

THE CSR REPORT

2018–2021/6



Ladies and gentlemen,

Three years have passed since our previous CSR report was published. Within this period, Solwit SA has changed, evolved, and become a medium-sized company with a well-established cultural model and a worked-out management system.

Over this time, we have changed our management tools and specified our business philosophy which is now well-founded and applied in the form of policies, procedures, programs, as well as unwritten traditions and customs. All of those elements combined shape our core values. According to our need of constant growth, we treat this moment as a perfect starting point for us to develop further and build an even more mature, responsible, and sustainable company that has a chance to have a real, positive impact on the world.

This report tells a story about what we worked out in the last three years, how the pandemic affected us, and what we strive to achieve in the following years. It is also a declaration of transparency.

We are sure that transparency is the key factor for sustainable development. Transparent approach to how we act and what we offer proves that we are ready to take responsibility for it.

We invite you to read our Corporate Social Responsibility Report for the period of 2018 to 2021/06.



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1.

SOLWIT IN THE YEARS 2018-2020



xxxKluczowe wydarzenia wpływające na system zarządzania w Solwicie

2018

2018/03

New Solwit offices in the BCB2 building. We grow our office space to approx. 4,000 m².



2018



xxxPublikacja Ground Rules – pakietu zasad i praktyk stanowiących podwaliny kultury naszej kultury.

2019



Wojciech Wasiukiewicz resigns from the position of the vice-chairman. Piotr Pągowski takes over.

2019

The ISO ISMS Certificate (Information Security Management System).



2020/02

The ISO BCMS Certificate (Business Continuity Management System).



2020/03

COVID-19 – the Solwit SA team starts to work from home, allowing us to continue to provide value for our customers without interruption.



2020/09

We implement the HCMS (Health Continuity Management System), the in-house system supporting and promoting physical and mental health of the employees.



2020/12

We reorganize the company and create new Business Units: Cloud&Integration Services; Product-VQC; Products-Legacy.



2020/12

We sign the Declaration of Equality and Inclusion, ABSL.



2021/03

Maciej Puchalski becomes a Vice-President.



2021/05

Joining United Nations Global Compact initiative.



2021

Solwit SA – who are we?

We pursue the following sustainable development goals:



- » Ensuring the safety and mental health of the employees; supporting their health-promoting activities and habits



- » Increasing the number of women hired for executive positions
- » Ensuring a fair, equal pay, and equal additional benefits for the same job
- » Appreciating and supporting parents who take care of a child, or any dependent person, by providing services, resources, or information
- » “Zero tolerance” policy for all kinds of violence at the workplace, including verbal or physical, and counteracting sexual harassment



- » Increasing the energy efficiency in operational processes, taking account of the supply chain
- » Investing in research and development related to sustainable energy services
- » Investing in local, energy efficient infrastructure



- » Increasing the economic performance via diversification, technological modernization, and innovations, as well as focusing on sectors with a high added value and with a high labor intensity index
- » Providing fair jobs and a safe working environment
- » Counteracting mobbing and sexual harassment in the workplace
- » Equal pay for men and women, as well as for the excluded groups for the same job
- » Creating job and skill development opportunities for young people



- » Developing a highly technological, sustainable business with a high added value, including increasing the resource efficiency and using clean and environmentally friendly technologies and production processes
- » Investing in research and development
- » Promoting innovation and openness to stakeholders' ideas



- » A transparent pay and reward system
- » Counteracting discriminatory practices, for example via the company's non-discrimination policy and training courses for the employees
- » Financial transparency of the businesses, no tax evasion, introducing and following ethical codes
- » Partnerships with local organizations, aimed at strengthening the local entrepreneurship



- » Providing innovative solutions in order to increase the energy efficiency of buildings, sustainable urban transportation, road safety, and waste management



- » Limiting the amount of produced waste and managing the waste disposal responsibly
- » Implementing sustainable development practices, starting from the "green office", to introducing changes in enterprise value chains



- » Investing in R&D and developing new products and services which would allow us to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, for example the RES technologies, energy efficiency, carbon capture and storage (CCS)
- » Investing in R&D and developing new products and services which would allow us to increase the resilience to climate change and natural disasters
- » Improving energy efficiency, using energy-saving installations, pursuing energy independence, and using RES in the whole production process and in the value chain



- » Implementing lawful, understandable, and transparent policies and solutions in the area of HR, orders, and corporate processes – such as compliance, ethical and educational programs
- » Compliance with the legal regulations and the international standards with regards to the supply chain, and while co-working with other businesses
- » Complete elimination of forced labor and child labor, preventing organized crime and illegal movement of money in the supply chain

1.2 Solwit in a nutshell

We offer software-related services and deliver our own IT solutions for domestic and global customers.

The company was founded in 2011 by Leszek Pankiewicz and Wojciech Wasiukiewicz, both of whom have years of experience in IT company management. The Solwit services include the full life cycle of an IT product, starting from software design, through developing, testing, and implementing, to maintenance stage, both on the software and hardware level (e.g. hosting computer laboratories). Our comprehensive approach to IT products implementation requires a set of various qualifications. The qualifications of our employees are therefore what makes us a valuable and competitive company that stands out on the market.

After almost a decade of activity and carrying out a few hundred projects, Solwit has become a safe and stable workplace for over 300 employees, in five major areas of expertise and business, which are:

- » Software development
- » Testing and embedded systems
- » Cloud solutions and technological integration
- » AI/ML products/technologies – Vision Quality Control
- » Eco-friendly products – the ENVIRA and IZE systems

We are the majority owner of 2 companies: Solwit.eko Ltd and Solwena Ltd.

Solwit in numbers



The number of employees



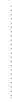
Revenue

2018	296	39,601,999 PLN
2019	305	49,647,508 PLN
2020	290	47,655,786 PLN

1.3

The companies of the Solwit SA group

The Solwit Group incorporates Solwit SA, as the parent undertaking, and two subsidiaries:



The subsidiaries



Name	Name
Solwit.eko	Solwena
Business area	Business area
The development, sale, and implementation of the ENVIRA system dedicated for managing waste disposal.	The development and sale of the IZE system dedicated for managing energy in SMART-type buildings.

