GENOSSENSCHAFT MIGROS AARE

SWISS RETAIL SUPERBRAND STREAMLINES TEST DATABASE WITH SAP® TEST DATA MIGRATION SERVER

"We can now create a test system copy fully up-to-date and consistent with the production system but with only approximately 10% or less of the original data volume."

Thomas Kräuchi, Team Member,
SAP Basic Team, Genossenschaft Migros Aare

QUICK FACTS

Company
- Name: Genossenschaft Migros Aare
- Location: Schönbühl, Switzerland
- Industry: Retail
- Products and services: Fresh groceries, catering, specialty stores (sporting goods, electronic products), indoor and outdoor leisure activities, and training centers
- Revenue: Over SFr 3.4 billion (€2.5 billion)
- Employees: Over 12,200
- Web site: www.migros.ch
- Implementation partner: SAP® Consulting

Challenges and Opportunities
- Manage a large production environment (1.5 terabytes) with multiclient systems
- Maintain a nonproduction system despite inadequate system copy, import, and export functions
- Eliminate system downtimes due to system copy
- Reduce high cost of hardware

Objectives
- Cut disk requirements for nonproduction software landscape
- Implement solution to maintain a lean and consistent test environment
- Reduce storage size and expenses involved in creating a test environment
- Improve quality of development by keeping data between production and nonproduction systems up-to-date

SAP Solutions and Services
- SAP Test Data Migration Server software
- SAP Consulting services

Implementation Highlights
- Implemented within 3 days, on time, and within budget
- Received invaluable assistance from SAP Consulting during the implementation process

Why SAP
- Powerful, proven software developed by software experts
- Market-leading software for setting up lean software environments for testing and development
- Ease of use of comprehensive range of applications

Benefits
- 90% reduction in size of nonproduction database
- Improved availability of production software data in the test environment
- Higher quality of development through improvements in the test environment
- Greater savings through reduced database volume and costs of hardware

Existing Environment
SAP ERP application

Third-Party Integration
- Database: Oracle
- Operating system: AIX
- Hardware: IBM and Hitachi

MIGROS

"What we were looking for at Migros Aare was a solution that would let us mirror our multiclient system for development and testing purposes," explains Thomas Kräuchi, team member of the SAP basic team at Genossenschaft Migros Aare. The method the company had been using was time-consuming and extremely hardware and cost intensive. On top of that, creating a nonproduction system meant restricting user access to the multiclient software environment. The company decided to implement SAP® Test Data Migration Server software.

One of Switzerland's strongest brands in the retail sector, Schönbühl, Switzerland–based Migros Aare had reached the viability limit of its test systems. The cooperative Migros Aare has more than 12,200 employees, 18 production systems running SAP software, and 28 nonproduction systems – for testing and development – running SAP software all around Switzerland in the company's various supermarkets and retail outlets. With the size of the company's production database exceeding 1.5 terabytes and system copies taking between 24 and 36 hours, the situation at Migros Aare was obviously not sustainable. The company needed a more effective method of creating test systems. "Even though the software was still in its infancy when we first implemented it," Kräuchi points out, "SAP Test Data Migration Server has allowed us to make considerable savings. It has proven to be a most sensible decision."

By implementing SAP Test Data Migration Server, Migros Aare both reduced the amount of data needed for its nonproduction database and improved the quality of its in-house development. Now SAP Test Data Migration Server gives Migros Aare the ability to refresh its test environment by copying a mere 10% of the production system data to the nonproduction database – but with wholly relevant data for effective testing. The process is much easier, quicker, and much more reliable.

Ballooning Volumes, Cumbersome Requirements

Like many companies, one of Migros Aare's main problems was coping with creating nonproduction software environments and keeping them up-to-date with its live software in order to replicate live conditions. With Migros Aare's software landscape spread all over Switzerland in cooperative markets, each with its own projects and modifications to boot, the challenges facing the company's data and IT infrastructure had ballooned accordingly. On top of that, any software inconsistencies taking root in the many individual branches needed proper managing. This made testing new developments on parallel, nonproduction systems not just a cumbersome task but one that was almost impossible due to its gigantic scope.

"Currently, our database and production system environments are between one and two terabytes large. Before we implemented SAP Test Data Migration Server, the only methods we had were either a complete system copy or a full import and export of the software environment," Kräuchi explains. "It simply wasn't possible to manage the multiclient system with a full system copy. With anything between 1,000 and 1,500 transports per year per software landscape, you can imagine what sort of volumes of changes we were dealing with. That wasn't just costly in terms of hardware infrastructure expense, but it was time-consuming as well. Something had to be done," he adds.

