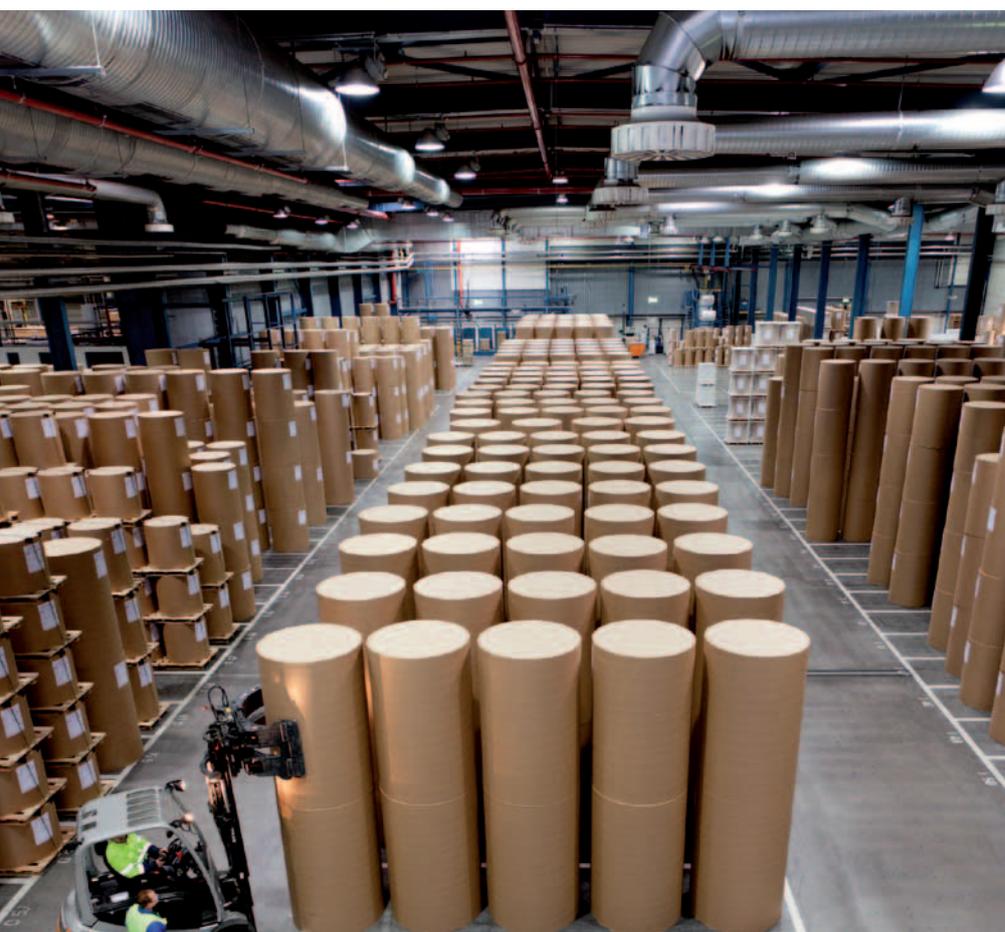# Firm boosts efficiency with innovative environment

Germany-based manufacturing company reduces cost of business warehouse by a third with simplified database infrastructure

Business need

Manufacturing company Koehler Paper Group wanted to replace its conventional database environment with a more efficient infrastructure.

Solution

The company worked with Dell and SAP to introduce a new database solution based on SAP® HANA™ and Dell™ PowerEdge™ servers in three days.

Benefits

- New system cuts data loading times from five minutes to five seconds
- Firm reduces cost of business warehouse by one third
- Ease of use simplifies reporting process
- Efficient reporting helps employees make smarter decisions faster
- Strong partnership provides expert consultancy

Application areas

- Application Services
- Deployment Services
- Server Solutions
- Support Services

"I was very pleased with the technical know-how of the Dell and SAP teams... Not only was the level of expertise impressive, but on a personal level, everyone collaborated well to make the project a success."

Karl Schindler, Head of IT, Koehler Paper Group

World leaders in specialist paper manufacturing, Germany-based Koehler Paper Group sells 500,000 tonnes of paper each year. It employs around 1,800 staff and reports an annual turnover of more than €700 million.

To support growth, the company must ensure that it continues to produce high-quality paper products from its plants in Greiz, Kehl and Weisenbach.

Karl Schindler, Head of IT, Koehler Paper Group, says: "We use state-of-the-art technology to produce a range of technical and graphic paper types. But we also depend on technology to ensure that our business runs as efficiently as possible. We need it to be quick and easy for our employees to access and analyse data on everything from order processing to plant machinery downtime."

With the right data analysis tools, the company wanted to make smarter decisions to boost plant performance, sales, and profitability. Schindler says: "Efficient enterprise resource planning (ERP) is central to our success. That's why we decided to upgrade our existing relational database solution. We wanted to make sure we had a cutting-edge infrastructure that could keep us one step ahead of our competitors."