1.4 The organizational structure

The Company Management

Leszek Pankiewicz

President

Maciej Puchalski

Vice-president

Supervisory Board

Sergiusz Gniadecki

Zbigniew Jaś

Jan Mioduski

Directors

Magdalena Brauer

Human Resources

Łukasz Kania

IT Administration and Security

Jarosław Orenowicz

Sales and Marketing

Mariusz Ormiński

Legacy systems

Mariola Pankiewicz

Administration and Payroll

Piotr Wierski

Testing and Embedded Systems

Witold Zamorski

Cloud and Artificial Intelligence Solutions

Paweł Ziemiński

Software and Application Development

Corporate governance

Solwit SA is a joint-stock company with 100% Polish capital. The company's activity is regulated by a set of fundamental documents, which are:

- » The status,
- » Regulations of the Management Board,
- » Regulations of the Supervisory Board

There are also other important documents related to the company's management system, such as:

- » The annual strategy,
- » Personal policy,
- » Information security policy
- » The anti-mobbing policy
- » The code of conduct for the employees
- » Internal regulations, i.e. wage regulations, etc.

The shareholding structure

Solwit SA is a company with a Polish capital. The company shares are not available at stock exchanges. The main shareholders are the founders

of the company: Leszek Pankiewicz and Wojciech Wasiukiewicz, as well as the Polish investment funds: Ipopema TFI SA and Black Pearls VC.

Jan 28, 2021			
Shareholder of Solwit SA			
Group	The number of shareholders	The number of shares	%
Shareholders > 10%	3	3,475,454	76.28%
Pankiewicz Leszek		1,218,663	26.75%
Wasiukiewicz Wojciech		1,214,000	26.64%
IPOPEMA 138		1,042,791	22.89%
Shareholders > 5%	1	316,352	6.94%
BlackPearls VC		316,352	6.94%
Shareholders > 1%	4	309,166	6.79%
Shareholders < 1%	58	455,504	10.00%
In total	66	4,556,476	100.00%

Management system documents

The other vital documents related to the company management system are:



Personal policy	Information security policy	The anti-mobbing policy	The code of conduct for the employees	Internal regulations, i.e. wage regulations, promotion regulations, benefit regulations, etc.
Information security management system (ISO27001)	Business continuity management system (ISO22301)			

1.6

Rewards and rankings



2018



2018



"Deloitte Technology Fast 500" – the fastest growing technological companies in 18 European countries

2019



2019

„Pracodawca Jutra”

2020



2017-2020

COMPUTERWORLD TOP200

2020



"Financial Times FT1000," a list of the fastest growing companies in Europe

2020

iTWIZ.

Industry Ranking

2021



1.7

The business model

The company culture

Our mission

Building lasting values for our Customers, Shareholders, and Employees. We achieve that by utilizing digital technologies in a creative way, in order to solve problems related to the modern society and business.

Our vision

We make sure to manage all kinds of resources rationally, with due respect to the environmental balance, while simultaneously covering the growing economic needs, which is essential for shaping our present and considering the future at the same time. One of the most effective methods of achieving that goal will be the growing usage of modern, scalable, and safe technologies. We aim at becoming a well-established solution supplier for various industries in Poland and Europe, all of which respect the sustainable development principle.

Our values

Caring for health and safety

Life and health are superior values – thus, we create and maintain a safe workplace. We also keep introducing processes and procedures that ensure the safety of data and information. Furthermore, we promote and support various forms of cooperation, increasing the sense of safety and comfort at work.

Customer focus

We know our customers and their needs. We always make sure that they find it easy to work with us. We constantly offer them the best solutions.

Result focus

We focus on the results of our work. We analyze one problem from multiple perspectives. We take all responsibility for the solutions we propose.

Quality

We design solutions according to the best models and the highest quality standards. We keep enhancing our skills.

Taking risks

We appreciate innovation, we think outside of the box, and strive for the better. We condone taking a well-calculated, thoroughly thought-out risk. We learn from the successes and failures of ourselves and others.

Versatility and discipline

We are always professional. We make promises and keep our word. We are flexible, and we support change.

Team spirit

The culture we build is founded on cooperation and partnership. We are friendly, we communicate openly, and support one another. We get involved in team work and company initiatives.

Respect for competition

We work ethically, with a partner-like approach to the other companies in our industry. We build a market advantage.

Openness

We present our ideas and opinions honestly and openly. We appreciate dialogue and respect for different viewpoints.

1.8 The values for our customers

The Solwit SA offer consists of services related to software engineering, as well as ready-made IT solutions, implemented according to individual customer needs.

As the declaration in the company's mission states, our goal is to solve the problems of the modern society and business with the use of digital technologies. We have identified two major challenges that the modern companies will have to face, and on that basis we have specified the Solwit service offer:



Accelerating innovation

At present day, digital technologies are involved in almost every industry that provides value for customers and consumers. The speed of technological changes, along with the growing need for IT expertise, turns out to be a challenge for entrepreneurs and it may negatively impact their efforts to achieve their business goals. Solwit offers solutions that will accelerate the innovation supply, optimize business management costs, and enable our customers to increase their competitive advantages. The services we offer at Solwit will benefit our customers by:

- » minimizing the risk of errors
- » optimizing the costs
- » using high-tech software in business processes
- » process automation
- » analysis based on AI / ML



