



VFL WOLFSBURG-FUSSBALL GMBH

DIGITAL PLAYGROUND:

VFL WOLFSBURG AND ITS PATH TO
LEGALLY SECURE DATA ARCHIVING

DATA COMPLIANCE AND MINIMAL EFFORT THANKS TO A SOFTWARE-DEFINED ARCHIVE

„With iCAS, we have found a solution that perfectly integrates into our infrastructure and gives us the good feeling that our data is where it belongs: GDPR-compliant, protected, and under our control.“

Dino Kallmeyer,
Teamlead Technical Management at VfL Wolfsburg-Fußball GmbH



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Sector:

Professional soccer/sports organization

Background:

The previously used hardware-based archiving solution was out of support and also cumbersome to handle. A powerful, audit-proof, and GDPR-compliant alternative was sought that could be seamlessly integrated into the existing infrastructure.

Challenges:

- Reduction of IT expenses for managing the archiving solution
- Ensuring audit security and GDPR compliance of sensitive personal data
- Flexibility and cost efficiency with steadily increasing data volumes
- Efficient retention management

Solution:

iTernity iCAS Middleware
iTernity Special Delete Manager
Hardware from HPE

Images: Provided by VfL Wolfsburg-Fußball GmbH

THE SUCCESS AT A GLANCE



Secure, GDPR-compliant archiving for personal data from various areas such as scouting, purchasing, and media departments



Efficient retention management for a wide range of legal retention periods



No effort required for IT with the archiving solution: iCAS runs as a silent worker in the background.



Flexible, scalable central archive with easy integration of additional departments

WORK – SOCCER – PASSION

VfL Wolfsburg, whose sole owner since 2007 has been Volkswagen AG, is a mainstay in German professional and women's soccer. The club was founded in 1945 and has been closely associated with the Volkswagen Group ever since. With the victory of the German championship in 2009, the DFB-Pokal win in 2015, and numerous international participations, the club represents ambitious top-level soccer. The women's team of VfL is also particularly successful, having won the German championship and the UEFA Women's Champions League multiple times.

VfL Wolfsburg not only stands for top-level performance in sports. In the club's administration and IT, the club also relies on professionalism, innovative spirit, and sustainable structures.

With a total of around 250 employees - 18 of whom are in IT - the club operates a state-of-the-art infrastructure that supports key areas such as scouting, media production, and administration.



- **Key data : VfL Wolfsburg Fußball GmbH**
- Industry: Sports organization
- Approximately 250 employees, of which 18 are in IT
- Archived data: scouting videos, photos, social media and press content, content from Wölfe TV
- Archive volume: approximately 30 TB, annual increase: approximately 20 TB

INITIAL SITUATION: DEPLOYED STORAGE PLATFORM IS NO LONGER SUPPORTED

At VfL Wolfsburg, data is archived that is rarely found in traditional archiving projects: scouting videos in 4K resolution, press photos from the in-house photographer, content for social media, or the club's own Wölfe TV.

Dino Kallmeyer, team leader of Technical Management at VfL Wolfsburg, explains:

„You wouldn't think it of a soccer club - but just thru our media department and scouting, an enormous amount of data accumulates. Currently, we are at around 30 TB, and every year about 20 TB are added.“

VfL also archives data from women's and youth soccer - areas where professionalization is continuously increasing. For example, the former national player Alexandra Popp exemplifies the growing importance and visibility of women's football.

„Here too, scouting data and images are generated, which we want to

securely and long-term archive,”

according to Kallmeyer.

In 2024, the IT managers around Kallmeyer were forced to undertake a comprehensive storage renewal:

„Our old storage platform was out of support and also rather uncomfortable to use.“ Together with HPE, our storage partner, we searched for a powerful, GDPR-compliant alternative.

Particularly important to the VfL Wolfsburg-Fussball GmbH was also the legally compliant handling of incorrectly stored data.

„When, in the heat of the moment, a file is accidentally moved into a folder with a set retention period, it was important for us to be able to delete it specifically,”

explains team leader of Technical Management, Dino Kallmeyer.

