



Barbier Group pursues
always-on, eco-friendly
manufacturing with SUSE

Barbier Group

Industry and Location

Manufacturing & Engineering | France

Product and Services

SUSE Linux Enterprise Server for
SAP Applications

Success Story

At-a-Glance

For more than two decades, Barbier Group has relied on SAP ERP solutions to support its operations from end to end. Taking a step in its transformation journey, the company migrated to SAP HANA for real-time analytics, running on IBM Power Systems servers with the SUSE Linux Enterprise Server (SLES) for SAP Applications operating system.

Equipped with new capabilities from SAP HANA, Barbier Group is pushing ahead its Industry 4.0 vision. Business users can now query production data and instantly gain insights into manufacturing, logistics and the extended supply chain. Looking ahead, the company is confident that big data analytics will empower it to increase profitability and reduce pollution.

Introducing Barbier Group

Barbier Group is one of the largest producers of polythene films and wraps in France. Committed to environmental sustainability, around 20% of the company's products are made from recycled materials, and Barbier Group aims to further enhance the efficiency of its manufacturing and recycling operations in the years ahead.

To strengthen its status as a leading player in the circular economy, the company aims to harness technology to boost its manufacturing output while keeping



headcount lean and environmental impact low. Industry 4.0 innovations — including analytics, Internet of Things (IoT) and the blockchain — promise to help Barbier Group realize these goals. To enable these next-generation services, the company aimed to gain real-time insight into manufacturing and logistics.

Protecting the planet, building the business

Manufacturers are under pressure to adapt products and processes that protect the environment and ensure healthy profitability. As a result, recycling has become a key objective for the global plastics industry, as enterprises work to reduce waste on the factory floor and throughout the wider supply chain.

Aiming to lead this trend, Barbier Group continually strives to find more efficient ways to produce, ship and reuse its products. Today, just under 20% of the company's manufacturing output is made from recycled materials.

“SUSE Linux Server for SAP Applications is the ideal foundation on which to build our data-driven business. When you turn on a tap, you just expect water to come out – and with an IT infrastructure platform, the situation is much the same.”

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CIO

Barbier Group

To strengthen its leading position in the industry, Barbier Group aims to achieve the highest possible efficiency at every stage of the production and logistics process. As well as minimizing the environmental impact of its operations, the company’s goal is to boost manufacturing throughput without a corresponding increase in headcount.

Jean-François Desassis, CIO at Barbier Group, explains: “We recognize that staying ahead of the curve in our industry requires continuous innovation. For example, we’re committed to reinvesting between eight and 10% of our annual revenues into new and more efficient manufacturing equipment for our factories.”

Targeting Industry 4.0 innovation

As it investigated new production line technologies, Barbier Group recognized a big opportunity to boost its manufacturing efficiency by augmenting its machinery with Industry 4.0 capabilities. The company was confident that it could identify and unlock valuable savings in

time, cost and materials by analyzing real-time data from the factory floor.

“By integrating technologies such as analytics, IoT and the blockchain into our processes, we will be able to lift our operational efficiency to new heights,” continues Desassis. “For more than 20 years, we’ve relied on SAP ERP business systems to support our end-to-end workflows. To lay the foundation for real-time insight into manufacturing and logistics, we decided to migrate our primary SAP databases to SAP HANA, with the ultimate goal of moving to the next-generation ERP, SAP S/4HANA.”

Preparing for real-time analytics

To prepare for the increased demand of real-time analytics workloads from the SAP HANA platform, Barbier Group needed a future-ready infrastructure platform. Following a recommendation from SAP, the company began to review server and storage offerings from a number of leading vendors to determine the optimal solution for meeting its long-term requirements.

“As CIO, I never need to hear about the SUSE solution, because it just works. In SUSE Linux Server for SAP Applications on IBM Power Systems servers, we’ve found the robust, reliable, and scalable platform we need to support our digital transformation for years to come.”

