

Nutanix Enables Dongfeng Renault to Focus on Driving Customer Experience and Outflanking Competition

Dongfeng Renault partners with Nutanix to re-platform its architecture, enhancing both system and team's performance so better customer experience can be achieved amidst this competitive landscape.

INDUSTRY

Manufacturing

BENEFITS

- Achieved high availability and more stable business operations
- Superb system performance, speed of application performance increased twofold
- Less operational burdens and failure-free experience brings peace of mind
- Elevated the business value of IT

SOLUTION

Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform

- Nutanix AHV
- Nutanix Prism Pro

APPLICATIONS

- Dealer management system
- Official website
- Financial accounting and management systems
- Customer service systems including contact center telephony services
- Office applications including EIP, eHR and and Microsoft Exchange system
- MySQL database and Microsoft SQL Server.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Under the strategy of "being customer-oriented and driving customer experience" Dongfeng Renault has mapped out a comprehensive digital transformation journey which aims to meet the following four goals :

- Focus on driving customer experience
- Drive continuous process improvements
- Enable agile systems
- Deliver stable and consistent performance

"Nutanix has outperformed all our expectations right from the start, even during the testing phase. We started seeing more benefits after implementation, such as high availability and stability in our systems. We are now gradually moving our core business applications onto Nutanix. In the next two to three years, Dongfeng Renault will concentrate completing their digital transformation roadmap with the help of Nutanix's HCI technology."

- Wang Junlin, Section Manager, IT department of Dongfeng Renault Automobile Company Limited

By partnering with Nutanix, Dongfeng Renault has re-platformed their architecture, achieved more robust development capabilities and are more agile in executing IT strategies. As such, the organization's IT staff can now redirect their focus to core business-critical application developments instead of spending resources on maintenance and operations, thus raising the entire productivity efficiency of the team. In the fiercely competitive Chinese automobile manufacturing industry, Dongfeng Renault undoubtedly positioned itself well against its competitors in the efficiency and agility quotient.

CHALLENGES

Pressures from the intensely competitive market in the auto industry

Established in 2013, Dongfeng Renault faced heated competition the moment it entered the Chinese market. With the aim to stay competitive while coping with rapid expansion business pressures, digitalization and rising costs, Dongfeng Renault IT department started crafting their roadmap to address those goals and to further enrich their customer experience.

Wang Junlin, section manager of IT, said, "Judging from trends in the global competition, the capabilities of our technology infrastructure must be closely matched with the speed and vision of our business, or perhaps we should even be one step ahead."

Traditional infrastructures fail to rise up to emerging challenges.

"In today's automotive industry, the speed of data and network access is one of the benchmark in which to measure a competent IT infrastructure," said Wang.

He recounted an incident where a marketing event caused a sudden spike in web traffic data and their traditional architecture was unable to handle the situation, resulting in several hours of downtime to their corporate site. Such technical shortcomings limited the agility of Dongfeng Renault's business.

Hence in order to establish a foothold and distinguish itself among its competitors, Dongfeng Renault has been reviewing its IT strategy since 2018 and has laid down concrete plans for a comprehensive IT infrastructure upgrade which will be completed in the next two to three years.

SOLUTION

It was the end of 2017 when Dongfeng Renault was formulating their IT strategy that they explored the idea of using hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) to replace their traditional infrastructure. Nutanix caught the eye of Dongfeng Renault as it has been a market leader in the HCI space. After a five-month testing period, Nutanix was chosen as based on its good performance and cost-effectiveness.

Wang shared with us an interesting story that occurred during the selection process. At that time, Dongfeng Renault's system was registering slow system speed. After 3 days, the IT staff discovered the real cause of the issue – a fiber optic cable was partially damaged and resulted in a system glitch. And so Wang decided to keep the cable fault as a test during its vendor evaluation period.

"Any HCI partner we choose must pass this test, to see if it can detect the anomaly and provide us with accurate alerts during health checks. And Nutanix was the only one who can outperform the rest in this test," Wang said. Nutanix's automated self-healing and robust performance had indeed left a deep impression on Dongfeng Renault.