GOALS AND SOLUTION SELECTION

In addition to the desired GDPR compliance and legal certainty, the following goals and conditions were the focus for the IT managers of VfL Wolfsburg when selecting the new archive:

- The archive should be easily and quickly expandable at any time to keep up with the constantly growing amount of data.
- The archiving solution should require minimal effort from the IT staff of VfL Wolfsburg.
- The archive system should be able to integrate as transparently as possible into the existing OnPrem structures.
- VfL Wolfsburg wanted to retain full control over the data.

HPE recommended our middleware iCAS - particularly because of the ability to integrate audit-proof and GDPR-compliant archiving into existing infrastructures. Another crucial advantage: The iCAS solution works in the background - stable, invisible, reliable.

„That’s exactly what we wanted: an archiving solution that runs reliably and stably with almost no administrative effort“,

according to Kallmeyer. Above all, the maintenance intensity of the old solution used to cause frustration. Today, the system runs almost maintenance-free.

The flexibility of the solution is evident in its handling of different requirements from the specialist departments. Each department can define individual retention periods, such as two, four, six, or 18 years.

„We receive tickets with the requirements, then set up a corresponding drive and define the retention. iCAS then takes care of ensuring that these are adhered to, and the data is automatically deleted after the retention period expires,”

describes Kallmeyer the process.

Since, at the request of individual persons, data must also be deleted before the retention period expires („right to be forgotten“), the iTernity Special Delete Manager is also used, which enables simple and independent management of deletion processes thru a user-friendly interface. Every deletion process is comprehensively documented in the audit log and can be traced in detail - for maximum control at every stage.

What is a sensitive issue for many organizations, VfL Wolfsburg has approached proactively and strategically. Dino Kallmeyer:

„We want to consciously have our data in our own hands to maintain data sovereignty and keep costs in check. Cloud solutions are not an option for us in this case.”

LEGAL CERTAINTY, FLEXIBILITY, AND MAXIMUM INVESTMENT SECURITY

The introduction of the archiving solution at VfL Wolfsburg took place in close collaboration with the partner HPE and iTernity. The very specific use case in the sports sector initially brought some coordination needs, which were efficiently resolved together. Thus, the project could be implemented smoothly overall.

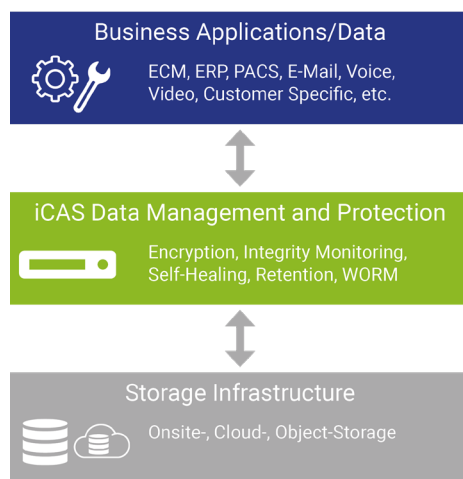
*„Especially positive was that our requirements were taken seriously and implemented quickly,” says Dino Kallmeyer in retrospect.
„We found a solution with iCAS that integrates perfectly into our infrastructure and gives us the good feeling that our data is where it belongs: GDPR-compliant, protected, and under our control.”*

In addition to the technical infrastructure, VfL Wolfsburg places great importance on data protection and compliance, as already mentioned. The integration of iCAS as middleware not only ensures the legally compliant storage of sensitive data but also supports internal and external audits. Especially for an organization that archives both personal data of players and employees as well as copyrighted images and video material, this is of crucial importance.

Another advantage of the solution is the ability to scale seamlessly. Due to the constant data growth – such as thru high-resolution scouting videos, photo series, and media productions – archive systems must be flexibly expandable. With iCAS, additional storage paths can be easily integrated without disrupting existing processes. This keeps the archiving solution future-proof in the long term.

