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*Roman Feigenwinter
Storage Team Leader
Coop*



Coop Group Cures Growing Pains with Super-Fast Hitachi All-Flash Storage Solution

Challenge: Ensure that growing data volumes do not diminish the performance of mission-critical business applications.

Solution: Implement a high-speed all-flash solution to boost performance and reduce response times.

Outcome: Greater performance and reduced response times meet day-to-day business demands without interruptions or delays.

The Challenge

A Growing Business Means More Data

The Coop Group is headquartered in Switzerland and operates in the retail, wholesale and production sectors. Its stores serve customers in the areas of food, non-food and services. Coop offers the greatest choice of brands in Switzerland and has a broad range of environmentally friendly and socially responsible products, as well as sustainability achievements along the entire value chain.

Coop is tied with Transgourmet Holding AG as Europe's second largest cash and carry and wholesale supply business. In total, the Coop Group has around 2,000 retail outlets in Switzerland and 115 cash and carry markets in Switzerland and

other European countries. The Coop Group has a workforce of around 77,000, with approximately 53,000 employees in Switzerland. With its in-store and online business growing, the Coop Group's data volumes were also increasing rapidly.

“We predict data volumes will grow 30% a year over the next five years. Our SAP ERP, SAP Business Warehouse, SAP HANA, Oracle and other application environments are constantly expanding,” explains Storage Team Leader at Coop Group, Roman Feigenwinter. “More and more data is now retained for longer periods of time, and our existing storage infrastructure was approaching the point where we would not be able to cope with the demand for faster access.”



INDUSTRY

Retail

SOLUTION

Enterprise, All Flash

HARDWARE

Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform G1000
Hitachi Accelerated Flash

SOFTWARE

Hitachi Storage Virtualization Operating System

Outcomes

- Reduced footprint by 60%.
- Reduced response times by a factor of 10.
- Enabled three times faster overnight batch jobs.
- Migrated all mission-critical data with zero downtime.

He continues, “Additionally, the hybrid nature of storage platform was time-consuming to manage. We could not always ensure that the fastest solid-state drive (SSD) capacity was available for specific workloads. This had an knock-on effect on nightly batch processing, which would then often overrun and risk disrupting operations.”



The Solution

As Quick as All Flash

Considering the changing nature of the data, growth in volumes and the consequences of overrunning batch processes, the team set about refreshing Coop's infrastructure.

“Firstly, it was crucial that our new infrastructure was capable of accommodating the predicted levels of data growth,” Feigenwinter explains. “Next, we wanted to solve the issues around storage allocation, to help remove the batch processing issue; and finally, we wanted to be sure that the solution would last for five years. HDS was the only vendor to tick all these boxes,” he recalls. “What's more, because we have always had a good relationship with HDS and a positive experience with their technology, we knew that we could rely on HDS to deliver on what they promised.”

Coop implemented an all-flash solution with two Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform G1000 (VSP G1000) systems at each of its twin data centers located 130km apart. With all-flash storage, the VSP G1000 systems offered accelerated storage performance and superb scalability, providing a complete solution for Coop Group.

“The implementation went very smoothly,” recalls Feigenwinter. “We completed in-depth meetings with HDS when planning the implementation, and enjoyed some great technical discussions about the solution. The HDS team was always very open-minded and helpful,” he adds.

“Working together, we were able to migrate all of the mission-critical data from our previous storage systems to the VSPs during business hours, without any downtime. This process took just three weeks and users were none the wiser! Keeping our core applications, such as our SAP ERP, SAP Business Warehouse, SAP HANA, Oracle, etc., online throughout the migration process meant that there was no interruption to business, whatsoever,” he confirms.

The Benefits

Speedy, Scalable, Simple

With the VSP G1000 all-flash solution, Coop has turbocharged performance of its infrastructure. Notably, overnight batch jobs now run three times faster than in the past. “By tracking performance and response times we have seen significant improvements. With response times reduced by up to a factor of 10, response times of some applications are now under 1 millisecond,” Feigenwinter reports.

“With applications and systems running quicker, business users are able to get on with their jobs without any delay. The HDS solution helps to ensure that operations keep running smoothly, even as Coop Group continues to grow. Furthermore, all of the difficulties we had around storage allocation have disappeared,” continues

Feigenwinter. “Previously, with a hybrid solution, the storage team was constantly tied up in discussions with business users who wanted ‘premium’ flash storage for their applications. Today, all applications run on flash, so everyone benefits from high performance levels. The all-flash HDS solution freed up this time to focus on other tasks.”

Through implementing this solution, not only was Coop able to reduce its infrastructure by 60% (from five to two racks), but it was also able to gain a third more capacity. “The solution provided outstanding performance. “We are confident that the HDS all-flash solution will continue to meet growing demand now and in the future, all while keeping performance levels sky-high,” Feigenwinter concludes.

About HDS

Hitachi Data Systems innovates technology for business and social prosperity. Our IT solutions and services drive strategic management and analysis of the world's data. Ask us how we can help you get started. HDS.com

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