

Polenergia Dystrybucja selects a hybrid model for IT infrastructure maintenance at Beyond.pl.

Colocation and cloud on HPE GreenLake platform.

Business environment

Polenergia Dystrybucja is one of the largest private distributors of electricity serving 23,000 customers across Poland. Its main customers are investors in special economic zones, shopping malls, owners of office and service buildings, industrial and warehouse facilities, and residents of many housing estates in the largest Polish cities. The company belongs to Polenergia Group, the largest Polish private energy group listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange. Polenergia supports the Polish energy transformation process and the development of a low-emission economy based on clean and renewable energy sources.

Polenergia Dystrybucja's business activity is based on outsourcing many elements of its operations, which allows it to focus on developing unique competencies in the energy sector. **In the area of IT, the company has been relying on an outsourcing strategy for years, procuring services of specialized suppliers, in the areas of both software and hardware and its maintenance.**

In 2020, the Polenergia Group adopted a strategy for all entities of the Group for the period 2021–2024. The strategic goals include the aim to significantly increase the market share, and the number of customers supported via the launch of innovative projects which will support the development of renewable energy sources in Poland (onshore and offshore wind farms, photovoltaic systems, and e-mobility). **Achieving such ambitious goals cannot be done in isolation from the digital transformation of the Group. The coming years will therefore be an extraordinary challenge for Polenergia as a whole.**



Challenge

Polenergia Dystrybucja operates in the energy market's regulated segment, which ensures high predictability and business security. The new "Investment Plan for 2021–2026" envisages connecting over 90 new distribution areas, mainly residential areas, to the power grid. Additional opportunities are defined in the development of energy production in the private sector via home photovoltaic power plants and in e-mobility.

By 2026, Polenergia Dystrybucja plans to have a base of approximately 80,000 customers to whom it will offer not only distribution services but also the sale of energy and a wide range of additional products and services. Such a significant increase in the number of customers has to be appropriately planned not to lead to a decrease in the quality of customer service. The company also plans to develop its applications and systems so as to further automate key processes and improve customer service, e.g., e-meters, billing systems, CRM and others.

Polenergia has approached the transformation by simulating the expected expenditures on IT infrastructure and its maintenance, taking into account the business development plan of the next several years. Beyond.pl, as the company's strategic partner for IT infrastructure delivery and maintenance, was asked for support.

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We have a clear business strategy for IT. We focus on the development of our core business lines, and we outsource the acquisition of required IT competencies from the market. One of the areas which is outsourced in full is the maintenance and administration of IT infrastructure. This task has been entrusted to and successfully delivery by Beyond.pl for several years. When we faced the challenge of defining our demand for IT infrastructure for the next few years and the related budget, we immediately turned to a trusted partner to help us with the simulations. Our primary goal was to design an IT solution that would be optimal from a financial and business perspective.

Krzysztof Pubrat
President of the
Management Board,
Polenergia Dystrybucja



Solution

Beyond.pl suggested launching an analytical and consulting project starting with an assessment of the existing infrastructure and the modeling out options for growth, modernization, and optimization of different solutions. The project was launched in mid-October 2020. Polenergia defined a project team which consisted of key representatives from business operations, sales, and IT. This approach allowed Beyond.pl experts to gather all necessary information about the company's current and future needs to model and suggest several scenarios for infrastructure management.

Most importantly, attention was paid to security and the assurance of business continuity. This was especially important to Polenergia as the company is in constant contact with consumers through multiple IT systems. The decision was made to colocate the IT infrastructure in a specialized data center that guarantees the highest level of availability and security in the European Union. **Beyond.pl's Data Center 2 is the only facility in Central Europe and one of three across Europe with ANSI/ TIA-942 Rated 4 certification. The facility has attained 100% availability since commissioning in 2016.**

High connectivity standards were another consideration. Low latency between the customer's headquarters in Warsaw and the data center in Poznan and optimal coverage that extends across Poland and Central Europe guarantees stable access to systems and data to allow for the delivery of efficient customer service.

