Platned

CASE STUDY



PLATNED | CASE STUDY | HOSTING AND MANAGED SERVICES

How Sumi Agro improved IFS system reliability and IT efficiency with Platned managed hosting

A seamless hosting migration, 99.9% uptime and proactive support for business-critical operations across six European countries.

IFS Specialized Partner

OVERVIEW

Reliable access to business-critical systems

For organisations operating across multiple countries, reliable access to enterprise software is essential. System interruptions can affect everything from order processing and inventory management to financial transactions and customer service.

Sumi Agro Europe faced this challenge as it approached the end of its existing hosting agreement. With approximately 200 employees relying on IFS Applications 10 across six countries, the company needed a hosting partner that could deliver dependable performance, responsive technical support and greater flexibility.

By moving its IFS environment to Platned's managed hosting services on Microsoft Azure, Sumi Agro gained a more integrated approach to infrastructure management, proactive system monitoring and ongoing technical support.

> "The result was a reliable, scalable environment backed by 24/7 monitoring, responsive service and a reported 99.9% uptime.

AT A GLANCE

Sumi Agro at a glance

INDUSTRY
Agriculture and agricultural products

PARENT COMPANY
Sumitomo Corporation

ENTERPRISE PLATFORM
IFS Applications 10

HOSTING INFRASTRUCTURE
Microsoft Azure

IFS USERS
Approximately 200

COUNTRIES SUPPORTED
United Kingdom, France, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary

SERVICES PROVIDED
Cloud hosting, managed services, infrastructure monitoring, database management, system maintenance and backup management

99.9%	24/7	~200	6	8+ years
reported uptime	proactive monitoring	IFS users	European countries	partnership with Platned

THE CHALLENGE

Keeping essential business systems available

Sumi Agro Europe is part of the Sumi Agro Group, owned by Japanese multinational Sumitomo Corporation. The business develops and distributes agricultural products, including fertilisers, seeds, herbicides, insecticides and fungicides.

IFS Applications 10 supports core business activities across its European operations, connecting essential processes such as ordering, invoicing and inventory management. This makes system availability a business-critical requirement.

With its previous five-year hosting agreement approaching completion in November 2024, Sumi Agro began evaluating how it could improve the management and responsiveness of its IT infrastructure.

One of the primary concerns was the time required to resolve hosting issues, implement changes and respond to urgent requests. Delays in obtaining technical resources could affect important business processes and place additional pressure on internal IT teams.

The company needed a solution that would provide faster access to technical expertise, dependable monitoring and greater control over its hosting environment.

THE SOLUTION

Bringing hosting and IFS support together

Sumi Agro had already established a long-term relationship with Platned. Over more than eight years, Platned had supported the business through IFS implementations, upgrades, consulting projects and application support.

Extending that partnership to include hosting and managed services provided an opportunity to simplify IT management by bringing infrastructure and application support under one experienced team.

Platned developed a managed hosting solution using Microsoft Azure, with separate development, testing and production environments. The agreement brought together infrastructure management, system maintenance, backups and round-the-clock monitoring.

Importantly, it also provided direct, controlled access to the IFS environment and service level agreements designed to support timely responses to technical issues and requests.

For Sumi Agro, consolidating these services meant fewer dependencies between separate providers and a more coordinated approach to maintaining business-critical applications.

DEV

Development

Separate environment for building and developing changes.

TEST

Testing

Changes validated with recent business data before release.

PROD

Production

The live IFS environment, monitored 24/7 on Microsoft Azure.

THE MIGRATION

A carefully managed migration with minimal business disruption

Moving an established enterprise environment requires careful preparation, particularly when systems support operations across multiple locations. Platned worked with Sumi Agro to plan and test the migration before the November 2024 transition.

The project began with the creation of new hosting environments on Microsoft Azure. A cloned copy of the existing IFS database was then installed in the new infrastructure.

Over approximately three months, the teams carried out extensive testing to confirm that the environment could support the company's operational requirements. This included validating integrations, checking connectivity between offices and making necessary adjustments to regional firewall configurations.

The final migration was scheduled over a weekend to reduce disruption.

The migration weekend

FRI

Friday evening

The existing IFS environment was taken offline and users were temporarily locked out.

SAT

Saturday

Platned installed an updated copy of the production environment.

SUN

Sunday

User testing confirmed the new environment was ready.

MON

Monday morning

Employees resumed normal business operations.

Platned's project specialists remained available for two weeks following the transition before responsibility moved to the Managed Services team. This structured approach helped Sumi Agro move to its new infrastructure while maintaining business continuity.

PROACTIVE MONITORING

Proactive monitoring that helps prevent problems

One of the most significant improvements for Sumi Agro was the move from reactive issue resolution to proactive infrastructure management.

Platned's cloud specialists continuously monitor the hosting environment, helping identify potential issues before they develop into more serious problems. Rather than waiting for employees to experience disruption, the team can investigate alerts and take preventive action.

For Sumi Agro, this has meant that some issues are identified and addressed outside normal working hours, with the IT team receiving confirmation of actions already completed.

The arrangement combines 24/7 monitoring with responsive technical support and agreed service levels.

THE BUSINESS IMPACT

Improved system reliability, earlier issue detection and reduced pressure on internal IT resources.

