VON ARDENNE

VON ARDENNE improves control of business critical data

HPE Big Data Software reduces cost and increases efficiency

Objective
Introduce centralised systems for storing and accessing vital data and protect important intellectual property

Approach
Visited HPE Discover event to see demonstrations of HPE Big Data Software

IT Matters
- Provides a single processing layer for virtually any data regardless of source, format and language, and uncovers trends, patterns and relationships in near real-time for faster and better decisions

- Federates unified search results from a single query to give users the big picture from their data to minimise the risks of oversight or lost opportunities

- Takes a holistic approach to both structured and unstructured data

Business Matters
- Delivers a 400 per cent ROI in four years

- Saves several million euros a year through reducing search times by 75 per cent

- Eliminates the loss of important data and halves the 'time-to-offer' on new deals

German coating equipment specialist, VON ARDENNE, needed to take better control of decentralised data, in particular its 750 patents and other business critical intellectual property. HPE Big Data Software provided the answer, increasing search efficiency and data protection while reducing costs.

Challenge

Widespread data
We live in an information age where data is an organisation's most valuable asset and the volumes of that data are growing dramatically. Forecasts on worldwide data levels are already being measured in exabytes and zettabytes so it's vital that companies find effective and secure ways to manage the information explosion.

Dresden-based VON ARDENNE found itself in this position due to its rapid business growth and to the critical importance of its intellectual property. VON ARDENNE develops and manufactures advanced vacuum coating equipment for applying minutely thin coatings to glass, metal strips, wafers and polymer films. An example is its architectural glass coating which increases the heat insulation of buildings.

"Using HPE IDOL and Consolidated Archive has enabled us to save several million euros a year by reducing the time taken to carry out searches. Now we have entered into a third project implementing HPE Records Manager and HPE ControlPoint."

– Sylvio Reh, head of integrated business services, VON ARDENNE

VON ARDENNE owes its roots to the work of German physicist and inventor Manfred von Ardenne who took out 600 patents in fields that included electron microscopy, medical technology, and nuclear technology. With its equipment available in over 50 countries, the company now holds more than 750 patents worldwide.

"Know-how is the differentiator of our company and our intellectual property is the base upon which the company is built," says Sylvio Reh, head of integrated business services at VON ARDENNE. "That's the heartland that we need to defend because we have lots of competitors, many of which are global companies."

Over a six year period, the company had grown from 120 to 650 employees. The IT environment had developed organically and Reh was hired to completely overhaul it.

"Our data includes everything from unstructured files to patents, drawings, emails and Microsoft® SharePoint, in fact anything you could imagine. It was spread over more than 25 locations so it was difficult to locate the information you needed," he says. "When you speak about starting from a greenfield situation, what I found was a jungle. We literally had to make the jungle into a greenfield and then start to build it up again."

Reh's team is responsible for three major and five mid-sized locations and delivers IT access to 50 other smaller sites across some 26 countries. Its main challenges were to draw the data together into one central system and create the necessary security around intellectual property. Compliance was another factor, particularly in relation to the legal requirements of the VON ARDENNE solutions for the medical world.

Solution

Improved search

VON ARDENNE did not issue a worldwide request for proposal because that would take too long. To speed up implementation, the company wanted the simplicity of a turn-key solution provided by a single vendor and chose HPE Platinum Partner, Janz-IT, with whom it had already worked successfully on database contracts. When they visited an HPE Discover event, demonstrations showed the potential of solutions built on HPE Big Data Software.

"Janz-IT is a strategic partner of VON ARDENNE dealing with all its central IT requirements, especially when they relate to the HPE portfolio. Based on this trusted partnership we identified HPE data management tools running on the HPE Big Data platform as the perfect solution to meet the customer's requirements," says Dirk Waltje, senior executive president sales at Janz-IT.

The solution started with an IDOL implementation which was subsequently upgraded to IDOL 10 which is designed to help organisations break down data silos, process data of virtually any format, analyse in near real-time, and use its information more efficiently. It is a single and flexible platform for addressing diverse requirements in enterprise search and advanced content analytics. HPE IDOL uses probabilistic algorithms to automatically recognise the concepts and ideas expressed in all forms of information both within and outside the enterprise. With an extensive library of connectors, the solution can, in addition to enterprise data repositories, tap into cloud based data sources such as Facebook, Twitter, Google+™, Google Drive™, Dropbox, and others.

Consolidated Archive delivers a scalable, unified content archive that controls and manages electronically stored information from hundreds of different data formats. It provides conceptual and contextual understanding of the data while improving storage efficiency and productivity. It also enables companies to identify, manage or enforce governance policies on the data to assist in compliance and support accurate searches.

A third phase of the VON ARDENNE solution has now been entered with the implementation of HPE ControlPoint and HPE Records Manager. ControlPoint is a compliance platform that enables real-time control and complete visibility of all content, enabling users to align data with corporate, legal or regulatory standards. Records Manager is a scalable, electronic documents and records management solution that helps organisations manage large volumes of information, improving compliance with organisational and regulatory rules on the management of business records.

"The way that IDOL manages searches was the prime reason for selection," explains Reh. "The second reason was the huge amount of interfaces already attached so we could be pretty sure that even if we found something new during the journey, there would always be an interface, connector or agent on hand."

Benefit

Cost saving

"From 2012 to 2015, VON ARDENNE has saved four times the cost of these HPE solutions and I think that is quite impressive. It has saved money in two other ways, firstly through eliminating the loss of important legal data and secondly because we are not having to re-invent the wheel."

Customer at a glance

Software

- HPE IDOL 10

- HPE Consolidated Archive

- HPE ControlPoint

- HPE Records Manager

"Our intellectual property is now a lot more secure than before. The HPE solutions are definitely helping us to secure that data, knowing everyone who is accessing the information and how they are using it."

– Sylvio Reh, head of integrated business services, VON ARDENNE

"For example, if a customer requests a better way to use a system you can quickly drill down and find out where and how you did that before. This has improved time-to-market and has reduced the time taken to find the answers from months down to weeks. Also, because we highlight the author with the search, we can find out who in the company has done something in this area in the past so we can quickly find the guy who has the information we need on any particular topic."

Reducing search times by 75 per cent saves VON ARDENNE several million euros a year and improved archiving also saves a lot of time, particularly for older data which would otherwise be hard to find. The time taken to make an offer on new deals has also been halved.

"I recently had one request from a very senior guy in VON ARDENNE, who wanted to trace an article from 1993 which would prove that we had already published a patent that one of our competitors was trying to take out. We were able to find the particular article and prove that it was our patent and we would not have been able to do that without the HPE IDOL solutions," concludes Reh.

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