Red Hat

Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus reduces the cost of ownership for servers thanks to Red Hat Virtualization
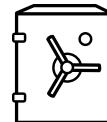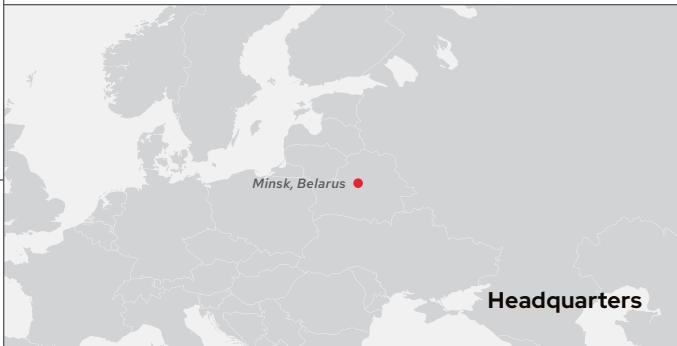
DEVELOPMENT BANK

The Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus (DBRB) previously used a VMware hypervisor for its virtual servers but needed to lower costs while maintaining performance. Decreasing vendor lock-in with Red Hat's flexible, subscription-based software has helped the bank reduce total cost of ownership (TCO) for its virtualized IT environment while improving system reliability and gaining new automation capabilities.

Software and services

Red Hat® Virtualization

Red Hat Enterprise Linux® with Smart Virtualization

Red Hat Training

Minsk, Belarus ●

Headquarters

Financial Services

7 offices
400+ employees

"Overall, our migration from VMware to Red Hat was fast and simple, with no problems. The system is stable. We have only positive things to say about the Red Hat solution."

Dmitrij Volchek
Head of the department of system-technical support and communication, Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus

Benefits

• Improved system reliability by standardizing on supported virtualization platform and operating system from a single vendor, Red Hat

• Reduced costs and vendor lock-in with flexible, subscription-based pricing

• Resolved problems quickly with fast, expert support

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Virtualization costs create pressure for new bank

Founded in 2011, the Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus (DBRB) is a government-run financial institution that helps to sustainably develop Belarus's economy and businesses. DBRB finances key national investment projects, including infrastructure and enterprises, as well as modernization and innovation efforts.

"DBRB is a very young bank with infrastructure built from scratch," said Dmitrij Volchek, head of the department of system-technical support and communication at DBRB. "So when decisions were made about IT infrastructure, two key criteria were cost and technology maturity. We decided to virtualize some of our systems for optimal use of our datacenter capacity."

Initially, the bank used VMware software for server virtualization. However, to get more value from existing hardware investments—and due to the high costs of continuing the licensing for existing products—DBRB's specialists wanted a more cost-effective solution that would maintain or improve system performance.

Trusted vendor offers cost-effective virtualization solution

To improve costs while maintaining performance, DBRB decided to migrate its virtualized servers to Red Hat Virtualization. DBRB had already successfully used Red Hat Enterprise Linux with Smart Virtualization—a solution that combines Red Hat Enterprise Linux and Red Hat Virtualization—for several years internally.

"We were already using Red Hat Enterprise Linux as one of our operating systems and it would be easier to identify and solve any virtualization issues working with the same vendor," said Volchek. "Other factors for choosing Red Hat included its dedication to innovation and rapid development, as well as better costs than the proposed VMware solution that we tested."

The bank runs its datacenter systems on Microsoft Windows as well as Red Hat Enterprise Linux. Red Hat Virtualization bridges the two effectively, helping the company consolidate its virtualization capabilities across operating systems.

Now, machines virtualized with Red Hat support all of the bank's internal-facing IT services, including day-to-day operations to analytics processes, from one common, consistent environment within its central office and six branches—a total of more than 400 users.

"The migration went very smoothly. The conversion utility offered in Red Hat Virtualization helped us easily import most data from our VMware environment into the Red Hat software," said Volchek.

The bank also uses the community version of Ansible® to automate tasks in its network infrastructure. "Our network infrastructure is developing quickly, so automation is helpful in deploying the environment at the necessary pace," said Volchek.