Overall, the project at VfL Wolfsburg exemplifies how modern IT solutions can be successfully integrated into non-traditional archiving environments. Whether medical data, financial records, or - as in this case - scouting videos, media materials, and internal team recordings: The requirements for integrity, availability, and traceability are always high. iCAS demonstrates its full strength as a flexible, software-defined solution with maximum investment security.

The functionality of iCAS and the Special Delete Manager:



As a software-defined solution, iCAS connects specialized applications with the storage infrastructure while being independent on both sides. The software solution runs on Windows servers and can be operated both physically and virtually. iCAS is based on standard hardware, can be used with on-premise, object, or cloud storage solutions, and ensures compliance, data integrity protection, and WORM storage (Write Once Read Many). Thru its software-defined architecture, iCAS offers high flexibility and security even for future and unpredictable developments. With the Special Delete Manager for iCAS, VfL Wolfsburg has the ability to delete archived data in compliance with GDPR before the

retention period expires. It supports the integration of a structured and legally compliant deletion of data protection concept.

The main advantages of iCAS and the Special Delete Manager were quickly apparent to VfL Wolfsburg:

- Quick, straightforward provision of the solution and minimal time and personnel effort during setup.
- iCAS runs efficiently and without interruptions in the background. Thanks to minimal maintenance effort, resources in the IT team are freed up for more important tasks.
- No additional effort for legal compliance: Documents are stored in a revision-proof and unalterable manner thanks to iCAS (KPMG certified).

- The solution grows effortlessly - even with sudden data growth.
- The Special Delete Manager allows for easy and secure deletion of personal data before the retention period expires.
- Thanks to the simple user interface of the Special Delete Manager, management and organization are effortlessly possible..

GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

The IT department of VfL plans to connect even more data sources to iCAS in the future. In addition to the women's and youth sectors, the possibility of securely archiving training data, sports medical information, and administrative documents is also being examined. The archive system is thus growing together with the club - technically and organizationally.

DATA ARCHIVING MADE SIMPLE

iCAS is a flexible middleware for retention management & WORM storage. The solution integrates perfectly into heterogeneous infrastructure landscapes. While you take care of your core business, iCAS reliably protects the integrity and availability of your data in the background.



HARDWARE INDEPENDENT

The archive intelligence is tied to the software-layer, not to the hardware



COMPLIANT

iCAS assures regulatory and compliance requirements



FLEXIBLE

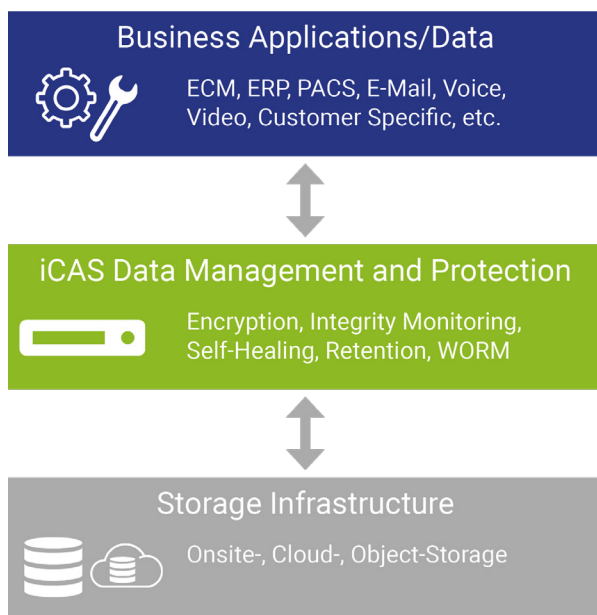
Middleware between your business application and the storage infrastructure



TAMPER-PROOF

iCAS provides WORM storage, encryption and retention management

THE CENTRAL PLATFORM FOR YOUR DATA MANAGEMENT



iCAS protects data integrity and availability, even if the underlying storage technology and hardware changes in the future. As a software-defined solution, iCAS lays the foundation for audit-proof data archiving and protects your investments in hardware, software and services.

iCAS adapts to your IT infrastructure and adds compliance, data integrity protection and WORM storage (Write Once Read Many) to your existing systems.