



CASE STUDY

# Apotex Prescribes Actifio for Global Data Protection

With Actifio, Apotex Accelerates Database Recovery Times by 96%



## KEY FACTS

**Who:** Apotex, a global pharmaceutical company.

**Challenges:** Data backup and recovery speed, complexity and reliability

**Solution:** Five data centers, Oracle, SAP HANA, VMware (90%), Windows, Solaris, Linux, Azure for Office365, Cisco UCS, and EMC XtremIO, VPLEX, with Actifio running on VMAX and VNX

**Benefits:** Standardized globally on Actifio for backup, DR, testing, and DevOps. One tool for rapid backup and recovery, protecting and managing all physical and virtual application environments

## Summary

Apotex, a global pharmaceutical company, had no toleration for downtime. Applications needed to be up and running, data protected. Rapid recovery from any system failure was essential. But they were encountering unacceptable data backup and recovery times - as much as 14 hours for backups and equal time to recover if a problem occurred. A broad search for solutions proved that Actifio was the “disruptor” that could deliver backups and recovery in 30 minutes or less. And it provided extensive additional capabilities in support of DevOps, analytics and cloud services.

## Organization Overview

Founded in 1974 by Dr. Barry Sherman, Apotex is a proud Canadian pharmaceutical company. Apotex produces high-quality, affordable generic and innovative pharmaceutical medicines for patients around the world.

In support of international manufacturing, R&D, and commercial operations Apotex operates in more than 45 countries and employs more than 11,000 people worldwide. With global production of 25 billion doses per year, the company supplies over 89 million prescriptions in Canada alone.

“Our biggest challenge as an IT organization was protecting our large applications that are essential to running the business. Rapid data recovery is crucial to minimizing any disruption.”

**ERNESTO NIGRO** MANAGER,  
SYSTEMS OPERATIONS & ARCHITECTURE GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

## The Challenge

The global scope and complexity of Apotex business put IT at the heart of organizational challenges. From financial forecasting, analytics and manufacturing to research and development of new medicines, managing uptime is a critical success factor. Manufacturing has no tolerance for downtime. Major databases need to be up and running or recovered quickly when necessary. And that had become their central challenge.

The length of time to complete backups of the larger databases could take half a day or more. Also, periodic database refresh for testing environments would tie up several staff and production resources for two or three days. "We began looking for that disruptor," Nigro said. "We wanted a means to unconventionally do what we needed to do without having to go through the same old struggles. But every backup alternative we looked at made only small incremental advances. They all left a gap in being to recover in a timely fashion." So, they continued looking.

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"Using Avamar and Data Domain meant that major database backups took several hours to complete and 12-14 hours to restore. Impacts on the business were major downtime and loss of revenue."

**ERNESTO NIGRO**- MANAGER  
SYSTEMS OPERATIONS & ARCHITECTURE | GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

## The Solution

The Apotex team reviewed and tested several potential vendor solutions to address their data backup and management challenges. Not until a Proof-of-Concept (POC) demonstration with Actifio did they find what they wanted. "I brought my database administrators to witness and participate in the Actifio POC," said Nigro. "They're the ones that are most protective of these environments. And when they found that we could mount a database in under ten minutes, we got a lot of attention." Actifio shrank the recovery time for mission-critical applications from 12 hours to less than half an hour. Actifio quickly became the Apotex standard to protect all major databases and expanded to replace Avamar and Data Domain as their global resource for backup/recovery, testing, and DevOps.

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"As we began using Actifio for backup, recovery, and development we found that the copy data virtualization reduced the need for additional storage. It's helped me manage my budget and reduce capital expenditures on storage by as much as 60%. Most importantly, it gives us peace of mind."

**ERNESTO NIGRO**- MANAGER  
SYSTEMS OPERATIONS & ARCHITECTURE | GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

## What's Next

Nigro and his team were already using cloud resources such as Azure for Office 365 and some SaaS applications when they began thinking about potential cloud backup solutions. A POC with AWS didn't work out because it didn't support VMware. However, a successful POC using Actifio combined with the IBM cloud worked flawlessly and satisfied all the QA and regulatory requirements. That's led to the potential for a new DR strategy.

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"No product is perfect, but even when there is a glitch, Actifio is always immediately responsive. Our account team is fast to react and help. Support issues can be quickly escalated with a phone call. We don't get that level of support from anyone else. For example, an unknown bug with another vendor's system forced us to use Actifio to recover critical databases seven times in six weeks. We had engineers, developers, everyone on the phone helping us and clear visibility all the way to the top. If not for Actifio, we could not have operated through much of that time and our financial losses would have been substantial.

**This is when you need your product to work. And it worked."**

**ERNESTO NIGRO** - MANAGER  
SYSTEMS OPERATIONS & ARCHITECTURE | GLOBAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

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## Immediate Benefits

### Reliable Backup

Apotex now enjoys new backup speed, simplicity, and reliability. Backup times have been reduced 96%, from 12 to 14 hours to less than half an hour.

### Disaster Recovery and Failover Testing

Combined with IBM cloud resources in a POC, Actifio demonstrated a robust and reliable set of cloud-based DR capabilities.

### Reduced Expense

Actifio has helped to reduce storage expenses by as much as 60% while eliminating license and maintenance fees for costly backup applications. Additional expense reductions come with Actifio-enabled storage choice.

### Development & Test

Actifio allows the rapid refresh of test databases for analytics and DevOps in as little as 30 minutes. The result is reduced staff time, no impact on production environment resources, and accelerated operations.

### Easy Cloud

Actifio provides ease of data movement, or "burst" to any cloud for multiple purposes from DR, to testing, and data management.