Stable platform frees resources, boosts productivity

Greater stability and reliability

By standardizing on Red Hat Virtualization and Red Hat Enterprise Linux, the bank can ensure its IT systems are stable and highly available. Now, all of our business services—including critical ones—operate in the Red Hat virtualization environment," said Volchek.

To support reliable operation after the initial deployment, Red Hat provided an on-site Red Hat Virtualization training course for the bank's technical specialists[1]. "Our engineers found this course helpful, and any of our engineers who has worked in a virtualization environment will find it easier to manage migration with the guidance we've received and the user-friendly interface of the Red Hat system," said Volchek.

Controlled yet flexible costs

DBRB has reduced the total cost of ownership (TCO) for its virtualized IT environment by taking advantage of Red Hat's subscription-based pricing model, rather than making large initial licensing investments. For hosts running Red Hat Enterprise Linux—around 40% of its servers—the bank uses Red Hat Enterprise Linux with Smart Virtualization. For Windows hosts, it has purchased a Red Hat Virtualization subscription.

"It did not make sense to immediately purchase licenses for large volumes, as suggested by VMware and Microsoft. Instead, we needed to go step by step," said Volchek. "Thanks to Red Hat's subscription options, we can optimally allocate resources and vary our investment in licenses without financial penalty."

Virtualizing with Red Hat's flexible product subscriptions has also helped the bank avoid vendor lock-in, potentially leading to further future cost reductions. "When we buy hardware, we are not tied to a particular vendor, as long as we check documentation in advance to confirm that it's compatible with the virtualization system," said Volchek.

With the money that it saves, DBRB has been able to invest in increasing the number of hypervisors, thus increasing the capabilities of its IT environment.

Rapid issue resolution with expert support

With access to support from Red Hat's highly qualified technical teams, the bank can resolve problems quickly and make changes as required. The support included in Red Hat's standard product subscriptions covers an unlimited number of cases, with a one-hour response time.

"As a bank, we're generally conservative and don't implement all the new features or latest versions straight away," said Volchek. "With Red Hat, we have support no matter how quickly we make updates. If we have an issue, we know that we will not be left alone with problems, which makes us feel more secure. I'd rate the support for our last three cases with Red Hat at an overall nine out of ten for speed, completeness, and technical competence."

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1 *Red Hat Virtualization (RH318) helps IT professionals acquire the skills to deploy, administer, and operate virtual machines.*

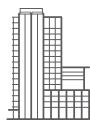## Broad software portfolio offers automation opportunities

After success with Red Hat's enterprise virtualization software, DBRB is evaluating several additional Red Hat products for its IT environment. For example, the bank is considering moving from the community version of Ansible to Red Hat Ansible Tower to simplify network administration, automate deployments, and streamline component configuration. The bank is also looking into Red Hat Enterprise Linux Smart Management Add-On and Red Hat Satellite to automate management and centralize patch monitoring.

"Overall, our migration from VMware to Red Hat was fast and simple with no problems. The system is stable," said Volchek. "We have only positive things to say about the Red Hat solution."

About Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus

Established in 2011, Development Bank of the Republic of Belarus (DBRB) aims to finance long-term and capital-intensive investment projects in the framework of government programs and activities implementation, as well as to support small- and medium-sized enterprises by means of special credit products granted through a network of partner banks and to extend concessional export credits to support large projects of domestic exporters.

About Red Hat

Red Hat is the world's leading provider of enterprise open source software solutions, using a community-powered approach to deliver reliable and high-performing Linux, hybrid cloud, container, and Kubernetes technologies. Red Hat helps customers integrate new and existing IT applications, develop cloud-native applications, standardize on our industry-leading operating system, and automate, secure, and manage complex environments. Award-winning support, training, and consulting services make Red Hat a trusted adviser to the Fortune 500. As a strategic partner to cloud providers, system integrators, application vendors, customers, and open source communities, Red Hat can help organizations prepare for the digital future.

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