



“Prior to implementing MIMIX HA for i5/OS it would take us 24 hours to fully recover from a system failure. This caused a lot of stress and we worried about our credibility with customers. MIMIX high availability means that we can forget about the possible loss of 24 hours of productive uptime. Worrying about what might happen if something goes wrong is a thing of the past.”

Piotr Stankiewicz, IT Director, McLane Polska

Business Profile

Company name:
McLane Polska Sp. zo.o.

Headquarters:
Blonie/Warsaw, Poland

Industry:
Wholesale distribution

Size:
Ranks 435 in the top 1000
companies in Central Europe

Employees:
600+

Business Environment:

- Three modern distribution centers near Warsaw, Ruda Slaska, and Gdynia
- 24/7 warehousing operation and delivery service
- 24 hour delivery guarantee regardless of where the customer is located
- Serves large food retailers like Tesco, fast food giants like KFC and Pizza Hut, gas stations and convenience stores
- Works with 200+ suppliers including Philip Morris, Unilever, and Kraft, as well as major domestic producers
- Occupies nearly 1.4 million square feet of warehouse space making it the largest operation of its kind in Poland

Implementation Team:
IBS Polska Sp. z o. o.
IT technicians from McLane Polska

Vision Solutions Product:
MIMIX® HA for i5/OS®

Critical Issue

An internal audit of uptime requirements revealed that it could take up to 24 hours to get McLane Polska's distribution and financial systems online if a major event compromised its servers.

Also, McLane Polska's technicians had only a small window to perform backups, system maintenance, and testing. Given the company's operational scale, its high degree of complexity, and the huge number of documents possessed by this system, its technicians worked intensively over the weekend to complete these tasks.

Results

- Real-time backups while users access essential business applications
- A significant decrease in the likelihood of a system failure interfering with daily business
- A dramatic reduction in the number of technicians needed to monitor McLane Polska's systems
- Improved response times as a result of balanced system loads

Technologies

- MIMIX® HA for i5/OS®
- IBM® iSeries model 810 (Serving as both production processor and backup)
- IBM iSeries model 720 (Serving as both production processor and backup)
- MDS (McLane Distribution System)

Business Challenge

McLane Polska plans to substantially build up its presence on the European market over the next few years. A large scale presence means that the company's efficiency will depend on the fluid transfer of electronically processed documents between supply chain partners. These documents include invoices, orders, order confirmations, and price lists. McLane Polska attaches great importance to operational continuity, because any downtime or system breakdown implies substantial losses.

As part of its overall business plan, McLane Polska needed to ensure operational continuity, safeguard data, and protect the applications controlling company's core business processes. It also needed to implement technology that would balance its computing workload between two iSeries servers.



Solution

The European integration process has led to changes in the market. The success of a company or even its very survival depends on being highly competitive in business. An unfulfilled order affects customer relations, and this breach is sometimes irreparable. Every possible step must be taken to eliminate or at least to reduce the frequency of such events. In the case of McLane Polska this means uninterrupted access to a reliable IT system.

When technicians McLane Polska examined MIMIX HA for i5/OS, a solution brought to them by IBS Polska, they came to the conclusion that it was the best enterprise class HA solution available. The large number of satisfied clients in Poland who already use the MIMIX solution also factored into McLane Polska's decision.

IBS Polska, a Vision Solutions Business Partner assisted with the installation of MIMIX HA for i5/OS. IBS Polska understood the nature of McLane Polska's business activities and unique requirements which resulted in reduced post-implementation care.

McLane Polska uses two iSeries systems to serve its production computing requirements. One system is a model 810 and the other is a model 720. Each unit serves as a backup for the other. The MIMIX HA solution reproduces the data and object environment and guarantees complete synchronization of the data and application copies on both servers. In case of system malfunction on one server it allows the application to automatically switch over to the other server and reduces the application's downtime in case of data base reorganization.

With MIMIX HA for i5/OS, the database can be backed up in real time, while users continue to have access to the system. The backup process is quick and efficient, with no risk of data loss.

MIMIX HA for i5/OS also facilitates load balancing between the two iSeries servers. This delivers better overall system performance. According to Aleksander Lipowski, IT Coordinator at McLane Polska, "Before, it took me so long to print out a report that I had enough time to make some coffee, drink a cup and in the meantime do half a dozen other things. Now I can read the report while sipping my cup of coffee. That's quite a difference."

The introduction of the MIMIX high availability solution has freed nine programmers from worrying about the system's operation. Only two people are needed to manage the iSeries environment. "That clearly shows how easy it is to work with MIMIX HA for i5/OS," adds Lipowski.



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◆ High Availability ◆ Disaster Recovery ◆ Systems and Data Management ◆