BiCA manages its gas stations with virtual servers from green.ch

Gas station payment systems (point-of-sale and pay-at-the-pump systems) have to communicate with the fuel pumps to know the exact amount of fuel that needs to be charged. They also receive master data (e.g. prices) from central systems, process orders (fuel, shop) and ensure secure credit card payments in this online era. A Hyper-V ServerCloud from green.ch provides maximum availability and flexibility.
The company
BiCA AG in Rothenburg, Switzerland, belongs to the international Lantzerath-Group, a family-owned company with around 1000 employees. Founded 43 years ago, the company specializes in building and maintaining gas stations. BiCA, a diversified technology subsidiary with more than 180 employees, develops and produces a state-of-the-art system landscape for point of sales, retail automation, supply chain management, branch management and customer loyalty systems in the areas of PETROL, RETAIL & HOSPITALITY. Almost all renowned mineral oil companies in Switzerland use the BiCA retail solution to a varying degree.

The challenge
With the support of the Swedish CODAB AB, in which BiCA AG has a substantial holding, BiCA AG has developed a new forecourt controller generation (the heart of every filling station and interface to peripheral devices) that is monitored and operated via CLOUD and WEB APP. BiCA has thus laid the foundation for total virtualization of the BiCA Retail Solution and the decoupling of the BiCA software from the hardware and operation system.

In addition to the forecourt controller itself and a stable network, a central server landscape is necessary. When a forecourt controller first goes online, it loads its configuration from the CLOUD. This configuration is regularly updated, e.g. when prices change. The local function of the forecourt controller also works offline, whereas for WEB APP applications, the CLOUD must be available. To enable BiCA AG to concentrate on its core business of software evolution, it decided to outsource the operation of the required infrastructure, including redundancy, backup and uninterrupted power supply, to a professional service provider.

The solution
In April 2014, after careful evaluation of the alternatives, BiCA management decided on a virtual server solution, specifically the Hyper-V© ServerCloud. The green.ch solution offered high flexibility that competitors could not match. Additionally, the two companies already had a long-term successful and trusting working relationship in other areas, decisive criteria when it comes to data and operating security.

The order was placed via a web form that allowed BiCA to configure and enter all needed resources based on the project requirements. In total, five medium-performance virtual servers were needed. Just over 48 hours after submitting the order, installation of the solution was started, and in just a few days it was ready to be used. Furthermore, the Hyper-V© ServerCloud provides BiCA flexible scalability. If additional capacity, such as more servers, memory or storage are needed, these can easily be added in small steps, and they are available within minutes.

"Setting up and maintaining central IT infrastructure for our customers used to be a time-consuming and difficult endeavor. It was barely standardized and not part of our core business," sums up Stefan Gübeli, COO of BiCA AG. "Thanks to the virtual infrastructure from green.ch, we can flexibly set up and expand our system. The quality of service can be significantly improved."

Outlook
So far, 100 gas stations have been equipped with the new forecourt controller and are operated via CLOUD or WEB APP. The potential is around 4000 gas stations in Switzerland, with practically unlimited global potential. For all potential customers, this means high security and availability. "We at BiCA are specialists for payment systems, not for operating a CLOUD," states Stefan Gübeli. "Therefore our vision of a virtual solution requires a central IT infrastructure that is professionally maintained. The Hyper-V© ServerCloud offered by green.ch is exactly what we need."

Data security and availability are essential to gas station operations.

WEB APP: simple, clear and safe to use.

"Thanks to the virtual infrastructure from green.ch, we can flexibly set up and expand our system. The quality of service can be significantly improved."

Stefan Gübeli
COO BiCA AG
References

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Primary and secondary data center for Europe

**apriver**
Europe-wide data center

**HP**
Europe-wide cloud computing center

**Nord Stream**
Primary data center

**AVECTRIS**
Primary and secondary data center for Avectris AG
Primary data center and emergency workplaces

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