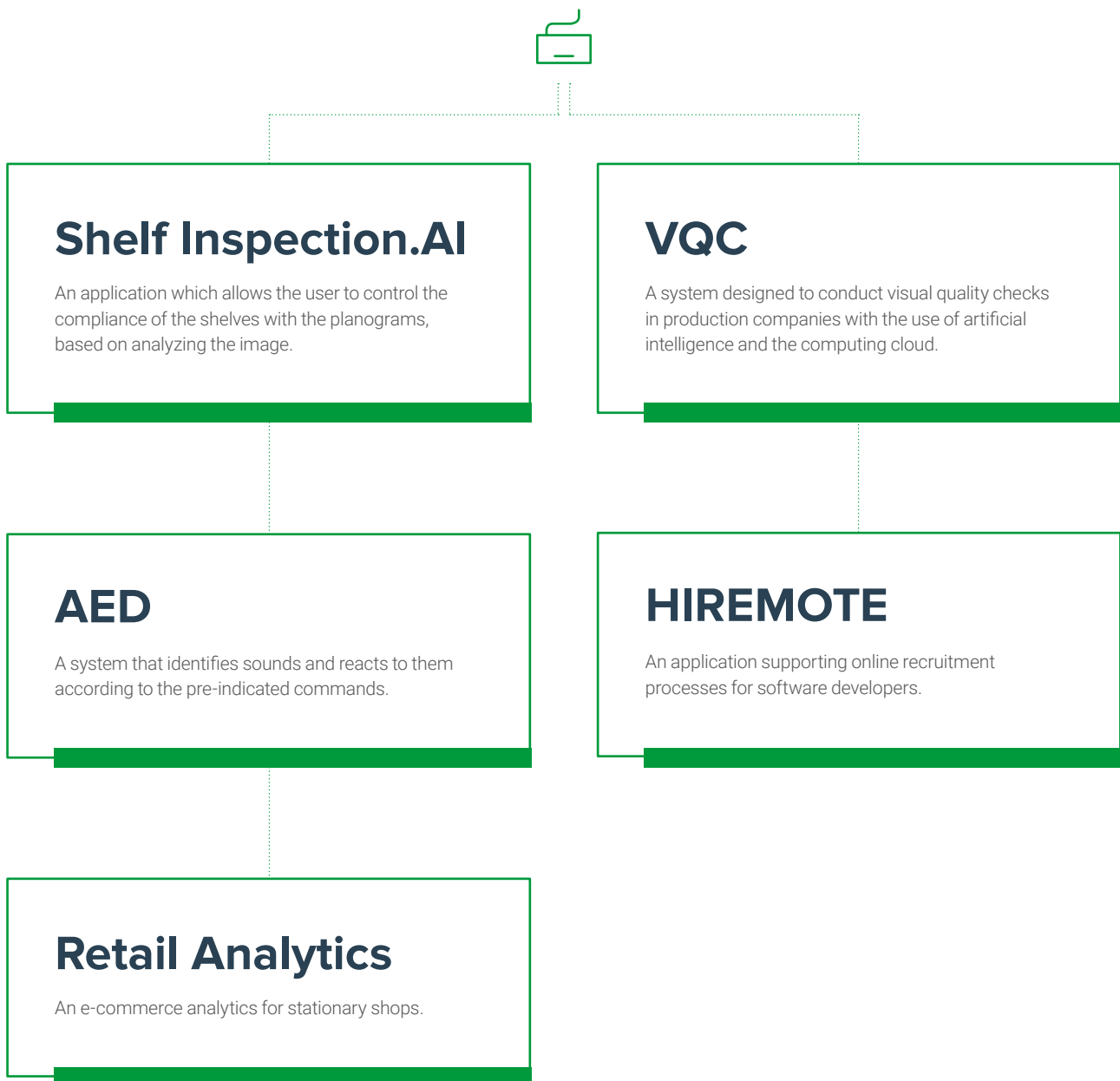
Reducing the technological debt

The technological debt is a result of accumulated actions which for some reason have been postponed. It is frequently compared to financial debt, only in this case, the interest is in the form of excess work which will have to be completed in order to quickly adjust to current requirements. Considering the rapid changes on the market, one must realize that entrepreneurs often lack the necessary time to repay the technological debt. Hence, Solwit comes up with solutions that allow entrepreneurs to get rid of the time-consuming debt, and focus on developing their businesses, i.e.:

- » code and application refactoring
- » acceleration of tests
- » providing expertise and teams that expand the customer's resources

1.9 Business solutions

Solwit has worked out proprietary solutions, based on cutting-edge technologies. We implement these solutions in customers' environments and adjust them to the particular requirements of each customer.



The Solwit competence centers



Software and application development

- » creating applications and web services, as well as dedicated solutions
- » technological debt elimination
- » activities from the area of business intelligence / data analytics

Director: **Paweł Ziemiński**



Cloud services and AI Solutions

- » agile solutions development based on artificial intelligence
- » solutions based on technological partners' services
- » dedicated cloud applications
- » mobile applications
- » data migration to a public cloud
- » service reselling and support

Director: **Witold Zamorski**



Tests and embedded solutions

Providing competence teams and services in the realms of:

- » developing embedded, high quality software that is highly predictable in its activity
- » software testing, including increasing the efficiency of a given process, i.a. by automation

Director: **Piotr Wierski**



Main customer service

Supplying the business groups of the customer with competence teams that complete the customer's R&D processes, in compliance with the global ones.

Director: **Leszek Pankiewicz**



PRO-LEGACY

Developing systems commercialized by the daughter companies, supporting implementations, and the third line of support.

Director: **Mariusz Ormiński**

Selected technologies and programming languages



Solwit's Technological Partnerships



Sales models

Solwit offers services in the outsourcing model. We also create solutions for the customer, mainly based on three underlying sales models:

Fixed Price

Time & Material

Output Based Contracting

The billing model is determined by negotiation with each customer.

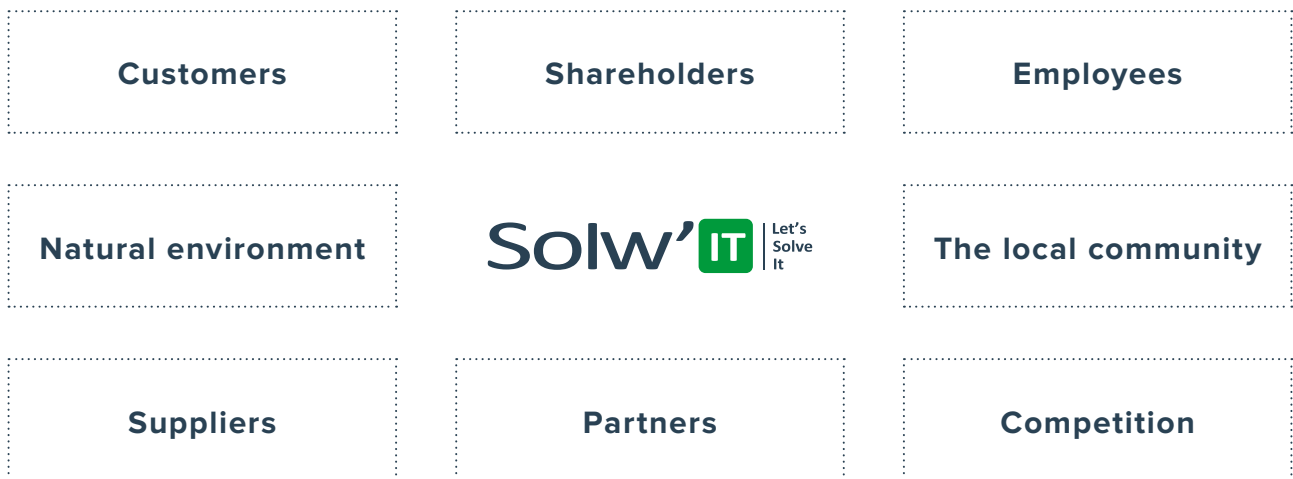
1.10

Stakeholders

In Solwit's mission, we have specified the priority groups of stakeholders:

Using digital technologies in a creative way to solve the problems of the modern society and business, and, in consequence, to build lasting values for our Customers, Shareholders, and Employees.

