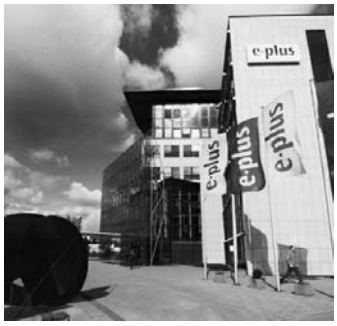
SAP Customer Success Story

E-PLUS

PROVEN PLANT MAINTENANCE: E-PLUS CONTINUES TO RELY ON SAP

With more than 7.8 million customers, E-Plus ranks as Germany's third-largest cellular network provider. The SAP® R/3® family of solutions offers the cellular network provider a stable IT infrastructure that can take the company well into the future. In its ongoing commitment to excellence, E-Plus uses Plant Maintenance in close integration with Materials Management to help manage its global system for mobile communications (GSM) and universal mobile telephone system (UMTS) network.



It's ringing: Far more than a catchphrase from the E-Plus adverts, this expresses a huge commercial achievement. In fact, E-Plus Mobilfunk GmbH & Co KG (Düsseldorf) currently maintains a high-quality network that is used by more than 7.8 million customers nationally. As a front-runner for mobile multimedia in Germany, this KPN group subsidiary offers access to mobile services with i-mode, in addition to mobile communications offerings. Rollout for a universal mobile telephone system (UMTS) network is already well under way. This means that E-Plus is not only highly visible, it is also clearly audible; superior sound quality remains one of the distinguishing aspects of this cellular network provider.

TEN THOUSAND BASE STATIONS

Ten thousand base stations provide the foundation for the company's success. Some 2,800 employees work to extend its current market position and help grow the customer base. Expanding the UMTS network is top on this list of priorities.

In its efforts to consolidate its market position and win new customers, E-Plus implemented an IT infrastructure based on SAP® software. Today, the SAP R/3® System is central to information management at E-Plus. The company uses Financial Accounting, Controlling, Asset Management, Materials Management, Sales and Distribution, along with SAP Business Information Warehouse and the Plant Maintenance (PM) application, which E-Plus has been using productively for more than five years. Plant Maintenance replaced the original IMS software, which proved incompatible with a highly integrated

system landscape. For example, E-Plus had to enter materials-management activities in two separate systems. Spare parts could only be stocked on a quantity basis.

The E-Plus operations support department helped supervise the PM implementation, along with specialist teams from Fa. Schmücker & Partner Information Systems GmbH. A steering committee and a project coordination team helped ensure that costs were kept in check and that the project came in on time. Intensive training for designated employees, who acted as qualified contacts for around 400 users during and after go-live, guaranteed the success of the Plant Maintenance implementation.

FIFTY THOUSAND MAINTENANCE ORDERS EACH YEAR

PM has been in operational use since 1998. E-Plus maintenance uses around 8,000 functional locations, network distribution locations, and dummy locations. The system administers equipment master data of around 73,000 network elements and replacement-part master data for about a million parts. It also enables E-Plus to process some 50,000 maintenance requests.

ONLINE CONNECTION BETWEEN MAINTENANCE AND THE PM SYSTEM

Typically, once a malfunction has been reported in the central monitoring system, PM creates a repair request and transfers it to the SAP R/3 System using an online interface. Any errors that occur are reported directly to the central monitoring system, so that the processor can identify whether the order was created correctly in Plant Maintenance. A maintenance engineer is assigned to the repair and can access all relevant information using a laptop with an online wireless network card. Using the PM system, the user can query the order status, including processing times and data on replacement parts, and confirm completion. However, if the parts required are not available, the maintenance engineer uses similar procedures to report the shortage or to order components. If the situation cannot be fixed internally, a repair request can then be transmitted to a logistics partner, who has authorized online access to PM.

AT A GLANCE

Software	SAP® R/3® for PM, FI, CO, AM, MM, SD, SAP BW
Hardware	HP 9000/800
Operating system	HP-UX
Database	Oracle 9.2
Number of end users	Total of 2,000 users (360 in maintenance)

CONSTANT TRANSPARENCY

With a direct link to Materials Management, users can quickly and easily determine the status of maintenance and repairs at any time, which helps increase efficiency and reduce workload. For example, E-Plus employees can easily access information regarding downtimes, order-processing times, and quickly determine the location of network malfunctions. They can also provide customers with repair information and estimated times for repair.

Transactions specially developed for E-Plus make for easy-to-use applications. The system enables users to easily retrieve various master data, perform calculations, and distribute the results. And, because the software is based on standardized processes, E-Plus does not have to worry about incurring exaggerated costs associated with upgrading the PM application.

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