



# ORIFARM

## CASE STUDY

**How Redgate Monitor gives  
developers the information  
they need to develop faster  
and smarter**



**redgate**



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## The Customer

Based in Denmark, the Orifarm Group is a major international player in the healthcare business with a vision to be number one in making healthcare a better deal.

## The Challenge

The IT team wanted to bring in a third-party monitoring tool to give developers the metrics they needed to gain control over what went wrong, when it went wrong, and help them to fix it.

## The Solution

The overview screen of Redgate Monitor gives the whole team the real-time status and metrics of every server, database, and instance, highlights issues instantly, and encourages collaboration.

## The Results

Developers now know they can rely on Redgate Monitor to alert them to issues as soon as they occur, flag which database or instance it affects, and help them pinpoint the cause.

**“I wanted to be more proactive by helping developers gain control over what went wrong, when it went wrong, and to be able to show them how they could fix it.”**

Paw Jershauge, Database Architect

## The Customer

Based in Denmark, the Orifarm Group is a major international player in the healthcare business with a vision to be number one in making healthcare a better deal. Every day, it strives to deliver high quality pharmaceuticals to end users at affordable prices by manufacturing, commercializing, and trading a wide range of products.

After nearly 30 years in business, it is now the largest supplier of parallel imported pharmaceuticals in Europe, with a turnover close to €2 billion and a strong presence in the Nordic generic markets. It is also an international company, with offices in 11 countries across Europe as well as the USA. The group now employs close to 2,200 people and its portfolio covers pharmaceuticals for primary as well as secondary care by specialists, over the counter (OTC) use, and consumer healthcare.

The culture of the company is based on what it calls the ‘explorer spirit’, in that it is always looking for new ways to develop and improve, with respect to both the quality of its products and the individuals in the company.



**€2 BILLION**

TURNOVER

**2,200**

PEOPLE

**11**

COUNTRIES



**“Redgate has definitely been a game-changer when it comes to looking into the internals of the SQL servers that we’re monitoring, and how we communicate with Operations.”**

Paw Jershauge, Database Architect

## The Challenge

As might be imagined, there is a large IT department at Orifarm’s HQ in Odense, Denmark, with over 80 people responsible for delivering software solutions as well as developing and maintaining the databases of the Orifarm Group.

As Database Architect, Paw Jershauge is responsible for overseeing database development and operations, with a role that ranges from making sure queries are fully optimized to designing new databases.

The seven SQL developers in his OLTP team focus on developing and maintaining the production and development servers, all of which are on-premises, while the 20-strong BI team which look after the OLAP systems use a mixture of on-premises and cloud databases.

Paw wanted to help all of them become more aware of issues on the production servers like deadlocks, slow-running queries and I/O bottlenecks. These are often caused when developers deploy changes and updates from development and testing environments, and there are unforeseen errors in the code. In-house or native SQL Server monitoring tools can help to identify the issue in some cases, but frequently fall short.



As a result, problems take longer to fix, and developers are left in the dark about what problems occurred and why, and what they can do in future to avoid them happening again. Paw realised he would need the added capabilities and metrics a third-party monitoring tool offers to help both him and the development teams.

As he states: "We didn't have any KPIs, but what we wanted to show was that once we had the monitoring tool, we would be able to look at baselines and predict how bad a situation would become. And when an issue did come up, we could easily debug and figure out where it was."

**“As a developer, being able to look up at the monitor and see if things are breaking is very helpful. You immediately see when something goes red and there's an issue.”**

Jacob Mjelde, SQL Specialist

## The Solution

When he evaluated Redgate Monitor, Paw was immediately attracted by its overview screen, which shows an entire SQL Server estate at a glance, along with the status and metrics of every server, database, and instance. Alerts are instantly flagged on the overview screen and the cause of any issues can be drilled down into in minutes before they become problems.

After a successful Proof of Concept, Paw introduced Redgate Monitor and immediately made use of the tool's customizable metrics to configure it to suit the many databases in use from different companies in the Orifarm Group.

As he states: “We have a lot of metrics we need to get information about and Redgate Monitor has been a great tool to work with. I also like the fact that when we talk to Redgate about an issue, within an hour we're already in contact and somebody is on the case.”

These metrics came into their own when there was an issue with the SQL servers running slower and slower – something the Operations team couldn't see and didn't realize was a problem. To find out the cause, Paw created a custom metric to track what he suspected was the cause: the use of Microsoft's Volume Shadow Copy Service, or VSS, to create backups in daytime working hours.



Using Redgate Monitor, he could go back in time and show that while it normally took around six or seven seconds for VSS to back up a database, it was now running for more than a minute and then breaking all the connections to the server.

After the Operations team were shown, using Redgate Monitor, how the servers were visibly slowing as each day progressed, the VSS backups were stopped during working hours. The root cause – a cache becoming constantly overloaded before taking down the server – was then identified and the problem resolved.

This changed the game for how the database and Operations teams communicate, and prompted a closer and more collaborative working relationship.





## The Results

The advantages of Redgate Monitor for Orifarm go far beyond the deeper understanding of what is happening inside SQL Server. They also go back to Paw's original desire to help developers fix problems when they reach production.

A big part of this is Redgate Monitor's intuitive overview screen and Jacob Mjelde, a SQL Specialist who works alongside Paw, sees this first hand every day, as does everyone on the team. A big monitoring screen on the wall in the room where the developers work shows the running, live status of Redgate Monitor constantly.

As well as making the health of every database and instance visible at a glance, it also helps with ongoing development. When Jakub was undertaking a SQL replication project, he was able to add metrics to Redgate Monitor to collect data from Dynamic Management Views (DMVs) and have it displayed on the monitor so that he could spot any issues immediately and easily.

The developers in the SQL and BI teams now know they can rely on Redgate Monitor to alert them to issues as soon as they occur, flag which database or instance it affects, and help them pinpoint the cause.



Looking ahead, this will become even more valuable, because Redgate Monitor can monitor any database or instance, whether on-premises or in the cloud, and show them all on the same overview screen. Paw's team has been approved for the SQL Server 2022 Early Access Program and with Microsoft calling it 'the most cloud-connected release' yet, he anticipates taking advantage.

And, true to the explorer spirit of Orifarm, Paw and Jacob are also exploring how other Redgate tools like SQL Prompt, SQL Compare, and SQL Provision can help them enhance and improve their database development practices and processes yet further.