

University of Southern Queensland Future Proofs Digital Foundation with Nutanix

UniSQ modernizes its IT with Nutanix, gaining a flexible platform to support evolving modes of learning in higher education.

University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ) wanted to move beyond its incumbent vendor and modernize its IT infrastructure while maintaining reliable services for its diverse learning environments. The university chose Nutanix with the Nutanix AHV hypervisor to establish a more flexible and scalable platform. As a result, UniSQ consolidated infrastructure by 52 percent, improved operational efficiency and gained the ability to support evolving education models and emerging technologies in the future.

Challenge

Comprising multiple campuses across Toowoomba, Springfield and Ipswich, University of Southern Queensland delivers world-class education and training to more than 25,000 students worldwide. The University is a pioneer in distance education and has been delivering flexible study options for more than four decades to on-campus students, online learners and working professionals. To support these diverse study modes, the university relies on its virtualized IT infrastructure to provide reliable, always-on access to learning platforms, academic resources and administrative services.

In late 2024, Stephen Payne, Associate Director Hosting Infrastructure, University of Southern Queensland, said major shifts in the industry had led him and his team to identify concerns around their incumbent virtualisation platform. After initially considering a like-for-like replacement, Payne said the University decided to implement the Nutanix Cloud Platform solution to set itself up for the future and unlock strategic flexibility.

"We didn't really think about anything else other than changing hypervisors," says Stephen Payne, Associate Director hosting infrastructure at UniSQ. "We were looking for the least disruptive path."

Solutions

However, UniSQ leadership encouraged Payne and his team to look beyond a simple hypervisor replacement and explore a more strategic solution to set itself up for the future. Discussions with IT solutions provider Laminar highlighted an opportunity to modernize the university's infrastructure

Industry

Education

Location

APJ

Website

<https://www.unisq.edu.au/>

Key Benefits

Future-ready flexibility

- IT agility can support new types of study modes for students

Optimized performance

- 52% consolidation helps optimize IT performance for students and faculty

Simplified management

- Greater management automation maximizes uptime across all services

Products

Nutanix Central

- Prism

Nutanix Cloud Infrastructure

- AOS Storage
- AHV

Nutanix Professional Services

with Nutanix. By adopting Nutanix hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI), UniSQ could transform its environment while gaining greater automation, simplicity and cloud agility.

“Nutanix gave us insight into what we could achieve without overhauling our entire environment,” Payne explains. “We didn’t want to just tread water for the next five years, we were looking to put something in place that would drive our innovation and take advantage of the agility within our team. Whether it was Kubernetes, cloud, or AI, Nutanix had answers to all the questions we hadn’t even thought to ask yet.”

With support from Nutanix Professional Services, UniSQ implemented the Nutanix Cloud Platform (NCP), running Nutanix AHV hypervisor software on Nutanix HCI nodes and Lenovo hosts. “We had a short timeline as we wanted to beat the VMware renewal so Nutanix Professional Services were key to migrating quicker than we thought we could ourselves,” Payne said. “Speed was one factor, documentation was another. We wanted to do it once, do it right, and get a solid foundation with proper documentation to simplify future containerisation or hybrid multicloud initiatives.”

“We’ve achieved our migration on deadline,” Payne said. The University migrated its Test and Development environment (500 VM) and production environment (around 300 VMs and appliances), including business-critical applications, such as the Moodle-based learning and teaching system, uConnect student and staff portal, and PeopleSoft ERP system. Its Oracle databases now run on NCP.

Customer Outcomes

Future-Ready for Flexible Learning Needs

With Nutanix, UniSQ is better positioned to respond to the evolving Australian higher education sector. The university can focus on attracting school leavers who want adaptable learning options that move beyond the traditional academic calendar. This flexibility is supported by the stability of the Nutanix platform, allowing IT teams to rapidly spin up compute, storage and networking resources to support highly agile services. “When you have exam periods every few weeks, downtime isn’t really an option,” says Payne. “Being able to perform non-disruptive maintenance on Nutanix helps us deliver the level of service our students expect.”

Optimized Performance Through Consolidation

UniSQ has consolidated its infrastructure on Nutanix, enabling more efficient use of resources while maintaining strong performance. Previously, workloads were distributed across 50

Applications

- Moodle learning platform
- UConnect portal
- PeopleSoft enterprise resource planning

Solutions

- Business-Critical Apps

“With Nutanix, everything runs at the optimal level, making us more resource efficient and better able to invest in the future.

Stephen Payne,
Associate Director
(Hosting Infrastructure), UniSQ



nodes and the IT team lacked the tools to optimize performance effectively. With Nutanix, UniSQ reduced its infrastructure footprint by 52 percent to 24 nodes while gaining the ability to maintain optimized performance around the clock. “Now we have everything running at the optimum level, making us much more resource-efficient,” says Payne.

Simplified Management with Automation

Managing the Nutanix Cloud Platform is significantly simpler than the university's previous infrastructure. Previously, engineers had to manually diagnose issues and coordinate changes across three separate infrastructure tiers. Today, faults are automatically identified and often resolved with minimal manual intervention, helping reduce disruption to services. Payne comments, “In some cases, by the time we find out about an issue, like a need for more memory, a solution like a new stick of RAM is already on its way.”

Adaptable for Emerging Technologies

With Nutanix, UniSQ has the platform to introduce new technologies for enhanced teaching and learning. As AI and other emerging technologies evolve, the university has the flexibility to support more personalized, immersive and innovative study experiences. Nutanix also allows UniSQ to adopt these technologies securely and responsibly, at its own pace. “Using Nutanix, we can deliver the best IT for the university's needs at any point in time, whether that's 12 months or five years down the line,” Payne says.

Next Steps

Looking ahead, UniSQ can pursue its IT roadmap with greater confidence. The university plans to explore additional Nutanix capabilities, including Nutanix Flow for microsegmentation, Nutanix Kubernetes Platform for containerized applications, Nutanix Database Service for automated database management and Nutanix Cloud Clusters (NC2) for hybrid cloud deployments. “When containerization, databases and cloud services need to be addressed, we know Nutanix can provide the answers,” Payne says.

Learn more at www.nutanix.com

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