



PLANSEE Group

Cutting complexity and costs with IBM and SAP in times of rapid growth

Overview

The need

Growing rapidly in Asia, PLANSEE was keen to maintain excellent performance of its business and analytics applications even as the workload soared, to avoid hampering staff productivity.

The solution

PLANSEE replaced most of its SAP Business Warehouse Accelerator reports with IBM® DB2® with BLU Acceleration running on IBM AIX® on an IBM Power® 780 server connected to IBM DS8870 storage.

The benefit

Accelerated critical business reports by up to 40 percent. Enabled 30 percent faster access to sales statistics for improved customer service. Simplified IT infrastructure while reducing costs.

PLANSEE is a global market leader in high-performance materials produced by powder metallurgy, and used in the clean energy, medical technology, electronics, and mobility sectors. Privately owned and employing around 6,000 people, PLANSEE operates 33 production facilities and has sales offices in 50 countries. The company achieves annual sales of EUR 1.2 billion (USD 1.5 billion).

As PLANSEE expanded its business operations in Asia, the company wanted to ensure that its staff could continue to work efficiently even when data volumes increased and performance requirements soared.

Engelbert Wörle, Head of Group IT Infrastructure at PLANSEE says, “Continuous business growth with new plants and offices in Asia put additional strains on our central SAP ERP applications, and our existing SAP Business Warehouse Accelerator had reached full capacity. As a result, we were unable to load the data that our business departments needed. To avoid this problem hampering staff productivity, we had to look for a new solution.”

In the past, PLANSEE could speed up only predefined reports and not dynamic planning processes. “Today, thanks to IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration, planning dialogs and ad-hoc analyses are substantially faster – this unlocks huge time savings for our planners and analysts and significantly improves their workflows and productivity,” says Engelbert Wörle, Head of Group IT Infrastructure, PLANSEE.



Solution components

Hardware

- IBM® Power® 780
- IBM DS8870
- IBM FlashSystem™ 840

Software

- IBM AIX®
- IBM DB2® with BLU Acceleration for Linux, UNIX, and Windows
- IBM Tivoli® Storage Manager

Applications

- SAP BusinessObjects Global Trade Services
- SAP Business Warehouse
- SAP ERP
- SAP Supply Chain Management

Services

- IBM Software Services



Accelerated critical business reports by up to 40 percent

Reducing complexity with IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration on Power

PLANSEE started by embarking on a major systems refresh for its SAP applications landscape and analytics solutions. It deployed two new IBM Power 780 servers with 38 IBM POWER7+™ processors and 1,200 GB main memory in total. Two IBM DS8870 storage solutions provide 50 TB storage capacity for a wide range of SAP applications. The company also implemented one IBM FlashSystem 840 device, with 20 TB capacity, to boost application performance further using IBM Easy Tier® technology, which automatically moves the most frequently used data onto the FlashSystem.

Taking advantage of its new infrastructure, PLANSEE moved its SAP Business Warehouse databases to IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration for Linux, UNIX, and Windows running on the IBM AIX operating system. Today, the company relies on SAP ERP supporting finance, controlling, materials management and production planning processes, SAP Supply Chain Management, SAP BusinessObjects Global Trade Services, SAP NetWeaver Process Integration, SAP Solution Manager and SAP Business Warehouse. Including all solutions, PLANSEE operates 12 SAP production systems for approximately 3,000 concurrent users, with compressed database sizes of up to 2.6 TB.

Bernd Lumpert, Power Systems Administrator for SAP at PLANSEE, elaborates, “Together with the IBM SAP DB2 Center of Excellence at the IBM Development Lab, we migrated about 150 info cubes from our previous SAP Business Warehouse system already running on DB2 to DB2 10.5 with BLU Acceleration in approximately 16 hours.”

Markus Kaetzler, System Administrator Storage for SAP at PLANSEE, adds, “Moving to the new IBM solution was easy. We have put our trust in IBM for many years already, and we knew from previous experience that we can always rely on the project team, which is supported by specialists in the development lab. The project management was excellent and the migration itself went very smoothly.”

Cutting costs and boosting performance

As part of the new capabilities, PLANSEE implemented the Power Enterprise Systems Pools offering for its new IBM Power 780 servers. Power Enterprise Systems Pools consolidates enables a more-flexible use of aggregated computing and memory resources across systems, which substantially improves the agility of IT operations.

Bernd Lumpert explains, “We can now respond instantly to changing workloads, boosting system resiliency to enhance application availability. Scaling systems up and down has never been easier and more cost-efficient – this helps us to take full advantage of the combined performance in our data centers.”

“With IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration, we simplified our IT and at the same time added completely new capabilities while reducing investment and operating costs.”

— Engelbert Wörle, Head of Group IT Infrastructure, PLANSEE



Generated group-level financial controlling reports and detailed sales and order statistics 30 percent faster

By upgrading to IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration, PLANSEE is able to reduce the complexity of its IT infrastructure even more.

Engelbert Wörle remarks, “Thanks to IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration, we simplified our IT and at the same time added completely new capabilities while reducing investment and operating costs.”

Markus Kätzler adds, “Today, we benefit from the advanced database features of IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration, and we have improved performance without increasing licensing costs. By upgrading our IBM DB2 licenses, we shrunk the database size even further by 36 percent to just 1.6 TB. This reduction was primarily a result of significantly more efficient compression features such as adaptive row compression and actionable compression, which are features available in IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration.”

The streamlined IT environment also accelerates disaster recovery time. “Our central SAP systems are crucial for our global operations – together with IBM, we have already reduced recovery time from 72 hours to just 12 hours,” explains Engelbert Wörle. The recovery objective is 12 hours – but with the combination of powerful servers, storage, data compression and IBM Tivoli® Storage Manager backup software, PLANSEE can be back online within just three hours of a failure – considerably improving business continuity.

Klaus Schennach, responsible for BI in the IT Application Development Department, explains, “Since we upgraded to IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration, we can generate group-level financial controlling reports as well as detailed sales and order statistics 30 percent faster. Whereas the previous SAP Business Warehouse Accelerator solution only supported known queries with preprocessed data, IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration also makes interactive data entry and ad-hoc reporting much faster. This acceleration saves our analysts time and helps our business departments to improve sales and production planning.

“For example, the time taken to produce material and warehouse reports has dropped by 40 percent, and reports that help us to understand the order pipeline can be created 30 percent faster. We can also identify issues with delivery dates around 20 percent faster, and we can drill down into order details much more quickly than before.”

Engelbert Wörle concludes, “With the cost-efficient solution based on IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration, we have achieved full return on our investment in the technology within a year.”

For more information

To learn more about IBM DB2 with BLU Acceleration, contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: ibm.com/software/data/db2/linux-unix-windows/db2-blu-acceleration



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