The right IT software – and partner – for a fast-growing manufacturer

Publisher baramundi software

OT solutions specialist EXOR International relies on baramundi software to manage its IT infrastructure

EXOR International is a leading specialist in industrial manufacturing technology and services. The company sought not just a robust IT management software solution but one from a vendor willing and able to be a reliable partner supporting its rapid international growth. It found both in baramundi.

Global growth meant increasing demands on EXOR's IT infrastructure

As units of the San Giovanni Lupatoto, Italy-based Holdex Group Srl., EXOR International and CORVINA Srl., provide a wide range of operational technology (OT) systems and technology for industrial automation. Together with other Holdex Group companies, their systems comprise a sophisticated portfolio of end-to-end manufacturing solutions including electronic components, human-machine interface (HMI) systems, industrial PCs, programmable logic controllers (PLCs), runtime software for protocol conversion and visualization, and a cloud platform.

Among the group's innovations, CORVINA develops a cloud-based, industrial IoT platform for Industry 4.0 distributed edge systems. It combines data acquisition, monitoring and control, configuration management, integrated web tools and programming environments supporting machines and applications throughout their life cycle. Development and production take place in four locations in Italy with distribution branches worldwide.

Senior System Administrator Matteo Scala and three colleagues at the headquarters in Verona plus one IT admin at each location were using manual processes to manage a rapidly expanding and increasingly diverse IT environment with hundreds of devices. Growth at multiple remote locations made network transparency and security a real challenge for the IT team.

Searching for a solution

"Our office environment is pretty diverse," said Scala. „Beside classic Office suites, accounting, ERP and VPN software, we also develop our own software, firmware, and hardware in house with the help of our branch offices using specialized tools. We also create our own products to reduce our exposure to potential cyberattacks. That means we must pay very careful attention to any solution that might introduce vulnerabilities. We keep as much as possible behind our firewalls and limit our connections to cloud.

„When we were a smaller company, we managed all that by hand. But with more and more users and devices we reached the limit of what our team could do," he said. „In addition, our company requires ISO 27003 certification, which means we really need to be in full control of our IT environment. That includes maintaining an accurate inventory of everything in our network, keeping everything patched, and rolling out OS updates properly and on time. Without automation, that would be impossible with only four people and the need to supervise the process at all of the branches."

Need for control and automation

"We were also in the process of centralizing IT management to improve control. We needed automation to ensure that distributing updates and configurations across the network was secure and correct. We created a short list of three solutions that could provide the necessary tools," he said.

„We needed a secure on-prem solution, but one that also came with exceptional support and service. Simply put, we didn't just want software, we wanted a qualified, reliable partner that could accommodate our needs. After six months of careful evaluation we chose baramundi."

Quick implementation

Implementation went quickly: Within three months, the baramundi Management Suite was rolled out at the Verona site as well as locations in Germany and America.

"We continuously add locations to manage with baramundi. New locations are integrated quickly. Existing sites take a bit more time, so it's an ongoing process," said Scala. „We now manage the entire lifecycle of our devices with baramundi. We provision notebooks and desktop PCs as well as mobile devices. We inventory them, take care of updates and patches and automate many routine tasks with the baramundi modules. IT management also extends to our factory environment where we have many Windows devices, our own IoT-Linux HMI systems and other Linux devices."

Getting more done

"Changing to baramundi significantly improved our efficiency. Even though our IT team is still the same size, the baramundi solutions for automation, compliance, provisioning, inventory, and control more than doubled our effective capacity. Even better, our team members can now focus on specific responsibilities instead of just keeping up with routine tasks.
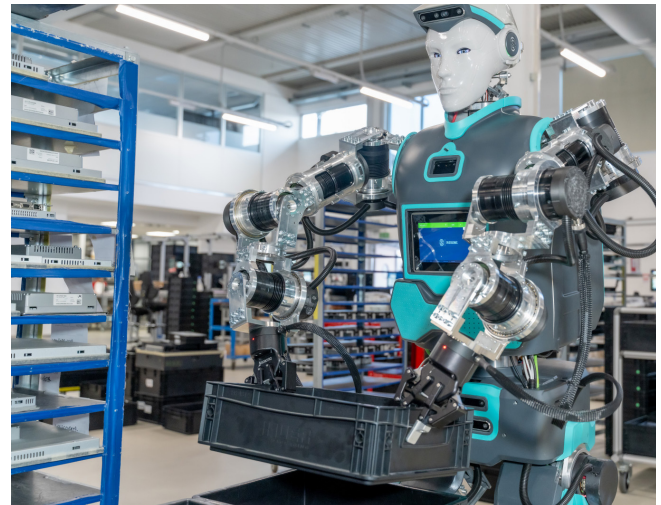
„In addition, we can respond more quickly to users even with the steady increase in the number of employees, devices and requests. Users can focus on their job while we do the admin work, so everyone is more productive. baramundi has also saved us from a lot of sleepless nights and work weekends through scheduled overnight distributions. Our families are very thankful for that."

Going forward

"We have achieved all of this success and know that there is still much more we can do with baramundi solutions. For example, we recently opened a lab in the US where we test local 5G LAN connections for production environments. Every production device there is Linux based and wirelessly connected through 5G. That's why we are excited about baramundi's growing support for Linux so we can manage the entire production environment with the bMS. All in all, we are very happy with baramundi and are looking forward to taking advantage of its full and expanding capabilities."