We do our best to leave a positive impact on other areas, as well. We determine the degree of our involvement based on assessing the risk of irregularities or disruptions, as well as the likelihood of Solwit influencing its stakeholders.



1.11

Lawful activity

The company has implemented a series of procedures aimed at ensuring that its activity is compatible with the Polish law and the community law on all areas where those laws apply, e.g.:

- » The personal data protection procedure and creating the position of Personal Data Protection Inspector
- » Procedures related to risk management, i.e. information security procedures, compliant with the ISO 27001 norm, and business continuity procedures, compliant with the ISO 22301 norm.

- » Anti-corruption procedures, i.e. the Code of Conduct for the employees, and the Code of Conduct for the suppliers
- » Procedures related to compliance with the human rights and the employee rights – work regulations and wage regulations, anti-mobbing policy procedures

The company undergoes regular controls of the state authorities, and the audits of the certification bodies. Our customers and partners can also monitor our activity, if that is our obligation under cooperation agreement.

2.

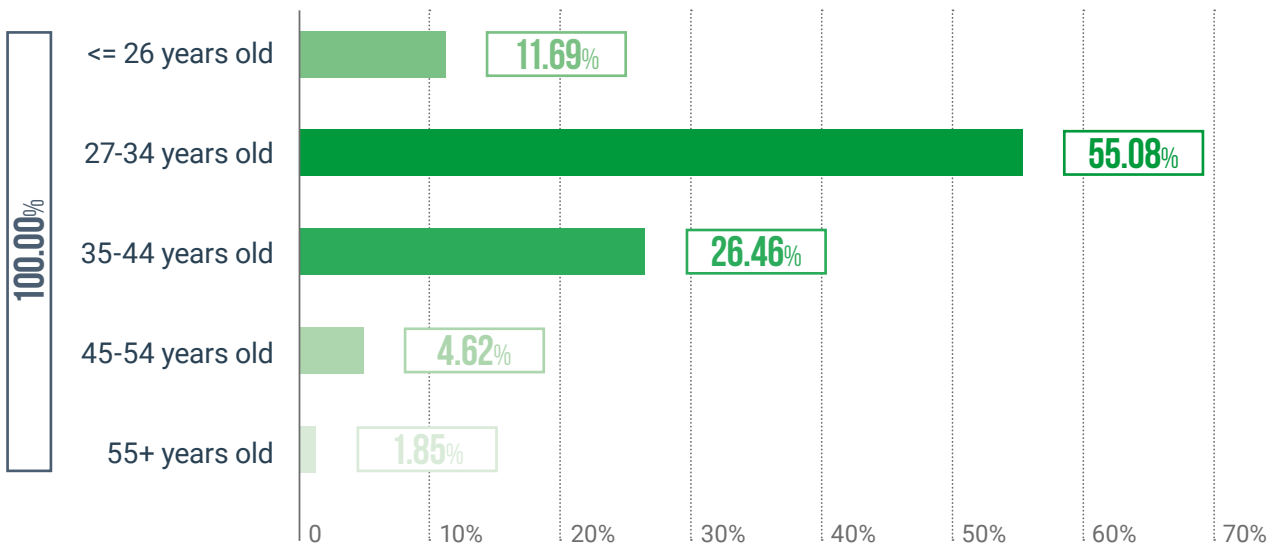
WORK IN SOLWIT



2.1 Our employees

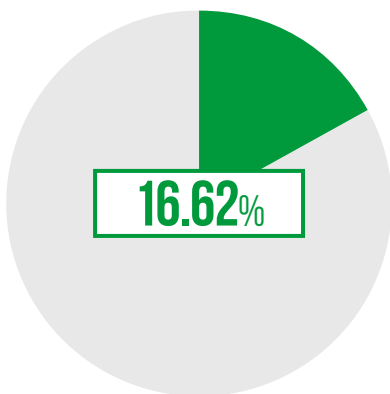
Employment in the years 2018-2020

Age range Demographic data regarding the employed and cooperating persons

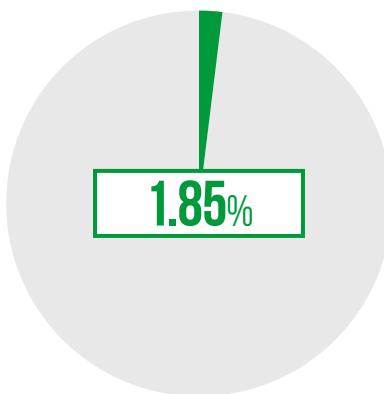


The employment of women

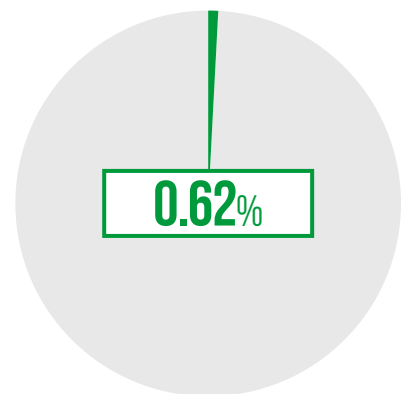
Women in total



Women on leadership positions



Women in the management team



2.2

The Solwit recruitment process

The quality of our recruitment processes is monitored by an internal recruitment team, consisting of several recruiters. We keep improving our tools and recruitment tasks, in order to better assess the key qualifications for our business, and to turn the recruitment process into an interesting experience for the candidates.

Our candidates can get familiar with the recruitment process on [Solvit's website](#). The recruitment rules are transparent, which is why we contact the candidates through social media (Facebook and LinkedIn) and through the [gowork.pl](#) website.

As a matter of principle, we never leave anyone hanging. Each interview is followed by feedback, regardless of whether we offer the candidate a job, or not.

We participate in the Coalition for Friendly Recruitment

We understand that changing a job and being interviewed may be a source of stress and anxiety. That is why we strictly obey the Code of Good Recruitment Practices, making sure that the candidate's overall experience is as positive as possible. We put emphasis on proper communication and creating the atmosphere of mutual respect and kindness during the whole recruitment process.

