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ITERGO: Simplifying and Automating IT Administration with SAP® Landscape Management

ERGO

beON

Is it really possible to manage a highly complex IT landscape without much effort? Having found a corresponding solution in cooperation with SAP partner beON, ITERGO Informationstechnologie knows that the answer is a resounding yes. As the primary IT service provider of the ERGO Group, ITERGO now uses SAP Landscape Management to oversee its SAP HANA®-based system environment. The result? Administrative processes that run almost entirely automatically.

SAP

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Automating Lifecycle Management with SAP HANA®

Company
ITERGO Informations-technologie GmbH
Düsseldorf, Germany
www.itergo.de

Industry
Insurance

Products and Services
Business and infrastructure management, application development

Employees
1,400

SAP® Solutions
SAP® Landscape Management

SAP S/4HANA® Finance

SAP HANA®

Before: Challenges and Opportunities
- Implementing a new lifecycle management solution based on SAP HANA®, and handling related data center operations
- Significantly simplifying administration, patches, and updates
- Automatically documenting changes in a consistent and transparent manner

Why SAP and beON
- ITERGO had already achieved a great deal of success with SAP solutions
- SAP HANA is a very powerful and advanced platform
- beON is a leading implementation partner that specializes in the insurance industry

After: Value-Driven Results
- Automated documentation of all system configurations throughout the life-cycle of ITERGO's SAP HANA installation
- Patches, updates, and system conversion of database tenants now possible without operational interruptions
- Simplified backup and maintenance processes
- Optimized transparency, operational stability, and auditability
- Fully automated mechanism falls back to another data center when systems fail
- Fully automated recovery in case of catastrophe
- Implementation stayed on schedule and within budget

"With SAP Landscape Management, we've got a handle on the highly complex IT landscape used throughout the ERGO Group. It's reliable, cost-effective, and helps us maximize uptime."

Dr. Dorothea Krüger, SAP Technical Lead, ITERGO Informationstechnologie GmbH

Executive overview

Company objectives

Resolution
- Technical architecture

Business transformation

Future plans

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Delivering first-class IT services around the world

Some 40 million insured people trust solutions provided by the ERGO Group. The entity responsible for the technological foundation of this success is ITERGO, one of the leading internal IT service providers in the insurance sector. Its 1,400 employees design and perform IT services at four locations for around 50,000 users in Germany and other parts of the world. ITERGO's offerings are already considered the industry benchmark, and the company keeps raising the bar by engaging in a continuous innovation effort.

With support from SAP partner beON, ITERGO most recently succeeded in implementing the SAP HANA platform and the solution SAP S/4HANA Finance. Here, the company's objectives included improving its compliance with the requirements of the new IFRS 9 accounting standard and further simplifying various processes. To this end, a tailored data center integration (TDI) solution was created for ITERGO's particular purposes.

"We'd previously had excellent results using SAP BI Accelerator," explains Klaus-Christian Seibel, SAP engineer at ITERGO. "While we definitely wouldn't have been able to handle our reporting without it, we also knew that there was a lot more potential in SAP's newest solution." With its new SAP solution, ITERGO was able to make its reporting 20% faster.

Dr. Dorothea Krüger, ITERGO's technical lead for SAP, and Klaus-Christian Seibel decided to revamp all of their company's lifecycle management efforts for SAP HANA. This proved to be no easy task: With a landscape consisting of different operational environments, neither general administration nor the installation of updates and patches is a walk in the park.

ITERGO wanted to automate these activities, including documentation that would be reproducible for audits, to the greatest extent possible. It was thus looking for a finely tuned combination of standardization and flexibility that would help it respond quickly and reliably to new customer demands – by resizing databases, for example.

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Multitenant strategy
providing for greater flexibility

Before the project began, a number of key decisions had to be made: What strategy did ITERGO need to choose to meet its requirements in terms of both standardization and flexibility? Its team ultimately settled on an architecture involving multitenant database containers.

This is where SAP HANA supports multiple isolated databases in a single system. "A multitenant approach opens the door to centralized administration, improved performance, and flexible resizing," Krüger explains.

Serving as the maintenance and administration hub for ITERGO's SAP HANA environment was SAP Landscape Management. This software enables administrators to automate SAP operations with components such as workflows for near-zero downtime maintenance (nZDM) and the creation of system copies and refreshes.

In addition to ensuring comprehensive monitoring, ITERGO now has a central means of managing its entire landscape and streamlining various processes. This is helping it make life easier for its employees, with automation keeping manual activities to a minimum. "Cost efficiency was another important factor for us, of course," Krüger concedes. This is why the company is continuing to make optimal use of its existing hardware and software resources based on the TDI implementation concept.

