

CASE STUDY

Switzerland's Largest Retailer Reduces Operating Costs with Avantra

Avantra for SAP systems improves stability and drives significant time savings

With nearly 600 stores and over \$27 billion in annual revenue, Migros is Switzerland's largest supermarket chain and also the nation's largest retailer. Headquartered in the heart of Zurich, the grocery juggernaut employs more than 105,000+ employees, making Migros one of the 40 largest retailers in the entire world.

Migros currently operates an intricate SAP landscape comprised of 120 Unix servers and 230 Windows® servers, as well as more than 100 applications. 125 SAP systems power the firm, including:


- Retail ERP 6.0
- BI 7.0, including BI-Java
- KW 7.0, including J2EE Content SEM and SEM-BW 6.0
- ERP 6.0 and SCM 5.0
- FiCo/HR 6.0
- SRM 5.5
- SAP J2EE

The system landscape includes more than 13,000 SAP users spanning areas that include retail, industry and corporate operations.

EXPANDING SAP LANDSCAPE OUTGROWS EXISTING CAPABILITIES

Leading up to 2007, the SAP Basis Services Team faced an ever-growing number of cobbled-together systems that had been implemented to meet the company's complex operational needs.

Over time, the team found its existing setup didn't meet the needs of the expanding SAP landscape. Complexity mushroomed, requiring extra staff resources maintain increasingly interconnected systems. The more the company grew, the more features and functions they



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CUSTOMER NAME: MIGROS	INDUSTRY: Retail and Wholesale
REVENUE: € 24 Billion	ORGANIZATION SIZE: 105,000+ employees

BUSINESS CHALLENGE:

- Massive cobbled-together systems hard to monitor
- Need for one tool that could manage mixed technologies environment
- Lack of an early alert system - issues found too late

SOLUTION:
Avantra business processes and technical monitoring

BUSINESS VALUE:

- Reduced patch installation times of up to 20 days
- Server updates implemented in just 1 to 2 hours
- Post-processing of system copies reduced from 3 hours to 3 minutes
- Adding a new system to the monitoring process reduced from half a day to 30 minutes
- Release updates for the monitoring solution reduced from 2 months to less than a day
- Prevented 2 major failures in SAP production systems
- Monitoring over 120 HANA systems

needed to integrate into their existing configuration. It wasn't long before the company's administrative burden became unwieldy.

Recognizing the need for an efficient, comprehensive monitoring solution, the SAP Basis Services Team decided to establish an internal task force to evaluate an entirely new monitoring system.

TEAM SEEKS TO SIMPLIFY SAP SYSTEM MANAGEMENT

In summer 2007, the task force came up with a comprehensive set of specifications that included all required monitoring functions, components and systems. The team prioritized the list according to importance and relevance, identifying on-call duty management as an essential requirement.

Of the five software products under consideration, three were discarded early on, leaving Avantra and one other potential option. The Migros team decided to run a bake-off of both systems, performing thorough in-house testing for efficiency and reliability over the course of several weeks.

The SAP Basis Services Team needed many key benefits from their management interface including flexibility, scalability, and overall system-wide data throughput. But their primary focus was choosing a system that was easy to manage.

“We wanted a solution that enabled system administration and configuration from one centralized location,” says Balz Koch, Head of SAP Basis Services for Migros. “We also wanted to establish an early alert system that would minimize the chance of emergencies.”

Ultimately, Avantra was the winner. Not only was it specifically developed for companies working with SAP systems, it met virtually all of the company’s requirements. By December 2007, Migros and Syslink had finalized the details and were ready to move forward with the new software implementation.

IMPROVED MONITORING PREVENTS PROBLEMS AND SAVES TIME

In January 2008, Syslink brought in a consultant to create an implementation plan tailored to the unique needs of Migros. Shortly after the installation and configuration effort was complete and all SAP systems connected, the benefits of Avantra became unmistakable.

First, the company was able to create a system of automated alerts visible on a centralized dashboard, also sending them to staff via text message and email. Daily checks on all systems helped Migros automate additional functions and eliminate routine tasks. With these improvements, system monitoring went from a man-hour devouring grind to a part-time activity.

The new setup identifies performance issues and bottlenecks early on, with improved stability helping the company avoid two separate breakdowns in SAP production systems.

“Using Avantra we prevented 2 Major Failures in SAP Production Systems. We’ve also reduced server updates implemented to just 1 to 2 hours, post-processing of system copies reduced from 3 hours to 3 minutes and adding a new system to the monitoring process reduced from half a day to just 30 minutes.”

Balz Koch,
Head of SAP Basis Services for MIGROS

Since then, Migros has also achieved significant time savings by implementing Avantra, including:

- **Reduced patch** installation times of up to 20 days
- **Server updates** implemented in just 1 to 2 hours
- **Post-processing** of system copies reduced from 3 hours to 3 minutes
- **Adding a new system** to the monitoring process reduced from half a day to just 30 minutes
- **Release updates** for the monitoring solution reduced from 2 months to less than a day
- **Prevented 2** major failures in SAP production systems.

What’s more, the database now has a much smaller footprint –only 500MB. Clean interfaces drive lower resource consumption and make it easy for a new administrative professional to become productive with far shorter ramp up time. All in all, the team has seen only positive impacts on servers or SAP systems.

Looking at the results, Koch says the new monitoring solution has made all the difference to Migros operations and customers.

“It was important to us to have a system which is easy to handle, with a system administration and configuration that can be executed from a central position. We also wanted an early alert system can be established so that there won’t be a chance for emergencies ever to happen. Avantra does it all” says Koch.