We strive to enable our newly employed colleagues to learn the ropes and get to know the Solwit community with no stress or interruptions. In order to achieve that, we organize entry onboarding training and give out gifts to make them feel like they belong in our team.



2.3 First steps in Solwit

We do our best to make it easy for our employees to quickly adapt to the new team of colleagues and the new environment. The onboarding process is implemented in different stages. First, we make every effort to let the newly employed person know what is about to happen, before they officially start working.

On the first day of work, the employee will undergo various courses related to the Health and Safety rules. The second day will start with a meeting with the HR, and the employee will become familiar with our organizational culture.

A gift with a note attached from the CEO is a nice touch, too. We announce the new colleagues via e-mails.

The subsequent onboarding stages are carried out by the teams in which the employee is going to work. The HR team ensures that the new employee feels at home.



2.4

Hi! How do you like working here?

Communication in Solwit

We make sure to stay in touch with one another on a daily basis, keeping up with the pivotal events and information. In order to communicate internally at Solwit, we use a set of tools:

- » **An internal company portal**, Solnet, which contains news, announcements, access to documents and company systems.
- » **MS Teams**, serving as a place for conversations, collaboration on documents, group discussions, and thematic channels.
- » **Regular group and individual meetings**.

- » **The company newsletter**, sent out weekly.
- » **The weekly company newsletter** available online.
- » **Meetings with the Management Board**, held online every two weeks, enabling two-way communication.
- » **Quarterly information meetings**, summing up business and organizational events within the company (the so-called Solwit Update Meetings).

The employees find it easy to communicate in our office – we provide multiple, conference rooms of various sizes, sofas in the hallways, comfortable play-room spaces, and kitchenettes.



The organization of the office

We are convinced that a well-designed workspace may significantly improve the quality of the tasks we complete.

A set of factors that benefit health at work – such as ergonomic, good quality furniture, proper lighting, acoustics, and temperature – is necessary for efficient work.

Our spaces are not only offices, but also play-rooms and relaxation rooms, equipped kitchenettes, and comfortable conference rooms.

Leadership and work organization

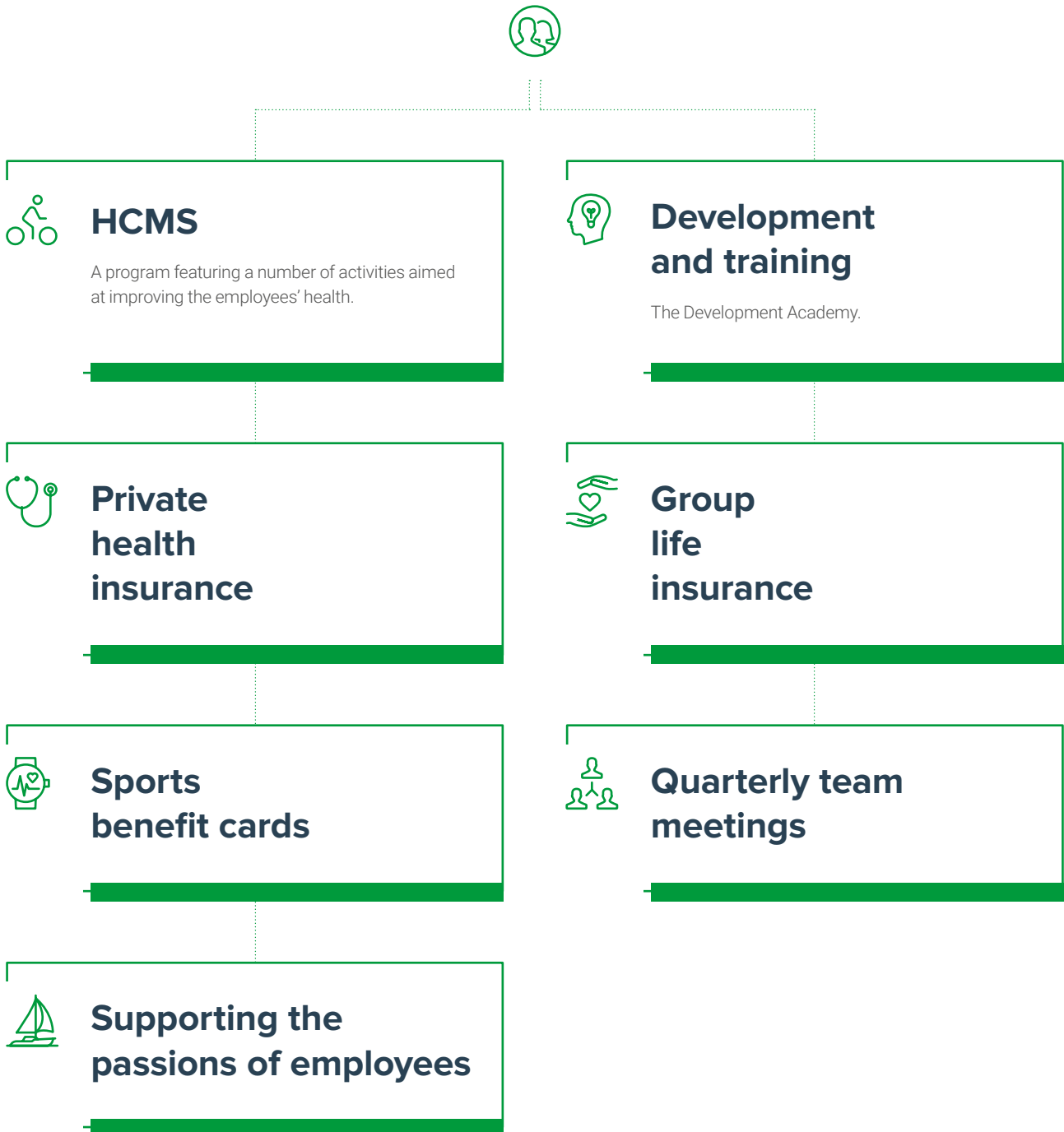
Team efficiency research has shown that when there are clear norms established in the workplace, employees tend to feel respected by their employer and their peers, and they do not feel anxious around them.

The recent survey has shown that Solwit stands out in terms of approaching work-life balance aspect. Our leaders support the employees' in matters related to their mental health, and pay extra attention to organizing teamwork, healthy interpersonal relations, and integration.



