# NetApp

# Axians Eliminates Downtime, Benefits from Scalability and Flexibility



# axians

## KEY POINTS

**Industry**
Service Providers

**The Challenge**
Accommodate further growth and offer Backup-as-a-Service

**The Solution**
FlexPod based on a NetApp AFF8080 system using 3.8 TB SSDs

**The Benefits**
- Non-Disruptive Operations
- Flexible data placement between tiers
- Scalability
- Adaptability to customers' needs

## The Customer Profile

Axians is a brand of VINCI Energies, dedicated to ICT solutions and services. The organization supports its customers — private-sector companies, public-sector entities, operators and service providers — in their infrastructures and digital solutions development. Solutions which offer their clients competitive advantage in the area of Digital Transformation, Big Data, Cloud, the Internet of Things and Security. Axians employs 8,000 people throughout Europe, of whom 600 work in the Netherlands, and offers bare-metal servers, managed networking, telephony, and datacenter solutions for clients through a proprietary VMware-based AxiansCloud service built on NetApp.

Axians has run a Networking Operations Center (NOC) for many years, based in the Dutch city of Capelle aan den IJssel. The Networking Operations Center is a monitoring center where clients' datacenter and networking infrastructures are managed around the clock. While the NOC monitors both infrastructure on the customer premises and AxiansCloud, the physical location of AxiansCloud is in a tier-3 datacenter in Aalsmeer and Utrecht.

Axians's competitive edge lies in the fact that the company can offer a mix of both private and public cloud services. Depending on customer and licensing requirements, services can be divided between the Axians's environment and the customer environment. Because of this hybrid cloud concept, customer migrations are usually less painful since customers' investments can still be leveraged.

## The Challenge

To keep up with recent technological developments, accommodate further growth, consolidate the infrastructure, and improve scalability, Axians was looking for a solution to fulfill their needs.

## The Solution

Axians and NetApp have a long-standing partnership. The service provider has ample experience operating NetApp systems, which is why they chose to implement an all-flash FlexPod infrastructure based on a NetApp AFF8080 system using 3.8 TB SSDs, processing data with consistently low latency.

## The Business Benefits

The move to the AFF8080 system enabled Axians to generate significant storage savings as well as a reduction in energy, rack space, and cooling. A great benefit of NetApp ONTAP is for Axians to start small and grow big, scaling as needed without losing earlier investments.

Michel van Kessel, Cloud Architect at Axians, added: "Thanks to NetApp storage optimization features, including deduplication, compression, and compaction, we have realized significant storage savings. We can serve more storage with the same hardware."

The Unified Communications Solutions offering, which encompasses telephony services and collaboration, is one of Axians's major cloud-based offerings. Erik Lenten, Chief Technology Officer at Axians, mentioned: "Our Unified Communications Solutions, which runs on our AxiansCloud infrastructure, generates many writes – the NetApp solution can handle the data stream efficiently."

In addition, thanks to NetApp ONTAP, Axians can manage customer operations with zero downtime. Moreover, the infrastructure is protocol independent, which allows Axians to avoid capital expenses for separate equipment. Thus, Storage Virtual Machines (SVMs) can be deployed regardless of the protocol preferred by the client. Storage Virtual Machines allow for offering all services in a unified way with different licensing models. The Axians infrastructure contains disks of varying connectivity, including SAS, SSD, and SATA. Thus, data can be moved non-disruptively and cost-effectively between storage tiers, depending on the customer's need.

Axians can deploy working customer environments within days, so customers can start deploying virtual machines very quickly to get up and running while the system is further tweaked. With the help of NetApp, Axians can accommodate customers' needs easily. As an example, for one of their customers Axians deployed a dedicated environment, which resulted in lower licensing fees for the customer and more profitability for Axians – that is a win-win for both.

Theo Weijers, Contract Manager Enterprise at Axians, completed: "The NetApp systems architecture is very stable and optimized – therefore, our management costs for the environment actually turned out to be lower than anticipated."

### The Business Benefits
Axians is looking to deploy a comprehensive Backup as a Service (Baas) offering. As part of this service, customers will be able to backup local data from their NetApp environment to the Axians environment through a combination of the NetApp ONTAP management software and a dedicated Storage Virtual Machine.

## THE SOLUTION COMPONENTS

- FlexPod based on a NetApp AFF8080 system using 3.8 TB SSDs

- NetApp ONTAP 9

- NetApp SnapVault, SnapMirror, SnapCenter

- Virtualization: VMware

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