

Flexibility, reliability and economy with FlexFrame™ for Oracle

The Sommer Group builds on grid computing



»No matter how it's configured, a fixed server landscape always has defined resources. With FlexFrame for Oracle, I don't have to worry about that.«

Heinrich Chemnitzer, Head of System Analysis and Programming of the Sommer Group

→ The Customer

Sommer Fassaden-systeme, Stahlbau, Sicherheitstechnik GmbH & Co. KG

Döhlau bei Hof/Saale, Germany
www.sommer-hof.de

→ The Project

Complete migration of hardware, operating system and application environment to a new ERP system

→ The Solution

Implementation of IFS Applications on FlexFrame™ for Oracle® grid computing infrastructure

Project partners:
IFS, Oracle

There comes a time when every company has to rethink its IT strategy. The IT decision-makers of the Sommer Group realized that and opted for Dynamic Data Center™—the synonym for the Fujitsu Siemens Computers IT strategy. This new approach involves the use of virtualization and automation technology to create a new generation in IT architecture. In this case, the solution includes an agile system that makes the business processes of this medium-sized company significantly more stable and at the same time increases IT operational efficiency—FlexFrame for Oracle. Our Dynamic IT Solution, which is based on Oracle grid technology, was deployed when the Sommer Group decided to migrate from the ERP system in place to IFS Applications. The transition was

effected with no problems and on schedule. The new system has been in production since April 2006, and the company's IT personnel now has the good feeling that comes with knowing that they can handle future performance and application needs flexibly, reliably and economically.

Solutions for contemporary architecture

The Sommer Group can look back upon over 100 years of involvement in building construction, planning and design. With over 400 employees, the company today offers solutions that meet and exceed the high standards of its customers which it comes to modern glass architecture and building security. The company's range of products includes building fronts, glass roofs, doors and gates.



Benefits for the Sommer Group

- Consolidated server landscape: a single server pool for both production and testing environments
- Significant reduction in operating and maintenance expense
- Enhanced protection for business-critical applications
- Dynamic allocation of resources for optimal service quality
- Future-safe investment since the grid platform can be flexibly scaled with industry-standard technology

The solution at a glance

- Incremental migration of ERP system, including the entire system environment
 - Introduction of IFS Applications on FlexFrame for Oracle grid platform
- Current configuration
- Servers: 10 PRIMERGY BX620-S2 Blades
 - Operating system:
SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 8 (SLES8)
 - Oracle Database 10g, Oracle Real Application Clusters (RAC) 10g, Oracle Application Server 10g
 - Virtualization software from Fujitsu Siemens Computers

Incremental transition to Dynamic Data Center

Heinrich Chemnitzer, who heads up the areas of system analysis and programming for the Sommer Group, expressed his satisfaction with the migration of his company's system landscape: "We had a very complex IT shopping list—but everything went much smoother than we expected. To a great extent, we were able to make the transition so smoothly and within the planned time frame because the cooperation between all parties involved functioned so well." However, it took considerable work to get the job done. When it was announced that maintenance would no longer be available for the old ERP System, the Sommer Group decided to upgrade its entire IT environment—including hardware, the operating system and applications—to the most recent state of the art: Dynamic Data Center.

In view of the different requirements of its various operational activities, the company committed to incremental migration of functional areas together with implementation of a modern server architecture. "Big-bang migration might have been easier, but the risks would also have been significantly greater since the old system had undergone extensive customization to meet the specific requirements of our business units," explains Chemnitzer. The company chose IFS Applications for its ERP system. One of the advantages of this scenario was that it allowed parallel operation of both the old system and the new one with the same data. Near-standard functional areas were migrated to IFS Applications in an initial phase and those areas that had been significantly customized followed in a second phase. In addition, legacy hardware was replaced by a

PRIMEPOWER server for productive operation and another for development and testing activities. The next step represented the actual transition to a new era in IT operation—migration of all applications to a single system, namely, FlexFrame for Oracle. "The FlexFrame system was an obvious choice since the IFS ERP system is based on Oracle databases and promises significant savings and considerably better protection against IT emergencies," says Chemnitzer. "Although no reference installations existed, we found these benefits so attractive that we decided to implement FlexFrame in a pilot project." FlexFrame for Oracle now for the first time permits a grid platform that can visualize and run applications based on Oracle Application Server or Oracle Database 10g. At the level of IT operation, that results in appreciable benefits. For example, dynamic allocation of resources to applications guarantees adequate performance on an ongoing basis. Automatic failover in the event of a system outage guarantees that downtime is limited to a matter of seconds—without the need for an expensive hot-standby cluster environment.

For Chemnitzer, that adds up to an attractive bottom line: "We now have a very scalable solution that offers enhanced availability and protection against outages. At the same time, we were able to reduce our outlay for servers and achieve a significant decrease in operating and maintenance costs, and that's what our ROI projections led us to expect. We now plan to determine exactly what our ROI is together with Fujitsu Siemens Computers. However, there's no doubt but that we were able to significantly reduce our IT operating costs. In any case, migration paid off for us."

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