The benefit offer

The benefits and the bonuses offer is adjusted to the current needs and organizational culture premises.
The currently offered benefit list includes:





We support passions

Solwit hosts an annual golf tournament called "Jeszcze w Zielone Gramy." We also sponsor the Golf Academy that accompanies the tournament. All Solwit employees, along with their families, are welcome to participate.



We celebrate the employees' birthdays

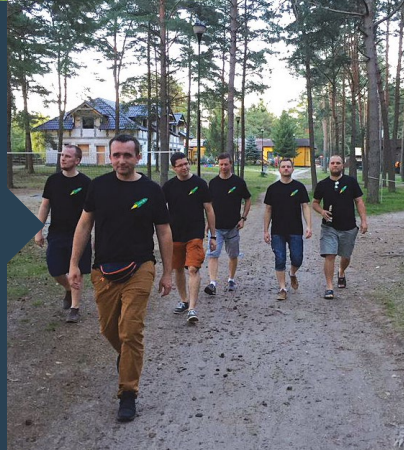


We play together with our families

We welcome our employees' newborn offspring



We integrate on our quarterly team meetings



Our health as the greatest value

Taking care of our employees health, we have created a 'health management system'. The HCMS (Health Continuity Management System) is a set of rules, actions, and recommendations which help our employees in their efforts to improve their physical, mental, and social well-being.

The HCMS offers and fulfills educational, preventive, and integrating activities, in particular those focused on physical, mental, and social well-being. The expected result of these undertakings is increasing the level of satisfaction and contentment of our employees.

How the HCMS system works?

We support all initiatives that promote health improvement and fulfill the needs of the local communities and the environment, in compliance with the company values, e.g.:

- » Within Solwit: organizational challenges for particular causes, e.g. converting kilometers into money, in order to support a charity of choice; charity breakfasts, auctions, etc.
- » External events: among others, participating in charity tournaments, fund-raisers, and supporting initiatives that help particular institutions or individuals in need.

In the HCMS spirit, we plan and carry out in-house and integration events: team vegan/vegetarian breakfasts

- » events related to health prevention (e.g. Movember, Pink Ribbon, Healthy First Day of Spring)
- » celebrating events that are important for our employees (birthdays, etc.), kudos, honorable mentions
- » team meetings: integration parties, coffee breaks – we discuss topics close to our employees.

Under the HCMS system, we intend to make our employees aware of how important it is to maintain their well-being. Thus, we carry out educational meetings with various professionals (a dietician, a psychologist, a coach, a physiotherapist).

On top of that, we also organize workshops on self-fulfillment and coping with emotions and stress. Apart from cyclical meetings, the employees can request a training course at the Solwit Development Academy, at any time.



2.5

Development and training

The reason why Solwit is able to evolve is our ability to define and achieve ambitious goals, based on the knowledge, skills, creativity, and attitudes of our employees. The employees' motivation and involvement is ever-growing. The Periodic Performance Review System is founded on the following priorities:

- » an objective appreciation for the previous work results (meritocracy)
- » identifying areas to be developed further
- » setting measurable and ambitious goals for the subsequent period of cooperation

As we help our employees to continually broaden their skills, we enable them to participate in training courses, workshops, and conferences – both internally and externally.

The worth of training courses purchased for the employees (internal and external training):

2018	2019	2020
159,550.00 PLN	198,000.00 PLN	121,000.00 PLN

Sharing knowledge in Solwit is not only a way of enhancing competence, but also a chance for self-fulfillment and community building. In the years 2018-2020, as part of the Solwit Development Academy, Solwit's employees have conducted almost 1000 hours of training for their colleagues. At present, we have 14 internal trainers.



Career path planning

Our career paths are a set of activities regarding the strategic goals of organizations, as well as areas, requirements and roles, to which the Employee may bring value. Moreover, Employees may also contribute to achieving those goals, based on:

- » recognizing and verifying the needs, aspirations, and possibilities of the employee, and describing the skills desired for the position they intend to work in
- » enabling the employee to develop on their own by letting them work in a role that is essential for achieving the employee's strategic goals

There are four career paths in Solwit:

- » The expert path, consisting of broadening one's knowledge, along with technical and specialized skills, under the three competence grades: JUNIOR/ MID/SENIOR
- » The manager's path, related to development and using people management skills,
- » The product and service supply path (delivery), which requires project and team management skills, along with the process of Client's cooperation.
- » The sales path, which enables the employee to participate in the commercial process, and enhance their bidding and contract winning skills.

The more detailed descriptions of the processes can be found at the internal company portal (Solnet).

3.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT



Managing all kinds of resources rationally, with due respect to the environmental balance, is a key element of the Solwit philosophy detailed in the company's Vision.

Considering our scope of activities, Solwit's negative impact on the environment is minor. Our impact relates primarily to utilizing hardware, electricity consumption, using office supplies, and the waste generated by office work.

We have adopted some eco-friendly habits in our daily life, such as waste sorting, eliminating plastic disposable tableware, creating documents in the electronic form whenever possible, and utilizing electro waste, toners, and batteries. While communicating within the company, we keep educating our employees about environmental issues, showing them the proper attitude toward waste disposal that we expect of them.

As an IT solutions provider, we are perfectly aware of how advanced technologies shape our presence with a consideration for the future at the same time. We bring two IT systems on the market, both of which are in-house developed solutions. The systems directly influence the environmental footprint we leave:

- » A waste stream management system, ENVIRA – dedicated for municipal departments, factories, and trading networks. It simplifies the process of reporting to the Waste Database and ensures a more efficient way of managing waste, as well as the transparency of those organizations, and the ways in which they deal with waste disposals. A subsidiary of Solwit – Solwit.eko LLC – is responsible for distributing and implementing the system.
www.envira.com.pl



- » A system for managing electricity in the IZE buildings, dedicated for business clients, office centers, hotels, etc. It allows the customer to optimize and monitor the electricity consumption, and, in consequence, reduce it by approx. 20%. A subsidiary of Solwit – Solwena LLC – is responsible for distributing and implementing the system.
www.solwena.com



4.

FOR THE COMMUNITIES



We act with conviction that only a sustainable business ecosystem can provide opportunities for further development. We support our business environment and our local community by sharing our material goods, time, knowledge, and skills.

We share our knowledge and experience

There is a growing need for IT-related knowledge, on both the elementary and the advanced levels. Informatics is one of those fields where lifelong learning is essential. Technologies constantly evolve and change, which is why we need to keep an eye on them and acquire new information on a regular basis. Lectures and workshops, conducted by experienced practitioners, are particularly valuable. We think of sharing knowledge and experience as a privilege, but also as a responsibility to the ever-growing local economy that is founded on advanced technologies. With just as much passion, we also support events that enable knowledge flow and personal development of the IT specialists.

