Composable infrastructure drives innovation for manufacturing systems in Continental Tires

Leading worldwide tire manufacturer drives innovation with HPE Synergy solution

Industry
Automotive

Objective
Implement a unified IT standard for manufacturing systems in 20 plants throughout the world for at least the next five years

Approach
Researched the market and contacted its suppliers in order to find a solution that best met all technical and business requirements

IT matters
- Single infrastructure with fluid resource pools of physical and virtual compute, storage, and fabric
- Software-defined intelligence simplifies lifecycle management
- Highly automated deployment of IT resources

Business matters
- Reduced CAPEX with single infrastructure of fluid resource pools
- Reliable operation of IT infrastructure in manufacturing plants
- Reduced admin time and cost with automated operations
- Simpler, quicker, and more efficient operation

Continental Tires was looking for an IT solution that would simplify and unify both deployment and administration of its manufacturing IT infrastructure at all of its 20 manufacturing plants worldwide. It chose an HPE Synergy solution for its composable infrastructure architecture as this can deploy resources quickly for any workload, reduce costs, and drive operational efficiencies.

Challenge

Transformation to software-defined infrastructure to speed up IT processes

IT environments are constantly changing, and older systems as well as some established IT processes often no longer meet business or technical requirements. We are living in an era of digital transformation, in which new technologies allow companies to transform their business in a new way. Companies are undergoing a significant digital transformation to accelerate innovation and growth. They're doing this with a software driven, application approach to IT, which is fundamentally changing how companies operate. Companies must fundamentally re-evaluate existing business processes while driving revenue and customer experiences with new apps and services.

"Due to technology obsolescence, we were searching for a new IT infrastructure concept that would allow us to standardize manufacturing systems in data centers. We needed one tool for simple management and software-defined technology for the next 5 years at least. This solution will provide a long-term standard for our plants throughout the world. We required a unified, global solution."

– Ing. Pavel Šimšálek, IT MES Infrastructure Manager at Continental Barum s.r.o.

"We chose an **HPE Synergy** solution not only due to its technical specifications, which **meet our requirements**, but we also liked how **simple and easy** it is to **manage**. Our **existing satisfaction** with prior generations of **HPE servers** is another **positive** aspect."

– Ing. Pavel Šimšálek,
IT MES Infrastructure Manager at
Continental Barum s.r.o.

Continental Tires needed a solution that would meet the requirements of today's evolving world. Continental has been manufacturing tires in Hanover since 1871. The entire Continental AG group, under which its tire manufacturing falls, has 240,000 employees in 60 countries and annual revenues of EUR 44.55 billion. In the Czech Republic, Continental AG manages a variety of different automotive companies with specific responsibilities.

The Continental Tire division was searching for a way to unify and efficiently manage its manufacturing IT environment. The objective was to decrease the time necessary for the deployment of new IT systems and reduce operations effort during lifecycle management.

During the vendor selection process, great emphasis was placed on a common, simple management tool and technology that would be future proof. A long-term standard was also required that could be applied not only in the Czech Republic but also in as many as 20 plants around the world, including South Africa, Brazil, Thailand, Malaysia, Ecuador, and other countries.

Solution

A software-defined, composable infrastructure solution
Continental Tire was looking for a way to replace its existing HPE BladeSystem solution. "We needed a solution that could give us the best services together with the functionality and growth we were looking for. We were facing a decision whether to choose

blade servers as the standard for the next five years, or to switch to standard rack servers," says Pavel Šimšálek, IT MES Infrastructure Manager at Continental Barum s.r.o.

Composable infrastructure is an architectural approach that allows you to deploy IT resources quickly and for any workload using software-defined infrastructure. Composable infrastructure is a 100% software-defined approach enabling IT and businesses to speed time-to-market and capitalize on new opportunities. Transforming to a software-defined data center with HPE Composable Infrastructure automates tasks, reduces risk, enables IT collaboration and increases speed and flexibility of IT service delivery. The benefit to the business is you can now use technology to improve customers' experiences and adapt to changing expectations through apps and data.

"We chose an HPE Synergy solution not only due to its technical specifications, which meet our requirements, but we also liked how simple and easy it is to manage. Our existing satisfaction with prior generations of HPE servers is another positive aspect," explains Pavel Šimšálek.

Factory manufacturing systems always run on a solution that is split between two server rooms to ensure an outage-free operation. "We have been gradually switching to the new HPE Synergy solution at our plants around the world since September 2017, according to how obsolete existing infrastructure has become. During the spring and summer, we were testing the proposed solution and familiarizing ourselves with it so that our administrators could switch to the

"After testing and verifying the concept we decided on an HPE Synergy composable solution with HPE OneView software-defined intelligence. We achieved simplified infrastructure and unified management in all locations."

– Ing. Pavel Šimšálek, IT MES Infrastructure Manager at Continental Barum s.r.o.

Customer at a glance

Hardware
- HPE Synergy 12000 Frames
- HPE Synergy Composer
- HPE Virtual Connect SE 40Gb F8 Modules
- HPE Synergy 480 Compute Modules

Software
- HPE OneView

HPE Pointnext
- HPE Installation and Deployment Services
- HPE Foundation Care

new environment as easily as possible. This was also greatly facilitated by the use of the HPE OneView management tool, which we are now using to not only manage the new HPE Synergy solution, but also to monitor older HPE BladeSystem c7000 systems," says Pavel Šimšálek, adding that his team is gradually deploying the solution at other manufacturing plants throughout the world.

Two Synergy frames with a total of twelve compute modules have been implemented in South Africa, as well as in Brazil. Another Synergy frame has been deployed in Thailand, and another frame will be added next year. Malaysia, Ecuador, and the USA are next. Additional countries will then follow.

Benefits

Easy to administer, use, and implement

HPE Synergy, the first composable infrastructure that is truly software-defined, offers cost reductions by eliminating costly silos due to over-provisioning, accelerated application and workload deployment, and simplifies management by automating processes and speeding service delivery. The entire system can be managed with modern and intuitive HTML5 GUI or using Unified API which simplifies further integration inside the data center.

"The use of HPE Synergy has accelerated and simplified our deployment process significantly. Something that took a couple of days now takes only minutes. Deployment of a Synergy frame with all its compute and network elements is so fast because we are utilizing automation through a unified RESTful API. We also achieved time savings for our server and network administrators thanks to the fact that a server administrator can perform network configuration on the server side without the participation of a network administrator," says Pavel Šimšálek.

The HPE Synergy solution reduced Continental Tires' total cost of ownership for critical manufacturing plant IT infrastructure around the world. It offers 82% higher performance over its previous generation and has helped accelerate deployment and simplify operating activities.

"We obtained a modern solution for at least the next five years. One that is easy to administer, use, and implement at all our division's plants throughout the world," concludes Pavel Šimšálek.

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