



Success Story

All for One Steeb Uses NetApp to Protect SAP HANA, Eliminating Downtime and Workarounds



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Industry

Information technology

The Challenge

Providing a new backup model to support reliable, 24/7 access to ERP services with SAP HANA.

The Solution

Deploy a NetApp® MetroCluster™ with HA configuration; back up local instances using NetApp Snapshot®; create NetApp SnapVault® backups outside production environment; and support seamless back up management with HANA Studio and NetApp SnapCreator.

Benefits

- Lightning-fast backup with no impact on performance
- 24/7 availability for SAP HANA
- Standardized SAP operating model also applied to SAP HANA

Customer Profile

All for One Steeb AG is the leading SAP partner in the German-speaking SAP market and has the largest customer base in the mid-sized business sector. More than 2,000 companies in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland place their trust in All for One Steeb AG.

The company is both a supplier and a strategic partner. Its portfolio includes solutions and services for every step of the IT value chain. The company currently provides managed cloud services to approximately 70,000 SAP users and operates more than 2,500 operating systems and 1,500 SAP instances for more than 240 customers.

All for One Steeb AG has approximately 1,200 employees and generated a turnover of €217 million in its 2013–14 financial year.

Relying on NetApp since 2010

All for One Steeb has been relying on NetApp storage solutions for traditional SAP environments since 2010 and has always had a very positive experience. Integration between the two systems is seamless, even when working with a production environment and heterogeneous databases.

NetApp storage solutions are always network attached and deployed with the NFS protocol. “This gives us unmatched flexibility for our customer’s systems and greatly simplifies our operating model,” explains Dirk Lorenz, head of platform services at All for One Steeb. “The real question for us was whether the highly valued benefits of NetApp’s storage solutions would still hold their own when it came to the SAP database technology of the future: SAP HANA.”

The Challenge

In 2015, an opportunity arose for All for One Steeb to put this to the test. A mid-sized customer in the manufacturing industry wanted to migrate from SAP Business Suite 7.0 to SAP HANA. The customer’s existing MaxDB database had reached its limits, and there was also strong demand from within the industry and its own customers for unlimited 24/7 access to ERP services.

All for One Steeb already had a lot of experience with SAP HANA implementations. However, the specific challenge for this customer was that the environment was a production environment. There was also the added requirement of having to provide virtually 100%

availability. This meant that downtime during backup and restore processes had to be kept to a minimum.

This last requirement was challenging for two reasons. First, compared to traditional SAP products, SAP HANA is based on a specific operating model and a fundamentally different data management approach. Second, the full backup method used by SAP HANA involves sequential writes to separate disks, which is very resource intensive and places considerable constraints on operations when backups are performed at peak load.

One of the services All for One Steeb offers its customers is running highly available and virtualized SAP HANA system services from its data centers, while also meeting strict SLA requirements. That was the plan in this specific case. Negative impact on performance or even downtime during backup was not an option. Rigorous targets in terms of data protection policies also had to be reached.

For cost reasons, the customer also wanted to use existing NetApp secondary systems as the backup infrastructure.

The Solution

All for One Steeb deployed a NetApp FAS8060 MetroCluster solution based on a high-availability configuration. Data is distributed to two data centers located approximately six miles apart. Each site provides 107TB of available capacity.

The process of backing up the SAP HANA database is performed in two steps. First, local instances are backed up using NetApp Snapshot technology and then registered in the SAP HANA backup catalog. This entire process takes less than a minute. Next, the backups are moved to another location using NetApp SnapVault software. This second step is performed asynchronously, outside the production environment.

In conjunction with the SAP HANA integrated management interface,

HANA Studio, NetApp Snap Creator® software is used to support seamless management of consistent backups. This framework provides a plug-in that allows the integration of NetApp features into SAP HANA.

The Benefits

“If we had opted for conventional SAP backup technology, we would have had to reconfigure the SAP HANA system so we could offset service disruptions during backup,” says Lorenz. “However, because we used NetApp, this wasn’t necessary. The infrastructure is still lean and streamlined.”

Each backup is completed very quickly. Compared to traditional methods, the first step in the backup process, which is important for database operations, is completed 60 to 100 times faster. With the exception of about one minute, SAP HANA is available 24/7.

The storage-based Snapshot backup solution allows for data protection without downtime. Even hourly backups can be performed effortlessly and with no impact on operations or on restore requirements.

In summing up how significant the success of this project has been for his division, Lorenz explains, “We wanted to use the same proven, standardized NetApp model that we used for conventional SAP environments and apply it to SAP HANA as well. We were very happy with the result. We are now in a position to offer our customers unlimited access to SAP HANA based on the same SLA requirements as traditional SAP applications: high availability and virtualization.”

Strategic importance

Michael Scherf, member of the All for One Steeb management team and head of the Managed Services division, explains why this latest experience with NetApp is important for the company: “We are now one of the leading providers of SAP HANA solutions for the upper midmarket. HANA is the SAP technology of the future, so it is very important to

be able to provide a storage solution that meets the toughest requirements in terms of data protection and availability.”

Scherf continues, “The successful integration of NetApp unified storage solutions with SAP HANA means that we can now use our existing SAP processes for HANA as well, without having to compromise at the expense of our customers.”

With NetApp, all SAP HANA data can be protected to the usual high standard. Backups and restores can be provided with virtually no downtime at all. “Without the NetApp Snapshot technology and software integration, our customers would have had to endure service disruptions of up to two hours per day,” says Scherf. “For us, that would have been unacceptable.”

When asked about other SAP challenges coming down the line, Scherf explains, “We have also carried out tests recently with SAP S/4HANA. With NetApp storage solutions, the path ahead is clear in terms of technology. All requirements are met.”

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

Products and Services

NetApp FAS8000 series, HA configuration, MetroCluster, Snapshot, SnapVault, Snap Creator framework with SAP HANA plug-in

Operating Systems

SUSE Linux Enterprise, Microsoft Windows Server

Applications

SAP Business Suite

Databases

SAP HANA, SAP Sybase ASE, SAP MaxDB, IBM DB2, Microsoft SQL Server, Oracle

Protocols

NFS, iSCSI



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