



“ARX allows us to control our high volumes of data. ARX also supports our department when it comes to moving less critical data to more affordable storage and thus helps reduce IT investment.”

Hans-Jörg Leister, In-House Consultant for Storage and Archiving

Pharmaceutical Company Reduces Backup Times and Storage Costs with F5 Solution

B. Braun Melsungen AG is a manufacturer of pharmaceutical and medical products that employs more than 40,000 people in 50 countries, with 6,000 at headquarters in Melsungen, Germany. Braun supplies the health market with products for anaesthesia, intensive care, cardiology, extra-corporal blood treatment, and surgery.

B. Braun’s data volumes were increasing by 50 per cent annually and its long backup times were increasing by around 40 per cent, which posed increasingly difficult challenges for storage administrators. B. Braun needed a solution that could reduce backup frequencies and use intelligent storage tiering to free up additional storage resources. One of its most important criteria was support for stub-free systems.

Business Challenges

B. Braun consistently experienced storage capacity problems, often reaching the available limits at its data centre. Up to 95 per cent of available resources was permanently in use and at full capacity. Backup and restore times had increased to over 40 hours due to increasing data volumes. Although B. Braun could temporarily address the trend by buying new storage hardware, the problem would essentially remain unsolved. “We were looking for a solution that would take the pressure off on a long-term basis and reduce the need to buy more storage

modules. We also wanted to press on with the virtualisation of our file service environment,” explains Hans-Jörg Leister, In-House Consultant for Storage and Archiving.

B. Braun estimated the costs of the existing infrastructure at €0.60 per gigabyte of backup tape per year—a total of €300,000. It was critical for the storage team to save costs in this area. The first step was migrating the data to more affordable Tier 2 storage. The next step was to find an intelligent solution that could reduce

Overview

Industry

Pharmaceuticals and medicine

Challenges

- Optimise file service infrastructure
- Reduce backup times
- Decrease storage resources costs

Solution

- F5® ARX®

Benefits

- Cuts backup times by 50 per cent
- Saves €120,000 in CapEx
- Achieves ROI in 18 months

backup frequencies via storage tiering and reduce backup times by an ambitious 50 per cent. Finally, the company aimed to implement a stub-free system, which required a storage approach that would avoid the need to back up potentially millions of stub files.

Solution

The company reviewed quotes from various manufacturers to find the solution that most closely matched their needs. It made an extensive evaluation of the existing situation and the project specifications. The testing process included checking how 500 GB of data was directed to each storage tier based on predefined policies. Finally, the B. Braun team chose F5 ARX, which they implemented on four servers at the data centre in Melsungen.

Leister explains, "The most important criteria that swayed our decision to implement F5 ARX were scalability and stub-free support."

The ARX implementation was completed in March 2010, and the existing infrastructure was retained in full. F5's intelligent storage virtualisation, which allows seamless migration of data without interruption or downtime, was the right fit for B. Braun. Leister describes their experience: "It was crucial that we could connect our Macintosh PCs properly to ARX, and the additional file virtualisation layer was implemented in the Microsoft DFS Service environment without any problems."

Storage tiering support allows existing data to be distributed across different storage classes as a function of their relevance and age. With ARX, migration to Tier 2 storage is seamless. "F5 provided top-notch support at both planning and implementation stages, covering consultancy, project management, and maintenance. This avoided downtime

and other problems. After a brief training period, we were able to continue with operations on our own," explains Leister.

Benefits

There were several concrete benefits for B. Braun. It cut backup times by 50 per cent and reduced IT investments. The solution also guaranteed simple, seamless migration of the data into the existing file system, which meant that the restructuring process did not affect the employees' everyday work.

Storage tiering freed up 12 TB of Tier 1 storage—80 per cent of the total data volume. This data was relocated onto more affordable Tier 2/SATA units, which saved €30,000. As Tier 2 storage includes mainly older files, it is not part of the permanent backup process.

Having ARX in place meant B. Braun could defer or even cancel other planned data storage acquisitions. Its investment in ARX made purchasing a new Tier 1 storage unit unnecessary—reducing CapEx by €120,000. B. Braun was able to postpone plans to purchase hard drives by six months, and it needed 5 TB less storage capacity for the following 12 months than had originally been planned. The company achieved ROI in 18 months.

"ARX has provided us with the infrastructure to go ahead with the uninterrupted deletion of old data. ARX has reduced required times and costs and thus optimised the entire storage infrastructure," says Leister.

F5 Networks, Inc. 401 Elliott Avenue West, Seattle, WA 98119 888-882-4447 www.f5.com

F5 Networks, Inc.
Corporate Headquarters
info@f5.com

F5 Networks
Asia-Pacific
apacinfo@f5.com

F5 Networks Ltd.
Europe/Middle-East/Africa
emeainfo@f5.com

F5 Networks
Japan K.K.
f5j-info@f5.com

