



GrECo JLT Group supports rapid business growth with improved performance and lower costs



GrECo JLT Group is an international insurance broker that specializes in providing risk management solutions for major corporations. Headquartered in Vienna, Austria, GrECo JLT has a huge presence in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe with 51 offices and 825 employees in 16 countries across the region.

Peter Jarisch, Head of IT Operations at GrECo JLT, says: “GrECo JLT is growing rapidly and plans to continue entering new markets—in 2013 alone we opened new offices in Estonia and Turkey. With this expansion came increased volumes of data and increased demand on central systems. We could not risk a decline in performance, so we looked for a way to optimize and future-proof our data warehouse environment.”

Meeting growing demand

To support business growth and better cope with a dramatic increase in data volumes, GrECo JLT wanted to modernize and reorganize its data warehousing capabilities. At that time, the company was running an outdated version of Microsoft® SQL Server® 2008 R2 Enterprise Edition on two separate servers to

Overview

After opening two new international branches in 2013, and with plans to keep growing across Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe, major insurance broker GrECo JLT recognized the need to reorganize its central data warehouse to cope with increased demand.

By consolidating its server landscape and migrating its Microsoft SQL Server software to a single System x® server from Lenovo, GrECo JLT improved performance levels by 20 percent and reduced licensing costs by 90 percent.

“GrECo JLT not only boosted data warehousing performance, but also we expect to reduce IT costs by 60 percent over the next five years.”

—Gerhard Blümel,
Deputy Head of IT Operations and Database Administrator,
GrECo JLT



support its mission-critical analytics and transactional systems. GrECo JLT planned to migrate to the Microsoft SQL Server 2014 Standard Edition to keep response times steady and reduce IT costs.

Gerhard Blümel, Deputy Head of IT Operations and Database Administrator at GrECo JLT, explains: “We could not allow performance to suffer. Our users expect quick response times.”

Due to a change in Microsoft’s licensing model, GrECo JLT had to rethink its data warehouse solution to avoid incurring significantly more expensive licensing costs. “We were looking at an investment of EUR 500,000 over five years purely for licenses,” says Gerhard Blümel. “Without even factoring in server and maintenance costs this was not a viable option for the business. We needed to find a more cost-effective way to manage our data warehouse performance levels.”

Consolidation and optimization

“We decided to get creative in finding a solution to this problem and we planned to consolidate the data warehouse. We wanted to migrate from two servers to just one more powerful server,” states Gerhard Blümel. “To reduce database licensing costs, our goal was to move from Microsoft SQL Server 2008 R2 Enterprise to the 2014 Standard Edition. The challenge was to effectively manage the limitations of the Standard Edition, so this change would not impact the performance of our mission-critical business applications.”

GrECo JLT engaged Business Partner Huemer iT-Solution to implement a new System x® X6 infrastructure solution from Lenovo. The combination of System x servers, equipped with Intel® Xeon® processors, and eXFlash memory-channel storage technology offers exceptionally-fast response times and low latency.

Gerhard Blümel comments: “We fine-tuned the environment, and our data warehouse is now running considerably faster than on our previous systems.”

Better performance, lower costs

The Lenovo solution offers GrECo JLT extremely high performance levels. “We were pleasantly surprised that system performance improved so much,” says Peter Jarisch, Head of IT Operations at GrECo JLT. “We were expecting runtime to remain static, given the database limitations of the Standard Edition, so reducing the runtime by 20 percent was an excellent achievement.”

Gerhard Blümel continues: “The Lenovo solution fulfilled all of our expectations and we will move on from demo environment into production soon. We minimized total IT costs considerably because we are saving approximately 90 percent in database licensing costs. Server investment and software licensing costs combined over five years are projected to decrease by 60 percent. We can operate our Microsoft SQL Server environments much more cost-effectively and benefit from all the new features of the latest release.”

Solution components

Hardware

- System x3950 X6 with Intel® Xeon® processors

Software

- Microsoft® SQL Server® 2014 Standard Edition
- Microsoft Hyper-V®

Business Partner

- Huemer iT-Solution

“We were pleasantly surprised that system performance improved by 20 percent thanks to our new Lenovo infrastructure.”

—Peter Jarisch,
Head of IT Operations,
GrECo JLT

The company is currently also consolidating its Microsoft Hyper-V virtualization solution. For this purpose, GrECo JLT has ordered five additional System x3950 X6 servers to further streamline its IT infrastructure.

Gerhard Blümel concludes: "We boosted data warehousing performance while reducing IT costs. We are very confident that as GrECo JLT continues to expand, the easily scalable Lenovo solution will grow with us, helping keep performance high and operational costs low."

For more information

To learn more about System x, contact your Business Partner or visit:

lenovo.com/systems

For more information about GrECo JLT visit: www.greco-jlt.com

For more information about Huemer iT-Solution visit: huemer-it.com/en/

To share and connect:



"We minimized total IT costs considerably because we are saving approximately 90 percent in database licensing costs."

—Gerhard Blümel,
Deputy Head of IT Operations and Database Administrator,
GrECo JLT

lenovo®

© 2015 Lenovo. All rights reserved.

Availability: Offers, prices, specifications and availability may change without notice. Lenovo is not responsible for photographic or typographic errors.

Warranty: For a copy of applicable warranties, write to: Warranty Information, 500 Park Offices Drive, RTP, NC, 27709, Attn: Dept. ZPYA/B600. Lenovo makes no representation or warranty regarding third-party products or services. **Trademarks:** Lenovo, the Lenovo logo, and System x are trademarks or registered trademarks of Lenovo. Microsoft is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. Intel, the Intel logo, Xeon and Xeon Inside are registered trademarks of Intel Corporation in the U.S. and other countries. Other company, product, and service names may be trademarks or service marks of others. Visit <http://www.lenovo.com/lenovo/us/en/safecomp.html> periodically for the latest information on safe and effective computing.