



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORIES

Debeka Gains Advanced Capabilities for Future Development Plans with EDB Postgres[®] AI





CUSTOMER: DEBEKA

EDB customer since October 2022

Markus Hartmann

Head of Platform-as-a-Service,
Debeka

CHALLENGE: Debeka needed a more scalable, modernized database system that could give it the additional storage, functionality, and built-in compliance it needed to accelerate its business.

EDB SOLUTIONS: EDB Standard Plan with Trusted Postgres Architect, Postgres Enterprise Manager, and EDB Failover Manager

RESULTS: With EDB's help, Debeka redeveloped individual components of its system using PostgreSQL as the back end, unlocking new potential with a modern, flexible database solution.



OVERVIEW

Germany's largest private health insurance company chose EDB and Postgres to modernize its database

Digital transformation of any kind is rarely easy, but for a large institution that has spent decades managing increasing volumes of complex data while relying on a more traditional operations model, it can often be the kind of challenge that seems almost impossible to overcome.

As the head of platforms at Debeka, Germany's largest private health insurance company, Markus Hartmann is no stranger to such challenges. So when the company decided to embark on a new business project that required a more scalable, modernized system, he knew it would be a challenging undertaking.



The project faced multiple hurdles from the outset. For one, the size and complexity of both Debeka's operation and this particular database transition meant the company needed to fulfill a unique and expansive set of storage and functionality requirements. Moreover, any new system would also need to be in full compliance with Germany's strict regulation treaties around data management for the insurance sector.



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Fortunately, Hartmann’s team had at least one aspect of the project figured out: They knew they wanted to use Postgres. Hartmann had experience operating PostgreSQL databases and was aware of the benefits of using open source software. Based on that knowledge, he determined early on that a Postgres-based architecture would likely be best suited to his team’s needs. Admittedly, however, this version would have to support significantly more complex use cases and handle exponentially larger volumes of data, all without sacrificing regulatory compliance.

“Postgres was always in our company, but for really small applications, so we needed to switch to a new version with additional storage, functionality, and built-in compliance,” he said. “But after looking at the whole market, there were really few vendors who could offer us a Postgres database-as-a-product with the right amount of support and consulting.”

Hartmann’s team eventually approached EnterpriseDB (EDB), albeit with a critical eye and some understandable hesitation. Already believing that a transition to a cloud-based solution would be too daunting and likely out of the realm of possibility, Hartmann remained open yet reluctant throughout the first few months of exploration. However, the more he learned about EDB’s host of features and interacted with the team, the more he felt like he might have stumbled on an unexpectedly perfect match.

“For a while it seemed out of our scope, because it was a cloud company and we really weren’t sure how it would work. But every week, as we got further into the project, they seemed more and more like a viable partner,” he said. “By the time we discussed cost and volume, we had found that it was a good fit in every way.”

A strategic shift in priorities

Despite this new partnership being a positive development, Debeka was still encountering internal challenges unrelated to the integration of EDB, namely a prolonged proof of concept (PoC) regarding the initial idea of creating a single database to support one large application.

However, Hartmann also realized that the new infrastructure and tools provided by EDB would allow the company to simply shift its priorities. More specifically, he saw an opportunity to leverage EDB's highly flexible and scalable features to make Debeka a Postgres-first company, focused on the faster, more efficient deployment of self-developed applications as opposed to the creation of an exclusive internal database.

Speaking about exactly what prompted this shift, Hartmann explained that it was a purely strategic move that occurred to him only after he became familiar with EDB's automation features and additional Postgres integrations, which he had initially found to be useful but soon realized would be essential to streamline each task within his department's broader modernization process.

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Planning ahead

As for the future, Hartmann and his team at Debeka will remain primarily focused on refining their strategy of deploying self-developed applications in Postgres, with the ultimate aim of achieving standardized service delivery through the exploration of infrastructure-as-code approaches with EDB.

More specifically, Markus explained that while Debeka has already had success leveraging AI to automate a number of core tasks, including the advanced processing of customer invoices, the company is excited to develop and uncover new use cases and opportunities for enhancement with the help of EDB's growing inventory of supportive features. In fact, Markus shared that not only has his team already begun building data lakes on top of its Postgres infrastructure to support new applications but developers have been pleased to discover that EDB's assistive features can actually make the process enjoyable.

"We've been needing a good API to unlock new AI use cases, and having EDB and adjacent plug-ins in place allows us to build on top of the database with some special frameworks around it," he said. "And these features have actually been quite fun for our developers to use."

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