Technology | Germany

Boosting data center energy and cost efficiency

activation GmbH

To future-proof IT services for a large healthcare customer, activation GmbH selected a scalable, energy- and cost-efficient hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) solution based on 12 Lenovo ThinkSystem SR655 servers powered by AMD EPYC™ Server CPUs.

1 Customer background

Who is activation GmbH?

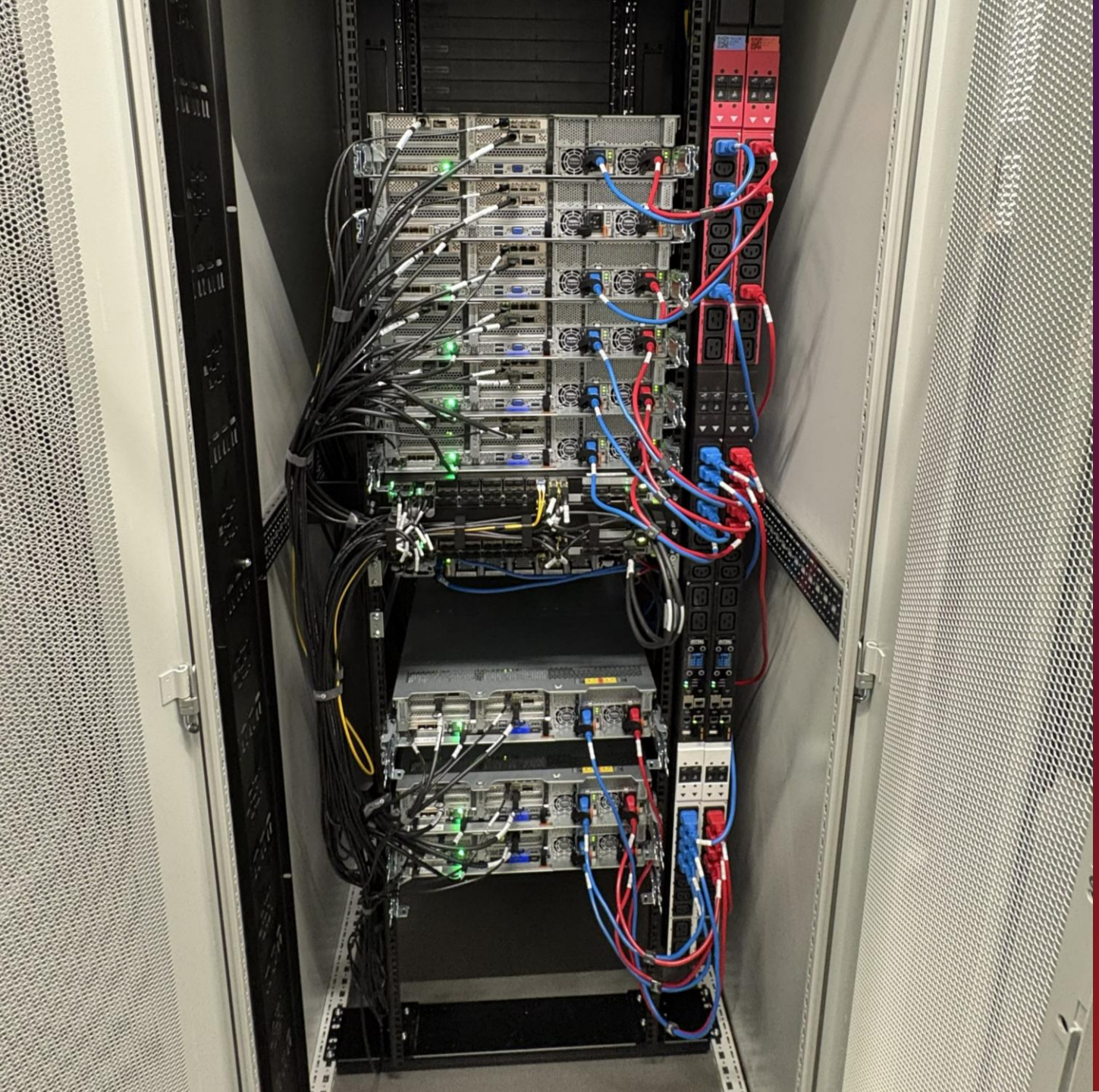
activation GmbH is a growing IT full-service provider based in Esslingen, Germany, with branches in Bielefeld, Ulm, and near Sinsheim. The Lenovo business partner offers consulting, infrastructure, operations, support, backup, and private cloud services to small to midsized companies across a wide range of industries. The specialized team at activation GmbH focuses on long-term customer and vendor relationships, building trust with high-quality customer-focused solutions and services to achieve high customer satisfaction and realize sustainable business growth.

activation
Your IT-Company

2 The challenge

When a large healthcare customer approached activation GmbH for help modernizing its IT services and facilitating compliance with the latest cybersecurity standards, it prompted a fundamental rethink. After evaluating its existing infrastructure, activation GmbH decided to move its private cloud services to a completely new data center location.

As part of its efforts to lift its IT services to the next level, complete with ISO 27001 compliance, activation GmbH needed a fast and reliable infrastructure foundation for the new data center. The company also wanted to use this opportunity to boost energy efficiency to reduce power use and cut operating costs.



Additionally, activation GmbH aimed to optimize costs by swapping virtualization platforms and consolidating systems. The company looked for a strong partner with deep experience and proven expertise across virtualization solutions to ensure a smooth switch from VMware to Proxmox Virtual Environment (VE).

“We wanted to **modernize and future-proof** the IT services we deliver for one of our large healthcare customers. With budgets under pressure and rising energy costs, our goal was to **increase performance substantially while also significantly reducing energy consumption**. We were looking for a **strong partner** to help us build up a completely new and highly efficient data center in line with industry best practices and the latest cybersecurity standards.”