Data Center Kampus Beyond.pl in Poznan





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The level of security provided by Beyond.pl’s data center in Poznan is the best in in the region. We had no doubts about continuing our cooperation. The stability of our IT environment is a priority, and there is no room for experiments in this regard. During the analytical phase of this project, Beyond.pl proposed a diverse set of possibilities and technologies from the very beginning. We concluded that our target solution should consider our long-term strategy supporting our business development. We therefore needed to analyze the impact of the growth of our business on the demand for our IT environment over the course of the next several years, taking into account the overall increase in the number of customers over time, and temporary peaks resulting from seasonality and specificity of demand for computing power. We conducted a comprehensive analysis together with Beyond.pl.



Dariusz Bednarski
Vice President
of the Management Board,
Polenergia Dystrybucja



The analytical and advisory project lasted three months and concluded in December 2020. In defining the infrastructure model, Beyond.pl considered the following factors relevant to Polenergia:

- rapid growth in the number of customers over time,
- demand for computing power typical for the utility segment (cyclical peaks related to the billing period in at month-end),
- increase in demand over time for new infrastructure (servers, storage arrays, and processors),
- growth over time of systems and introduction of new applications along with the development of functionality and corresponding growth of data,
- 5-year TCO (total cost of ownership) – the full cost of the investment over a longer-term perspective.

After a series of meetings with Polenergia Dystrybucja, Beyond.pl presented four alternative scenarios for the infrastructure model:

1. private cloud model,
2. IaaS model (Infrastructure as a Service),
3. colocation model,
4. a hybrid model including colocation and VMware cloud on HPE GreenLake platform.

After a joint analysis of the proposed scenarios, Polenergia Dystrybucja selected the hybrid option, which proved to be 30% cheaper than the alternative scenarios over a five-year period.



We analyzed in detail all four scenarios for the deployment and maintenance of our infrastructure, taking into account two key criteria for us, i.e., the estimated customer growth over time and the total cost of the solution. Over a 5-year period, which best corresponds to the lifespan of IT equipment, the total cost of ownership indicated in absolute favor of the hybrid model.

Dariusz Bednarski

**Vice President of the Management Board,
Polenergia Dystrybucja**

The hybrid model for Polenergia Dystrybucja is a combination of colocation and VMware cloud services hosted in Beyond.pl's Data Center 2.

Beyond.pl is responsible for the collocation of the customer's infrastructure in the ANSI/TIA-942 Rated 4 facility in Poznan supported by comprehensive set of managed services, including infrastructure administration, network management, and backup.

Concurrently as Beyond.pl is one of the largest VMware cloud services providers in Poland, Beyond.pl was entrusted to maintain and manage VMware Cloud in a private model on the customer's infrastructure collocated in the data center. **In case the demand for computing power increases above the level that is contracted, Beyond.pl provides VMware public cloud services on-demand. This is possible thanks to the utilization of the HPE GreenLake technology platform. Polenergia Dystrybucja is the first company in Poland to deliver cloud services on the HPE GreenLake platform.**



innovation



security



customer support



performance





The service delivery model in the IT sector is gaining importance year by year. HPE is constantly pushing forward, and our answer to customer needs is the GreenLake approach. The immediate availability of computing power on demand and a flexible billing model based on pay-as-you-go consumption allows HPE to be among the market leaders among infrastructure providers. We deliver cloud services from the most secure data center in this part of Europe through our partnership with Beyond. We offer customers the flexibility and scalability of GreenLake on the foundation of the highest security standards of the Rated 4 facility. This allows us to deliver private and public clouds for the most demanding customers.

Marcin Szymanik
Service Provider Sales,
Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Access to the cloud offered by Beyond.pl on the GreenLake technology platform is characterized by instant access to computing resources, flexible pay-per-use billing model and allows to avoid upfront investment in hardware, which would be used only in a fraction of its capacity. This turned out to be an optimal solution for Polenergia, which, due to its billing calendar for its services, experiences peak demand needs for IT resources at the end of each month.

Beyond.pl is the first data center and cloud services provider in Poland to offer services on the HPE Greenlake platform. With this in mind, Beyond.pl's cloud offer has been expanded to include a flexible pay-as-you-go billing model and on-demand accessibility.





Maintaining infrastructure in a hybrid model combines the best elements from two worlds, namely off-premise and cloud solutions. On the one hand, the customer gains security and privacy resulting from the colocation of infrastructure in our data center, on the other, the customer secures scalability and flexibility of the cloud on the HPE GreenLake platform. This is an ideal solution for companies that have stable monthly IT resource demand, but also have cyclical peaks that need to be served to ensure efficient support of line of business solutions, e-commerce platforms or industry-specific applications.

