FBD INSURANCE

Seeing is Believing as Irish Insurer Targets the Cloud with Nutanix

Nutanix Enterprise Cloud proves its value as key component of hybrid multi-cloud strategy at FBD Insurance

BUSINESS NEED

Despite ambitious plans for digital transformation and cloud adoption, FBD Insurance was still reliant on legacy data centre technology to host the company's core policy administration system. Moreover, when tasked with refreshing that infrastructure, Chief Technology and Operations Officer, Enda Kyne, found it challenging to formulate a viable business case for any kind of different technology approach. Until, that is, a chance recommendation and exhaustive proof of concept trial provided compelling agility, cost and scalability reasons for putting the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud at the heart of the insurer's digital strategy.

> "Our digital plans were in danger of being compromised by a reluctance to abandon legacy technologies. Deploying Nutanix Enterprise Cloud in the data centre helped overcome that reluctance and get us back on the digital track by realising the benefits of moving to the cloud across our whole infrastructure."
>
> – Enda Kyne, Chief Technology and Operations Officer at FBD Insurance

INDUSTRY
Insurance

BENEFITS
- Increased business agility at lower cost - estimated 60% reduction over five years

- Full virtualisation of core policy administration system at minimal cost using Nutanix AHV hypervisor.

- Simplified management of physical and virtual resources through Prism Central management console.

- Enhanced application-centric security using Nutanix Flow visualisation, microsegmentation and network automation tools

- On-premises private cloud as part of a wider hybrid, multi-cloud, strategy going forward

SOLUTION
- Nutanix Enterprise Cloud
- Nutanix AHV hypervisor
- Prism management plane
- Nutanix Flow

Applications
- TIA (The Insurance Application) from TIA Technology

NUTANIX

CHALLENGE

Widely viewed as early cloud adopters, businesses in the highly regulated general insurance industry often remain cautious when it comes to moving core workloads out of the on-premise data centre. A reluctance Enda Kyne, Chief Technology and Operations Officer at FBD Insurance discovered when the time came to upgrade the company's legacy IT infrastructure.

"Although business stakeholders were signed up to a wider cloud and digital first strategy, many were concerned that moving TIA, our core policy admin system, to the cloud might lead to performance, security and compliance issues," he explained. "The tech team, too, thought it prudent to stick with what they knew, even though it might cause problems later should the need to move to the cloud became more pressing."

SOLUTION

Worried that the company's long-term digital plans might be undermined by adopting a conservative approach to hosting such a business-critical system, Kyne took time to evaluate all possible alternatives, including various private, public and hybrid cloud solutions. During that time a chance meeting with an existing customer led to a proof of concept trial of the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud, the results of which gave Kyne the collateral he needed to reassure reluctant stakeholders. Not merely of the immediate business value of an alternative, hyperconverged, infrastructure, but how this could be done by as part of a wider hybrid cloud approach.

To this end it's very much 'business as usual', with FBD Insurance hosting its primary Enterprise Cloud cluster in the same colocation data centre as before, and still employing a second cluster at head office for backup and disaster recovery. The company also stayed with the same managed service provider, further reassuring business stakeholders when it came to management, security and compliance concerns. At the same time, however, the company has been able to migrate its core policy admin system to a modern cloud-based infrastructure delivering the same kind of high availability and instant scalability benefits plus pay-as-you-consume economics as public cloud platforms.

CUSTOMER OUTCOME

The core policy administration system is now fully up and running on the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud and the legacy data centre infrastructure decommissioned with no impact on service availability. Performance has been enhanced and, at the same time, operational overheads lowered by savings made in rack occupancy, power and cooling.

There have been immediate benefits too from moving away from the third-party virtualisation platform used for other IT workloads, to the Nutanix AHV hypervisor which needs no additional licensing and enables virtual workloads and physical resources to be managed together from the same Nutanix Prism management console.

"There were no technical reasons for using anything other than the Nutanix AHV hypervisor," claims Kyne, "and it made real financial sense. We worked out that it would reduce costs by a massive 60 percent over five years, with even more to be gained from having integrated management and a single point of contact when it came to support."

More importantly, the company's on-premise infrastructure is now closely aligned and in tune with its multi-cloud strategy, as Kyne confirms:

"What the Nutanix software has given us is a significant and immediate lift in technical capability together with the ability to scale quickly to handle future cloud-based projects and ideas. All for a lot less than we were paying for the old infrastructure. It's also enabled us to enter into new business partnerships not previously possible due to IT challenges, growing our business and our brand as a result.

Kyne and his team have also begun to take advantage of the visualisation, microsegmentation and network automation capabilities available using Nutanix Flow, to enhance application security and further address stakeholder concerns over cloud adoption.

"We were already looking at microsegmentation," said Kyne, "Nutanix Flow and AHV have given us the ability to start using it to enhance our security now and at a significantly lower cost compared to the alternatives."

NEXT STEPS

Spurred on by the success of the initial project, Kyne and his team have already begun migrating other workloads to the Nutanix platform as well as planning to use it as a springboard for the migration of workloads to the cloud and between providers as part of its multi-cloud approach.

"Beyond solving our immediate on-premise issues, Nutanix Enterprise Cloud gives us the ability to press ahead with our multi-cloud strategy and develop applications which can be hosted either on-premise or in the cloud, and moved around, to suit the business not the infrastructure or technology. It really is a win-win solution," stated Kyne.

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