

The cloud provides a solid basis for a great shopping and customer experience

A private cloud, from T-Systems, gives Valora an optimal mix of cost-effectiveness and flexibility

Reference project:

valora

k kiosk

Press R&B Books



avec

Ditsch



cigo

ServiceStore DB



ok.-

bob
finance

back
WERK



“In T-Systems, we’ve found a partner who enables us to be innovative as well as optimally cost-effective – on both the local and international levels.”

Roberto Fedele, CIO Valora

It's an all-too-familiar situation for train passengers: A fast transfer between trains that allows only a few minutes for essential purchases such as a cup of coffee, a sandwich or a newspaper. The Swiss-based Valora Group, with brands such as BackWerk, Ditsch, Press & Books, k kiosk and U-Store, is a trusted partner for mobile people who often find themselves in such situations. The company maintains more than 2,700 points of sale at heavily frequented locations in a total of six European countries. And it is continually expanding its position as a convenience and food-service provider. In the framework of a digital strategy, the Swiss company is establishing completely new, automated convenience concepts such as the cashless avec box, in which customers manage all of their purchases via an app. To succeed, such new digital concepts have to run on powerful platforms. With the help of T-Systems, Valora is building a private cloud platform for operation of its current applications and future business innovations.

At a Glance

Valora has sited the Citrix-based back-end system for its future-workplace program (Office 365 and point-of-sale solutions) within a private cloud from T-Systems. The private cloud offers a high-performance virtual environment for both non-SAP and SAP systems. It efficiently supports growth strategies by providing full scalability for services – at transparent, adaptive costs and with guaranteed service levels.

- Valora is using the private-cloud approach, with state-of-the-art pricing models, to modernize substantial portions of its IT infrastructures
- The system assures the efficient operation of the company's legacy systems (including workstation systems, point-of-sale systems, non-SAP and SAP systems)
- The private cloud also provides significant advantages in the areas of cost, flexibility and future-proofness

Reference in detail

The Challenge

In the past, Valora's IT systems provided infrastructure capacities – such as the back-end system for its IT workstations, its point-of-sale systems and its SAP systems – in the conventional fashion. But fixed capacities – which can become unused overcapacities – and their associated static pricing models tend to generate high core costs for IT operations, along with declining value returns.

Even worse, fixed capacities do not provide a suitable basis for innovation. „The retail business is changing,“ explains Roberto Fedele, the company's CIO. „The essential ingredients for future success are customer centricity and services tailored to specific target groups.“ Conventional infrastructures lack the flexibility and scalability that such requirements call for. In addition, the CIO sees a need to enhance regional flexibility for cross-cutting areas within the group.

In sum, Valora requires a future-proof platform that can both a) enhance the cost-effectiveness of large portions of its current applications and b) enable it to implement its ideas for a digital future in optimal ways. The retail company has ambitious growth targets that call for new, scalable IT infrastructures.

The Solution

Valora understood that it needed to move key infrastructures into the cloud. As a first step, this entailed phasing in new, maximally virtualized infrastructures. T-Systems' private cloud dynamic solutions proved to be the optimal choice for Valora. By combining infrastructural scalability with attractive pricing models, they provide a truly future-proof platform for new business models. In addition, they offer the reliable service levels that are essential for disruption-free operation of business applications.

For Valora, T-Systems uses vCloud, on the basis of VMware. For the operation of the private cloud, Valora and T-Systems have divided responsibilities in keeping with Valora's specific, varying requirements, and also with the aid of a judicious mix of „make“ and „buy“ services provision. While Valora's IT team operates the Citrix-based back-end system for the company's workstations, and manages a number of the company's business applications, T-Systems manages operations for a range of other business applications, and a number of middleware, database and operating systems. SAP basic operations (including HANA) are provided via proven, mature third-generation dynamic computing services. T-Systems runs the systems in a high-security twin-core data center in Frankfurt. „We needed a partner for our move into a private cloud. And we found the right partner in T-Systems,“ Fedele summarizes.

Customer Benefits

Valora's CIO is determined to apply all of the cloud's options and potential to the development of the company's business. As he explains, „Innovation is a key factor. Together with digitalization, it is a key driver of our retail business.“ With T-Systems' private-cloud platforms, Valora has created a solid basis for its future development. The system is opening up all kinds of perspectives – for example, for dynamic operation of checkout systems, or even for a revolutionary new approach to the checkout concept, in combination with the group's new, automated shop concept.

At the same time, Valora is enjoying cost advantages through its private cloud. The clear-cut arguments in favor of the company's evolutionary step include significant cost savings, considerably enhanced flexibility and operational stability, and excellent platform quality. In addition, the system, operated by T-Systems in Frankfurt, is supporting the Swiss company's internationalization strategy. „In T-Systems, we've found a partner who enables us to be innovative as well as optimally cost-effective – on both the local and international levels.“

The benefits at a glance:

- Significantly enhanced infrastructural virtualization
- Significantly enhanced flexibility of infrastructure resources
- High operational stability, thanks to guaranteed quality (SLAs)
- Optimized cost-effectiveness, via a business-tailored pricing model
- Provides the basis for future digital solutions that enhance customer intimacy and the customer experience
- T-Systems provides cooperative partnership for innovation



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