IBM

BRUNATA METRONA
Einfach. Mehr. Qualität.

Business challenge

How could BRUNATA-METRONA combine and analyze data from millions of IoT sensors to enable intelligent home automation for its customers and reduce energy consumption and costs?

Transformation

The company is optimizing its investments and creating actionable insights with integrated data from millions of sensors, using SAP® ERP applications running on IBM Power® Systems and IBM® Storage.

Markus Hertrich, CIO and Bernd Maisenbacher, Head of IT and Telco Operations, BRUNATA-METRONA

Business benefits:

99%
faster billing processes

>99,9%
availability for business-critical applications

Millions
of sensors deliver continuous data to core systems

BRUNATA-METRONA
Achieving sustainable energy consumption with detailed usage data and intelligent real estate operations

BRUNATA-METRONA (external link), headquartered in Munich, Germany, is a leading provider of heating and water solutions to the real estate sector. With 750 employees, the company offers comprehensive services to property companies, private landlords, homeowners and renters. The family-owned business drives innovation in the field of home automation to increase energy efficiency with the use of advanced IT solutions.

"Working with IBM, we have direct access to leading specialists in a wide range of fields and can take advantage of IBM's technology leadership."

Bernd Maisenbacher

Head of IT and Telco Operations

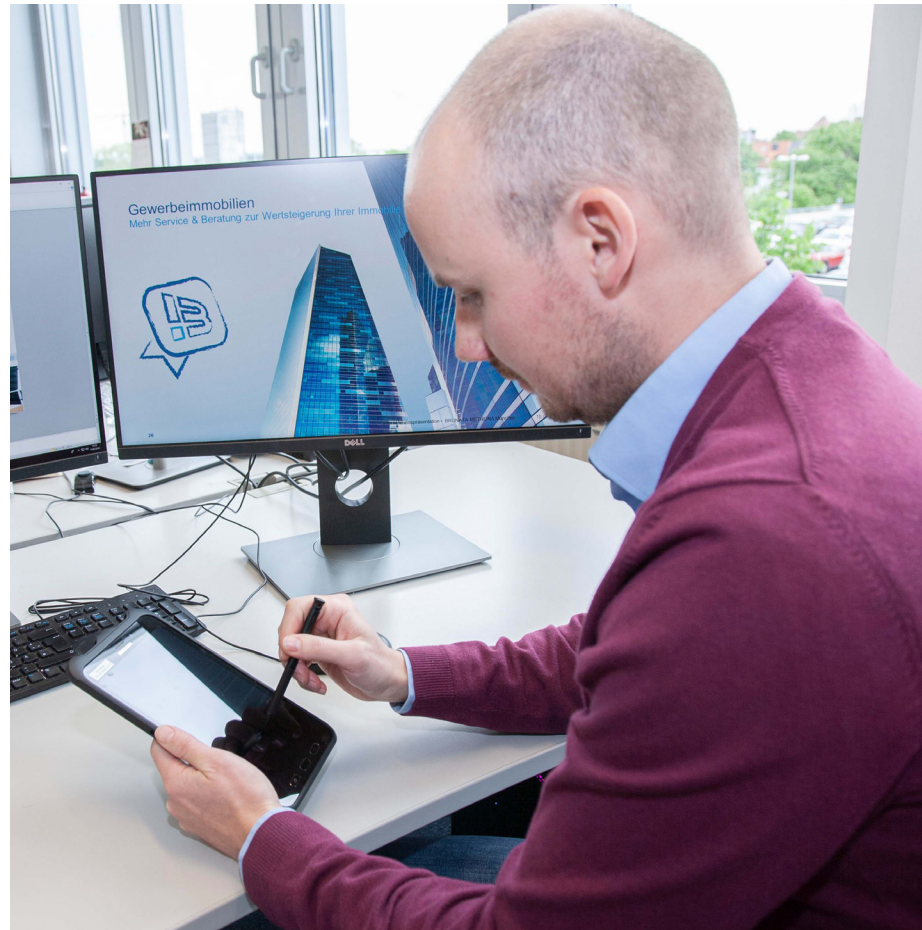BRUNATA-METRONA

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Tackling energy waste

As the reality of global warming impacts us at a personal level, there is a growing drive to tackle energy waste. One way to reduce household energy consumption is to optimize heating system usage, and the key to this is providing good-quality data.

BRUNATA-METRONA in Germany works with universities and research institutions to identify common heating usage patterns using advanced analytics, machine learning and artificial intelligence. BRUNATA-METRONA manages sensors for heating, water, smoke detection and other purposes, and processes vast amounts of data in real time.

Markus Hertrich, CIO at BRUNATA-METRONA, explains, "As a heating and water services provider managing more than one million properties, we are better-positioned to identify usage patterns than individuals or landlords. By reducing the energy consumed per household for heating, we positively protect the environment, and also reduce living costs for renters and homeowners."

He continues, "Our goal is to use intelligent grid operations and smart home technology to innovate. Connected sensors can understand what is happening within a household and dynamically adapt to constantly changing situations. Intelligent automation allows us to adjust heating controls while

taking additional contextual information into account, such as a window being opened. Initial results have already shown that our smart home automation solutions can save up to 30 percent in heating energy usage—without reducing comfort for tenants and homeowners."

However, capturing and analyzing vast volumes of smart meter and sensor data imposed significant new workload on existing billing and management systems. That's why the team looked to revitalize its

IT infrastructure, which would make even more flexible billing models possible.

"Thanks to IBM Power Systems, IBM Storage, IBM PowerVM, IBM AIX, and IBM Db2 we have the reliability we need to provide landlords, homeowners and renters with all the relevant information online, all day, every day."