Nutanix's Enterprise Cloud has provided Dongfeng Renault with a new generation infrastructure that outperforms in expectation and also provides confidence and ease of mind to the IT team. Hence, Dongfeng Renault was eager to move its core business applications onto Nutanix AHV.

CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

Achieved high availability and more stable business operations

Nutanix's hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) contains a reduced number of components as it converges the traditional datacenter stack which includes compute, storage, networking and virtualization into one turnkey server which allows Dongfeng Renault to scale node for node. Having less components effectively means reducing the rate of errors in operations. In addition, Nutanix's failover recovery feature will also kickstart to ensure continued application service availability, should unforeseen situations like node failures or server crash happens.

It has been 10 months of smooth operation since Dongfeng Renault shifted their core IT business applications onto the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud. Some of these applications include their sales and business operating systems and other business intelligence systems.

Wang observed that their sales and business operating systems running on Nutanix responded much faster to end-users' data request and ran more smoothly than before. Furthermore, their official corporate website is now able to handle more traffic volume during peak seasons than its previous architecture, hence directly influencing Dongfeng Renault's business operations.

Superb system performance, speed of application performance increased twofold

System and more specifically I/O performance is one of the most direct indicator of the overall performance and its test results exceeded everyone's expectations. IT staff at Dongfeng Renault even conducted repeated tests to confirm the authenticity of the number. Wang commented, "This shows that the capability of Nutanix is rather high. The feeling of using Nutanix platform is like a new Dongfeng Renault car tuned to deliver at peak performance. It has completely exceeded all our expectations."

The first persons to feel the difference of the system were the IT managers. As direct users, they could feel an obvious difference in speed and efficiency especially in booting up applications, or usual daily workflow operations. One of the IT managers said, "All operating applications were smoothly running. The most obvious improvement was the speed experienced in patch upgrading. It takes me probably about 10 minutes on our previous solution but after moving to Nutanix, the whole process takes just around 3 minutes maximum. From my perspective, the performance of all our applications has improved at least twofold."

Less operational burdens and failure-free experience brings peace of mind

Today, Dongfeng Renault's IT team is managing its current setup of over 100 physical servers and over 800 virtual servers, with just two employees tasked with the datacenter's daily workflow operations and maintenance. Nutanix Prism presented enterprise professional workflow in "consumer-grade interface" and its one-click function is an exemplary highlight of how intuitively easy it was for the team in managing its daily workflow.

"The size of our deployment has increased but not the workload. The simplicity of Nutanix has helped us achieve better efficiency in our processes," said Wang.

The whole Nutanix experience has given Dongfeng Renault complete peace of mind and confidence in their core architecture. Wang recounts an incident of how Nutanix's backend customer service center picked up an anomaly even before their staff could detect it. As such, the IT team was able to fix the issue quickly before the situation escalated thanks to this timely alert. Thus far, Wang has not faced any failures since migrating to Nutanix, calling it "failure-free".

Elevated the business value of IT

With Nutanix, there was no need to increase manpower resources and hence operating expenses were reduced. The IT team in Dongfeng Renault were freed from the daily mundane and tedious routine maintenance operations. The team has now diverted their focus to more business-critical areas of their work and this has greatly elevated the business value of IT for their department.

“Agile development is a core goal of Dongfeng Renault’s IT strategy. After adopting the Nutanix, we are able to fully maximize our resources and refocus our energies on product development to meet this goal,” Wang said.

NEXT STEPS

“In the next two to three years, Dongfeng Renault will concentrate on completing their digital transformation roadmap with Nutanix as a partner,” Wang said. The company intends to expand their current Nutanix platform to include more of their core business workflow, applications and operations. “Dongfeng Renault’s adoption of Nutanix Enterprise Cloud is highly successful in every perspective, from both business value and technical value.”

This partnership with Nutanix marks the beginning of a new chapter for Dongfeng Renault’s future by enabling their digital transformation. In the coming years, Dongfeng Renault will be in good competitive position to bring about a great experience to their customers as well as further their expansion into the Chinese market.



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