Case study

By successfully moving its IFS applications and database from vendor hosting to a Platned environment, Sumi Agro now enjoys 99.9% uptime, 24/7/365 pro-active monitoring and seamless, instant resolution of any support issues. The environment ensures access to business-critical IFS enterprise software for 200 users across the UK, France, Germany, Poland, Czech Republic and Hungary.

The company uses IFS Apps 10 enterprise software daily across six countries. Explains Kam Saran, Group IT Manager for Sumi Agro Europe, "IFS is our main company system where we process all our orders, invoices, inventory and more. If that's not accessible, the company simply comes to standstill," he says.

Improved responsiveness

Coming out of a 5-year hosting agreement with vendor in November 2024, Kam approached its IFS gold services partner Platned to discuss a hosting and managed services contract. "Platned have worked with us for over eight years on various IFS upgrade, implementation and consulting projects. Since the company already manage all our support, consolidating the hosting with the same team was a logical move," he says.

The move was prompted by the desire to ensure that any hosting issues or install request could be resolved as swiftly and efficiently as possible. "We cannot afford to wait days, or weeks, for vendor resource to action requests. The cloud hosting and management SLA with Platned provides robust pro-active system monitoring, coupled with the ability to raise any urgent matters for a response within minutes or hours," he says. "We have three environments, development, testing and production, hosted in the cloud on Microsoft Azure. With Platned we get controlled, full access to the system, and, based on our excellent support experience to date, enjoy premium service levels and SLAs at a competitive cost."

Platned hosting, managed services and proactive monitoring of Sumi Agro Global operations.

About Sumi Agro

Owned by Sumitomo corporation, a leading Japanese multinational, Sumi Agro Europe, Part of Sumi Agro Group, specialises in the development and distribution of advanced agricultural products including fertilizers, seeds and herbicides, insecticides and fungicides for plant protection.

Using IFS Apps 10 enterprise software on a daily basis across six countries, the company has IFS 200 users.

Proactive monitoring and management

24/7 proactive monitoring by Platned's cloud team ensures that the vast majority of potential problems are detected and resolved without any impact to customers. "I'll sometimes come in to see an email sent during the previous night, advising me of a successful preventative action that has already been taken," says Kam.

In addition, Platned now manages all routine system maintenance for Sumi Agro's cloud computing instance consisting of IFS application servers, Oracle database servers, add-on servers, and jump servers. This includes applying Windows updates, Oracle database updates plus IFS software updates for IFS Applications.

"Platned now handles our backups, on a daily, weekly and monthly basis," adds Kam. This means it's much easier to refresh our non-production test and development environments. Every three to six months, we ask Platned to clone our live system data, refreshing the environments using data from the previous day's backup. We use these environments to test updates across our processes before deploying, and to develop and trial new reports and functionalities. The new Platned agreement gives us the flexibility to clone environments twice a month if needed."

Seamless transition

The switchover process from IFS servers to the new Platned hosting environment was seamless. Explains Kam, "Before the move in November 2024, Platned created our new environments. IFS provided a zipped, cloned copy of our current database, which Platned installed on their Microsoft Azure instance. To ensure integrations and connectivity were maintained across our six offices, we conducted three months of robust testing. For example, firewalls in different geographies needed to be modified. Finally, we closed the IFS environment on a Friday evening and locked out users. By Saturday Platned had installed a full copy of the latest instance. During Sunday a group of users tested the system, and by Monday morning it was business as normal again," he says.

Benefits seen with Platned managed hosting

- Improved SLA performance with timely response to issues and requests

- Proactive system monitoring 24/7

- Maintenance including management of all updates and backups

- Flexibility to scale capacity cost-effectively

- Direct access to the IFS environment

Communication throughout was excellent, and the project team remained in place for two weeks after go-live before handing over to the Managed Services team. "We had three experienced Platned consultants who all knew the business well. They also set up a WhatsApp group so that any issues or queries could be quickly shared and investigated," says Kam. Now, in addition to weekly calls with the team, a detailed Platned report summarises overall performance to date on a quarterly basis. "I also have access to Synchromax, Platned's support ticketing system, to look at any issues myself," says Kam.

More flexible scalability

The hosting flexibility and scalability available with Platned is an important benefit. "Like most software vendors, IFS offers fixed-step increases for cloud capacity – so-called 'T-shirt sizing', " says Kam. "This means that as organisations scale, they often pay for a capacity tier that exceeds their actual needs. In contrast, with Platned we can increase or reduce capacity by just 10% or 20% as needed and so scale hosting flexibly and cost-effectively."

Upgrade plans: IFS Cloud

With six out of ten of Sumi Agro's overseas operations already using IFS, Turkey and Slovakia are the next in line adopt the Platned hosted solution within the next 12 months. By Q4 2025, Kam expects to appoint Platned to begin a project to upgrade from Apps 10 to IFS Cloud, with a pan-European go-live in 2026. "Platned will run scripts that will take a copy of our live environment into the new cloud test environment. Once all six countries have tested and signed off on that, we'll go-live with IFS Cloud Europe-wide," he says.

Switchover advice

Platned's global Managed Services team is currently supporting IFS environments for 20+ other customers. What advice would Kam offer other companies considering moving their hosting and Managed Services to Platned? "The entire process, from initial enquiry to preparation, testing and switchover has been painless. In my experience, Platned excels in delivering exactly what is promised in the agreed timeframe. The service level we have now is excellent. We know our environment is being monitored and managed proactively by experts, and any issues or concerns we need to raise are always dealt without delay," he says.

> We have three environments, development, testing and production, hosted in the cloud on Microsoft Azure. With Platned we get controlled, full access to the system, and, based on our excellent support experience date, enjoy premium service levels and SLAs at a competitive cost.
>
> Kam Saran, Group IT Manager for Sumi Agro Europe

Find out more

For further details, e-mail **info@platned.com**, contact your local Platned office or visit our website at **www.platned.com**

Platned