



Salus-Haus boosts network availability and safeguards its IT investment with Intel® Gigabit Ethernet

By installing Intel® PRO/1000 Gigabit Server Adapter cards in all the devices in its new server farm, Salus-Haus has dramatically improved access to its ERP system, and to the servers that host the company’s other business-critical applications.

Case Highlights

Profiled Organisation	Salus-Haus
The Challenge	Running at just 100Mbps, links between the Salus-Haus servers and network were too slow to cope with the growing volume of data traffic. Users had become unhappy with response times when accessing business-critical applications, including the company’s ERP and graphics systems. A substantial increase in data-transfer rate was required between its servers and the backbone network for improved connectivity and performance.
The Solution	As part of a planned upgrade of the entire network, and to satisfy the needs of users, Salus decided to link all the devices in its new server farm to the network via Intel Gigabit Ethernet Server Adapter cards, using a combination of fibre and copper wiring.
Benefits	Intel® Gigabit Ethernet has greatly improved access to all the company’s servers and plays a critical role in ensuring resilience and reliability of network operations.

Summary

Situated in Bruckmühl, Bavaria, Salus-Haus manufactures some of the world’s best-known herbal products and natural remedies, most notably the award-winning Floradix Iron Liquid. The company takes its name from the word ‘Salus’, meaning health, well-being, or flourishing, which is derived from Salus, the daughter of Asclepius, the Greek goddess of cleanliness and sanitation.

Since its foundation in 1916, the company’s philosophy has been to produce high-quality natural products within a holistic system that takes account of both economic factors and ecological and social criteria. This practice starts with the raw materials, which are produced primarily in the company’s environmentally friendly farms in Chile. About 40 percent of Salus’ production, which includes some 1500 different items, is exported.

Around 270 people are employed at the company’s head office site in Bruckmühl. Approximately half of these are involved in research and development and administration, while the remaining half are engaged in the production process. The majority of the company’s staff rely heavily on the performance of personal computers in their daily work.

The existing links between Salus’ servers and network were too slow to handle its rising volume of data traffic. Users were dissatisfied with response times when accessing information on the company’s ERP system, graphic-design packages, and other applications vital to their work. Salus needed much higher data-transfer rates between its servers and backbone network to enhance connectivity and to protect the company’s investment in IT.

As part of a plan to modernise the entire network, Salus decided to install Intel® Gigabit Ethernet adapter cards in all of its servers. This has greatly improved access to the company’s business applications and to its servers in general. Today, the solution plays a critical role in ensuring the overall resilience and reliability of Salus’ network operations.

Challenge: Improve connectivity to business-critical applications

The problem was that the servers hosting Salus-Haus' ERP system and other business-critical applications were attached to the company's network using 100 Mbps and partly coupled links. These links had become too slow to handle the growing amount of data traffic on the company's network. Many users had become unhappy with response times when accessing vital information on the servers. Most notably, Salus' graphics team of six people use Apple Mac computers to produce high-resolution images, which involves the frequent transfer of large files and therefore requires much higher levels of throughput and performance.

"Response times had simply become too long," says Wolfgang Steinbach, IT Manager. "We urgently needed to substantially increase the data-transfer rate between the servers and the backbone network if we were to improve connectivity and safeguard our existing investment in the network infrastructure," he adds.

Process: Implement Intel Gigabit Ethernet on recommendation of an established supplier

Steinbach says that, for some time, the company had been planning to modernise its entire network and convert the existing Windows NT4 platform to a Windows 2003 Server environment. He says this gave him the ideal opportunity to upgrade the company's growing server population to Gigabit Ethernet, and thereby provide users with greatly improved connectivity and performance.

Based on the recommendations of its established systems and software supplier, Sinitec, Salus- Haus decided to install Intel® Gigabit Ethernet connections in all its servers. "We have come to rely on the advice of our external supplier, so we were confident to trust their recommendation that the Intel Gigabit solution was the best on the market," says Steinbach.

As a result, Salus implemented Intel PRO/1000 Gigabit Server Adapter connections on all the devices in the new server farm, which has become such a central feature of its modernised network infrastructure. They include four Fujitsu-Siemens servers, which act as the administration servers for its new Windows 2003 Domain environment. These also handle the systems functions of the Domain Name System (DNS), the Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol (DHCP), and the Active Directory System (ADS). In addition, two file servers and two Citrix terminal servers—also from Fujitsu-Siemens—are connected to the network by Intel Gigabit Ethernet.

Furthermore, Salus has installed Intel PRO/1000 Gigabit Server Adapter cards in three new Acer servers, which are used for HR, communication, virus detection and backup. Two Compaq servers are connected to the network via Intel Gigabit adapters: the first runs Apollo ERP software, while the second hosts the Exchange Server software, which enables Salus to send and receive electronic mail and other forms of interactive communication through its network.

Solution: Dramatically improved response times and the catalyst for future changes

Since installing the solution, Wolfgang Steinbach says access times have been greatly reduced, overall throughput in the system is much better, and the quality of network availability has increased significantly. He says Intel® Gigabit Ethernet has improved access to the ERP and graphics systems in particular, but to all the servers more generally. He believes the solution now plays a critical role in ensuring the resilience and reliability of network operations, which are essential to Salus' business.

For instance, Salus uses Veritas Backup Exec to archive the data held on its servers. In the absence of an archive robot, Wolfgang Steinbach says he has successfully combined two DLT tape drives to perform as one logical drive, enabling him to copy the data simultaneously to two separate devices, thereby eliminating the need to swap tapes during the night. "Since installing the Intel Gigabit connections, we have no further problems with the 'time window' for this overnight archiving procedure, as backups can now be performed much faster and more reliably," he says.

Wolfgang Steinbach believes that Intel Gigabit Ethernet has dramatically improved response times throughout the company's network. "Our employees can now work much more effectively," he says. "Since their 'idle time' has been greatly reduced, I would say their overall level of productivity has been increased by 10 to 15 percent," he adds.

"Intel Gigabit Ethernet is also enabling sensitive areas of our business, such as marketing and graphics, for example, to communicate with one another much more effectively. It will also help to facilitate the integration of further backbones into the Gigabit network in the future. The Intel solution certainly seems likely to be the catalyst for other future changes," he concludes.

Find out more about a business solution that is right for your company by visiting the Intel website at:
www.intel.co.uk/network

Solution provided by:



Copyright © 2005 Intel Corporation.

Intel and Itanium are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries.

* Other names and brands may be claimed as the property of others.