# Operlog tools bring relief to IT admins

## Large Austrian data center handles data-intensive z/OS environment more efficiently with logstreams

Over five million accounts and 12,400 workstations are managed on the z/OS machines of Austria's ARZ Allgemeines Rechenzentrum GmbH, and 7.8 million transactions are processed, every single day. For load balancing and scalability, the mainframes are coupled into clusters ( a Parallel Sysplex). This generates data that is time-consuming to process and monitor and requires special expertise in the special log format called Operlog. However, the introduction of Beta Systems' Operlog tools has put an end to this.

"Until now, we have managed the Operlog data using IBM on-board resources," explains Clemens Berchtold, System Administrator in the ARZ's Core Infrastructure department. Traditionally, Log data is accessed via the z/OS user interface "System Display and Search Facility (SDSF)", but SDSF can only access online data. Analyzing logs that have already been archived again requires a separate tool.

To simplify work with the Operlog data, ARZ introduced a specialized tool set from Beta Systems Software AG at the beginning of 2021: Enterprise Logger Tools/z. "Administration with IBM on-board tools worked well, but with the Beta Systems solution, it is just more detailed, less complicated and more convenient for us," says Mr. Berchtold. "Evaluations are available more quickly. We save time and can summarize messages across LPAR (logical partition) boundaries."

### Better evaluation options, more overview

This is because the "Operlog Manager", as one of the components of the tool set, manages both the online and the archived inventory, and does so via a simple and feature-rich interface. It allows IT administrators to sort out and select messages individually, save previous selection criteria, reuse them, and much more. From a flood of logs, the causes of a problem can thus be identified very quickly. The "Logstream Manager", as an additional component, facilitates the selection of logstreams and supports sorting, display of definition and settings, cloning of one or more streams etc. And for the communication with Sysplex the Logstream Manager accesses the open Basic Sysplex (XCF) interface. A Sysplex Communicator is therefore the third component of the Enterprise Logger Tools/z.-

*"The tools provide opportunities for evaluation that our IT team couldn't do before, or could only do at great expense."*

*Clemens Berchtold, System Administrator Core Infrastructure, ARZ*

### Errors can be precisely narrowed down

A typical example is the tracking of errors. If it says "At time X, error Y occurred," an operator typically has to look in many different logs to find the needle in the haystack. With the Operlog tools, time periods can now be narrowed down quickly and clearly, which significantly shortens error searches. Clemens Berchtold said: "If an error occurred at 10:15 a.m., for example, I simply summarize a few seconds before or after. That way, I have everything at a glance and can quickly get to the cause of the problem." Often, technical users are also interested in a specific message from the DB2 systems, for example. Mr. Berchtold then asks them about this event (error message) and can immediately provide an evaluation with just a few mouse clicks.

13 people make up the IT administration of the ARZ, eight in the mainframe, five in the Unix environment. So far, only the mainframe specialists work with the Operlog tools. The use for DB2 administration and production is planned for the near future.

### Manage syslog data at the same time

As a System Administrator, Mr. Berchtold particularly likes the fact that the new toolset also lets you manage syslog data. Again, in the past Typically, a Sys Admin would need to look in several places to identify a a problem. For example, there are the Syslog, Operlog and Netview-log (networks and automation). Syslog data is written and archived. For evaluations, a Sys Admin would have to search manually in the archive or even program specific searches or filters in the Rexx script language - this can be cumbersome and requires a lot of knowledge and understanding of the complex environment.

But now, with Operlog Manager in a uniform interface, all of that data can be retrieved easily. The Operlog data remains archived in IBM datasets for revision reasons. But in addition, the data is archived in the Operlog tools specifically for evaluation. On a daily basis, separate datasets are created on, which are accessed by the Operlog

**About ARZ Allgemeines Rechenzentrum GmbH**

ARZ Allgemeines Rechenzentrum GmbH was formed in 1993 from the merger of the RZW and VDG data centers. With 600 employees at two locations in Vienna and Innsbruck, ARZ is a well-known and recognized name as a competence center for IT services in the banking sector, but also in the area of hospitals and public administration in Austria. ARZ supports its customers in the financial services sector in the processing of daily banking transactions by using a wide range of software solutions. In particular, in-house developments based on the latest technologies, but also proven standard products (GEOS, SAP, etc.) are used. In addition to the core banking systems, the service provider supports online portals and a data warehouse infrastructure for its customers.



tools. If a query comes up (for example, about an error about a month ago), it can be found quickly by entering the date. After six months in use, the Operlog toolset is gaining momentum at ARZ Allgemeines Rechenzentrum GmbH, and additional application scenarios are planned in the near future. The data center has also been using the products _beta log|z (the former Beta 92 Log Management), Beta 85 and LDMS|z for list archiving for a long time.