IBM

Reynolds

Business challenge

For a tasty dish, you need the best ingredients. Reynolds aims to be the most dependable supplier of high-quality foodstuffs in the UK, and searched for the IT infrastructure to achieve this goal.

Transformation

Reynolds engaged Chilli IT to implement IBM® FlashSystem® storage and to upgrade its IBM Power® Systems servers, boosting availability and performance.

Business benefits:

Non-stop
services help Reynolds exceed clients' expectations and grow its business

98% saving
on backup times minimize risk of disruption to operations

Accelerates
order fulfillment through a dramatic rise in IT performance

Reynolds Catering Supplies

Keeping the UK's foodservice industry well-stocked with the freshest goods 24/7

Reynolds Catering Supplies (Reynolds) is the sole family-run national greengrocer in the UK. The company is a leading supplier of fruit and vegetables to the foodservice sector. The Reynolds name has become a hallmark for quality, reliability, flexibility and excellent customer service, alongside a commitment to source seasonal, British produce whenever possible.

"The combination of IBM Power Systems servers and IBM FlashSystem storage gives us shorter response times across the board. That means we can move faster as a business."

Richard Calder
IT Director
Reynolds Catering Supplies

chilli

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Timing it just right

When it comes to food, timing is everything. And that doesn't just apply to cooking – fruit, vegetables, dairy, meat and more all need to be sourced at just the right time to maximize quality.

As a supplier to foodservice clients across the UK, Reynolds deals with the complexity of the foodstuff supply chain so that its customers can focus on turning ingredients into delicious dishes. To do this well, the company carries out hundreds of transactions each day and operates around the clock to get the highest quality goods to where they need to be without fail.

Richard Calder, IT Director at Reynolds, explains, "Supporting the foodservice industry is a no ifs, no buts scenario. We've grown into a national business that's trusted by our clients to deliver on time, every time – from providing the strawberries to Wimbledon each summer to helping to keep racegoers at Royal Ascot and visitors to The Chelsea Flower Show well-refreshed."

A key element of Reynolds' operations is the company's IT infrastructure, which ensures that its employees know what and when to pick and where to send it. As the company expanded, its data grew to 7 terabytes, extending overnight backup processes until they reached 11 hours.

"As a 24/7 business, we couldn't afford to have our systems tied up with 11-hour backups every night," comments Calder. "At the same time, we were considering an upgrade of our ERP [enterprise resource planning] platform. It was the natural time to refresh our IT infrastructure, and we looked for new technology that would deliver higher availability and performance to put our business on the best footing going forward."

Sourcing optimal infrastructure

Reynolds looked to long-time collaborator and IBM Business Partner Chill IT for guidance on its technology refresh. Chilli IT helped the company to recognize the advantages of moving to all-flash IBM Storage and upgrading its IBM Power Systems servers.

Calder recalls, "We have partnered with Chilli IT for years. They understand our business and keep up to date with new releases of IBM technology, identifying the solutions that can drive our growth. With their help, we realized that by deploying IBM Storage and Power Systems servers in a high-availability configuration we could dramatically increase our resilience as a business. The IBM Power Systems upgrade also offered us a 42 percent uplift in CPU performance."

To facilitate the data migration to the environment and prepare for an upgrade of its ERP platform, Reynolds utilized IBM FlashCopy®. Also part of IBM Spectrum Virtualize, FlashCopy functionality enables users to take point-in-time data snapshots.

"We used IBM FlashCopy to create a staging database environment as part of our transition to the new ERP version," says Calder. "Compared to the last time we upgraded our ERP system; this was much simpler and faster because of FlashCopy."

Delivering without fail

With resilient IBM infrastructure behind the scenes, Reynolds can focus on picking, packing and delivering the very best fresh and chilled food products to foodservice operators across the UK. The company has greater protection against interruptions to its IT services than ever before, helping it strengthen its reputation as one of the most dependable and sought-after suppliers in the industry.

"Our customers rely on us to deliver what we say we will on time, every time," comments Calder. "By working with Chilli IT to deploy IBM technology, we have added new layers of redundancy into our IT infrastructure, helping to ensure we always meet and exceed client requirements."

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Working with Chill IT, Reynolds deployed a cluster of IBM FlashSystem 7200 storage systems and IBM Power Systems S814 servers running the IBM i operating system at both the company's original data center and a new disaster recovery site. Data is replicated between the two sites using a combination of IBM Metro Mirror and a third-party solution.

Using IBM HyperSwap®, which is part of the IBM Spectrum® Virtualize software integrated into IBM FlashSystem, Reynolds gains automatic failover capabilities in the event of a failure at one site. Calder adds, "IBM HyperSwap gives us great of peace of mind. Luckily we haven't had to use it in earnest yet, but we've tested it and we know it works."

Reynolds succeeded in significantly reducing backup times, decreasing the risk of them over-running and affecting operations. Calder adds, "Moving to IBM FlashSystem storage slashed our backup times from 11 hours to just ten minutes, a reduction of more than 98 percent. We no longer have to worry about backup processes disrupting our business."

By increasing performance across its IT environment, Reynolds enabled its staff to access data faster, helping them work more productively. The company is passing this benefit onto its clients in the form of higher levels of service.

Calder concludes, "The combination of IBM Power Systems servers and IBM FlashSystem storage gives us shorter response times across the board. That means we can move faster as a business, getting the highest quality goods out to our customers sooner and continuing to grow as an organization."

Take the next step

To learn more about IBM Storage or IBM Power Systems technology, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following websites: ibm.com/storage or ibm.com/it-infrastructure/power

Chilli IT serves a diverse client base with infrastructure solutions and professional services. Combining technical expertise with extensive experience in IBM Power Systems, IBM i, IBM AIX®, Linux and Intel integration, the company delivers mission-critical projects that help clients attain their business goals.

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