

Global Automobile Dealer

A Customer Success Story



Stefan Gössel

IT Systems Group Leader:

“The implementation of the MDL (formerly known as MAS) VTL was for us like a step into the future. The focused objectives including the eradication of manual tape handling & shorter backup times were not only fulfilled, but also spin-off Development benefits were realized, including speed, simplification & automation for delivering fast reliable copies of Production data for the Development environment.

The tangible benefits of the MDL solution were of no great surprise to us, as at S&G, we have come to expect the delivery of cost-efficient & reliable solutions from the mainstorconcept team.”

The Company:

For over 100 years, we at S&G believe in the future of the automobile. No global dealer has been promoting “the star” longer than S&G. As an authorized Mercedes-Benz sales & service partner, this makes us especially proud.

S&G was founded in 1898 when Ernst Schoemperlen brought the automobile to life in central Karlsruhe. In 1905 the company founder meets his later business partner Walter Gast while repairing a breakdown, & with him as a business partner, the company Schoemperlen & Gast (S&G) was founded in 1908. In 1998 to celebrate the 100 years jubilee, the S&G automobile corporation transformation is complete.

With 11 Mercedes-Benz locations in Baden & 6 in Saxony-Anhalt, plus other subsidiaries for the smart, Mitsubishi & KIA brands, the portfolio of the S&G group evolves systematically.

A total of 1300 employees deliver drive & commitment for the S&G brands.

S&G Mainframe Data Protection Virtualization

The MDL (formerly MAS) VTL halves (~50% reduction) backup run times, while delivering enterprise wide data protection for all cartridges.

In Focus

S&G operates a computer centre deploying the most modern IBM Mainframe infrastructure. The traditional Operating Systems z/VM 5.2 & z/VSE 4.1 are deployed on an IBM z9 server. This strategic infrastructure renewal was completed in the Summer of 2007, together with the valuable assistance of the mainstorconcept team.

In conjunction with other infrastructure objectives, but within the scope of the “Mainframe Reorganization” project, it was thought also possible to automate the largely manual tape processing activities, with two further essential project objectives:

- Reduction of data protection backup times during Batch processing, & thus a reduction of the overall Batch processing window elapsed times
- Eradication of manual tape handling, associated with physical cartridges

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Considering The Optimum Solution

For many years the batch processing at S&G was already automated & so to a large extent, a completely automated operation's Data Centre. Therefore S&G has eradicated the requirement for multiple-shift operations. On-Site Operations cover is provided until 18:00, while the on-line CICS processing continues until 00:30. Then the Batch processing commences. When errors occur, the on-call duty support operator is automatically informed via SMS (SNMP Generated Text Message), allowing remote access for problem diagnosis & resolution.

However, for the data protection backups, another 3490E compatible tape system with an Autoloader function (CSL) was used, which allowed "automated" cartridge processing to a limited extent...

Hence, manual tape handling processes were still unavoidable. Cartridges had to be prepared for Batch processing & then be manually returned to the media library, immediately following batch processing. Also, as & when required, the on-call duty support operator would have to travel to the data centre, to manually mount the required cartridges, for any data restore activities.

The ideal solution for the S&G Data Centre left the existing data protection backup processes unchanged. Also, there was a requirement for restore processes to remain unchanged, while being operationally processed at any time, automatically & without any manual handling of cartridges.

Additionally, elapsed time reduction for data protection backups & therefore the whole Batch processing window was a fundamental objective. Of course, it was also necessary that the BVS Tape Management Subsystem (TMS) deployed by S&G could be used without change.

Virtualization & Enterprise Wide Standard Disaster Recovery Protection

The new data protection concept was achieved by deploying a MDL (formerly MAS) Virtual Tape Library (VTL). All virtual cartridges for Mainframe data protection are now stored by

now stored by the MDL solution on a RAID Disk array, incorporated into the enterprise-wide data protection strategy.

Previously S&G have used an IBM tape library for physical data protection, & continue to do so. Atempo data protection software is used for data protection processes, directing backup to Fibre Channel (FC) attached tape drives. For safety reasons, the IBM Tape Library is installed in a remote building located within the company campus.

Evolving from a three-stage to two-stage data protection concept for Mainframe data, the MDL virtual cartridges were incorporated in the Open Systems data protection concept. Thus regular additional Disaster Recovery data copies are created on LTO cartridges, delivering the simplified & cost efficient two-stage data protection concept.

The MDL Virtual Tape Library (VTL) is attached to the IBM z9 Mainframe via FICON channels. For the BVS Tape Management Subsystem (TMS), the standard "robots" (ATL) module was previously modified by PG Software (Pfeilschifter GmbH) the BVS software manufacturer (ISV) for MDL usage, so BVS can now mount all virtual cartridges automatically & without Console message (WTO) considerations.

With a total of 256 virtual tapes available, tape drive contention bottlenecks are no longer a consideration and Manual tape handling is now only required as an ad-hoc or occasional process, namely the processing of cartridges for data exchange activities.

Results

S&G delivered all required objectives with the MDL tape-on-disk solution:

- Complete eradication of manual tape processing with associated & significant performance improvements
- Enterprise wide & standard Data Protection concept integration
- Floor space, cooling & energy savings, where MDL only requires 4U (4 Units) space in a standard 19" rack, including the associated disk array
- Therefore delivering a cost efficient, space saving solution, located in a highly secure IT data centre