Marcin Kaczmarek
Head of Global Cloud Services,
Beyond.pl



Work on the deployment of the hybrid solution commenced in January 2021. **Polenergia Dystrybucja handed over full responsibility for its implementation to the Beyond.pl team, which was responsible for, among others:**

- procurement of new infrastructure,
- logistics to and deployment of equipment in Data Center 2,
- launch and configuration of the infrastructure in line with the requirements of Polenergia's IT systems,
- updating database platforms,
- migration of the company's IT systems to the new infrastructure,
- network integration with billing devices,
- coordination of the deployment with third parties responsible for maintaining the client's IT applications.



Benefits



High-quality infrastructure services:

- offer built to meet the customer's business needs – based on a hybrid model of colocation and VMware private and public cloud;
- Poland's first VMware cloud maintained on the HPE GreenLake platform;
- PUE up to 1.2 enabling optimization of energy costs related to IT infrastructure maintenance;
- low latency time between Beyond.pl Data Center in Poznan and customer's headquarters in Warsaw- 4 milliseconds round-trip;
- optimized connectivity to several thousand measurement devices across Poland supporting data aggregation in real-time;
- high-quality communication services- access to EPIX and numerous telecom operators guaranteeing the best communication times and lowest costs throughout Poland;
- highest levels of support delivered by a competent team of certified technical experts and architects of hybrid solutions.



Benefits



Security and continuity of operations:

- scalability, thanks to on-demand access to the public cloud;
- Data Center facility meeting international security standards- the only data center in Central Europe with ANSI/TIA-942 Rated 4 standard (service availability at the level of 99.995% per year, i.e., potential downtime limited to only 26 minutes);
- communication neutrality- the possibility to connect any operator link according to customer preference.



Financial savings

- designing a hybrid service, which in a perspective of 5 years delivers 30% cost savings vs other infrastructure delivery and maintenance models, including the cloud model;
- flexible payment model for the cloud forpeaks- pay as you go for the computing power actually used.



Strategic partner – comprehensive set of services:

- colocation and cloud services delivered from one place;
- competence in handling hybrid projects;
- IT consulting;
- 24/7/365 technical support.

Summary



Digital transformation is not just about implementing new IT solutions and remodeling internal processes. It's about changing the way of thinking and abandoning the perception of technology being solely prescribed to IT as a cost center. Cooperation between Beyond.pl and Polenergia demonstrates this new way of thinking: business, working hand in hand with IT team leaders, looking for alternative options and being open to change the status quo. Today, a growing number of companies are looking at how the long term outlook on business development is going to impact IT, and vice versa how IT will support this business development. Furthermore, as IT is becoming ever more strategic in supporting critical business process, especially those that are client-facing, companies are not only sensitive to IT project costs but more importantly to security and to being able to ensure the highest levels of availability. Not always does one model fit all. Hence hybrid models are becoming the way of the future. Concurrently, they may be the most complicated to define correctly. Our task is to understand specific business requirements and identify fluctuations for demand for compute capacity, based on which we model and suggest appropriate infrastructure solutions to meet the combination of "stable" and "peak" demand. Working with our customers, we define the most optimal model for delivering IT infrastructure which ideally fits the business scenarios defined by the client.

Services provided by Beyond.pl for Polenergia Dystrybucja:

- migration and onboarding of IT infrastructure to Data Center 2 of Beyond.pl,
- colocation services,
- VMware private and public cloud on HPE Greenlake platform,
- server and database licensing,
- IT consulting,
- support of IT infrastructure procurement process,
- modernization of network and storage infrastructure,
- infrastructure and operating systems administration,
- backup as a service,
- project management.



Wojciech Stramski
CEO,
Beyond.pl



Beyond.pl's ambition is to be the most trusted and respected provider of colocation, managed services, cloud environments and outsourced Infrastructure as a Service in Poland & Central Eastern Europe. We are the most secure data center in all of Europe with ANSI/TIA-942 Rated 4 certificate and most energy efficient facility, powered by 100% renewable energy, in all of Poland. Guaranteeing the highest level of security and availability we provide grounds for our customers and partners to deliver a competitive advantage, innovate and grow with confidence.



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