From 2018 to 2019 (until the pandemic broke out), we carried out a series of educational meetings regarding cloud solutions for the IT community of the Tri-City. Among others, we organized Cloud Study Jams and a series of four PyCloud meetings for anyone interested in Python and cloud software development. Around 60 individuals attended each meeting.

During the pandemic, we also conducted webinars, on topics such as developing and testing critical software.

The PyCloud meeting



We help those who are in need

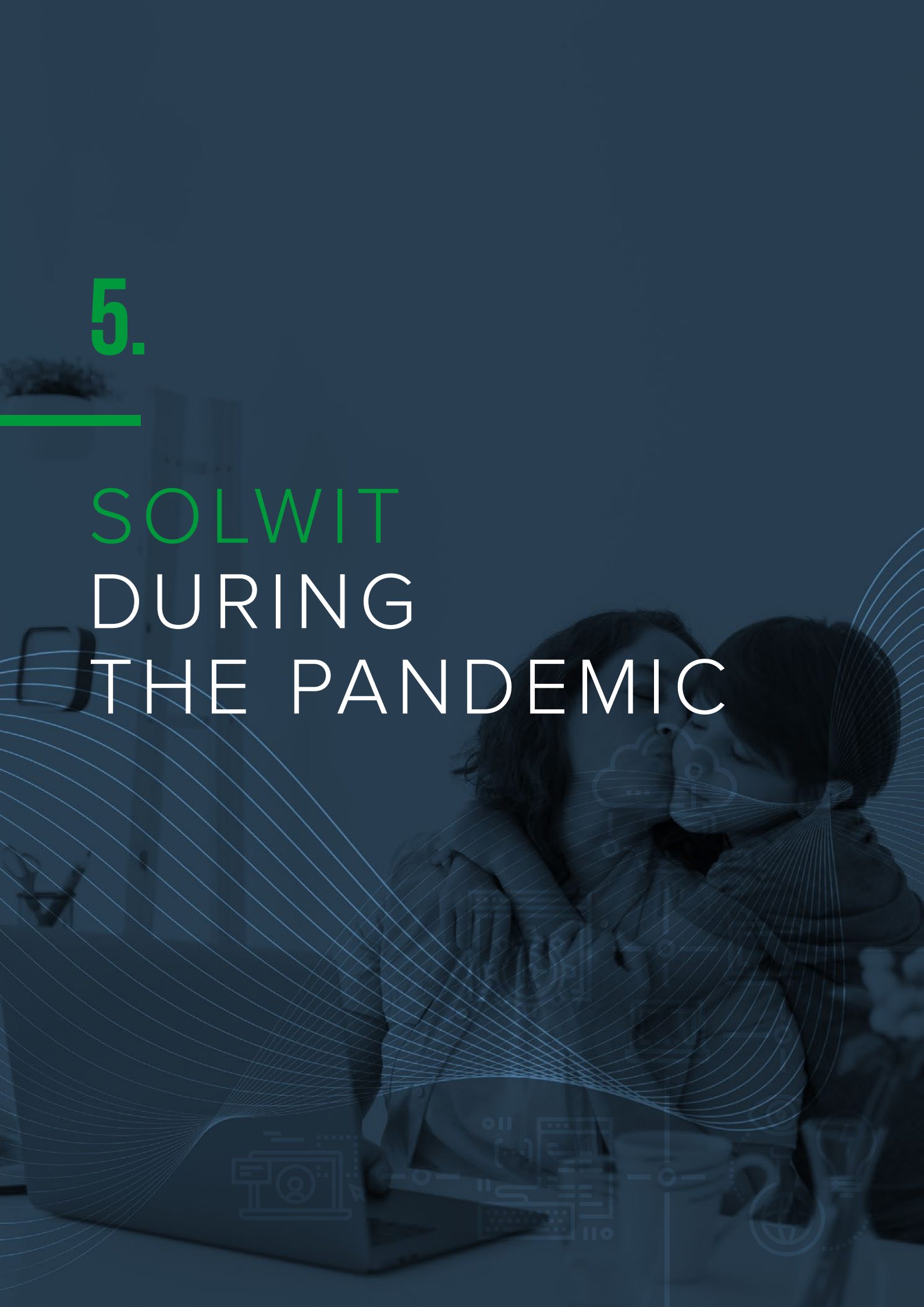
Before the pandemic, we would regularly prepare charity breakfasts, during which we collected money for organizations and people in need, according to simple principles: we prepared the meals ourselves and served them on one big table for everyone to try, but first they had to make voluntary donation into the Charity Jar. This is how we collected over 30 thousand PLN, which we then donated to the Hospice Foundation, the “Dom na Skraju” Foundation, and the beneficiaries of the “Kawałek Nieba” portal.

When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, there came a truly challenging period when prizes were going up and medical equipment warehouses were being emptied. Yet, we managed to deliver non-contact thermometers, protective helmets, and even coffee makers, in a very short time and without the unnecessary paper work. We printed protective helmets for medics on 3D printers and sewed hundreds of colorful masks on home sewing machines. Moreover, we happily participated in the project of General Systems & Software (Poland) Ltd, under which we developed software for an application dedicated to predicting and identifying coronavirus outbreaks.



5.

SOLWIT DURING THE PANDEMIC





Solwit during the pandemic — why we are not afraid to call ourselves a COVID-19 resistant company

One of our marketing campaigns featured a following slogan: “Solwit — a COVID-19 resistant company.” What really motivated us to use the slogan was the overwhelming feedback from our customers, congratulating us on continuing to deliver good quality services. We switched into the home-office mode within 24 hours, and it took us as few as 3 workdays to regain full operational efficiency. There is no doubt that it was our previous preventive preparations, mechanisms, and the BCMS practices (Business Continuity Management System) that enabled us to succeed at that.



How we prepared for the unexpected

In 2019, the Solwit Management Board introduced a plan of implementing a solid, certified BCMS, and listed a set of goals that we consecutively achieved in the subsequent two years.

