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Polenergia Dystrybucja:

cloud as the core of the hybrid IT infrastructure model

Polenergia Dystrybucja, in cooperation with Beyond.pl, redefined the model for maintaining IT environments. The hybrid approach based on the private cloud allowed for increased scalability of technological solutions, strengthened business continuity of key processes, and optimized financial management of the IT area. Currently, as a technology partner, Beyond.pl provides infrastructure and cloud services to various companies of the Polenergia Group.

CLOUD BOOST ITwiz

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Krzysztof Pubrat,
President of the Management Board of Polenergia Dystrybucja

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>
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> **Wojciech Stramski,**
> Beyond.pl CEO

Polenergia Dystrybucja is a nationwide leader in island energy, serving 34,000 customers nationwide. Its customers include shopping malls, office buildings, industrial parks, warehouse centers, housing cooperatives, as well as manufacturing and service companies. The largest group of customers are individual customers within housing estates in dozens of Polish cities. The company belongs to the Polenergia S.A. Group, the largest Polish private energy group listed on the Warsaw Stock Exchange. Polenergia S.A. plays an active role in driving the transformation of the Polish energy market by fostering the growth of a low-carbon economy and advancing clean, 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.

Plan ahead

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. By 2026, Polenergia Dystrybucja plans to have a base of approximately 50,000 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 launched projects 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. Beyond.pl has provided Polenergia with a dedicated infrastructure service at Data Center 1 since 2018.

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Decision based on the data

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. 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 IT infrastructure management.

Beyond.pl highlighted the diverse range of possibilities and technologies from the outset of the analytical phase. The decision to select the target solution was made after careful consideration of Polenergia Dystrybucja's long-term business development strategy. The company aimed to analyze growth in demand over several years, taking into account both the overall increase in the number of customers over time and temporary spikes due to seasonality and specific demands for computing power. This entire process was carried out in close collaboration with Beyond.pl.

The analytical and advisory project lasted three months. 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.

Beyond.pl's scope of work for the launch of the hybrid model at Polenergia Dystrybucja:

procurement of new IT infrastructure	logistics 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
architecture, design and launch of a VMware private cloud based on the HPE GreenLake platform	migration of the company's IT systems to the new cloud infrastructure	network integration with billing devices	coordination of the deployment with third parties responsible for maintaining the client's IT applications

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The analysis identified four infrastructure policy scenarios:

1. **private cloud model**

2. **IaaS model**
(Infrastructure as a Service),

3. **colocation model**,

4. **a hybrid model**.

Hybrid model

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

The company analyzed in detail all four scenarios for the deployment and maintenance of our infrastructure, taking into account two key criteria, 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.

Polenergia Dystrybucja adopted a hybrid IT model combining colocation and a private cloud environment hosted at Beyond.pl Data Center 2. This approach provided robust security, business continuity, and optimized IT infrastructure costs.

As part of the colocation service, Beyond.pl managed Polenergia's physical IT infrastructure at its state-of-the-art data center in Poznan, Poland. This facility is the only one in the EU with the highest level of security confirmed by two independent bodies: the ANSI/TIA-942 Rated 4 certification and the EN 50600 Class 4 standard. The facility has ensured 100% uptime since its commissioning in 2016. The data center also met the customer's connectivity requirements delivering low-latency connections between the client's headquarters in Warsaw and the data center in Poznan, as well as coverage of all of Poland and Central Europe, guarantee stable access to systems and data for efficient customer service.

A key aspect of the project was the design, implementation, and ongoing administration of a private cloud environment for Polenergia.

The Beyond.pl team developed and launched a private cloud service using VMware virtualization technology based on the HPE GreenLake platform. The use of the HPE GreenLake service enabled the realization of the client's key expectations – the provision of computing capacity beyond the contracted resources on an on-demand basis, a flexible billing model for unplanned capacity in the pay-per-use option, and avoided investment in hardware that would be used only at a fraction of its capacity. This solution proved ideal for Polenergia, given its cyclical monthly increases in computing demand driven by its billing operations.

"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", indicates **Ryszard Bobrowski, Beyond.pl IT Delivery Manager.**

Following the implementation of the new IT asset maintenance model, Beyond.pl also launched for Polenergia an IT Infrastructure Administration service and Network Management and support for backup processes as part of Managed Services.

Even more clouds

The quality of IT services and the competence of the Beyond.pl team led to an expansion of cooperation. Soon, more companies from the Polenergia Group began using Managed Services support from Beyond.pl. **One new area entrusted to Beyond.pl's was support of Microsoft cloud solutions.** As a long-standing Microsoft partner with Solution Partner status, Beyond.pl had the necessary experience to manage this technology stack.

Initially, internal Microsoft 365 projects within the main group companies, centrally managed by Polenergia S.A., were supported. The scope of support included aligning usage standards for the tool across the organization, providing training, managing licensing, and optimizing costs.

"The Polenergia Group is constantly adapting the IT solutions to meet business requirements. These are main criteria for the changes we are implementing in technolo-

gy, such as migration to the cloud and modern workplace tools. However, due to the increasing digitalization of further business processes and the complexity of technology, we have decided to use support from a specialized technology partner," - says **Konrad Grązka, Polenergia S.A. Group Head of IT.** "In the public cloud area, we have not previously cooperated with Beyond.pl. However, Polenergia Dystrybucja's long-standing service, advice on developing a new model of maintaining IT resources, and its successful implementation were essential arguments in favor of Beyond.pl".

In 2024, the cooperation was extended again. For Polenergia Fotowoltaika S.A., which sells, among other things, photovoltaic micro-installations in Poland, Beyond.pl comprehensively handled a project to launch the Microsoft Azure public cloud. The work consisted of designing, configuring and implementing the environment, selecting services and migrating IT resources previously maintained in the on-premise model. The Beyond.pl Public Cloud team actively participated in the implementation of each stage of the project - from consultancy through project management, delivery, and cooperation with vendors who have so far been responsible for providing tools and services for Polenergia Group and its companies.

"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 quality. Business, working hand in hand with IT team leaders, looked for alternative options and was open to change the status quo. Today, companies are looking at how the long-term outlook on business development is going to impact IT. Not always does one model fit all. Hence hybrid models are becoming the way of the future."- concludes **Wojciech Stramski, Beyond.pl CEO.**

Polenergia Group's technology path at Beyond.pl

2018 – 2021
Polenergia Dystrybucja

- Dedicated infrastructure in Beyond.pl Data Center 1
- VMware shared cloud environment - maintenance and administration

2020
Polenergia Dystrybucja

- IT consulting - advice on a new model for maintaining IT infrastructure

2021 ~
Polenergia Dystrybucja

- Migration of IT environments from Data Center 1 to Data Center 2
- Colocation in Data Center 2
- VMware private cloud on HPE GreenLake platform - construction, maintenance, administration, development

2022 ~
Polenergia S.A.

- Managed 365 - wsparcie w zarządzaniu Microsoft 365 (zasoby, licencje) dla spółek Grupy Polenergia
- Managed Services – stałe wsparcie w bieżącym utrzymaniu środowisk IT dla spółek Grupy Polenergia

2024 ~
Polenergia Fotowoltaika S.A.

- Managed 365 - Microsoft 365 management support (resources, licenses) for Polenergia Group companies
- Managed Services - ongoing support in the day-to-day maintenance of IT environments for Polenergia Group companies