Bernd Maisenbacher, Leiter IT und TK Operations, BRUNATA-METRONA

Leveraging the performance and flexibility of IBM Power Systems

BRUNATA-METRONA relies on a wide range of SAP applications to support operations, including SAP ERP for finance, controlling, sales and customer services processes. The company also uses SAP Utilities as well as SAP Customer Relationship Management, SAP ERP Human Capital Management and SAP SuccessFactors Recruiting.

To accelerate its most business-critical workloads, the team turned to IBM for help optimizing its central IT infrastructure. The company chose two IBM Power System E950 servers, powered by IBM POWER9™ processors, to run the SAP ERP business applications. Using IBM PowerVM® virtualization technology running on IBM AIX®, these two servers host more than 40 SAP systems, many of which leverage the IBM Db2® database. The performance and efficiency of IBM Db2 support the company's core processes across all departments and business functions.

To ensure 24/7 availability for all business processes, the company implemented IBM PowerHA® SystemMirror® for AIX, which delivers enterprise-level business continuity and disaster recovery.

Bernd Maisenbacher notes: "Thanks to IBM Power Systems, IBM Storage,

IBM PowerVM, IBM AIX, and IBM Db2 we have the reliability we need to provide landlords, homeowners and renters with all the relevant information online, all day, every day. With more than 99.9 percent availability for the SAP ERP applications running on the IBM Power System E950 servers, BRUNATA-METRONA benefits from rock-solid stability. IBM Power Systems deliver top performance with a small physical footprint in the data center and a high level of automation, so we can focus more time and resources on the business."

He continues, "This flexible and highly scalable platform allows us to integrate continuously updated data from smart meters and many millions of IoT sensors into our core business processes. Supported by the IBM solutions we can deliver products and services more quickly, and get deeper insights into internal cost structures using features such as profitability analysis, enabling us to better understand corporate performance and improve our business strategy."

"It is only with the support of two strong partners, IBM and SAP, that we could make our vision of enabling more sustainable energy usage a reality. SAP ERP applications running on IBM Power Systems help us to gain new insights faster."

Markus Hertrich, CIO, BRUNATA-METRONA

Streamlining business processes and increasing customer satisfaction

Moving SAP ERP to the new IBM Power Systems E950 servers has transformed BRUNATA-METRONA's capabilities, both for internal systems and its larger sustainability objectives.

Bernd Maisenbacher comments: "The IBM solutions have enabled us to accelerate our billing processes substantially, reducing the time taken to deliver energy bills and analyses to customers from 15 days to just one day. Doing this at scale for 170,000 invoices a day is a great achievement, and it has hugely increased customer satisfaction. Clients want faster insight into their energy consumption, which we can now deliver by providing real-time information, which has

considerably strengthened our position in the market."

With the pace of change in the energy industry accelerating, operational flexibility has become a key concern. By using IBM Power Systems, the company benefits from dynamic, intelligent, fully automated capacity and resource management that achieves consistently fast response times of less than 250 milliseconds for its mission-critical SAP business applications. Without manual intervention, the solution design enables applications to leverage all available resources such as CPU cores or memory to ensure workloads at peak times are handled with ease. When peak workload moments have passed, resources are released for normal day-to-day business application activities, including finance and procurement tasks, and the increasingly important digital customer portal.

Bernd Maisenbacher says: "In today's dynamic world, estimating future IT workload is a major challenge. New technologies with a wider scope of digital processes result in shorter lead and lifecycle times for many IT solutions; we worked in years in the past, but now we're thinking in terms of months. The flexibility of IBM Power Systems gives us planning and investment security. Being able to use all the available capacity where we need it at short notice boosts our business agility and enables innovation to help optimize customer services."

He comments, "We consider IBM a highly valued, trusted partner. We have

worked with the same engineers for many years. They know our environment extremely well and have a deep understanding of both our business and technical challenges. Working with IBM, we have direct access to leading specialists in a wide range of fields and can take advantage of IBM's technology leadership."

Looking ahead, BRUNATA-METRONA wants to double down on its IoT and big data initiatives, with the aim of using analytics to gain even faster insights and offer new value added services to customers.

To tackle future big data challenges and increase business agility, including machine learning and artificial intelligence, the company is considering the latest hybrid multicloud-enabled storage solutions, such as IBM FlashSystem® storage to accelerate data delivery further.

Markus Hertrich concludes: "It is only with the support of two strong partners, IBM and SAP, that we are able to make our vision of enabling more sustainable energy usage a reality. SAP ERP applications running on IBM Power Systems with leading

IBM POWER9 processors help us to gain new insights faster. The scalable, reliable IBM infrastructure perfectly supports our preparations to move to next-generation ERP solutions and to in-memory technologies such as SAP Customer Experience solutions and SAP S/4HANA."

Solution components

- IBM® AIX®
- IBM Db2®
- IBM PowerVM®
- IBM PowerHA® SystemMirror® for AIX
- IBM Power® System E950
- IBM Software Maintenance
- SAP Billing
- SAP BusinessObjects Business Intelligence
- SAP® Business Warehouse
- SAP Business Workflow
- SAP ERP
- SAP for Utilities
- SAP Customer Relationship Management
- SAP Customer Service Management
- SAP ERP Financials
- SAP Human Capital Management
- SAP Invoicing and Contract Accounting
- SAP Lumira
- SAP Mobile Asset Management
- SAP Multiresource Scheduling
- SAP Solution Manager
- SAP SuccessFactors® Recruiting
- SAPUI5

Take the next step

To learn more about the IBM SAP Alliance, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: ibm.com/sap

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