The key elements of the aforementioned plan can be summarized in three stages:

1. Analyzing the risk of affecting the business activity of Solwit, the so-called Business Impact Analysis (BIA). As a result of that, we mapped out our strategic processes, among which we identified critical areas and processes. Then, we conducted a risk analysis, pointing out the potential risks which may drastically impact the company’s fate.
2. Extracting and describing the processes that are critical for maintaining business continuity. After we had pointed out the processes whose potential disruption could destroy the company, we also extracted and defined the processes which ensured the company’s survival. It allowed us to assess the minimal acceptable configurations of units, equipment, and data, which would have to be intact in the case of malfunction, when the company would have to be rebuilt. We were then able to come up with emergency plans that would either prevent, or moderate the losses in the case of unexpected events. Naturally, our following step was to design procedures that would minimize the negative consequences of potential malfunctions.
3. The third stage contained the implementation of the aforementioned procedures and processes. It was followed by months of testing and perfecting the procedures through very practical and, at that time, frequently unpleasant exercises.

A pivotal part of our BCMS plan that guaranteed its success, was appointing a crisis team and establishing the methods of communication. After we had identified the critical processes, some of the team members were selected organically — they were the directors of engineering areas, the chairwoman of the HR department, and the employees responsible for customer service and communication.

We quickly realized how essential it was to set a clear and undisputed division of roles in the team, and to choose the so-called “back-ups” — that is the persons who could cover the main role-players.

The critical team would test the emergency and crisis procedures themselves, for example by announcing a meeting early in the morning in a previously-established “backup center,” where they would solve an imaginary emergency case scenario according to a pre-defined methodology. We perfected our skills by trial and error, seeking our own errors and flaws in the steps and decisions we had undertaken.



Prepared for the lockdown

We have prepared and simulated various scenarios of possible disasters and difficulties—starting from fires, a complete Internet outage, and ending with individual team problems which would make them unable to reach a key customer. When we got a ISO 22301-2012 Certificate (regarding Behavior) in February, 2020, feeling satisfied with our success, little did we expect that as soon as a month later, we would face a global pandemic, when face-to-face interactions would become hazardous.

On March 13, 2020, the Crisis Management Team informed all of us that we would switch into the home office mode.

On Tuesday, March 17, Solwit was fully operational and ready to work — with all of its 300 employees on board — including home office arrangement, delivering all the necessary furniture, ensuring a safe and efficient IT infrastructure, and implementing convenient and dynamic communication channels. Because of all that, we could continue our tasks as usual, with no interruptions.

We informed all of our local and global customers that we were working from home, ensuring them that our involvement and continuous work on the projects remained uninterrupted. We explained to them what our daily work was going to look like, what kind of procedures we introduced, how we could guarantee the continuity of delivery, how we secured their data, whom they could contact in certain situations, etc.

Our customers admitted that they had not noticed the moment of Solwit's transition into home office. We, on the other hand, had noticed a growing need for continuous service delivery, guaranteeing that the contracts would be realized safely.

Each day, we put extra attention to fulfilling our customers' criteria and implementing mechanisms that ensure the highest quality of our services, with the full engagement of our engineers, who always keep

the innovative team spirit of Solwit. Staying in touch with the customers is crucial for us — we want them to be comfortable knowing that they work with a partner who is honest, well-organized, and prepared for anything.



#solwitteam – the most important customer of Solwit

The on-going, open, and frequent communication with the employees is just as important as communicating with the customers. Comparing the current situation to the regular working conditions, we concluded that our internal communication activities have intensified multiple times. We believe that the high transparency of information delivered to our employees is what distinguishes us among other companies. We keep that level of informativeness, even when, or maybe particularly because, tough topics have to be brought up.

Every two weeks (it used to be every week initially) we start the week with the so-called Coffee with the Management Board, an online meeting during which the managers openly discuss the latest events, the successes, the failures, the plans for the future, what we fear, the company's situation, and why we make certain decisions.

The employees may ask questions, and all of them are answered during the meeting. The form of those meetings proves to be so effective that we plan on maintaining it, even after the circumstances go back to normal.

We created a site dedicated to our current pandemic-related activities on the intranet, where we send out a Newsletter with summaries and information regarding not only the business matters, but also some lighter topics which serve as a way of engaging the employees and keeping them in a good mood.

Our HR department has gained a lot of new tasks. Keeping everyone motivated, involved, and feeling integrated with the company is one of the key elements of their work.

Our employees fill in questionnaires regarding their mood and well-being on a regular basis. We organize contests – some less serious than others – such as the best home office-related meme contest, or challenges aimed at improving health, good mood, personal development, and broadening skills. Since we are working remotely these days, as an addition to online courses we also encourage our employees to pursue physical exercises and show their interests and activities to us online.

The pandemic has taught us that taking care of our health and safety is one of the core values we should always uphold. Our management system has been enriched thanks to the Health Continuity Management System policy.



Fighting the pandemic

As it always happens in that kind of circumstances, we began to experience a strong need for helping the less fortunate people, and fixing the harsh reality surrounding us. After hearing about the arising problems in healthcare in the media, our natural impulse was to support doctors and other healthcare workers.

In our Solwit-like, agile style, we managed to deliver non-contact thermometers, protective helmets, and even coffee makers, in a very short time and without the unnecessary paper work, despite the fact that it was a truly challenging period when prizes were going up and medical equipment warehouses were being emptied.

Our employees took action – as they always do – and printed protective helmets for medics on 3D printers. They also sewed hundreds of colorful masks on home sewing machines.

We were also happy to participate in the project of General Systems & Software (Poland) Ltd, under which we created software for an application dedicated to predicting and identifying coronavirus outbreaks.

The fact that we were actively helping to fight the pandemic filled all of us with energy and allowed us to control negative emotions, while focusing on our work. When we are joining forces in our fight against the coronavirus, we are simultaneously creating a sort of an immunological system within our company.

What's next?

We are fully aware of being one of those few lucky industries that have not been affected by the crisis as suddenly, harshly, and brutally, as the other businesses. We are still capable of working and delivering our services without interruption, and providing our employees with safety and stability.

We also understand that this state of things will not last forever and the economic crisis will eventually, to a greater or lesser extent, affect us, too. That is why we have not stopped preparing for the unexpected. We have been working twice as hard, regularly assessing the risks, ensuring 100% customer satisfaction, and monitoring the motivation and well-being of our employees. We are looking forward to coming back to our offices with the same amount of passion as ever. We are already working on defining Solwit's identity in this new, pandemic reality.

Because “when all of this is over,” something else will begin – certainly something fascinating, full of challenges, and new possibilities.



We appreciate each and every remark, thought, and idea on how we should evolve, act, and report our activity.

All feedback is welcome!

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