The customer: Webbasierte Schulplattformen AG

The modularly structured *Web-based School Platform* (WSP), on which the workflows of an entire school are mapped, has been in operation since 2004. The platform was originally set up for the "*School for individual learning*" (SIL) founded by Rose-Anne Mettler-White and located in Birmensdorf ZH. The SIL's innovative learning model is geared towards the individual abilities of the students. Through its range of choices, the school provides support for children and youths with their educational and social skills and thereby prepares them for the life-long learning process.

The *Webbasierte Schulplattformen AG* was founded to expand the possibilities for using the platform, with the aim of making the application accessible to other educational institutions both at home and abroad. Independent of the type, form and level, any school can now be depicted on the web-based school platform. In addition to being used for the individual organization of tuition for children and youths, the platform can also be used, amongst other things, in the area of company-internal education (e-learning), remote learning or for the targeted assistance of unemployed persons.

Source: www.schulplattform.ch

„IBM was by far the best and fastest to respond to our questions and requirements."

Ernst, Zeller, WSP AG, solicitor and lecturer at the University of Zurich

Highlights

- **A scalable server architecture based on x 3650 systems offers flexibility to the *Webbasierte Schulplattformen AG* and can be adapted at any time to the changing requirements of the school(s).**

- **With the usage of Linux Red Hat IBM, together with the Zurich company Unic AG, the customer's specialist contractor, implemented an attractive solution for the WSP.**

- **Through the operation of the WSP solution in an energy efficient IBM green data center, environmental concerns were also addressed.**

The challenge

In today's IT age, qualities such as self-organization and soft skills such as the ability to work in a team are of increasing importance. It is for this reason that since 2004, WSP with the web-based platform has offered a solution which can depict the entire school operation with all structures, and thereby efficiently supported teaching and learning and made them more professional. At the beginning, the applications for the school platform were developed within the company and operated on their own server. Through the extended business model, which also offers access to the platform to external companies and institutions, it became clear that a strong external partner was needed for its implementation. The choice for this partner fell on IBM GTS.

The solution

The innovative school platform is based on a modularly structured standard solution. In addition, IBM as hosting partner offers an holistic support package which covers several services: provision of the data center, set up and operation of the Linux servers with the required storage and back-up systems, provision of the network with the connection to the Internet, and the management and maintenance of the DB2 database.

IBM and the *Webbasierte Schulplattformen AG* jointly developed an expandable solution architecture which allows other schools to access the application. These schools can now obtain the services of the school platform on payment for their usage (software as a service).

What is special about the solution is the WSP application's multitenant ability. It is made available via the Internet and possesses a scalable infrastructure which can be adapted at any time to the potential of the users. All parties benefit from this solution: the *Webbasierte Schulplattformen AG's* SMB customers through the consistent cost-benefit ratio, and IBM through an optimal utilization of the IT infrastructure.

Due to workflow controlled processes, the web-based school platform supports on the one hand the organization of the tuition and the management of the school data, and on the other the exchange of information between students, teaching staff and parents. Independently of time and location, these parties can access the portal through a user ID and password. A centre piece of the platform is the library with currently around 1,500 learning jobs, which are constantly further developed and modified by the teaching staff. The students receive learning jobs aligned to their ability profile and the learning targets derived from it and these learning jobs flow into a work plan and are completed with a test. The targeted control of the learning behavior and competence grid enable the causes of changes to be identified early on.

Furthermore, the teaching staff can enter the dates for tests, discussions with parents and many other things in the electronic calendar, note observations and open dossiers in the system or record absences. Parents and students continuously receive information via e-mail and can view the status of specific work and the learning progress via the platform.

The benefits of IBM Remote Managed Infrastructure Services (RMIS)

■ Comprehensive palette of server, storage, network and middleware services from one source – on-site at the customer or in an IBM data center. IBM provides services from an extensive continuum, from selective out-tasking up to complete outsourcing solutions.

■ With RMIS, IBM offers a multitude of scalable and configurable services to support its customers in managing their server environments more efficiently and cost effectively.

■ The services are available in flexible, modular service packages and allow, amongst other things, effective cost control and the adherence to technical guidelines, and have a positive effect on customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. Other benefits are improved customer service, an increase in operational efficiency, an extended monitoring and management of servers, flexible adaptation to changes as well as the control of IT-caused risks.

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