Customer Success

Miejskie Przedsiębiorstwo Wodociągów i Kanalizacji w m.st. Warszawie SA (MPWiK SA)

Introducing Data Protection Solutions to Meet Tomorrow’s Customer Challenges

Data security and data protection are key for almost all companies, regardless of their size or industry. Storing business-critical data in digital format forces most companies to deploy and regularly adapt their systems and processes for controlling and protecting data. The Warsaw Municipal Water Supply and Sewerage Company (MPWiK), which provides water to the majority of Polish residents and businesses in the municipal area of Poland’s capital city, decided to significantly upgrade its IT security and data protection systems using Symantec solutions. The implementation of Symantec NetBackup™ and Symantec™ Endpoint Protection have enabled the company to automate many of the processes performed by the IT team. The seamless scalability of the deployed solutions also enables MPWiK to meet the company’s emerging IT development plans.

Provider of clean water to Warsaw’s citizens and businesses

MPWiK has been providing Warsaw with fresh water since the second half of the 19th Century. The company delivers approximately 410,000 cubic meters of water every day via its supply system, which stretches to 3,352 kilometers. Additionally, MPWiK collects and treats Warsaw’s wastewater via 3,038 kilometers of sewerage pipeline.

To execute its mission, MPWiK must have a reliable IT infrastructure. Data from critical IT systems, corporate email, SQL databases, and information stored locally on user desktops, and the public website must be properly protected against accidental losses, failures, or virus attacks. Considering that the infrastructure comprises around 70 servers and 1,350 endpoints across multiple locations, ensuring high levels of security is a real challenge. For MPWiK’s IT team, the most important issues involve backing up its decentralized environment and protecting employee computers against Internet threats.

Why Symantec?

- Secure, centralized data protection
- Solution scalability
- The reputation of the Symantec brand
“Our IT organization does not have the resources to dedicate an employee to maintaining and monitoring a certain solution. We need to be sure that the software we implement is effective, reliable, easy to use, and that it provides real benefits to our operations. We wanted a proven, trusted solution,” says Artur Witak, IT systems administrator, Information Technology and Communications, MPWiK.

**Just NetBackup!**

To support the development of its IT environment, MPWiK launched the upgrade project for its backup system. MPWiK’s server environment is heterogeneous. There are around 70 servers in different locations that run several operating systems—Microsoft Windows, Oracle, Linux (both Debian and Red Hat), and even Alpha Digital Unix which is used for inventory applications. “We believe our infrastructure will grow. This is why we needed a solution that would support our existing environment and scale well to meet our estimated future requirements,” says Witak.

MPWiK chose NetBackup for its powerful data protection capabilities and favorable reviews. Those capabilities include Granular Recovery Technology, which allows administrators to recover individual files or objects from full backups; a flexible choice of backup methodologies (disk-to-disk-to-tape, disk-to-tape, or disk-to-disk); integration with virtual tape library (VTL) solutions, as well as tape library hardware independence and the elimination of vendor lock-in.

**Significant future potential**

During the first stage of deployment, which took about two weeks, NetBackup was installed on the Exchange and SQL servers at the Warsaw headquarters. The next step will involve the implementation of NetBackup agents on servers in certain locations and the centralization of the entire backup and recovery process. According to Witak, MPWiK hasn’t used the full potential of NetBackup yet: “This platform is the key to our upgrade plans for the backup system,” he says.

Witak admits that NetBackup deployment saved the company from loss of valuable information, such as Exchange email communications. “Corporate email is a business critical tool. If there is a failure, we need to restore the data from the day the downtime occurred. It is very easy with NetBackup and its database backup feature, which allows us to restore even individual emails.”

According to the IT team at MPWiK, the main benefits of the new solution are its efficiency and ease of use. “We only need to validate performed backups and check that everything has operated correctly. If necessary, we just implement some straightforward corrections. NetBackup requires virtually no maintenance. This is how it should work! The reliability and user-friendly operation provide us with significant time savings,” highlights Witak.

**“Symantec Endpoint Protection has proven 100 percent effective against viruses.”**

**Artur Witak**

IT Systems Administrator, Information and Communications Technology

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Protecting all users

The IT team at MPWiK is responsible for the security of around 1,350 endpoints, which by itself is a significant challenge. Moreover, some computers are located in different, remote sites within a radius of 10 kilometers. This makes it more difficult to effectively monitor endpoint security.

“We needed to upgrade the entire threat protection system — i.e. protection against viruses. Existing software licenses were about to expire, so we wanted to leverage this opportunity to explore market offerings and make the best choice. Considering our positive experience with Symantec solutions, we turned our attention to Symantec Endpoint Protection,” Witak recalls.

Before purchasing the new licenses, the team had to make sure that the software would meet all requirements, such as efficient threat protection, ease of use, and low network resource utilization. For this purpose, the IT team performed a number of tests on 40 machines in one of the company sites for several days. “Endpoint Protection outperformed all the tests we threw at it—and that convinced us it was the right choice.”

According to MPWiK’s IT team, the deployment of Endpoint Protection was very quick and caused no problems. “Due to our earlier testing we were ready for implementation. We knew the location of our main server and how to deploy clients on company endpoints,” says Witak. The product was installed on more than 1,000 endpoints in three days. Another two days were spent configuring the main server and Live Update servers in individual locations.

“The deployment was managed from a single location. After one week, the installation and setup process was complete. The solution was ready to go live and users could enjoy high Internet security,” he says.

Endpoint Protection delivers rewarding performance

“Our employees are aware of Internet risks. They know they shouldn’t open attachments and links in suspicious emails, download unauthorized software, or visit untrusted websites. Nevertheless, our machines are regularly attacked by malicious programs,” says Witak. During the six months following the successful Endpoint Protection deployment, the computers were attacked more than 2,500 times. “Fortunately, none of these attempts were successful. The Symantec suite has proved to be 100 percent effective against viruses.”

The IT team also highlights the fact that there have been no telephone calls from employees complaining about crashing computers or high network workload. “The product works extremely well. The operation is transparent to users even during the full system scan.” Thus, IT administrators do not need to provide helpdesk services or sacrifice their time for problem resolution.

Manageability is one of the most important issues for MPWiK’s IT organization. Witak emphasizes that Endpoint Protection administration via a single management console is very intuitive. IT team members have central insight into the entire infrastructure and threat statistics—and can centrally update all endpoints.

“For IT administrators, usability is very important. Endpoint Protection is a great solution because after the initial configuration, it doesn’t require ongoing maintenance — it just works, protecting our infrastructure. The time we save on system monitoring can be well spent on dealing with our future challenges,” Witak concludes.