



IMS Health accelerates its market analyses by up to a factor of 80 with “EXA-class” technology



The flexible and scalable database management system from EXASOL enables state-of-the-art, dynamic market analyses of pharmaceutical products.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- Data Volume:**
Project start (June 2007): 64 GB
Today (October 2007): 145 GB
- Availability:**
99,93% since project start
- Number of SQL queries:**
∅ 13.000 per month

TECHNICAL DATA

- Hardware:**
- 5x standard server, 2x Intel® Xeon® CPU quad-core, 16 GB RAM, 2.6 TB HD
 - 1x standard server, 2x Intel® Xeon® CPU Dempsey, 4 GB RAM, 2 TB HD (service node)
- Software:**
EXASolution 1.8
- Service:**
Installation, hotline, troubleshooting, monitoring
- Environment:**
IMS Health computer center

One of the key tasks in pharmaceutical market research is to process huge and complex data volumes in real time in order to generate information for both the pharmaceutical industry and research companies that can be used as a basis for decision-making. To this end, IMS Health uses state-of-the-art technologies and systems that meet these high requirements.

Decision-makers in the pharmaceutical industry, business unit managers, market researchers and scientists expect uniform, integrated and up-to-date information and analyses. During the course of the dramatic changes that are taking place as a result of statutory requirements and the dynamic competitive environment, innovative solutions are required to create an optimum decision-making basis enabling the development of specific strategies followed by an observation of their effects in real time.

New challenge: dynamic market analyses

IMS Health has responded quickly and flexibly to these requirements by initiating new projects. These involve linking and evaluating different data sources to optimum effect. For professional data preparation and evaluation, IMS uses up-to-date analysis software and applications. The results

support the customer in quick and low-risk decision-making. The data volumes quickly attain dimensions that previously pushed the underlying data warehouse solution to the limits of its performance and flexibility.

The time taken to process critical key figures is becoming increasingly important. A corresponding adjustment in performance would inevitably have led to IT cost explosion. IMS Health thus looked for an alternative solution that would meet the growing requirements with speed and flexibility.

The solution is called EXASOL

With EXASOL's scalable database management system, IMS Health has found a solution that responds to the challenges of dynamic market analyses with efficient algorithmic models from the field of high performance cluster computing. The EXASOL software combines unique in-memory cluster technology with innovative compression algorithms and thus opens up new horizons in data warehousing.

With the EXASOL solution, IMS Health is able to evaluate its very large and ever increasing database ad hoc in just a few minutes. If the data volume or analysis requirements increase, the cluster can be easily extended by adding additional cost-effective standard servers.



As part of a “proof of concept”, EXASOL proved that its solution increases performance by up to a factor of 80 and also reduces costs. Consequently, it didn’t take IMS Health long to decide in favor of the EXASOL solution. Thanks to standard interfaces, integration into the existing IT infrastructure was easy. The working environment for analysts in the various departments remained unchanged.

Rapid implementation of the new solution

The launch was quick and went without a hitch. After initial installation, it took just six weeks for the system to be in productive use. This was largely due to the efficient work of the teams of both companies, who continued to keep their sights set on the main goal. EXASOL supported IMS Health with system implementation and customized training.

“The project plan wasn’t just put together, it was also implemented professionally, both on time and on budget”, reports Michael Kempke, Manager Operations at IMS Health.

The result: a new level of performance

EXASOL has surpassed IMS requirements for performance and flexibility. Special analyses and calculations that used to take hours to process can now be completed in a few minutes. IMS has thus achieved a massive increase in performance. It can be used to analyze and prepare huge data volumes within a very short time frame for the customer.

Customers of IMS Health also testify to the system’s clear competitive advantages and now receive complex and customized evaluations, patient and prescription data, for example.

Further development of the new solution

“After our initial success with the EXASOL solution, we are confident that we will broaden our use of the system at IMS Health in the near future,” says Michael Kempke of the future cooperation with EXASOL.

IMS HEALTH at a glance:

For more than 50 years, IMS HEALTH has been the world’s leading supplier of information and services for the pharmaceutical and healthcare industries. In more than 100 subsidiaries worldwide, IMS brings together a wealth of healthcare information with tremendous analysis and consulting expertise. This unique offer guarantees decision-makers in pharmaceutical marketing and sales the support that is so crucial to the success of strategic planning, portfolio development and product launches.

IMS Health GmbH & Co, OHG
Darmstaedter Landstraße 108
60598 Frankfurt am Main
Germany

Contact:
Michael Kempke
(Manager Operations)
MKempke@de.imshealth.com
www.imshealth.de

EXASOL at a glance:

EXASOL AG is a leading supplier of next generation high performance business solutions. More than 20 years of experience in parallel processing and more than 10 years of specialization in data warehouse solutions have resulted in the development of EXASolution – a unique product that has already demonstrated its superiority in numerous benchmarks. Our reference customers, operating in a variety of business sectors, have successfully employed EXASolution for a number of years. Because EXASolution can support a wide array of usage profiles with highly elaborate database schemas, it can be used as data warehouse for the entire enterprise. That enables our customers to boost their competitive edge and optimize their business processes.