> "I've always found Platned consultants knowledgeable and thorough. Accessing technical resource is always fast and, if we do ever need to escalate, the response is immediate and effective.
>
> Kam Saran, Group ICT Manager, Sumi Agro Europe

MAINTENANCE AND BACKUPS

Simplifying maintenance, updates and backups

Maintaining the infrastructure behind an enterprise application requires ongoing technical management. Sumi Agro's environment includes IFS application servers, Oracle database servers, supporting application servers and secure access servers.

Under the managed services agreement, Platned takes responsibility for routine maintenance across these components. This includes Windows updates, Oracle database updates, IFS application updates and scheduled backups.

Backup management is particularly important because Sumi Agro uses separate environments to test changes before introducing them into production. Previously, the business typically refreshed its testing and development environments every three to six months using copies of production data.

With Platned managing backup and environment restoration activities, the company has greater flexibility to refresh these systems more frequently, with the option to request cloning up to twice per month when required.

This allows teams to test software changes, evaluate new functionality and develop reports using recent business data.

BEFORE

Every 3 to 6 months

Test and development environments refreshed with production data

WITH PLATNED

Up to twice per month

Environment cloning available on request when required

THE BUSINESS IMPACT

More efficient system maintenance, improved testing flexibility and reduced administrative complexity.

FLEXIBLE CAPACITY

More control over infrastructure costs and capacity

As businesses expand, infrastructure requirements rarely increase in perfectly defined stages. Traditional cloud hosting agreements can require organisations to move between fixed capacity tiers, potentially resulting in additional costs for resources they do not yet need.

Platned provides Sumi Agro with a more flexible approach to scaling its hosting environment. Rather than moving directly to a substantially larger infrastructure package, the company can adjust capacity in smaller increments, such as 10% or 20%, based on operational requirements.

This flexibility allows Sumi Agro to respond more precisely to changing workloads while maintaining better control over infrastructure expenditure.

THE BUSINESS IMPACT

Greater scalability, more efficient resource allocation and improved cost control.

COMMUNICATION

Ongoing communication and technical visibility

Effective managed services depend on more than infrastructure performance. Clear communication, access to technical specialists and visibility into service activity are equally important.

Throughout the migration, Sumi Agro worked with experienced Platned consultants who were already familiar with its systems and business processes. A dedicated communication channel helped the teams share questions and resolve issues efficiently during the transition.

Following go-live, the relationship continued through regular service meetings, performance reporting and direct access to Platned's Synchromax support ticketing system.

Weekly discussions provide opportunities to review ongoing requirements, while quarterly reports summarise infrastructure performance and service activity. This gives Sumi Agro greater visibility into the health of its environment and the work being carried out to maintain it.

THE RESULTS

A more resilient and flexible IFS environment

By combining hosting, infrastructure management and application expertise, Platned helped Sumi Agro strengthen the reliability and management of its enterprise systems.

- **99.9% uptime**
  Reliable access to business-critical IFS applications across six countries.
- **24/7 proactive monitoring**
  Continuous oversight helps detect and address potential problems before they disrupt operations.
- **Responsive technical support**
  Improved service responsiveness through established SLAs and direct access to experienced specialists.
- **Seamless business transition**
  A carefully planned weekend migration enabled normal operations to resume on Monday morning.
- **Simplified IT management**
  One partner manages hosting infrastructure, system updates, backups and ongoing support.
- **More flexible capacity planning**
  Hosting resources can be adjusted in smaller increments to better reflect business requirements.
- **Improved testing capabilities**
  More frequent environment refreshes support software validation, reporting development and operational improvements.

LOOKING AHEAD

Preparing for future growth and modernisation

Sumi Agro's hosting transition also established a foundation for its longer-term enterprise technology plans. At the time of the original case study, the company was considering extending its Platned-hosted environment to additional European operations, including Turkey and Slovakia.

It was also planning a future transition from IFS Applications 10 to IFS Cloud. The proposed approach involved creating a new cloud testing environment using a copy of the existing production system, allowing the participating countries to validate business processes before approving the upgrade.

These plans reflected Sumi Agro's intention to continue developing its enterprise technology capabilities while maintaining the reliability of its existing operations.

WHY PLATNED

Why Sumi Agro chose Platned

For Sumi Agro, the decision to work with Platned was influenced by an established relationship, proven IFS expertise and confidence in the team's ability to deliver.

By combining application knowledge, infrastructure management and ongoing support, Platned provided a more coordinated approach than relying on separate hosting and technical service providers.

The successful migration demonstrated the importance of detailed planning, effective communication and experienced technical teams when moving essential enterprise systems.

It also highlighted the value of proactive management, particularly for organisations whose daily operations depend on uninterrupted access to IFS.

BUILD A MORE RELIABLE IFS ENVIRONMENT WITH PLATNED

Reliable systems. Responsive support. Infrastructure that grows with your business.

Whether your organisation is looking to improve hosting performance, simplify infrastructure management or prepare for a future IFS Cloud migration, Platned can help. As an IFS Specialized Partner, we combine specialist application knowledge with cloud hosting and managed services expertise to support the performance, reliability and long-term value of your IFS environment.

Discover how Platned Hosting and Managed Services can support your business.

Explore Platned's IFS Hosting | Discuss your requirements

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