of reducing costs, time-to-market, and better service delivery."

Jörg Pauseback
General Manager, IKB

ABOUT ASG

A recognized innovator in enterprise IT software solutions, ASG Software Solutions has been optimizing 85 percent of the world's most complex IT organizations for over 25 years. We create and deploy unique software solutions that reduce cost, mitigate risk and improve service delivery throughout the IT lifecycle. ASG's comprehensive solutions help you solve today's challenges, such as Cloud Computing and big data, while driving your business forward by providing insight and control across Cloud, distributed and mainframe environments.

Within only nine months, 400 applications had been migrated to an optimized server farm comprised of 120 servers.

In 2008, another consolidation project was launched for the server environment, this time on the basis of Windows Server 2003 and Office 2003. The number of servers was reduced from 120 to only 50. To ensure high availability and disaster recovery, these servers became distributed across two data centers. "We run the Citrix servers at levels determined by the actual workload at a particular time," said Pauseback. "For example, we only need to keep a small number of servers in active operation on weekends. The degree of virtualization and automation that we enjoy today is the equivalent of what is called a managed private Cloud today." IKB Data uses this managed private Cloud to provide its customers with some 500 applications.

In terms of client hardware, the company has replaced PCs with low-maintenance thin clients (TCs) that are managed centrally. Today, about 80 percent of all users work on these energy-saving TCs, which also provide high levels of security thanks to central data storage.

"We enjoy working with ASG because this partnership has been very successful, without any red tape," said Pauseback. "ASG always delivers flexible support and focuses on solving problems quickly and effectively. ASG delivers what they promise. What's more, ASG has the same understanding for the need of ongoing further development, just as we do. This is exactly what you expect from a win-win partnership."

"Thanks to the standardized software concept and our strong process orientation, we are able to implement change processes very quickly," said Pauseback with satisfaction. "When a bank opens a new branch office, we deliver the technology required extremely fast."

An example: When a financial services institution opened a new leasing office in Budapest, IKB Data put the entire IT infrastructure, including applications, into operation within just three days following activation of the WAN. "Thanks to the infrastructure and processes we have developed together with ASG, we are fast, agile and flexible," explained Pauseback. "We can guarantee fast time to market for our customers, and that saves time and money."

"When compared with 2007, we now save 10 percent annually when it comes to operating our Citrix server farm," said Pauseback. "And due to stringent change processes and workflows, rollouts are even 30 percent less expensive compared with previous years."

Currently IKB Data is migrating to Windows 7 and Microsoft Office 2010, and will upgrade its Windows Server 2008 server farm. Once again this managed private Cloud provider is counting on the know-how of its long-term trusted partner ASG.



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