

TOP TO BOTTOM

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END TO END

Monster migration at Laurus.

With a market share of approximately 19%, over 33,000 employees and more than 740 shops at home, Laurus NV is one of the most important organisations in the food industry in the Netherlands. Created in 1998 through the merger of De Boer Unigro NV and Vendex Food Groep BV, Laurus NV operates 744 supermarkets in the Netherlands under the Konmar, Super De Boer and Edah banners. These supermarkets are either wholly owned by Laurus or leased to independent entrepreneurs and franchisees. In 2002, Laurus achieved group-wide revenues of 5.5 billion Euro.

The SAP solution at Laurus is absolutely crucial for the business. The system, which manages the logistics and ordering for all supermarkets and numerous suppliers, has to be up and running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In fact, Laurus has only one opportunity a year to perform maintenance on its IT environment: the first weekend in June. This tight schedule leaves neither the time nor the freedom to take any risks.

The ERP solution at Laurus is based on SAP R/3 and the SAP Industry Solution for Retail, with a 2TB Oracle database.

As business growth put an increasing load on the system, it became clear that a hardware upgrade was needed. Laurus wanted to take the opportunity to simplify the maintenance of the environment, to consolidate its servers, and to achieve better performance. As if migrating the platform and database were not enough, the upgrade of the current SAP environment to the next release was also due. The stage was set for a mighty challenge, when Laurus asked IBM to support the SAP release upgrade and to consolidate the existing server landscape to IBM @server pSeries – all within 72 hours.

Mission impossible.

Impossible it seemed. Joost Smit, Project Manager of Laurus, explains: "The retail software used by Laurus has to be up and running all the time. Only once a year, during the first weekend in June, is it possible to shut down the system for a longer period to perform maintenance and upgrades. After this weekend, the system has to be up and running again. When you miss the time window, you basically have to wait an entire year for the next opportunity. So we had only 72 hours to perform the platform migration, the database migration of 2 Terabytes

Overview

■ The Challenge

Server Consolidation with platform migration plus migration and upgrade of a 2TB+ database plus release upgrade of the SAP® system in less than 72 hours

■ The Solution

Industry: Distribution

Application: SAP R/3® with SAP for Retail

Software: Oracle®

Hardware: IBM @server® pSeries™; IBM TotalStorage® Enterprise Storage Server™

Services: IBM Global Services; IBM Global Financing

■ The Benefits

Full migration achieved in extraordinary tight time frame, SAP upgrade performed with very little impact on the production system, massive performance improvements and simplified maintenance and scalability of the new IT infrastructure

IBM

SAP

including an upgrade to the next Oracle version, and the necessary SAP release upgrade to exploit the new functionality of the SAP solution."

IBM BCS breaks the mould.

A migration on this scale and at this speed was unprecedented, so the technical lead of the project at IBM was faced with a significant challenge. If conventional methodology had been applied, the migration would have entailed weeks of downtime. Since the time factor limited the options available to the project team, IBM chose to take an unconventional approach, and developed a special method for Laurus. IBM estimated that both the migration and upgrade could be performed within the 72-hour window, while giving Laurus the possibility of reverting to its original setup at any time, for reduced risk. This commitment to the success of the project, combined with IBM's vast experience of migration, convinced the Laurus team leaders to choose the IBM solution. Rinie Berkers, team leader for UNIX®/SAP at Laurus, comments: "We had different, but mutually dependent projects running in parallel in different locations, so it was essential to establish a good teaming atmosphere between Laurus and IBM. In the end, the project was so successful, we even managed to further optimise our WebSphere MQ [formerly MQSeries®] interfacing in the same 72-hour period".

The technology behind the scenes.

The unconventional approach chosen in the preparation phase of the migration was based on the Shareplex-tool from software vendor Quest Software. Shareplex can maintain a copy of the production database with few resources and little load on the production environment. An IBM @server pSeries p690 with several Logical Partitions (LPARs) was

connected to an IBM TotalStorage Enterprise Storage Server (ESS). This formed the basis for a powerful new platform, and enabled intensive testing and migration of data. Several weeks before the planned migration weekend, IBM performed the data migration of the 2TB Oracle database. IBM optimized its new methodology using native Oracle tools (a hybrid method of import/export, CTAS and PL/SQL), reducing the lead-time from several weeks to just 15 hours. Via replication, the databases were kept synchronized without necessitating modifications to the SAP environment. The result of this strategy was to produce a mirror system, reducing the overall downtime of the production environment considerably and allowing for a 100% fallback scenario, keeping risk to a minimum.

Top teams.

With everything in place, the project team awaited the first weekend of June with impatience – and the monster migration was completed even more smoothly than expected. IBM and Laurus managed to complete the whole project in just 68 hours, four hours under schedule. After the technical team had optimised the migration lead-time to 15 hours, it was decided that the data migration would go ahead on the Friday night. Initially, the team ran into a few delays, but the high performance of the system during the SAP upgrade meant that they were quickly able to catch up. Monday was reserved for testing, and the speed of the system was well above expectations. There was a brief moment of panic when all interface/MQ-queues were found to be empty, but this quickly turned to relief when the team realised that all outstanding transactions in the queues had already been processed by the system, which was running far faster than the old platform.

Peter Huberts, Manager Process Management ICT, sums up the positive experience: "IBM certainly lived up to our expectations. The company's reputation as a total solution provider is fully justified: the new hardware delivers excellent performance, and the entire handling of the project by IBM was very professional. We kept to the ambitious timeframe we set for ourselves, and got back to business right on time."

Further Information.

To learn more about how the IBM and SAP alliance can help your business, please visit: **ibm-sap.com**



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