Business challenge

When a health insurance customer requested a mobile app, BITMARCK Technik GmbH sought a flexible API management platform with proven security capabilities to develop and deliver the solution.

Transformation

When a health insurance customer requested a mobile app, BITMARCK saw an opportunity to shift to an API model for development and delivery. Implementing IBM® API Connect® and IBM DataPower® Gateway technology, IBM Cloud™ Professional Services helped the IT provider establish a flexible, security-rich architecture for creating and managing API-based offerings.

Results

Provides a new model
for efficiently creating and managing API-based offerings

Drives collaboration
with a flexible architecture shared across locations

Initiates larger transformation
that will include integrating services with its partners

BITMARCK Technik GmbH

Transforms app development with a flexible API framework

As an IT managed services provider for Germany's statutory health insurance (GKV), BITMARCK is driving digitization in the industry with innovative solutions and services. DAK-Gesundheit and other health insurance funds use the BITMARCK_21c|ng GKV software standard to increase process efficiency. In all, more than 30,000 employees and approximately 25 million policyholders in the GKV benefit from BITMARCK services. With 1,400 employees, BITMARCK has an annual turnover of approximately EUR 286 million and serves 85 percent of the German statutory health insurance funds.

"API Connect gives us a cleaner, more flexible way to build our applications."

—Andreas Gallus, Enterprise Architect, BITMARCK Technik GmbH

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An opportunity to evolve with an API model

To provide healthcare insurance companies with the services and solutions a rapidly changing industry demands, BITMARCK stays at the forefront of the latest developments in IT. When an insurer needed to provide its customers with a mobile app, the technology firm saw an opportunity to shift to an API model for development and delivery.

"This was our first external app involving communication between a health insurance company and its customers," says Andreas Gallus, Enterprise IT Architect for BITMARCK Technik GmbH. "We thought in the future we would be able to integrate more services into the insurer's app and build an ecosystem for online services with an API approach."

Instead of establishing "point-to-point" connections between each service and supporting infrastructure, BITMARCK sought a flexible API management platform to organize all channels feeding the app and provide one integrated user interface. To safely incorporate services from both cloud and on-premises environments, the company needed a solution with proven security capabilities.

API Connect seamlessly integrates services

BITMARCK chose the API Connect platform based on its ability to support the company's multicloud strategy and the security features offered by DataPower Gateway technology. "IBM DataPower Gateway is an important differentiator," says Jan-Philipp Schiller, Integration Architect for IBM. "It's not an open-source gateway like many competitive platforms have. It's closed firmware— solid and proven in the marketplace."

IBM Cloud Professional Services played a critical role in designing, building and configuring BITMARCK's API Connect solution. Deploying DataPower Gateway virtual appliances in the company's cloud infrastructure and its on-premises environment, the IBM team created a flexible, security-rich API architecture that seamlessly connects services for the insurance provider's mobile app.

After implementing the solution, IBM Cloud Professional Services worked closely with BITMARCK to help orient its users in the new technology. The IBM team helped the company define roles and responsibilities for operating in the API Connect environment and conducted multiple workshops to educate users.

A flexible new development framework

With the IBM solution, BITMARCK successfully launched its first mobile app for external users. "Our customer will now be more competitive with other insurance companies," says Gallus. "And our app is supporting better communication with its own customer base."

The IBM technology provides BITMARCK with a new model for efficiently creating and managing API-based offerings. It also introduces a more collaborative approach to app development overall, providing an established architectural pattern for the company's IT group to operate in across locations.

"From an architectural viewpoint, we've achieved our objectives," says Gallus. "API Connect gives us a cleaner, more flexible way to build our applications."

The IBM solution is BITMARCK's first step in a larger transformation and embrace of API architecture as a key business enabler. In addition to delivering API-based apps to its customers, the IT provider looks forward to integrating services with its partners for more seamless collaboration.

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