



Success Story

Enterprise Linux

Stiftung Kirchliches Rechenzentrum Südwestdeutschland (KRZ-SWD)

Church organizations, parishes, and charities across Germany rely on KRZ-SWD to manage and pay their staff. To offer new features and flexible services, KRZ-SWD moved its HR and payroll application to a new technology stack based on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for IBM Z and LinuxONE running on the IBM Z mainframe platform. The winning combination of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server, Java applications, and IBM Z ensures fast performance and strong data security, enabling clients to focus on their core mission.



Overview

KRZ-SWD provides IT services for church, social, and charitable institutions across the two largest Christian denominations in Germany. It is essential that KRZ-SWD is a true ecclesiastical non-profit organization, controlled by the major Catholic and Protestant churches in the southwest region. The company offers a wide range of IT services, including HR, payroll, and membership management

“SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for IBM Z and LinuxONE helps us deliver the very best value for money for our clients—charitable organizations that support worthy causes. Our solutions enable them to focus on the needs of their congregations, their welfare work, and the communities they serve.”

DR. REINER WEICK

Head of Sales & Marketing
KRZ-SWD

solutions. Headquartered in Eggenstein-Leopoldshafen, KRZ-SWD employs 140 people.

Challenge

Despite their special status in society, churches and charities also operate as businesses. Employees must be paid and finances must be properly managed. And while special care must be taken of specific church regulations, HR managers also expect cutting-edge solutions that are easy to use.

With demands increasing, KRZ-SWD wants to offer its clients more modern and flexible HR and payroll solutions to maximize process efficiency.

Dr. Reiner Weick, Head of Sales & Marketing at KRZ-SWD, comments: “Today, our business users include executives and volunteers, not just HR teams. By streamlining administrative processes around HR and payroll management, we help clients to free up precious time and resources so they can focus on their core mission: serving their communities. For



KRZ-SWD at a Glance:

Stiftung Kirchliches Rechenzentrum Südwestdeutschland (KRZ-SWD) is one of Germany's leading IT service providers focusing on church organizations, parishes, and charities across the two major Christian denominations and their welfare organizations (“Caritas” and “Diakonie”) in Germany.

■ Industry and Location

Computer Services, Eggenstein-Leopoldshafen, Germany

■ Product and Services

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for IBM Z and LinuxONE

■ Results

- + Modernizes HR and payroll application operations and integration, supporting state-of-the-art technologies and mobile apps
- + Increases agility to add new features and capabilities more quickly and flexibly based on user demands
- + Streamlines IT operations and saves costs by maximizing utilization of mainframe environments

“The combination of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and IBM Z is a real winner. It delivers top performance, availability, and flexibility. With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for IBM Z and LinuxONE, we consolidate our data center infrastructure and reduce licensing costs.”

FRANK SCHÜTZE

Head of IT
KRZ-SWD

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example, we generate pay slips for more than 500,000 of our clients' employees every month.”

Solution

To give clients more advanced features and a flexible user experience, KRZ-SWD worked with software partner GIP mbH to overhaul their HR and payroll application, called KIDICAP.

The original software was developed by GIP mbH for the IBM Z mainframe platform using the Natural programming language and the Adabas database developed by Software AG. When GIP mbH implemented the next version using the Java programming language and Oracle Database, KRZ-SWD was faced with an important decision: move the solution off the mainframe or find a way to run the new, modern software stack on the mainframe.

Frank Schütze, Head of Mainframe IT at KRZ-SWD, remarks: “We really wanted to continue running KIDICAP on our trusted IBM Z platform to ensure high performance and reliability. Hundreds of customers rely on us to manage their payrolls, so we were reluctant to move this critical application from the mainframe environment.”

The company evaluated different architectures, and infrastructure partner IBM provided a total cost of ownership

analysis. KRZ-SWD decided that SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for IBM Z and LinuxONE was the operating system that combined all the advantages it needed to take the next step. Working together, GIP mbH, SUSE, and IBM tested the solution and helped KRZ-SWD with sizing recommendations to optimize capacity usage and minimize investment costs.

Frank Schütze recalls: “After evaluating the market, we quickly realized that SUSE offered the Linux distribution best optimized for the mainframe. SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for IBM Z and LinuxONE enables us to fully exploit the power of the IBM Z architecture.”

KRZ-SWD worked with systems integrator SVA System Vertrieb Alexander GmbH to upgrade its mainframe to an IBM z14 model ZR1 server. The new KIDICAP application runs on SUSE Linux Enterprise Server on the mainframe alongside other business applications and traditional mainframe workloads. This approach facilitates integration between solutions and takes advantage of IBM HiperSockets, a memory-speed virtual networking technology.

Frank Schütze adds: “Running critical systems on a single platform enables us to gain efficiencies, increase reliability, and cut costs. We are currently rolling out the new and improved HR and payroll application to our clients.”

Results

With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for IBM Z and LinuxONE, KRZ-SWD can offer KIDICAP to its clients at an attractive price. The modern solution supports features like self-service travel and expenses management, representing a major benefit for clients and their volunteers.

Frank Schütze notes: “The combination of SUSE Linux Enterprise Server and IBM Z is a real winner. It delivers top performance, availability, and flexibility. With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for IBM Z and LinuxONE, we consolidate our data center infrastructure and reduce licensing costs. As we move towards DevOps working practices, we'll look at running containers on SUSE Linux Enterprise in the future.”

Dr. Reiner Weick concludes: “With SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for IBM Z and LinuxONE as a high-performance solution at our dual-location data centers, synchronized via our own dark-fiber connections, we can offer state-of-the-art IT solutions that fully comply with the latest IT security, data protection, and data privacy regulations, providing ‘security in stormy times’ as our company motto goes.”