

Publisher DER SPIEGEL: Significant Productivity Increase and Enhancement of Service Level Agreements

In brief

With a weekly print run of over one million and 6.5 million readers, DER SPIEGEL is the leading news magazine in Germany. The venerable publishing company also distributes a wide range of print, online and TV products.

Its great branding value is the result of investments in high-quality journalistic expertise and innovation. For example, DER SPIEGEL is the first news magazine worldwide with an online presence. Today, SPIEGEL ONLINE (spiegel-online.de) reaches 65 million page visitors on average and 400 million page impressions per month. The company also introduced SPIEGEL MOBIL, a mobile solution providing access to SPIEGEL ONLINE and other contents for mobile and PDA users.

DER SPIEGEL has over 1,250 employees in different offices, archives, and departments. A dedicated team creates the magazine with over 200 pages, published every Monday and distributed in 172 countries. More than 270 journalists worldwide research, write and edit DER SPIEGEL articles. DER SPIEGEL also employs image editors, graphic and layout designers, editorial and other staff including archivists.

The digital DER SPIEGEL archive system contains over 34 million documents and photos. Its database is tailored to the specific needs of print and online journalists, so everyone has online access to the entire archive from any location. All documents are saved as structured text and image files on servers.



DER SPIEGEL headquarters in Hamburg

Customer Snapshot: DER SPIEGEL

Customer:

DER SPIEGEL is one of the most influential news magazines in Europe. It is based in Hamburg and has a weekly print run of over one million with 6.5 million readers.

Challenges:

Secure and location-independent access to all data center servers. A more flexible server administration with longer operation times while maintaining the same staff base. Integration of a heterogeneous IT environment including Windows, Linux, Unix (Sun, HP), and Apple Macintosh servers.

Solution:

Paragon KVM (42-Port model) with remote access over IP Reach.

Results:

- Adoption of and compliance with Service Level Agreements (SLAs)
- Increased productivity
- Reduced mean time to repair (MTTR)
- No nighttime trips to the data center in case of downtimes

Germany's leading news magazine.

To ensure a continuous workflow for its global multimedia operations, DER SPIEGEL has a heterogeneous IT infrastructure with over 100 Linux, Windows, and Mac servers in a primary and in a backup data center. The number of servers has almost doubled over the years to support the growing business. The most critical systems that always need to be fully available include the web-based editorial system as well as DER SPIEGEL's Internet presence.

DER SPIEGEL's innovative web-based editorial system controls the provision, management, production and logistics of text and image contents for DER SPIEGEL magazine articles. System downtimes might significantly damage the entire value added chain and result in delayed production and dispatch of the magazine or other products. Huge decreases in productivity, sales losses in the hundreds of thousands of Euros would be the consequence - not to mention countless unsatisfied customers.

Optimized timing is essential in the news industry and determines the value of published news.

DER SPIEGEL online products also require full system availability, because the DER SPIEGEL website generates sales with articles from its online archive that readers can purchase via credit card. System downtimes therefore have a negative impact not only on online and mobile readers, but also directly on sales.



Thus, the full availability of key applications was essential for DER SPIEGEL's IT Manager Robert Kiehne. "We had to make sure that the same staff base could permanently access, as well as quickly and effectively manage, a more and more complex infrastructure." In emergencies, with isolated application systems using console switches from Black Box and Compaq, IT team members had to be locally present (even off-time) to fix any problems when a server operating system or

network card was down. Consequently, DER SPIEGEL was facing increased downtimes, more overtime and travel costs.

To address this issue and to ensure full system availability, Kiehne was looking for an IT infrastructure management solution providing him and 10 other team members secure and location-independent access to data center appliances to fix any problem anytime and anywhere.



Solution

DER SPIEGEL chose Raritan's Paragon KVM Switch, a modular, Cat5-based remote access solution allowing for a permanent and unblocked access to attached servers. Multiple users can simultaneously access rack-mounted servers. Our solution for DER SPIEGEL now includes 6 Paragon Switches, each controlling 42 servers. So, future expansions are also possible.

Paragon is based on an innovative, modular, and stackable architecture and offers the highest port density currently available while saving space and HVAC costs.

Optional access gateway IP-Reach allows remote server administration from anywhere using an Internet connection. DER SPIEGEL's IT team can therefore quickly address occurring IT issues that could impact SLAs. That way, expensive and time consuming trips to affected servers can be eliminated while ensuring more productivity.

Raritan is a leading provider of secure IT infrastructure management solutions that provide IT directors, managers and administrators the control they need to optimize data center productivity, enhance branch office operations and increase overall power management efficiency. In over 50,000 locations around the world, our integrated secure in-band and out-of-band server access, control and power management products help companies better monitor and manage server access, utilization and energy consumption. Raritan's OEM division provides advanced embedded hardware and firmware for server and client management, including KVM over IP, IPMI, intelligent power management and other industry standards-based management applications. Raritan has 38 offices worldwide, serving 76 countries. The European headquarters is located in The Netherlands. For more information, please visit Raritan.info

"With remote data center access on BIOS level we could considerably increase our response times and productivity," says Robert Kiehne. "Now, we can fix downtimes and other problems at anytime, even at night or from home. For example, I no longer need to drive over 120 kilometers to fix a problem. But the more important thing is that we finally can avoid production delays." Using the Raritan solution, DER SPIEGEL can also adopt and successfully implement SLAs. "Our Service Level Agreement with the company management says that data center downtimes should be fixed within an hour," says Kiehne.

Security also plays an important role. By enabling external access ("lights-out data centers"), the Paragon system minimizes the need for a physical presence in server rooms, thus providing a more secure data center operation. An additional security level monitors and tracks every access to servers.

Results

"With Raritan's Paragon access technology we can effectively use our IT resources and optimize our service levels," says Kiehne.

"We save a lot of time and efforts thanks to remote access via IP Reach," he adds. "Now, I can leave my office more relaxed on Fridays, when production starts, because I know that our entire IT system can also be managed from home in emergencies."

"We are confident that we are also able to successfully complete our remote access projects in the future, because Raritan has always provided the most suitable solution at the right time since the first day of our business relationship."

Why DER SPIEGEL chose Raritan:

- Perfect consulting
- Unbeatable cost-benefit ratio
- Support of power management integration
- Always the most suitable product at the right time

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