



# *Outsourcing at Ratiodata: In good hands with IBM @server xSeries.*

Ratiodata IT-Lösungen & Services GmbH, an IT company based in Cologne, is a subsidiary of GAD Gesellschaft für automatische Datenverarbeitung eG in Münster, the computer center and software house of the Rheinische und Westfälische Genossenschaftsbanken (local cooperative banks for Rhineland and Westphalia). Ratiodata also offers resources and services for SAP® R/2® and SAP R/3® production systems, as well as for PAISY payroll accounting, HR department services, archiving and document management systems to other companies outside the banking sector. 600 customers with over 80,000 staff use this service in the PAISY area alone. Ratiodata has been offering its services since 1984 in the Application Service Provider (ASP) area, and since 1985 with software from SAP. The companies access the relevant applications in the Ratiodata computer center via a dedicated line. Instead of purchasing licenses, they only pay for the software as they use it. Ratiodata has sole responsibility for the maintenance, support and availability of hardware and software. The usefulness of this concept is apparent now that ASP is seen in the IT industry as a byword for the application of complex corporate solutions. And it is this

very concept that the steel company Corus and the church organization missio have been adhering to for years.

## **Subsidiary sets IT standards**

The steel company Corus was formed in 2000 from the merger of Mannstaedt-Werke with British Steel. On behalf of Corus, Ratiodata operates SAP R/3 in Cologne as well as PAISY, and a time-keeping system on the Münster host. Corus reorganized its IT concept as long ago as 1998.

“We were using customized software packages that were neither Y2K-compliant nor euro-compatible”, explained Gerd Düvelmeyer, IT department manager at Corus. “And we had only 14 months from the invitation to tender. What’s more the

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|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Industry</b>    | IT service provider                                              |
| <b>Application</b> | SAP R/3<br>FI, CO, AM, MM, SD,<br>PP, PM, QM, HR                 |
| <b>Software</b>    | Windows NT®<br>MSCS<br>Oracle<br>Lotus Notes                     |
| <b>Hardware</b>    | Netfinity 5500 Server<br>Netfinity 7000 Server<br>xSeries Server |



*“We have trusted IBM as a partner for years, and with our xSeries servers have found ourselves a platform that guarantees us economical and secure operation.”*

Eberhard Grammes,  
Head of Production (SAP)  
Ratiodata IT-Lösungen & Services GmbH



budget with which the solution would have to be implemented by the start of the new fiscal year was very limited." In April 1999 it was ready. Ratiodata had created numerous add-ons that fully reflected the requirements of the steel trade in the SAP R/3 system. With customizing, the modules were suitable for the special requirements of the steel trade and they ran effectively.

### High-availability solution with IBM @server xSeries

In collaboration with IBM and M+S Elektronik AG, a SAP R/3 solution was implemented on a cluster comprising Intel processor-based IBM Netfinity servers (known by the new product name IBM @server xSeries since October 2000). It runs with the high-availability solution Microsoft Cluster Server on two IBM Netfinity 7000 servers, connected by fully redundant fibre channel adapters, hubs and RAID controllers to three IBM EXP storage expansion units. The 230 users work with the SAP R/3 modules FI, CO, AM, MM, SD, PP, PM and QM. A separate system environment with IBM Netfinity servers has been set up for the HR module.

Corus is delighted with its outsourcing solution and with Ratiodata as its partner. SAP R/3 Release 4.6c also caters for a large number of special requirements in the steel industry as standard features, such as the unit of quantity management. To come even closer to the standard of SAP R/3, Corus has opted for a release change. The project will start in the second half of 2001 and will result in the renovation of the entire system by mid-2002. According to Gerd Düvelmeyer, "The IT strategy with Ratiodata is successful and has the full support of the new group management."

### missio: companies obtain standardized carrier system

missio has had the same positive experiences. The organization, which is affiliated to the Catholic Church, supports the training and further education of local pastoral workers in about 100 countries around the world, according to the principle of "helping others to help themselves". missio finances these projects mainly through donations, but also receives an annual joint contribution from the German Church from church tax resources.

Since 1991 the organization has been using the SAP R/2 financial accounting package, which was provided in Ratiodata's Cologne computer center, for the administration and control of its finances. Other operational areas were covered by its own applications developed in-house.

In order to obtain a standardized carrier system for all operational applications and to facilitate the changeover to euro, missio decided in September 1999 to migrate to SAP R/3. Ratiodata planned the entire project and provided the hardware and software. During the process the ten missio companies were also integrated and defined as separate accounting groups in SAP R/3, and the foreign payments were matched to the requirements of the individual companies. Today missio uses SAP R/3 FI, CO and AM, as well as centralized software for the fundraising system, the customization of which called for considerable time and effort on the part of Ratiodata.

The project started in September 2000. First of all FI was transferred from the test to the production system, followed in December by AM and CO. The system was immediately available, initially for 30 users under Windows NT. The IT environment consists of two systems, test and production, which users can switch seamlessly between during operation. The servers are two IBM Netfinity 7000 M10 with 4 Intel Pentium III Xeon™ processors. According to Dr. Thomas Kramm, project manager at missio: "Ratiodata has implemented both the migration and the expansion to the SAP R/3 system in the best possible way. Ratiodata's ASP solution offers precisely the simplicity and transparency that is important to us."

### Operating concept includes planned contingencies

Contingency testing is a firm element of Ratiodata's operating concept. Such testing proves that the IT environment, which covers all generations of the server family from the IBM 704 to the xSeries, can return to full availability despite a power outage. Eberhard Grammes, head of production (SAP) at Ratiodata IT-Lösungen & Services GmbH, said "Our drills ensure that we have the staff and skills to deal with catastrophes. Thanks to the solution from SAP and IBM, we have a high-availability system."

### Into the future with e-business solutions

The IT service provider is currently thinking up new solutions in the ASP area. missio's fundraising system is therefore to be officially included in its portfolio and made available for other companies to use. It is also discussing the evaluation of DB2 and e-business solutions for marketplaces. For missio this will open up the possibility of offering its customers direct access to data via the Internet and of viewing the state of donations. This would also give Corus, as a vehicle industry supplier, ideal conditions for establishing contact with its customers online and becoming integrated into SCM solutions. Here, too, Ratiodata will continue to play it safe in the future with IBM and SAP.



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