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After a rigorous evaluation process, Barbier Group selected IBM Power Systems servers with the SLES for SAP Applications operating system as its new infrastructure platform. Desassis confirms: “The results of our benchmarking exercise clearly showed us that the IBM servers would give us the best performance for SAP HANA workloads, which involve loading and manipulating large sets of data in real time.

“When we looked at the options for hosting SAP HANA, we found that SLES for SAP Applications was the most mature platform, and that it was also the preferred platform of SAP itself. We wanted to avoid any issues around support or compatibility, and SUSE Linux gave us that confidence.”

Collaborating with proven partners

Working together with its trusted IBM Business Partners — ACMI for IBM Power Systems, and TeamWork for SAP Basis

support — Barbier Group deployed the new server environment in a high-availability configuration, with two pairs of servers and storage arrays located in separate server rooms to reduce the risk of unplanned downtime.

“The migration ran very smoothly,” says Desassis. “We have worked with ACMI and TeamWork for many years, and their level of competence gives us a great feeling of comfort. Indeed, this was another factor in choosing IBM and SUSE as the vendors for our new SAP landscape; we didn’t have the same confidence in the partner ecosystem for the other providers we considered.”

To protect mission-critical data in the event of a recovery scenario, the company replicates all system data to disk at an external site and performs long-term data backups to tape.

“If our SAP business systems were offline for even a few hours, 800 employees wouldn’t be able to do their work, driving up our costs substantially,” comments Desassis. “In more than two decades of using IBM servers, we’ve never expe-

rienced any unplanned downtime. By combining the proven reliability of IBM Power Systems servers with SLES for SAP Applications – SAP’s operating system of choice for SAP HANA – we are confident that we can continue this unbroken record of service continuity.”

Delivering insights rapidly

With the SAP HANA data platform running on IBM Power Systems servers and SLES for SAP Applications, Barbier Group has successfully laid the foundation for Industry 4.0 capabilities. Today, the company uses SAP Business Warehouse powered by SAP HANA to process up to 7 million queries per second, supporting faster, better-informed decision-making.

“Moving to SAP HANA allows us to drive big data analytics in real time – and the SUSE solution is one of the key enablers,” explains Desassis. “The combination of SAP HANA, IBM Power Systems, and SLES for SAP Applications delivers rapid response times for production data queries, which is contributing to faster insights into business performance for managers and senior leadership.”

Planning for a digital future

Barbier Group sees that automation will be a crucial capability in the years ahead. The combination of SUSE, IBM and SAP solutions allowed the company to reduce headcount requirements by up to 50%. On the factory floor, the ability to drive real-time analytics will open a wide



range of new possibilities, including the deployment of industrial IoT sensors.

“Without SAP software, IBM Systems and SLES for SAP Applications, we’d need twice as many people to generate the same annual revenues,” says Desassis. “By delivering instant access to the same accurate, reliable information throughout the business, our IT technologies are making an important contribution to the ongoing growth and optimization of Barbier Group.”

Exploring the possibilities

Looking to the future, Barbier Group plans to embed Industry 4.0 capabilities more deeply in its business processes. The long-term goal is to feed IoT sensor data into advanced predictive analytics models, enabling the company to perform maintenance on manufacturing assets before they fail – boosting availability and helping to ensure round-the-clock production. Automation could also have an important role to play in other areas: including AI-powered video analysis to detect production defects and automatic management of raw materials based

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on actual or forecasted customer orders – helping reduce waste in the circular economy.

“SLES for SAP Applications is the ideal foundation on which to build our data-driven business,” concludes Desassis. “When you turn on a tap, you just expect water to come out – and with an IT infrastructure platform, the situation is much the same. As CIO, I never need to hear about the SUSE solution, because it just works. In SLES for SAP Applications on IBM Power Systems servers, we’ve found the robust, reliable and scalable platform we need to support our digital transformation for years to come.”

Benefits

- Millions of data points queried in seconds, enabling faster business decisions.
- 50% reduction in headcount requirements, boosting cost-efficiency.
- Lays the foundation for environmentally friendly manufacturing technologies such as Industry 4.0.

Find out how SUSE can help you become an innovation hero!

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