



A hardware and software portfolio for 25 countries.

The Berner Group currently employs around 9,000 people in some 60 companies located in 25 countries. Its various business units are all managed from the group's headquarters in Künzelsau, Germany, including direct-to-customer sales of tools and consumables for skilled trades under the Berner brand, the Caramba Chemical Group, as well as building-industry specialist and direct marketer BTI. The headquarters also house an IT department responsible for the shared technological backbone of the group's international subsidiaries

Starting point. The Berner Group's international IT department ensures that employees' IT systems are always up to date and have the highest possible availability. It also keeps the more than 4,500 field service employees mobile and optimises the company's IT-supported processes, including service processes that vary from country to country. Both hardware and software orders and support processes used to be individually negotiated with local suppliers and managed by the IT departments of the individual locations. The existing infrastructure was not only very self-contained, but also heterogeneous, so that neither a uniform pricing structure nor cross-border support were possible.

Project objectives. The Berner Group's goal was to operate a standardised IT infrastructure with the help of uniform processes — including for software deployment, system preloads and IT support — across all of its sites. Hardware was to be delivered centrally. To this end, the Berner Group requested a global portfolio allowing authorised users to order any required IT component. This platform had to be reliable and available to all employees worldwide. The Berner Group also wanted its IT

“Each employee and each activity at the Berner Group has its own hardware and software requirements. Against a backdrop of 9,000 employees in 25 countries, we had to find a central, standardised way to satisfy these requirements. Bechtle's experts not only had a fantastic solution, they also provided the client-management experience to implement it perfectly.”

Wolf Christian Drexel,
Director international IT,
Berner Group

users to be able to provide feedback internally. The project's overarching goal, however, was to build a homogeneous IT landscape throughout the entire group, with every component available for delivery in any country at any time for a consistent price.

Process. After extensive consultation, Bechtel set up a store at its Neckarsulm location that was specially designed to meet the needs of the Berner Group and which always has a pool of equipment in stock. An international portfolio was defined, the prices of which remain stable despite currency fluctuations. Uniform pricing for all locations around the world mean budget planning is transparent and predictable for Berner, while the IT infrastructure built with components from just one vendor simplifies support.

Solution. In Neckarsulm, Bechtel built up a stock of client computers and corresponding peripherals for each of the Berner Group's 25 countries of business. This international portfolio features PCs, notebooks and monitors, primarily by Dell, which Berner selected following thorough testing. Bechtel centrally preloads these systems using Microsoft Center Configuration Manager (SCCM), then dispatches them to their country of destination. Throughout the process, Bechtel takes into account each country's specific circumstances—such as their existing IT infrastructure as well as the software solutions they use—upgrading and retrofitting clients as needed. In addition, the prices agreed between Bechtel and the Berner Group incorporate currency fluctuations as well as logistics costs, ensuring stable prices despite the portfolio's international structure.

Business benefits. Because the pricing of Dell and additional hardware is consistent across all of its global sites, the Berner Group is able to plan its IT budget more efficiently and straightforwardly from a central location. In addition, the Berner Group benefits from a single, central contact for both the vendor and systems integrator should any issues arise with hardware delivery—saving significant time and other resources.

CUSTOMER PROFILE



BERNER Group

People make all the difference — that is the firm conviction of the Berner Group, a modern European group with its roots in Künzelsau (southern Germany). 9,000 employees in 60 companies and 25 countries ensure that customers benefit from the full potential of the partnership between the Berner, Caramba and BTI business units. The Berner Group is responsible for the direct sale of professional consumables and tools and focuses on selected segments in the European construction and automotive trades. It also creates individual stocking systems for each customer's C-parts. The Caramba Chemical Group produces special chemicals and service solutions in the areas of cleaning, care and maintenance for households, hobby shops, workshops, industry and technology. It unites the companies Wigo, Tegee-Rumler, Christian Maurer, Corra, Apex, Matecra, Ambratex, ACC, Kent and Caramba. Construction specialist BTI Befestigungstechnik adds direct marketing of individual products and numerous system solutions. In the last financial year, the Berner Group achieved sales of more than one billion euros. For more information, please visit:

www.berner-group.com

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