Meanwhile, ITERGO is shielded against potential incidents and system failures, as well. Thanks to an all-inclusive approach to data center protection, its system can be quickly restored without any loss of data when disruptions occur.

"SAP Landscape Management has given us much greater agility and these ability to respond to new requirements in no time."

Dr. Dorothea Krüger, SAP Technical Lead, ITERGO Informationstechnologie GmbH

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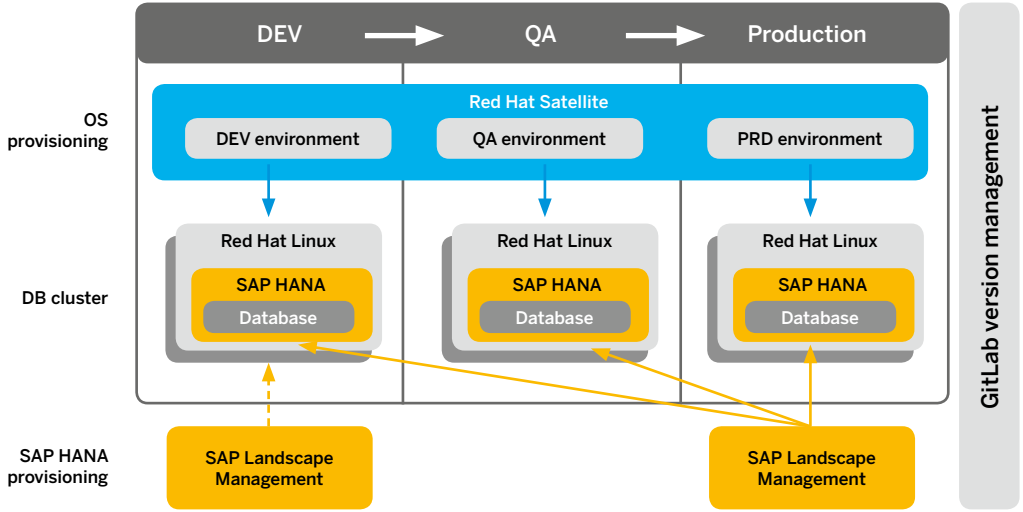
Automated landscape management
requiring less effort

SAP Landscape Management facilitates automated lifecycle management, from development all the way to live operations. Several solutions work in tandem: Instances of Red Hat Satellite provide the systems, SAP Landscape Management handles the staging and monitoring of database clusters, and a GitLab server is responsible for configuration management.



Automatic provisioning: Architectural overview

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An entire SAP landscape managed by five employees

"Implementing SAP HANA and SAP Landscape Management took us just nine months," says a pleased Dorothea Krüger. "It was a tremendous achievement on the part of beON, as well." With its new SAP HANA data center supporting agile, cost-efficient processes for IFRS 9, ITERGO's infrastructure is now ready to take on any challenge.

Automation and a high level of availability keep SAP HANA running on all cylinders. Should any components fail, ITERGO can bring the system back online in short order thanks to an across-the-board approach to data center protection, which includes a failover cluster configuration that ensures redundancy and scalability.

The latest database virtualization techniques and the ability to integrate these new elements into its existing landscape are reducing the company's total cost of ownership and helping it adapt better to changing circumstances. At the foundation of it all are ITERGO's multitenant database containers, which provide a central means of configuring and managing the company's heterogeneous landscape.

"Our customers are really happy with how well the system performs," Krüger reports. "With a team of just five employees, we're now able to oversee the ERGO Group's entire SAP landscape and reliably keep it up to date."

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"A high degree of automation and simple, cost-efficient processes – it's safe to say we're completely satisfied with SAP Landscape Management!"

Dr. Patrick Erren, Head of Product Solution, ITERGO Informationstechnologie GmbH

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Taking on the digital future with confidence

The experts at ITERGO only know one direction: forward. "Innovation is what drives us, and with SAP, we're prepared to take on the future," Krüger declares. In fact, the company already has designs on achieving an even more efficient IT landscape. Its next step will be to implement an identity management solution that offers further options for fulfilling regulations, security guidelines, and aspects of risk management.

In addition to migrating additional SAP databases from Microsoft SQL to SAP HANA, ITERGO ultimately wants to introduce SAP's approach to change request management. This will enable the company to coordinate all the modifications made to its software landscape and ensure that no related conflicts arise.

"In the future, we plan to expand our SAP HANA systems to 12 terabytes of RAM and introduce modules for collections, disbursement, and incentive and commission management."

Dr. Dorothea Krüger, SAP Technical Lead, ITERGO Informationstechnologie GmbH

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