



Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Industry

Healthcare

Goal

Automation and flexibilization of the IT infrastructure

Approach

Migration from conventional IT systems to HPE Hyper Converged solutions

IT improvements

- Flexible provisioning of resources through virtualization
- Reduced administrative effort
- Synchronous firmware update of all components by the hardware vendor
- Vendor ensures function of overall system, not just of individual components
- Simplified replacement of the system at the end of its useful lifetime or migration to a more powerful unit

Business improvements

- Very short time-to-value following installation of the systems
- Increased productivity thanks to reduced involvement of system administrators in hardware-related tasks
- Scope and role of IT staff change, administrators become middleware specialists
- Cost transparency and reliable planning
- Reduced footprint due to high degree of integration and compact design

ITSG—trusted IT partner for healthcare and social services

Hyper Converged systems from Hewlett Packard Enterprise simplify data center structures



The IT infrastructure provided by ITSG serves as a data processing and distribution hub for healthcare and social services. This infrastructure incorporates HPE Hyper Converged systems that use virtualization to dynamically provide the required compute and storage capacities and to reduce administrative effort compared to conventional IT solutions

When hundreds of thousands of employers in Germany submit their statutory insurance premium reports to Germany's national health insurance and social security organizations, these reports are transferred using prescribed electronic methods, including encryption. ITSG's products and services play a key role in this process. The business applications used by these organizations – such as the issue of ID numbers for citizens' health insurance cards, system checks for payroll applications or medication information systems – also rely on the services of ITSG. In the ITSG data center, health insurance and social security data is collected from complex business applications for processing and distribution. To be able to handle the dynamic growth of workloads more efficiently and more flexibly, the company switched from conventional IT to converged and hyper converged system. Today, ITSG deploys some 800 virtual systems.



“Our customers do not pay for hardware but for the services we provide. The reliability of these services is our key performance indicator. HPE Hyper Converged systems provide us with a stable and flexible solution for some areas. These solutions are more straightforward to manage than conventional base technologies.”

Harald Flex, Chief Executive Officer, ITSG GmbH

ITSG GmbH

ITSG (Informationstechnische Service-stelle der gesetzlichen Krankenversicherung GmbH) was founded in 1996 by Germany’s national association of statutory health insurers. To date, ITSG is the only IT company whose shares are exclusively held by the country’s health insurers and their umbrella association. This puts ITSG into a unique position in Germany’s IT landscape. Headquartered in Heusenstamm in the state of Hesse, the company employs some 110 staff. Numerous external service providers support ITSG with specialized know-how.

The products and services provided by ITSG simplify and accelerate the electronic exchange of data between employers, care providers, health insurers, social insurance agencies, and their business partners. ITSG drives and supports the standardization of data exchange and data processing in the statutory health insurance sector, creating synergies for its shareholders in non-competitive areas.

Classic IT too complex

When ITSG was founded in 1996, the company started its IT business with a small number of servers. Year after year, more servers plus a wide range of data storage systems and network components were added. Increasingly, the company’s IT staff were kept busy accommodating and coordinating different firmware update cycles of a wide variety of hardware products. The company’s highly complex IT architecture lacked flexibility and would have required tremendous management effort in the long run.

Strategic decision for hyper convergence

Following an in-depth analysis of suitable alternatives, ITSG opted for a bold move. The company decided to introduce hyper converged systems, virtualized under a common hypervisor, to gear up for future challenges.

“We decided to switch to hyper converged systems—against all odds. Yes, we had the courage to take risks. This decision was supported by independent scientific advice. For ITSG, this switch has paid off,” explains Harald Flex, CEO at ITSG.

As a company associated with the public sector, ITSG is not tied to a single vendor. In the hyper convergence arena, ITSG pursues a clear strategy that complies with public-sector procurement regulations. Consequently, the company also deploys hyper converged systems from other vendors.

Compelling solution concept

The overall concept presented by HPE, an attractive price tag and positive experience with its HPE ConvergedSystem 700 prompted ITSG to acquire a number of HPE Hyper Converged 250 (HC 250) systems within the framework of tenders. Factory preconfigured by HPE, these systems run as “black boxes” under the hypervisor. “This approach minimizes our installation effort, even when systems need to be replaced or more systems are added, and it reduces setup times for the provisioning of new applications,” says Flex.

Customer solution at a glance

Converged system

HPE ConvergedSystem 700 (CS 700)

Hyper converged systems

HPE Hyper Converged 250 (HC 250)

What is hyper convergence?

Hyper convergence integrates compute, storage and virtualization resources within a single system. Hyper converged systems feature a much higher degree of software integration than do converged systems. All resources integrated into the hyper converged system are managed as one system. Hyper convergence simplifies the provisioning of resources and ensures system-internal compatibility.

Source

Images: ITSG



High degree of automation

The HPE HC 250 systems are structured into virtual function blocks. Each of the business applications used by ITSG's customers is assigned to its own function block. The compute power and storage capacity of each block are dimensioned automatically for the specific needs of the associated application. Optionally, applications can be moved with reasonable effort to another block that provides greater performance, for example.

Clear and simple structures

HPE Hyper Converged systems assign their entire hardware management to the virtualization layer. The maintenance of the HPE HC 250 systems is performed at regular intervals through a matrix update delivered by HPE. There is no need for system administrators to physically connect hardware components or to implement product-specific firmware updates. "Our administrators no longer have to deal with the hardware inside of the system. They are becoming middleware specialists—and they increasingly focus on productive operations and application maintenance," Flex confirms.

Since their introduction, the HPE HC 250 systems at ITSG have been running stably and without any outage.



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