Successful collaboration delivers expert consultancy
Koehler decided to implement a new database infrastructure with existing technology providers Dell and SAP. Schindler says: "We were already using a previous SAP solution on Dell hardware. At the CeBIT 2012 conference, SAP impressed us with its new database solution and we began the search for a hardware partner. Because we've had nothing but good experiences with Dell, that's who we chose to go with."
Once the decision to conduct the technology revamp had been made,

Dell took care of the hardware setup, SAP completed a sizing assessment and both companies advised Koehler's in-house team on the best way to complete the database migration. The entire implementation took just three days.

Schindler says: "I was very pleased with the technical know-how of the Dell and SAP teams. Three consultants from Dell and two from SAP spent three days, including a nightshift, on-site with us. Not only was the level of expertise impressive, but on a personal level, everyone collaborated well to make the project a success. The knowledge transfer was also excellent.

> "It takes just five seconds to activate data with SAP HANA – with BW Accelerator, that used to take 330 seconds with the conventional database. And data modelling and design is at least 30 per cent quicker too."
>
> *Karl Schindler, Head of IT, Koehler Paper Group*

Technology in practice

Services

Dell Application Services – SAP Practice

Dell Support Services – Dell ProSupport™ with Mission Critical

Dell Infrastructure Consulting

Hardware

Dell™ PowerEdge™ R910 servers with Intel® Xeon® processors E7-4870

Software

SAP® HANA™ in-memory database

We have a very experienced in-house team, but Dell and SAP did a great job of making sure we had everything we needed to make the most of our new infrastructure."

Innovative database solution cuts data activation times from five minutes to five seconds

A new database environment helped Koehler reduce the time it takes to activate business-critical data from more than five minutes to just five seconds. As a result, employees are more productive because they don't have to wait for data to load. The company decided to replace its existing relational database setup with two Dell™ PowerEdge™ R910 servers running an SAP® HANA™ in-memory database.

Schindler says: "We were already using SAP NetWeaver Business Warehouse (BW) Accelerator, which delivered fast query and search response times, but SAP HANA on the Dell servers has taken things even further. It takes just five seconds to activate data with SAP HANA – with BW Accelerator, that used to take 330 seconds with the conventional database. And data modelling and design is at least 30 per cent quicker too.

"Users get the results they need in seconds, which means they can stay focused on the task at hand instead of having to come back to it once a report has been generated. Giving staff faster access to data on inventory management, sales, technical performance, and financial accounting has had a real impact on day-to-day productivity."

Ease of use simplifies reporting process

Koehler personnel can now make better-informed decisions thanks to improved reporting. The new Dell–SAP infrastructure has dramatically simplified the process of reporting and analysis. Schindler says: "The new reporting infrastructure helps our employees make better-informed decisions, faster. Procurement data

with millions of datasets can now be analysed and broken down into single reports. SAP HANA basically covers any combination that's possible, even ones you'd never think you'd need."

The Dell–SAP system is so easy to use that all employees can create reports without involving the IT team. Schindler says: "Now, users can search for and cross-reference any type of data – whether it involves sales, inventory management, financial accounting or research and development – without IT staff having to spend time determining input criteria up-front. That means we don't need to worry about pre-empting any potential user request because they're free to create any reports they want."

Efficiency gains cut cost of business warehouse by around 33 per cent

Thanks to more efficient processes, IT staff have more time to work on higher value tasks. Schindler says: "We've improved efficiency across the organisation. Where SAP BW Accelerator helped us to create reports more quickly, SAP HANA optimises the entire dataflow, from producer to actual user. These efficiencies have reduced the burden on the IT team. The introduction of SAP HANA on the Dell PowerEdge servers has seen us reduce the total cost of ownership of our business warehouse system by at least one third."

Innovation paves the way for the future

With a more advanced database solution, Koehler can gain real insight into the business and a clearer view of its day-to-day activities. This ensures the company will be better placed to drive growth. Schindler says: "The Dell–SAP environment is future-oriented. Not only does it help us use data in more innovative ways than our original setup, but it also puts us at the forefront of our field.

"Soon, it will help us accelerate complicated tasks such as processing and analysing bulk data from our plant equipment in our process

management system – something that's practically impossible with conventional technology. We'll be able to boost efficiency even further by preventing standstill times of plant equipment and planning maintenance more effectively."

Koehler also plans to introduce SAP BusinessObjects Explorer to its new database infrastructure. Schindler says: "Once SAP BusinessObjects Explorer is up and running, we'll be able to generate reports very quickly and cut out several steps in the data processing chain. We can also search for and cross-reference huge volumes of data in seconds."

End-to-end support brings confidence and continuity
Koehler chose to adopt SAP Enterprise Support as well as Dell ProSupport™ with Mission Critical, which offers 24/7 support and on-site assistance within four hours. Schindler says: "In a successful project a few years ago, Dell implemented a virtualized infrastructure for our SAP ERP system, which has been running 24/7 with no downtime ever since. I know from experience that if we come up against any issues, Dell will fix them straight away. I've never had any negative feedback about Dell support – I'd be the first to hear about it if my people had something to complain about.

"What I really like about Dell is its direct contact, personal advice and end-to-end services. Most other suppliers have an intermediary company to deal with medium-sized companies such as us. But with Dell, we feel like we're in a real partnership, and we get a certain continuity of service that other companies simply don't provide."

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