Grupo Petrópolis is Brazil’s second largest seller of beer, serving customers in 20 Brazilian states as well as Germany and Paraguay. The company operates production plants across Brazil and employs 26,000 people.
Growing pains

The Brazilian beer scene is dominated by one major player, which has a 60 percent market share. Smaller companies need to fight hard to win drinkers’ loyalty.

Grupo Petrópolis – Brazil’s second-largest beer brewer – recognized that if it could fine-tune its distribution strategy, it could sharpen its ability to grow market share – and serve thirsty consumers with a fine product.

To meet its aim, the company acquired a large beer distribution firm. Next, Grupo Petrópolis wanted to ensure close collaboration and integrated processes shared by its brewing and distribution companies.

But the company soon found that harmonizing the two parts of its business would be tougher than expected. With the freshly acquired distribution company, Grupo Petrópolis gained a large logistics network and a complex, heterogeneous IT system, which was extremely difficult to manage.

On top of that, the manufacturing and distribution businesses relied on different software platforms. Because the company was unable to integrate the two solutions, information had be transferred between the business units manually – a time-consuming process.

Grupo Petrópolis recognized that fostering close collaboration between the divisions would be markedly easier if it migrated to a single enterprise-wide IT platform.

Finding the right solution

Grupo Petrópolis began searching for a comprehensive ERP solution to support its business, and selected SAP ERP.

Wilson Oliveira remarks: “We recognized that SAP was a leader in its field, and that SAP ERP offered the full range of functionality we need to support our diverse business.”

“We have a long-term, very positive relationship with IBM, so we were confident that we were making a smart decision by engaging them to work on such a critical transformation project.”

Wilson Oliveira, IT Infrastructure Coordinator, Grupo Petrópolis

Since Grupo Petrópolis was planning to use the SAP applications to manage many of its mission-critical operations, it set out to find a robust hardware platform to support the solution. The company decided to deploy an IBM Power® 780 server connected to IBM Storwize V7000 storage device to run the SAP environment. Data is backed up automatically by IBM Spectrum Protect™ software to an IBM TS3500 tape library. The entire environment is replicated onto a second site for disaster recovery.
Net Place, an IBM Premier Business Partner, helped Grupo Petrópolis define the best environment for the SAP implementation and establish best practices.

“We decided to deploy IBM Power Systems servers at the heart of our business,” comments Wilson Oliveira. “Previous experience told us that they provide the outstanding reliability and superb performance we need for our mission-critical applications, such as our website and brewery.

“We have a long-term, very positive relationship with IBM, so we were confident that we were making a smart decision by engaging them to work on such a critical transformation project.”

Agostinho Gomes da Silva, Finance Director at Grupo Petrópolis, adds: “IBM gave us the option of paying for the solution in monthly instalments via IBM Global Financing. For us, that approach was much more appealing than a single upfront payment, because it enabled us to free up cash for other investments.”

Based on the capacity and scalability of the Power Systems platform, the company has been able to consolidate its resources and eliminate the complexity of running multiple local, independent systems. Not only has this removed the manual collation and transfer of data, for the first time Grupo Petrópolis has been able to introduce comprehensive disaster recovery capabilities. For example, by consolidating operations on the Power Systems servers, the company can run integrated backup from a single place, and if disaster strikes it can restore data faster than ever before.

With the IBM infrastructure in place, Grupo Petrópolis implemented a suite of SAP ERP applications including modules for accounting, finance, supply chain management, logistics, electronic invoicing and transportation. To unlock insight from its SAP data, Grupo Petrópolis relies on SAP Business Warehouse and SAP BusinessObjects. The SAP ERP solutions support both the brewery and distribution operations, and are accessed by thousands of staff across the business.

Building an agile business

Standardizing on SAP has provided enormous benefits to Grupo Petrópolis. Firstly, the company can capitalize on huge economies of scale in processes such as accounting, finance and invoicing. As a result, end-of-month accounting that used to take 18 hours now takes just six hours – that’s 67 percent faster.

When Grupo Petrópolis has a new product ready to hit the market, the brewery division can seamlessly hand over to its distribution arm, which is responsible for getting that product to the right consumers at the right time to maximize sales. Because the entire business is using the same SAP solution, there’s no need to painstakingly transfer data from one system to another. As a result, the company can react to new market opportunities much faster than ever before.

By seizing greater control of its distribution strategy, Grupo Petrópolis hopes to capture a larger share of the Brazilian beer market.
Additionally, the IBM Power Systems servers provide long-term benefits, with the ability to scale for future workload and provide great cost-efficiency.

Wilson Oliveira remarks, “The IBM Power Systems architecture is extremely efficient. Consolidating on the IBM Power Systems platform cut energy costs by 70 percent. Savings like that help us reduce our operational overheads and gain competitive advantage.”

As the carefully executed distribution strategy and huge efficiency gains trigger additional growth, the Power Systems platform will scale seamlessly to support the evolving business.

Wilson Oliveira concludes: “Our business is more agile and competitive than ever, pursuing our growth strategy and serving more consumers. We couldn’t have done it without IBM and SAP.”

Solution components

- IBM® Global Financing
- IBM® Power® 780
- IBM Spectrum Protect™
- IBM Storwize® V7000
- IBM TS3500
- SAP ERP with modules for accounting, finance, supply chain management, logistics, electronic invoicing and transportation
- SAP Business Warehouse
- SAP BusinessObjects
- Oracle Database

Take the next step

Net Place specializes in providing consulting services and state-of-the-art IT solutions to its customers. An IBM Premier Business Partner, the company is headquartered in Campinas, Brazil, and serves customers across the nation. To find out more about products and services from Net Place, please visit: www.ntplace.com.br

To learn more about IBM Power Systems, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: ibm.com/power

Connect with us

© Copyright IBM Corporation 2016, IBM Corporation, 1 New Orchard Road, Armonk, NY 10504 U.S.A. Produced in the United States of America, June 2016.