

Metacom Says Out with the Old and in with the New for Hyper-Scalability

About Metacom

Industry: Technology

Employees: 100

Geo: Cape Town, South Africa, EMEA

Products:

- [AHV Virtualization](#)
- [Nutanix Cloud Infrastructure \(NCI\)](#)
- [Nutanix Cloud Manager \(NCM\)](#)

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Managed Service Provider Selects Nutanix to Replace Ageing Environment and Accelerate Growth of Burgeoning Customer Base

Business need

Metacom, a managed service provider that also produces and deploys its own hardware (routers) that assist in delivering its services that extend to SD-WAN, POS, multi-media, and Wi-Fi solutions, requires robust, secure, and uninterrupted access to its network. While its clients come from diverse industries, the company is also a niche player in the retail sector, where it delivers services to more than 7000 retail outlets in over 20 countries.

This live, real-time environment hosted and supported by Metacom and made up of digital displays, audio and radio streaming, full spectrum Wi-Fi services, VoIP, retail analytics, and its network performance solution Metacom Online, can't suffer any downtime. When the company approached the end of its five-year technology upgrade cycle, it began to look for a partner that understood its systems' scalability demands, would grow with the business, and would ultimately be affordable.

Key Results

Hyper-Scalability

Ability to scale up and down with speed and ease as clients' demand and business grows

Full Visibility

Granular visibility into all systems through a tightly integrated management environment

Resiliency & Redundancy

Easily move payloads between different geographies with no downtime

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A key driver is how the system performed from the ground up, specifically around hyper-scalability. And as Nutanix was built on these principles, its blueprint is based on hyper-scalability, unlike other OEM vendors who must marry multiple components to achieve it. In the end, the level of scalability and the speed of the scalability we can achieve with Nutanix is why we moved away from the virtualization OEM vendor we were using.

Casper Visser

Network Manager, Metacom

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Challenge

A rapidly growing business with a diverse range of services, Metacom was not only at the end of its current technology lifecycle, but it also realised that this pace of growth meant it was set to face capacity constraints if it didn't upgrade.

"The sheer rate at which we are onboarding new clients is great for business, but it is a strain on our technology environment. The environment was just not fit for purpose, wasn't able to scale, and couldn't support the growth the company was experiencing. In short, if we didn't make a move, our systems would end up failing us," said Casper Visser, Network Manager, Metacom.

According to Visser, the main reason it looked beyond its existing environment was to fulfil its appetite to scale. The solution it was after had to be built from the ground up with scalability at its core, which is exactly what it felt it could get with a hyperconverged infrastructure, and, ultimately, why it selected Nutanix. A company it felt understood hyperconvergence, was itself built from the ground up and could deliver Metacom with the hyper-scalability it demanded.

Solution

As the project requires a full system move, Metacom is following a phased approach for the some 100+ systems it must move.

Using the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform, Metacom is leveraging the power of Prism Central and Prism Elements to assist it with oversight into and management of its hyperconverged virtualisation environment. This includes oversight of its Nutanix Acropolis deployment. To move its existing environment onto the Nutanix platform, the company made use of Nutanix Move.

"Proper and full system lifecycle management was very important to us. Not just for the software but for our hardware too. As the hardware we selected for our Nutanix deployment was built for Nutanix, we can now use the Nutanix system lifecycle management tool, and we can manage the hardware down to the firmware and BIOS upgrades. It's a mature solution, and it really works well together," says Visser. Even though the company had an initial glitch with the deployment, Nutanix quickly sorted out the bug in the process, and Metacom could perform a simple server firmware upgrade from the lifecycle manager, which allowed it to fix it with ease.

"We didn't go for a cheap solution. We really looked at what is best for the business and what was fit for purpose for Metacom," adds Visser.

Customer Outcome

"The immediate benefits we have seen are true resiliency and redundancy. And by this, I also mean resiliency from a geographic point of view as we run a full stack environment in both Johannesburg and Cape Town. With a four-node cluster running independently in both environments, we can very easily move payloads between the two and back again.

The new environment has also provided Metacom with the growth capabilities it needed, as adding another node is seamless and allows it to scale seamlessly and easily.

Metacom benefits from using Prism Elements and Prism Central because the company has a granular view of its environment. From memory in a node down to a physical interface and the traffic traversing the environment. The system's ability to map VM usage and alert the team of when it will reach capacity allows it to better plan its growth, avoid bottoming out of capacity, and prepare for capacity upgrades to a cluster itself.

According to Visser, the support that Metacom has received from the Nutanix team has been phenomenal. The company can pick up the phone anytime and get the necessary answers. "We're running the backend services for many big retailers who trust their network to us. So we need to have a partner that can really deliver and do it in a quick turnaround time."

Next steps

Metacom's immediate need is to finalise its migration, which it expects to have wrapped up in the next 4-5 months.

"Looking ahead, we have already seen the potential benefits of automation. Which I think will then be the next big drive/step for us as we look at automation of our client-server deployments and any other resource allocations we need to do within the system," ends Visser.



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