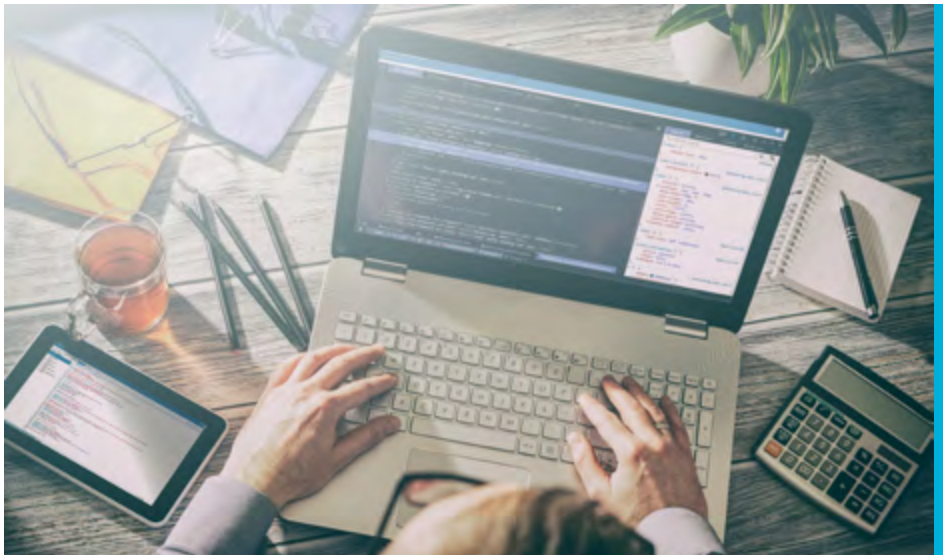

Business challenge

Apator Rector sp. z o.o. wanted to accelerate its development efforts by switching from on-server storage to a centralized disk solution.

Transformation

Its software development efforts limited by nearly decade-old equipment, Apator Rector joined with IBM Business Partner INET - Systemy Informatyczne to launch a centralized storage platform built with IBM FlashSystem® technology. Now, developers can more quickly and easily manage and migrate development-related data within a virtualized architecture.

Results

From 2 days to 5 hours
shortening the time needed to deploy new development environments

Boosts disk performance
thanks to a unified storage management console

Accelerates software development
with faster data access and by improving storage reliability

Apator Rector sp. z o.o.

Don't let old storage waste your time

Part of the Apator Group, Apator Rector develops and markets software to the Polish market. Specializing in geographical information systems (GIS) technology, the business predominately caters to utilities, telecommunications and public organizations. Apator Rector was founded in 1994 and currently employs over 150 staff.

"Before, when we would deploy a new database, the operation could take up to two days. After working with INET and IBM, we only need five hours."

—Marek Kulczyk, Head of IT Installation and Administration, Apator Rector sp. z o.o.

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No more waiting

Patience is a virtue. But your storage architecture really shouldn't be the tool you rely on to instill this positive attribute. Waiting on a loading screen or for data to populate can quickly become frustrating, particularly if you're iterating the tenth build of an application that you need to deliver next week.

Put simply, slow data will slow your processes. And for fast-growing software developer Apator Rector, waiting was no longer an option.

> ***"If a host goes down, we can start to work from another. It makes an outage a minor disruption instead of the large waste of time that it used to be."***
>
> —Marek Kulczyk, Head of IT Installation and Administration, Apator Rector sp. z o.o.

"The equipment we were using for software development was very old and very slow," explains Marek Kulczyk, Head of IT Installation and Administration at Apator Rector. "Most of it was purchased over seven years ago. And some of it was even older than that. We were running several large development environments—each with a large Oracle database—on these systems, and we were having a lot of performance issues."

At the time, Apator Rector was running these environments, including the associated storage, from individual servers with some devices storing 4 – 5 TB of data on older, slower equipment. And due to insufficient resources, the business sometimes had to keep data on local disks. Not only did this strategy limit the speed of data access, it also lowered overall availability.

"If a host went down, we'd lose access to the database, and several of our designers wouldn't be able to work," notes Kulczyk. "That could impact development timelines and impact customer satisfaction. So we wanted something that would make our processes more available. We wanted central, local storage for our development data."

Complex storage, simple delivery

For Apator Rector, the choice of platform was obvious. "In my previous job, I worked with IBM storage," adds Kulczyk. "I knew that IBM offered a good solution, and I wanted to use something similar at Apator Rector."

The business began working with IBM Business Partner INET, which helped Apator Rector flesh out its business and technical requirements to identify the right equipment for its development environment. And in early 2020, the joint team deployed

> ***"We don't need to spend time on the storage anymore. Everything is done, more or less, by itself. And that saves money and time for me and my team."***
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> —Marek Kulczyk, Head of IT Installation and Administration, Apator Rector sp. z o.o.

an IBM FlashSystem 5000 device in Apator Rector's corporate headquarters.

"It was a very quick and easy implementation," notes Tomasz Laube, Director at INET. "We configured the FlashSystem with a mix of SSD and traditional spinning disk drives, so they can store important data on the faster SSD drives. And material that is accessed less often—images or video—can be stored on the slower tier of disks. With the IBM Easy Tier tool, we also prepared a VMware infrastructure that can keep the Oracle data available if something goes wrong with the host."

In addition, Apator Rector also uses IBM® Storage Insights technology, a central console that lets users seamlessly manage the storage environment and even share logs with IBM to accelerate support in the unlikely event of an error our outage.

Fast data means fast development

With the new, tiered storage architecture in place, Apator Rector accelerated its development efforts with faster data access and by avoiding the performance issues that previously plagued its technology. Segregating data by disk type lets the business better optimize the performance of its systems, while with virtualization, Apator Rector can quickly scale development efforts to accommodate new projects and customers.

"We use the non-disruptive copying to quickly replicate existing development environments and start working on and testing something new," notes Kulczyk. "Before, when we would deploy a new database, the operation could take up to two days. After working with INET and IBM, we only need five hours."

"The SSD drives in the FlashSystem also help," adds Laube. "SSD is faster than traditional spinning disks, so they can pull up information more quickly. And you don't have any moving parts, so it's more reliable too."

Of course, the virtualized storage environment helps reinforce the increased reliability. As Kulczyk explains, "If a host goes down, we can start to work from another. It makes an outage a minor disruption instead of the large waste of time that it used to be."

Altogether, Apator Rector is pleased with its choice of INET and IBM Storage technology. “We don’t need to spend time on the storage anymore,” concludes Kulczyk.

“Everything is done, more or less, by itself. And that saves money and time for me and my team.”

Solution components

- IBM FlashSystem® 5000
- IBM® Storage Insights

Take the next step

To learn more about the IBM solutions featured in this story, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner.

To learn more about its technology solutions and what INET - Systemy Informatyczne can do for you, please visit: INET

About INET - Systemy Informatyczne

IBM Business Partner INET is a provider of industry-focused technology solutions. Founded in 2005, the business is currently headquartered in Kolbuszowa, Poland.

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