Oliver Bicanic

CEO, activation GmbH

3 The solution

Close collaboration drives IT transformation

After evaluating different vendors, activation GmbH selected 12 Lenovo ThinkSystem SR665 V3 servers as the foundation for the new data center. The Lenovo servers are powered by high-performance AMD EPYC™ 9004 and 9005 Series Server CPUs, with 64 cores for exceptional memory bandwidth and capacity, extremely fast NVMe disks, and 100 Gb Ethernet connectivity for high-speed networking. The Lenovo systems are set up as a hyperconverged infrastructure cluster running Proxmox Virtual Environment (VE) to create a cost-efficient and fast virtualization platform.

Hardware

Lenovo ThinkSystem SR665 V3
AMD EPYC™ 9005 Series Server CPUs
AMD EPYC™ 9004 Series Server CPUs

Software

Lenovo XClarity Controller
Proxmox Virtual Environment (VE)

Services

Lenovo Premier Support for Infrastructure
bytec

3 The solution

Streamlined infrastructure and technology stack with full support

activation GmbH has been working with this healthcare customer for many years, helping the company overcome the specific challenges of running many different business applications on a virtualization cluster. Using the integrated Lenovo XClarity software solution gives activation GmbH access to fast and easy hardware-level systems management features. To further maximize system availability and ensure business continuity, activation GmbH relies on Lenovo Premier Support for Infrastructure with direct access to expert assistance and on-site support.

3 The solution

The comprehensive dedicated private cloud solution has proven to be a great match for the customer's business requirements. The new Lenovo ThinkSystem SR665 V3 servers officially support Proxmox VE, giving activation GmbH the confidence to run 350 mission-critical customer virtual machines (VMs) including a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) solution on this software-defined, integrated platform. Easy scalability means that the healthcare customer can deploy additional Lenovo servers to the virtualization cluster as and when needed.

To access all the central business applications seamlessly, many of the healthcare customer's staff use Lenovo ThinkPad laptops.

“We have been using ThinkSystem technology for many years now, and highly value Lenovo solutions for their proven reliability and the excellent support.”

André Eulenberger

Senior IT Consultant, activation GmbH

“We worked with lots of specialists from Lenovo and the distributor bytec to optimize the configuration and HCI architecture. It was great to receive **honest guidance and expert recommendations**. We were particularly impressed by Lenovo’s deployment best practices and support for Proxmox VE. Together, we have built a **flexible and cost-efficient** enterprise virtualization solution using an **open-source platform without vendor lock-in**.”

André Eulenberger

Senior IT Consultant, activation GmbH

4 The results

By deploying Lenovo ThinkSystem servers, powered by AMD EPYC™ 9004 and 9005 Series Server CPUs, activation GmbH aims to deliver 30-50% faster application performance for the healthcare customer for 2,000 users across 90 locations. Rapid access to business information and documents managed with the ELO ECM Suite and DATEV tax accounting and data management solutions—among many other applications—will help the healthcare company to optimize processes, increase productivity, and accelerate growth.

What's more, improved virtualized desktop performance delivers standardized, modern digital workplaces that support a wide range of everyday business tasks.

- 30-50% faster application performance
- 33% fewer servers
- 20% energy savings

4 The results

Increasing performance and cutting costs

By moving to high-performance Lenovo ThinkSystem SR665 V3 servers powered by AMD EPYC™ 9004 and 9005 Series Sever CPUs, activation GmbH managed to consolidate its private cloud hosting cluster from 18 to just 12 nodes, reducing administration and maintenance workloads. By working with Lenovo for performance tuning of the cluster solution, activation GmbH achieves 283% faster write IOPS and up to 1.87M IOPS read performance.

The high energy efficiency of the Lenovo systems with AMD EPYC™ Server CPUs will also allow activation GmbH to reduce overall power consumption by about 20%, while boosting application performance for business users.

The Lenovo solution provides a solid, reliable, and secure foundation for activation GmbH’s new data center. Combined with the cost-efficient Proxmox VE virtualization solution, activation GmbH can achieve lower total cost of ownership (TCO) for mission-critical IT services.

“**Controlling costs with smart solutions** is key to deliver efficient IT services at scale. The new Lenovo and Proxmox VE solution architecture together with our new, more modern data center facilities will help us to **enhance cybersecurity and ensure compliance with the new EU NIS2 Directive**. This legal framework focused on securing network and information systems is becoming increasingly important for our bigger customers, so it’s essential for us to **future-proof our IT operations with stable and secure infrastructure solutions**.”

Oliver Bicanic

CEO, activation GmbH

Why Lenovo and AMD?

Working closely with distributor bytec and Lenovo, activation GmbH now achieved Lenovo Gold partner status. This is an important steppingstone for the company to unlock new exclusive offerings and discounts, helping activation GmbH to optimize customer deployments even more effectively.

Because of the compact design of the Lenovo ThinkSystem SR665 V3 2U rack servers, activation GmbH can easier install the systems in its new data center, streamlining hardware deployment and maintenance processes.

Oliver Bicanic, CEO of activation GmbH, says: “Based on the successful collaboration with Lenovo, AMD, and bytec, we have decided to also replace the servers powering our backup-as-a-service solution with new Lenovo infrastructure. We will consolidate our environment and expand our Veeam Managed Service Provider business to offer reliable, redundant backups across virtualization platforms including Proxmox VE.”

How can IT service providers modernize data center operations?

Working with Lenovo and AMD, activation GmbH implemented a powerful, scalable hyperconverged infrastructure solution based on Lenovo ThinkSystem servers, powered by AMD EPYC™ Server CPUs, and Proxmox VE software.

Explore Lenovo ThinkSystem Solutions

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