



ABOUT THE COMPANY

Capgemini Relies on One-Stop Data Center Infrastructure Management with Avocent Solutions from Vertiv™

Background

In 2006, Capgemini in Central Europe completely converted the operation of its IT infrastructure to remote management using Avocent® solutions. Since then, not only has the number of data centers, locations and IT administrators multiplied, but the complexity of data center planning and infrastructure management has continuously increased. The IT service provider has thus relied on the Avocent Data Center Planner™ infrastructure management application from Vertiv for some time and now uses all the currently available Avocent solutions for Data Center Infrastructure Management (DCIM).

As an IT service provider, Capgemini provides the full outsourcing portfolio, from application management and infrastructure management to business process management. Customers have the choice, ranging from simple hosting services to overall service of their complete IT in the form of full outsourcing service agreements. In these cases, Capgemini takes over the full responsibility for the customers' IT.

In 2006, the Capgemini data center in Essen at that time and the responsible administrators went their separate ways: the IT infrastructure moved to Frankfurt and the managers to Düsseldorf. In order to also be able to remotely control the hardware and software securely, the company installed remote management solutions from Avocent. Since then, they have also acquired the DSView™ 3 management software for remote server and component management, 40 KVM switches, 36 console port servers and several hundred power distribution strips with a total of about 4,000 ports.

"We no longer use the solutions solely in Frankfurt, but also at the data centers in Zurich and Menden. In addition, the administrators responsible are not just in Düsseldorf anymore, but also in Eastern Europe and Asia," explains Matthias Fortmann, Data Center Manager for Central Europe at Capgemini's Outsourcing Services. *"With this growth, however, the data center documentation and planning has become more and more complex."*

Previously, documentation and planning of the entire infrastructure—totaling 5,200 components—was primarily done using Microsoft® Excel® spreadsheets in Microsoft SharePoint®. Even if this method could be used to create extensive rack and cable plans, the administrators reached their limits with the tool.

"With such a large team of IT administrators spread out across the globe, it is a difficult task keeping the Excel lists up to date. In addition, only one administrator at a time was allowed to access the document," says Fortmann.

One graphic says more than a thousand spreadsheets

For these reasons, Fortmann, together with long-term partner Netsystem Netzwerk- und Systemtechnik GmbH, began looking into various solutions. In addition to the pure documentation of the data centers, the new software should also provide a visual overview and modeling for planning. *“One graphic says more than a thousand Excel spreadsheets,”* says Fortmann.

“The Avocent® Data Center Planner™ application from Vertiv™ simply won us over with its room and rack views, including detailed information on location, space, power consumption, heat dissipation, connections and network,” explains Fortmann. *“We can see at a glance where capacities are still free in the rack, where dependencies exist or if certain areas of the data centers are overheated. We can also model planned changes before implementing them, identify their effects and then reach the optimum solution. This allows us to maximize the use of our existing resources.”*

The deciding factor was that the Web browser-based application also enables simultaneous access; user administration can be used to control which administrators receive read or write access.

“The collaboration runs quickly and smoothly. We can assign certain projects to individual administrators or reserve capacities in a specific rack,” says Fortmann.

The Avocent Data Center Planner application was ready for the first crucial auditing test too. In the course of the ISO 20000 certification, the auditors praised the clarity of the documentation of the Swiss data centers. Data center information can easily be exported from the Avocent Data Center Planner application as a PDF or Excel document.

“The audit report even recommended that we use this type of documentation for the other data centers,” reports Fortmann.

Using the complete Avocent portfolio from Vertiv

Fortmann is also highly satisfied with the Avocent remote management components and the DSView 3 management software.

“The DSView 3 management software together with Power Manager plug-in shows our administrators a consolidated view of all systems and they can provide easy access via out-of-band paths when there are problems in the LAN, diagnose causes and restart the device if needed— a valuable emergency path that avoids unnecessary on-site visits,” states Fortmann. *“If threshold values are exceeded, we can turn the power supply off and on through the power distribution strips. Using the KVM switches and console port servers, we can also simply call up the monitor and keyboard of a server directly to our workstation.”*

The combination of Data Center Planner, DSView 3 software and the remote management components from Vertiv provides Capgemini Outsourcing Services with both optimization and administration of the entire infrastructure with all integrated IT and network devices throughout all locations. Currently, 140 administrators in Germany, Eastern Europe and Asia work with the solutions.

In conclusion, Fortmann says, *“Of course we are closely following the further development of Avocent solutions from Vertiv, which will soon culminate in an integrated DCIM platform. Integrating the management of IT infrastructure and facilities such as room, power consumption and climate control promises more efficient use of resources in data centers. The future has a few things in store.”*