From Software Infancy to Full Maturity and Ease of Use

"We needed a solution that could test the latest version of transactional data cleanly for all of the modifications we have to make to our production environments. We needed clean test data – for software modifications, releases, and upgrades," explains Kräuchi. When Migros Aare first started looking for a solution capable of dealing with the problem in 2004, SAP Test Data Migration Server had just been launched on the market. The company had recently migrated its module for financial accounting and controlling into the same software environment as its SAP for Retail solution portfolio, only to have to separate the two environments a year later.

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Thomas Kräuchi, Team Member, SAP Basic Team, Genossenschaft Migros Aare

When Migros Aare first implemented SAP Test Data Migration Server, the decision to go with it was partly inspired by experts from SAP Consulting services, who helped install the software, but also motivated by the fact that Migros Aare would be able to customize the software according to its own requirements. "When we first put SAP Test Data Migration Server to use, I have to admit we made a few adjustments to suit our specifications at the time. However, after using it for a while, we realized how much the software actually benefits our development and testing. Above all, it is very easy to use. Depending on whether the software landscape is running the retail software or the financial accounting and controlling software, the implementation normally takes only between two and four days to complete. If you're conversant with SAP software in general, you will find your way around it very quickly. And as an isolated implementation, it runs perfectly in parallel with other applications."

"Not only was it quick, but the implementation also profited greatly from the excellent contact we were afforded to the development team at SAP."

Thomas Kräuchi, Team Member, SAP Basic Team, Genossenschaft Migros Aare

Reduction in Data, Lower Costs

With the implementation of the SAP software, Migros Aare was able to deploy modifications to its software landscape in a much more compact test environment. The new test environment mirrors all of the important data necessary to run a nonproduction system – without making a complete copy of the production system. "In terms of saving drive space and costs, SAP Test Data Migration Server is a huge advance. We can now create a test system copy fully up-to-date and consistent with the production system but with only approximately 10% or less of the original data volume; that is, between 150 and 200 gigabytes of drive space. This means we can slash costs considerably for hardware and database volume," Kräuchi says, describing the major benefit.

Fewer Transports, Greater Quality

Besides providing Migros Aare with a stable nonproduction environment, SAP Test Data Migration Server has led to substantial improvements in the way Migros Aare manages its development projects. "Before we had SAP Test Data Migration Server, we couldn't do any refreshes after reaching the production phase of development. It just wasn't technically possible. With SAP Test Data Migration Server, this is no longer an issue: we can now do regular refreshes in our production systems. We have also managed to cut down on the number of transports we need to do between production and nonproduction systems," Kräuchi confirms. Because system copies have been streamlined to a more manageable size, transports of new developments and modifications between the production and nonproduction systems are leaner, less complex, and reduced in number.

With less time now needed for managing complex transport processes, Migros Aare has noticeably increased the quality of its functional tests. Kräuchi adds, "Not only has the streamlined nonproduction system done away with the inconvenience of system downtime, it has helped us greatly improve the efficiency and quality of our development. Obviously, a great advantage for us in comparison with our previous method is that we no longer have to test changes or modifications in our production system. We can make full use of the lean nonproduction systems for testing and development." With the qualitative improvements afforded by SAP Test Data Migration Server, Kräuchi sees advantages not only in the way the software fits into Migros Aare's testing process but also in how it slashes system downtime and boosts operational dependability. As Kräuchi explains, "From production onward, we can use reliable, up-to-date test data. Despite making modifications to multiclient systems, there are no longer restrictions for users while we test clients on nonproduction systems."

Software That Meets the Challenge

In one of the first implementation projects for a company of this size, SAP Test Data Migration Server not only proved its worth as an invaluable tool for creating viable test systems but also met all of the expectations

concerning the company's operations. Kräuchi is particularly pleased with the high quality of assistance provided by SAP Consulting in the area of initial customizing and postimplementation optimization. "Not only was it quick, but the implementation also profited greatly from the excellent contact we were afforded to the development team at SAP. It's something I can sometimes still take advantage of when I need support for specific issues," praises Kräuchi.

For Kräuchi, however, the factor that contributes greatly to the success of SAP Test Data Migration Server is the peace of mind he now has. As he points out, "SAP Test Data Migration Server helped us achieve a tremendous data reduction in our nonproduction environment. Furthermore, the software now lets our process staff map new processes in test systems based on real business data. Overall, SAP Test Data Migration Server fully met our expectations, and there is no other tool that compares to it."

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