



Business challenge

Fosen IKT delivers data-driven services to five municipalities in Norway. How could it continue to satisfy client demand for new services without harming the performance of existing applications?

Transformation

To improve the citizen experience, five municipalities in Norway rely on Fosen IKT to deliver data-driven services. With demand—and data volumes—on the shared services platform exploding, Fosen IKT deployed IBM® FlashSystem® 9100 to deliver the performance, availability and scalability for continued growth.

Results

Up to 50%

shorter application response times, helping Fosen IKT meet stringent SLAs

29%

data compression, reducing storage requirements and enabling data growth

Cuts

power consumption, delivering operational cost-savings

Fosen IKT

Embracing flash storage to enhance data-driven municipal services

Headquartered in Rissa, Norway, Fosen IKT provides IT services to a co-operative of five municipalities in the wider Fosen district.

“With IBM FlashSystem 9100 at the heart of our storage infrastructure, we have the scalable, high-performance platform we need to develop innovative, data-driven services for our clients.”

— Terje K. Nilsen, ICT Consultant, Fosen IKT

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Delivering high-quality services for citizens

Around the world, local governments are embracing digital services to improve the citizen experience. Delivering these capabilities requires significant investment, which often puts these services out of reach for smaller municipalities. To solve the challenge, five municipalities in the Fosen district of Norway joined forces to create a shared services organization: Fosen IKT. Today, Fosen IKT offers data-driven services to each municipality in the co-operative.

Terje K. Nilsen, ICT Consultant at Fosen IKT, explains: “The municipalities in the co-operative serve more than 20,000 citizens, and our local government clients depend on our applications to deliver those services effectively. Because our platform supports key areas such as healthcare, it’s crucial that we meet our clients’ stringent service-level agreements [SLAs] for reliability and availability.”

For a number of years, Fosen IKT relied on a storage area network (SAN) based on older IBM technology. With demand for its services growing year-on-year, Fosen IKT realized that its storage environment would soon be unable to accommodate the exploding volume and velocity of data.

“We wanted to continue to launch innovative services without compromising our ability to meet SLAs across our existing portfolio of applications,” continues Nilsen. “To achieve our goal, we looked for a way to enhance our storage platform.”

Deploying a future-ready storage solution

To prepare for continued data growth, Fosen IKT replaced its tiered storage environment with an all-flash IBM FlashSystem 9100 solution—delivering low latency and high throughput for all application workloads.

“Of all the solutions we considered, IBM FlashSystem 9100 was the best fit with our operational requirements,” explains Nilsen. “As well as delivering high performance and availability at a cost-effective price point, IBM FlashSystem 9100 includes IBM Spectrum Virtualize software, which makes it easier than ever for our administrators to manage our storage resources.”

Nilsen adds: “What’s more, we have used IBM storage solutions for many years and with great success. We knew that we could trust IBM to deliver the capabilities and the support we need to keep our applications running smoothly 24/7.”

“Key workloads on our accounting platform—such as payroll, budgeting and financial reporting—are now up to 50 percent faster.”

—Terje K. Nilsen, ICT Consultant, Fosen IKT

Working with a team from IBM and IBM Business Partner Arrow ECS, Fosen IKT deployed IBM FlashSystem 9100 within just two weeks and without disruption to its day-to-day operations.

Nilsen comments: “We were very impressed with the teamwork from IBM and Arrow ECS. Throughout the implementation process, both organizations worked together side-by-side—and we knew we could count on them to support us every step of the way.

“For example, the Arrow ECS team helped us use IBM Spectrum Virtualize to re-architect our storage environment and take advantage of thin provisioning. This enables us to minimize our storage requirements while ensuring our applications continue to run smoothly. Whenever an application approaches the limit of its allotted storage, IBM Spectrum Virtualize automatically alerts

us—enabling us to proactively allocate more space. The solution is also highly scalable, and increasing our capacity is as simple as plugging in additional modules.”

Improving the citizen experience

By deploying IBM FlashSystem 9100, Fosen IKT has enhanced the scalability, availability and throughput of its storage environment. The new solution enables the company to meet its SLAs even as the volume and velocity of its data continues to increase year-on-year.

Nilsen says: “IBM FlashSystem 9100 has significantly boosted input/output operations per second [IOPS], which has helped us to shrink end-user response times for many of our applications. For example, key workloads on our accounting platform—such as payroll, budgeting and financial reporting—are now up to 50 percent faster. This enables us to enhance the experience for our clients and make it easier for them to deliver responsive services to citizens.”

Fosen IKT is achieving these benefits while substantially reducing its power and data center floorspace requirements. The IBM FlashSystem 9100 solution has shrunk the storage footprint from half a rack to just two rack units.

“As well as enabling us to reduce our operational costs, IBM FlashSystem 9100 helped us reclaim valuable space in our data center,” explains Nilsen. “Although we only deliver our data-driven services to the municipalities, we rent out rack space in our data center to other organizations. Freeing up more rack space has increased our rental inventory—enabling us to boost our revenues.”

By using data compression and thin provisioning, Fosen IKT can make maximum use of its storage capacity and create headroom for future growth.

“Thanks to IBM Spectrum Virtualize we can compress our data by 29 percent,” Terje K. Nilsen says. “This gives us ample headroom for future growth in data volumes. What’s more, the rich management capabilities of IBM Spectrum Virtualize help us to monitor our storage systems efficiently, which frees our team to spend more time on value-added activities. We’re also interested in augmenting our management capabilities with robotic process automation tools, which would enable us to reduce our management requirements further still.”

Nilsen concludes: “With IBM FlashSystem 9100 at the heart of our storage infrastructure, we have the scalable, high-performance platform we need to develop innovative, data-driven services for our clients. Our IBM solution plays an important role in enabling municipalities across Fosen to deliver high-quality services to their citizens—and we’re very pleased with the results of our collaboration with IBM and Arrow ECS.”

Solution components

- IBM® FlashSystem® 9100
- IBM Spectrum Virtualize

Take the next step

To learn more about the IBM solutions featured in this story, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner.

About Arrow Electronics ECS Norway AS

Arrow Electronics ECS Norway AS provides IT services and solutions to organizations across Norway. To find out more, please visit: ecs-no.arrow.com

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