

Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH improves manufacturing with Red Hat, IBM, and SAP

BLANC & FISCHER

Familienholding

BLANC & FISCHER Family Holding, the parent and holding company of five subgroups, shapes kitchens as living spaces all over the world. The Holding sought to improve manufacturing productivity and speed application development for its subgroups. To support these efforts, the group became one of the world's first companies to migrate its extensive SAP environment to Red Hat Enterprise Linux for SAP Solutions on IBM POWER9. With this central, reliable infrastructure foundation, BLANC & FISCHER has achieved consistent global production processes, improved system availability, and reduced database response times by 30%.

Software

 Red Hat® Enterprise Linux®
for SAP Solutions

Hardware

IBM POWER9 servers

Partners

SAP

IBM

Manufacturing
8,300 employees

56 locations worldwide

Benefits

- Improved consistent worldwide production with central, standardized platform for SAP systems
- Reduced database response times by 30%—with fewer compute resources
- Enhanced production performance by eliminating downtime



“With the parallel operation of our SAP systems on Red Hat and IBM technology, we can develop and launch new business models to prepare for a more connected future in the kitchen, the factory, and beyond.”

Manfred Leistner

 Director and Head of Technology,
Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH

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“The team at Red Hat continues to be very supportive, even for minor technical difficulties. We were very impressed with how they followed up on questions when they didn’t have immediate answers, to get us the information we needed. That responsiveness has been key to our ongoing success with our new, frequently changing technology.”

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Standardizing IT infrastructure for SAP environment

Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH is the central IT service provider to the BLANC & FISCHER Family Holding, which shapes kitchen living spaces worldwide. It includes E.G.O.-Group, BLANCO-Group, BLANCO Professional-Group, ARPA and DEFENDI-Group. The group employs about 8,300 people worldwide in 23 countries and at 56 locations. In 2019, the group recorded a turnover of around €1.2 billion.

Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH maintains IT systems and applications for several of its parent group’s businesses—including an extensive SAP landscape and global IT infrastructure. To improve manufacturing productivity and speed application development, Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH sought to transform its IT approach to focus on digital technologies and products.

Previously, the group operated its SAP HANA® database management on certified, x86-based hardware, followed by a Linux solution running on IBM POWER8 processors. However, supporting an extensive digital transformation required the adoption of a standardized IT infrastructure that would improve flexibility and support for agile development.

“As IT service providers, we have to provide our services quickly, consistently, and efficiently,” said Manfred Leistner, Director and Head of Technology of Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH. “To give our departments and factories as much flexibility as possible and support agile development, we need extended automation for our SAP environment and quick, efficient resource deployment.”

Pioneering innovation with early adoption of Red Hat Enterprise Linux 8 for SAP Solutions on IBM POWER9

Once the solution achieved certification to run on IBM POWER9, Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH chose Red Hat Enterprise Linux for SAP Solutions as the foundation of its digital-focused IT environment.

“We prefer open source and open standards over proprietary technologies, and we’ve had a positive experience using open source platforms on IBM hardware for many years. Both Red Hat Enterprise Linux and IBM POWER9 are based on open standards,” said Leistner. “Red Hat kept us updated on the certification status of the solution, so we were able to complete testing before the official notification. We were eager to be early adopters.”

Once certification was complete, the group was among the first in Germany to adopt the combination of Red Hat Enterprise Linux for SAP Solutions on IBM POWER9 servers. Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH quickly migrated the SAP Manufacturing Execution (SAP ME) system—which tracks the process of converting raw materials into finished goods—for the group’s BLANCO brands to the new Red Hat and IBM solution.

Unifying and enhancing SAP operations to work and deliver faster

Created consistent, standardized IT foundation for worldwide production

With its new, high-performance IT infrastructure, Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH can now run its global SAP environment from its operation headquarters in Germany. This centralized approach provides a unified environment for the group to run all of its SAP solutions, including SAP ME, SAP Global Trade Services, SAP Supplier Lifecycle Management, SAP Supplier Relationship Management, SAP BusinessObjects Business Intelligence, and SAP ERP Human Capital Management.

About SAP

As a market leader in enterprise software, SAP turns businesses into intelligent enterprises. Our applications and services enable business and public customers across 25 industries globally to operate profitably and adapt continuously. With a global network of customers, partners, and employees, SAP helps the world run better and improve people's lives. For more information, visit www.sap.com.

With this central SAP foundation, Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH can flexibly provide computing resources to the group's different businesses for digital transformation projects, reducing the need for local infrastructure management or provisioning work. After consolidation is complete, the group anticipates needing 30% fewer application instances—a reduction that will deliver financial and time savings.

Reduced database response times by 30%—with fewer compute resources

The group's databases running on previous SAP versions required high processing power but low memory. However, SAP HANA requires the opposite: less processing power but more memory. With Red Hat Enterprise Linux for SAP Solutions on IBM POWER9, Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH can support and monitor both types of workloads without requiring separate server systems.

As a result, the group has achieved faster performance for BLANCO's SAP ME database—with fewer compute resources, including half the cores needed previously.

"During the testing phase, we found that the simulated response times for SAP HANA were around 20-50% faster, depending on the transaction," said Leistner. "Now that the system has gone live, we're achieving 30% faster database transactions."

Eliminated production environment downtime

With expert support from both Red Hat and IBM, Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH has kept BLANCO's IT infrastructure running reliably. No reboots or downtime have been required since the system went live, and migration of new manufacturing plants to SAP ME is easier, without requiring installation of additional instances.

"To date, there have been no performance problems at all with our production environment. On the contrary, SAP ME is running smoother than before," said Leistner. "The team at Red Hat continues to be very supportive, even for minor technical difficulties. We were very impressed with how they followed up on questions when they didn't have immediate answers, to get us the information we needed. That responsiveness has been key to our ongoing success with our new, frequently changing technology."

Continuing the digital transformation journey

Inspired by the success of its new IT infrastructure architecture, Blanc und Fischer IT Services GmbH is looking for ways to expand it to support new digital products and business models. The group plans to introduce SAP ME, running on Red Hat Enterprise Linux for SAP Solutions on IBM POWER9, for its E.G.O. brand in the near future.

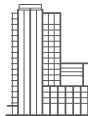
The group is currently working to centralize its SAP enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems on the SAP S/4HANA® ERP and BW/4HANA data warehouse software. Once complete, existing and new SAP applications will all run on Red Hat Enterprise Linux for SAP Solutions, providing additional efficiency and management benefits.

“We’re on a transformation journey with IBM, SAP and Red Hat,” said Leistner. “With this parallel operation of our SAP systems on Red Hat and IBM technology, we can develop and launch new business models to prepare for a more connected future in the kitchen, the factory, and beyond.”

About BLANC & FISCHER Family Holding

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About Red Hat



Red Hat is the world’s leading provider of enterprise open source software solutions, using a community-powered approach to deliver reliable and high-performing Linux, hybrid cloud, container, and Kubernetes technologies. Red Hat helps customers integrate new and existing IT applications, develop cloud-native applications, standardize on our industry-leading operating system, and automate, secure, and manage complex environments. Award-winning support, training, and consulting services make Red Hat a trusted adviser to the Fortune 500. As a strategic partner to cloud providers, system integrators, application vendors, customers, and open source communities, Red Hat can help organizations prepare for the digital future.



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