

Food and Hospitality | France

Supporting a busy ski resort with resilient servers

Soremet Les Sybelles

Working with FMI, Soremet Les Sybelles consolidated its IT infrastructure to four clustered Lenovo ThinkSystem SR650 V3 servers. These provide extremely high availability for key applications, helping the organization keep pistes open for its guests.



Lenovo

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Customer background

Who is Soremet Les Sybelles?

Soremet runs five out of the six linked ski stations that make up the resort of Les Sybelles, located in the Savoie department in the French Alps. As a family-friendly resort set in natural surroundings with more than 300 kilometers of pistes, Les Sybelles caters to everyone from young beginners to expert skiers.

Responsible for everything from the lift infrastructure to the upkeep of the pistes, and from safety patrols to real-time information, Soremet is dedicated to giving skiers the best possible experience.



2 The challenge

The seasonal nature of skiing puts intense pressure on resort operators to keep systems running smoothly at peak times. For Soremet Les Sybelles, there are six weeks in each year—school vacations during the winter months—that are absolutely critical for revenue generation. And since almost all guests arrive on a Saturday, most of the annual revenue is generated on just six Saturdays each year. On these days, any downtime for key systems such as administrative and sales applications would be disastrous.

With around 15 servers distributed between several locations, the IT infrastructure at Les Sybelles was becoming a potential liability. Soremet wanted to rationalize the infrastructure to increase efficiency, reliability, and serviceability while reducing its costs. In particular, the company aimed to replace aging hardware with new solutions offering better performance, availability, and resilience.

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“Our objective was to **ensure full availability and reliability for our key systems for the six critical Saturdays each year**. We had rationalized our IT operations to a single location, and we wanted to do the same for our server and storage infrastructure. Beyond choosing **the most resilient environment possible**, we wanted a solution with the **smallest possible environmental footprint**.”

Rémi Bras

IT Manager, Soremet Les Sybelles

Building an ultra-resilient infrastructure

Soremet Les Sybelles asked its existing technology partner FMI to propose two options: one using Dell technology and one using Lenovo. Based on an assessment of the price/performance ratio, the environmental aspects, and the build quality, Soremet Les Sybelles chose Lenovo.

FMI set up an eight-node VMware cluster on Lenovo ThinkSystem SR650 V3 servers in two locations. The combination of VMware vMotion and StorMagic storage virtualization creates a single logical architecture, so that systems keep running even in the event of an outage in one location.

Hardware

Lenovo ThinkSystem SR650 V3

Software

VMware vSphere
StorMagic



Protecting key systems from downtime

The applications running on the ThinkSystem SR650 V3 servers manage every aspect of the ski resort, including the vital sales applications and lift pass controls. With clustered systems and automated failover capabilities between the four ultra-reliable Lenovo servers, Soremet Les Sybelles has an IT infrastructure fit for its extreme requirements around availability and resilience. Key systems are further protected through the provision of immutable backups in both server rooms using Veeam technology.

“If we ever had a failure of our heating or air conditioning systems, it’s good to know that the Lenovo ThinkSystem hardware has very good tolerance of low and high temperatures, humidity, and so on,” says Bras.

FMI provides further reassurance of business continuity by supporting Soremet Les Sybelles with expert technicians who can be on-site within 90 minutes. “FMI is well-known in the French ski regions as an expert partner offering high quality of service,” says Bras.



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“Our Lenovo solution from FMI has given us much greater confidence that our most important systems will always be available when we need them. The cost of unexpected downtime on a peak Saturday could be as high as 10% of annual turnover, so it’s crucial to get this right.”

Rémi Bras

IT Manager, Soremet Les Sybelles

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The results

Moving from multiple potential points of failure to a clustered environment on ThinkSystem servers has significantly improved the availability of key systems at Soremet Les Sybelles. The organization also benefits from the increased performance, capacity, and ease of management of the Lenovo servers.

“The servers are sized so that we have spare capacity,” says Bras. “And if either room goes down, the other takes over with no degradation of service. The failover is completely automatic.”



Higher availability provides peace of mind



Seamless automated failover reduces risk of downtime



Improved performance helps drive 95% customer satisfaction

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The
results

Enhancing the experience for customers

The improved availability of systems has a direct positive impact on visitors to Les Sybelles. Waiting times are lower for people buying resort packages and ski passes, and surveys put customer satisfaction as high as 95%. Real-time information on lift and piste status is always accessible, so that visitors are kept informed and can spend less time waiting and more time having fun.

“All of our dynamic planning and real-time information systems run better on the Lenovo infrastructure, so our visitors don’t miss out on important information,” says Bras. “When families arrive and we can quickly issue their ski passes, they get a better overall experience that will drive repeat visits.”

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“For us, the solution is really **the combination of Lenovo technology with FMI know-how**. The FMI team really listens to us and then translates our requirements into the appropriate technical solution. FMI gives us domain experts who really understand the right way to do things. But at the same time, we just have a **single point of contact for support**.”

Rémi Bras

IT Manager, Soremet Les Sybelles

Why Lenovo?

“Our primary objective was resilience, and we felt that the Lenovo offering represented the best build quality and after-sales support, as well as economical pricing,” says Bras. “The environmental angle was also a consideration: like us, Lenovo is very conscious of sustainability and their technology is very energy efficient as a result.”

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“We recommended Lenovo ThinkSystem servers as **offering the best price-to-quality ratio and the best after-sales service**. As we have broadened our relationship with Soremet Les Sybelles, we are delighted to be able to help them in new areas of technology and support them with responsive services.”



Pierre-Hugo Colas

Business Development Manager, FMI

How can busy tourist sites keep vital systems available at peak times?

Working with Lenovo and FMI, Soremet Les Sybelles consolidated its IT infrastructure to four clustered Lenovo ThinkSystem SR650 V3 servers.

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