



MDlink gains flexibility with Lenovo networking switches building onto its Lenovo server infrastructure

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Overview

IT service provider MDlink online service center GmbH found that its networking equipment was struggling to cope with increased volumes of customer traffic and the demands of the company's new cloud services. MDlink chose to replace its existing Cisco switches with Lenovo RackSwitch technology, based on its outstanding experience of Lenovo System x servers. Not only does this decision enable the company to continue providing highly available hosting services, it also greatly simplifies MDlink's data center infrastructure.

MDlink online service center GmbH, based in Magdeburg, Germany, is an IT service provider with over twenty years of industry experience. The company offers fully managed server hosting, as well as internet connectivity and networking solutions with a focus on businesses across the region.

Mario Grosse, Cloud Computing Architect at MDlink online service center GmbH, says: "MDlink offers a wide range of services, from dedicated server hosting to customized cloud solutions. As our core networking infrastructure began approaching full capacity, we knew we needed to make changes to meet growing demand and ensure the highest standards of service for our customers. As we are currently in the process of expanding our cloud service offerings, we also took this as an opportunity to streamline our data center and make it truly cloud-ready."

Facing growing demand

Mario Grosse explains: "After having standardized to Lenovo System x servers, we were still using networking systems from three or four different vendors in parallel. Facing growing performance and capacity demands from customers, it became increasingly difficult to manage and expand the existing solution.

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— **Mario Grosse,**
Cloud Computing Architect,
MDlink online service center GmbH



“In the past, we relied on Cisco switches to handle most of our network traffic. However, increasing volumes of customer data and growing demand for flexible cloud services were putting immense pressure on our switches. We predicted that within twelve months, they would have reached maximum capacity and significantly slowed down our services.”

To ensure high availability of its hosting and cloud services, MDlink wanted to upgrade to high-performance and easily scalable networking switches. Based on its excellent track record with Lenovo System x servers, the company selected Lenovo networking. “We saw this as an opportunity to modernize our data center and create a homogenous architecture with a single-vendor strategy,” recalls Mario Grosse. “Building on our very positive experience with System x servers from Lenovo, we decided to evaluate Lenovo’s networking solutions.”

Scaling up capacities

MDlink started optimizing its networking environment by implementing two Lenovo RackSwitch G8264 switches. The company was so impressed by the reliability, scalability and seamless integration of the top-of-rack switches with its existing Lenovo System x servers that it chose to replace all of its remaining networking switches with Lenovo RackSwitch technology.

Mario Grosse says: “Lenovo RackSwitch G8264 fulfilled all of our expectations. The product provides exactly what we want from our networking switches and gave us the confidence to consolidate our data center infrastructure with Lenovo as our single vendor.”

MDlink then deployed two Lenovo RackSwitch G8124 switches for distribution switching and two G8052 switches as additional top-of-rack switches to support the modular design of its data center.

“Support from Lenovo has been excellent,” adds Mario Grosse. “Although we configure the switches ourselves, they are then checked by Lenovo and whenever we have any technical questions, we always get a fast, direct response. Working with a single vendor makes life much easier, as we have a single point of contact for all of our infrastructure components.”

Ace availability

With its new RackSwitch technology, MDlink successfully standardized its IT architecture with Lenovo. MDlink is already using System x3650 M5 servers to support the dedicated hosted infrastructure for its larger customers, and System x3250 M5 servers for those with smaller requirements. The company’s own systems run on a single virtualized System x3650 M5 server. Equipped with Intel Xeon processors, the Lenovo System x servers offer excellent performance, helping MDlink handle customers’ diverse workloads.

Mario Grosse comments: “With both our networking switches and servers from Lenovo, our data center is now much easier to manage and we expect to see a substantial reduction in time spent on administrative tasks. What’s more, we

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estimate saving around 30 percent in investment costs with Lenovo networking technology.”

The Lenovo solution offers MDlink increased availability and reliability. “With a robust cloud infrastructure based on Lenovo systems, we improved availability and can better meet growing demand for cloud computing. We are now able to offer higher-quality service-level agreements, keeping customers happy,” says Mario Grosse.

He continues: “Most importantly, the Lenovo networking solution has enabled us to build an easily scalable, cost-efficient and low-latency cloud environment, so we can offer our customers completely new services.”

Previously only offering Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), MDlink leverages Lenovo RackSwitch technology in combination with Lenovo System x and high-density, highly scalable Lenovo NeXtScale System servers as the foundation for various Software as a Service (SaaS) offerings, including backup and security solutions. Mario Grosse adds: “Being able to easily add nodes to the NeXtScale System chassis as and when we need them ensures that we are well-equipped to handle growing customer demand.”

Mario Grosse concludes: “Customers demand cloud services to simplify their IT operations. As a full-service provider, we want to support our customers and help them streamline their IT environments. Lenovo technology enables us to create a comprehensive and cost-efficient cloud solution that allows us to expand into new business areas while also strengthening our managed hosting business.”

For more information

To learn more about Lenovo Enterprise Systems contact your Lenovo Sales Representative or Lenovo Business Partner, or visit: lenovo.com/systems

For more information about MDlink online service center GmbH, visit: www.mdlink.de

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Visit <http://www.lenovo.com/lenovo/us/en/safecomp.html> periodically for the latest information on safe and effective computing.

Solution components

Hardware

Lenovo RackSwitch G8052

Lenovo RackSwitch G8124

Lenovo RackSwitch G8264

Lenovo NeXtScale System nx360 M5

Lenovo System x3650 M5

Lenovo System x3250 M5

Intel Xeon processors

Software

KVM Virtualization

OpenStack

Red Hat Enterprise Linux

