

Flexible Handling of Maintenance Quotas

A Niche Application

Expanded

By Grischa Rüdell

For years, Finanz Informatik, a company formed by the merger of FinanzIT and Sparkassen Informatik, has worked with a custom-developed network management application used for configuration and ACL management. Originally, it was used to administer about 16,000 network components in their own network and their customer network. Consist has successfully migrated the application, based on HTML and Perl, and assumed the responsibility of maintaining it in the context of its Application Maintenance Services (AMS).

The starting situation

The strategic orientation of the company mandates a focus on their core competence of network operations. Finanz Informatik thus decided on professional outsourcing of the maintenance and service of this niche application that had grown out of 10 years of pragmatic custom development. The network operations department that had developed the application was therefore looking for a reliable partner for network management in order to establish a reliable application. Consist turned out to be the suitable partner. The Kiel IT company was qualified both on a technical basis and in terms of rates, and in the context of Application Maintenance Services was ready to take responsibility of guaranteeing the required failure security with specifically defined SLAs. Two years earlier, Consist had already taken

over maintenance responsibilities for another niche application, proving themselves to be a reliable and responsible partner.

Porting to a high-availability cluster

After a few handoff workshops, the actual support project to port the application to a new, high-availability environment got under way. This migration project included transferring the production system onto a cluster system in the Hannover location. When the project started, the internal know-how for the application was no longer available. The AMS team at Consist took the plunge, familiarized themselves with the application, and actively supported FinanzIT in close collaboration in the context of the project. In the meantime, Consist

has been maintaining the FinanzIT application successfully with no problems.

FinanzIT thus now has two similarly organized service areas under maintenance with Consist. This gives them the advantage of being able to handle the contractually determined annual quotas flexibly. They are now used for all issues. In addition to supporting service topics, the time account can also be used globally for project work.

After migration, handoff of maintenance responsibility

The project was broken down into four sequential phases.

- Detailed analysis and working out of the system and network



photo: Finanz Informatik

connections to the application, accompanied by familiarization with the complex Perl code. This permitted simultaneous integration of the application to be migrated into the existing network architecture.

- Setup of the new hardware in Hanover, which also satisfied the high security standards of Finanz Informatik. In parallel with the existing productive system, the network component of the migration system was also set up.
- Successful go-live at a low-traffic hour.
- Final smooth transition phase backed up by high availability of technical personnel.

After the migration project was complete, Consist then took over operation and maintenance of the application. In the context of these AMS services, the application is continually optimized, the code cleaned up and adapted to produc-

tion needs. Functional adaptations to changing production conditions due to the dynamics of the merger of FinanzIT and Sparkassen Informatik are carried out. For example, interfaces to newly integrated systems can be adapted and functionality thus kept up-to-date.

Summary: Familiarization project replaces handoff

This example, too, shows that projects are outstandingly suitable for the familiarization and handoff of new AMS service topics to be taken over. If project implementation is already handled by the AMS team later to be managing the application, the team can familiarize themselves with the application or system environment by direct use during project implementation. The subsequent transition of maintenance responsibility can thus be carried out with no additional handoff effort.

Many of our AMS customers have long since recognized this advantage, and are using our project competence to outsource the new development of applications to Consist when they already plan in advance to outsource their maintenance.

For customers like Finanz Informatik who have multiple identically organized service topics in maintenance with Consist, there is also the added value that agreed-upon time quotas can be used flexibly and globally over all their requirements, thus cushioning any added cost of projects.

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About Finanz Informatik

Finanz Informatik, with headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, is the IT service provider of the Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe. Among their customers are 438 savings banks, 9 federal state banks (Landesbanken), 10 federal state building and loan associations (Landesbausparkassen), and other companies in the Sparkassen-Finanzgruppe and the financial services sector. Finanz Informatik was founded in 2008 as the merger of Sparkassen Informatik (in Frankfurt) and Finanz-IT

(in Hanover).

The service offering of Finanz Informatik includes the entire IT spectrum, from the development and provision of IT applications, networks, and technical infrastructure, to computer center operation, to consulting, training, and support. With the powerful total bank solution OSPlus, the company is now providing one of the leading IT systems for the German banking market.



Finanz Informatik provides services for 128.8 million accounts; each year, more than 50 billion technical transactions are carried out on its systems. The company employs 5,346 employees, and its sales volume is 1,556.9 million Euros (2007).

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