

Case Study



Stadtwerke Saarbrücken Completes Their Data Center

Stadtwerke Saarbrücken is the biggest communal service provider in Saarbrücken, the capital city of Germany's federal state 'Saarland'. The public utilities provider has over 1000 employees to provide water, electricity, long-distance heating, the main operations for gas, water, electricity and heating, the public transport, meter management, the operation of public baths and several other holdings. Their ultra-modern data center is the foundation for all critical IT services to many of Stadtwerke's subsidiaries, that act as national players.

THE CHALLENGE

Stadtwerke Saarbrücken, a German utility service provider chose FalconStor to underpin its vision of a fully software-defined data center and become more flexible to choose any data destination. A critical success factor for Stadtwerke Saarbrücken was the operation of its state of the art software-defined data center, stretched over two locations in Saarbrücken.

To achieve a very high level of flexibility and scalability, Stadtwerke was using software-defined technologies wherever possible. Technologies like server virtualization, VDI, software-defined networking and other modern components alongside a context-defined security solution and big data management with real-time data analytics had already been implemented. Regarding storage, Stadtwerke had used FalconStor's SDS-solution NSS for many years already to virtualize their entire storage infrastructure and to guarantee high availability for all services for their own subsidiaries as well as for clients of IT services throughout Germany. They are always on the lookout to improve their system even more.

THE OBJECTIVES



Prepare for roll out of new service platform for third parties that need more performance



Upgrade storage infrastructure



Achieve higher performance for existing and future workloads



Extend capacity

THE SOLUTION

Stadtwerke did not hesitate to upgrade to the FalconStor Data Mastery Platform (formerly branded FreeStor) from its previous FalconStor solution, NSS, once it became available in early 2016. Christian Schorr, Stadtwerke's IT-Manager explains: "The most important reason for us to use a SDS-solution is the enormous amount of flexibility we gain from it. At the core of FalconStor's platform is the powerful storage abstraction, which means to us that when we buy new storage or extending or scale existing storage sub systems, we don't have to worry about anything. We can just simply add the new capacity within the central management interface and have all advanced storage features ready to use for the entire abstracted storage pool, regardless of vendor, type or location."

“Our systems had been running smoothly for years already, managed through FalconStor’s management console. When we heard FalconStor would roll out a completely new SDS platform that would build on the solution we had trusted for years, we did not hesitate to upgrade.”

- Christian Schorr,
IT Manager, Stadtwerke

The Results

- Stadtwerke now manages six servers stretched over two clusters with a total capacity of close to 600 TB
- Stadtwerke was able to "extend their existing IBM server’s life by a mile."
- The FalconStor solution now in place allows Stadtwerke Saarbrücken to choose any storage destination, including the cloud.

Unlike other organizations that upgrade their storage appliances on very short cycles, we try to max out the value we get from our appliances. Our IBM systems for example are already more than eight years old and we did not just replace them with newer ones. The storage virtualization tools from FalconStor let us extend the usage of those appliances as we just move them to a lower storage tier. It does not really matter that they are not supported as the systems themselves are fully redundant and there is only tier 3 data stored on them. So this is a risk we can live with.

THE RESULT

To migrate all workloads to the new solution, FDMP was installed parallel to NSS on the new HP 3Par solution and a step by step migration was undertaken. Workloads are mixed on the storage systems although the 3Par machine is more modern and most critical workloads like SAP run on that. More data-heavy applications and file services run on the IBM-solution.

The FalconStor Data Mastery Platform now offers storage virtualization, intelligent abstraction, analytics and unified data services that deliver real, tangible benefits for Stadtwerke’s IT organization. When choosing FalconStor, a key factor was simple and powerful monitoring, as monitoring in virtualized environments is difficult to master and critical to manage complex installations easily. Christian Schorr explains: "Monitoring is extremely important to us and the new predictive analytics tool will be very a great asset for us in the future. Managing capacity is always a topic for audits and it is important that systems we use have tools included that offer a lot of insight of past, present and future usage. We have to show the auditor how our capacity management is done and the included predictive analytics help us a lot to get our plans approved."

At the moment all of Stadtwerke’s IT services are hosted on their own premises but the team is already looking ahead to the future, when cloud technologies will become more and more important to add even more flexibility. Christian Schorr: "As mentioned before, we love technology that offers us more flexibility. Although we are not using any cloud services at the moment, we believe there are many scenarios that can benefit us in the future. It is comforting to know that with FalconStor we have a solution in place that let’s us choose any storage destination, including the cloud."

About Falconstor

FalconStor Software, Inc (OTCQB: FALC) empowers IT professionals to achieve mastery of their data – an organization’s most precious asset – so they can responsibly push the boundaries of what’s possible in the digital economy. The company’s award- winning flagship solution, the FalconStor Data Mastery Platform (formerly branded FreeStor), is a modern, comprehensive and easy-to-use software platform that gives IT professionals centralized data management control across all their resources to reduce operational costs, lower risk, and avoid technology compromises. FalconStor’s vendor and hardware-agnostic solutions are designed to work with existing investments across complex environments, including legacy data centers, hyper-converged infrastructure, cloud, and hybrids.

Founded in 2000, FalconStor is headquartered in Austin, Texas and has additional offices in New York, Europe and Asia. Our solutions are available and supported by a vast network of system integrators and resellers. For more information, please visit www.falconstor.com.

FALCONSTOR®

Corporate Headquarters
701 Brazos Street, Suite 400
Austin, TX 78701
Tel: +1.631.777.5188
salesinfo@falconstor.com

Europe Headquarters
Rosa-Bavarese-Strasse 3
80639 München, Germany
Tel: +49 (0) 89.41615321.10
salesemea@falconstor.com

Asia Headquarters
Room 1901, PICC Office Tower
No. 2 Jian Guo Men Wai Avenue
Chaoyang District Beijing 100020 China
Tel: +86.10.6530.9505
salesasia@falconstor.com