



Doctors of BC Is Delivering Value with Nutanix

Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Upgrade Frees IT Resources to Focus on Security, Disaster Recovery, and other Strategic Projects

CHALLENGE

Doctors of BC was relying on legacy three-tier architecture consisting of a mix of Dell/EMC servers and EqualLogic storage systems. “Scalability and resilience were always an afterthought in legacy infrastructure solutions,” said Sunny Jassal, Director of IT, Doctors of BC. “The infrastructure upgrades were very disruptive, and the EqualLogic replication and snapshotting capabilities were not very mature. All of these problems affected the availability and reliability of our key applications. The systems were reaching end of life, so we started our search for better infrastructure solutions.”

Working with A Trusted Nutanix Partner

Doctors of BC enlisted the help of its long-term technology partner OPUS Consulting Group Ltd., a leading multi-disciplinary infrastructure consultancy, when making the technology decision.

When Mehernosh (Nosh) Chemi, senior account manager from OPUS Consulting Group Ltd., recommended Nutanix, Mr. Jassal decided to take a deeper dive into the platform. After going through Nutanix demos and obtaining a hands-on experience at various Nutanix events, and finally by reaching out to local references provided by Mr. Chemi and Trevor Millius (Nutanix account executive), Mr. Jassal concluded that Nutanix Enterprise Cloud would definitely solve the association’s current challenges and prepare them to meet their long-term business goals as well.

Why Nutanix?

Mr. Jassal shared the three main reasons why he chose Nutanix:

1. Lower TCO: “The first thing that got our attention was the ability to use the AHV OS hypervisor for free,” admitted Mr. Jassal. “Given that we pay close to \$100,000 in annual licensing fees for our current hypervisor was enough to make Nutanix a very strong contender for the upgrade. In addition, the Nutanix solution occupies a much smaller footprint and reduced our rack space and power requirements in our data center by approximately 60%, which has freed up much needed room for potential future expansion.”

2. Solution Features: “We really like the maturity of the Nutanix platform,” Mr. Jassal explained. “My technology investment philosophy has always been to invest in a company and the management’s vision, rather than just the product. I believe in what Nutanix’s CEO Dheeraj Pandey as an industry leader veteran has envisioned. He has delivered an exceptional Enterprise Cloud offering.”

“Nutanix has presented an excellent solution forward, with a clear and innovative vision. All of the other vendors are following Nutanix’s lead when it comes to hyperconverged infrastructure.”

— Sunny Jassal, Director of IT, Doctors of BC



3. Scalability: “We bought our first three Nutanix nodes last year, then we quickly added four more. As we invested with scalability in mind, we are now rolling out three more nodes to tackle our DR requirements,” Mr. Jassal said. “We were so impressed with the performance and manageability of the initial setup with Nutanix that we couldn’t delay adding more to further scale the environment. Nutanix offers plug-and-play scalability that enables us to quickly expand the number of nodes—with zero downtime—which is very critical in our environment.”

Launching the Solution without Running a POC

Doctors of BC worked with Mr. Chemi at OPUS Consulting Group Ltd. to reach out to local Nutanix customers to vet the claims made by Nutanix and obtain a first-hand experience from customers running their production environments on the Nutanix platform.

“We had received enthusiastic recommendations from numerous local reference customers in various sectors. In my two decades of working hands-on in the technology front, I had not seen a mature hyperconverged offering like this delivered by any early startup, but they do say ‘seeing is believing’ and this gave us the confidence in making the decision to switch to Nutanix. We kicked off the design phase and engaged with Nutanix engineers to design and architect our enterprise hyperconverged deployment at Doctors of BC,” Mr. Jassal explained. “And when you know Google’s cloud strategy is based on Nutanix, you have to listen to your gut. I had the full confidence to hit the ground running and move forward without running a POC.”

RESULTS

Fast Deployment with Zero Downtime

The Nutanix Enterprise Cloud solution was deployed by the Doctors of BC Network Services team, and that too was completed with zero downtime during regular work hours. “In a span of under 48 hours, we migrated terabytes of data over to Nutanix,” reported Mr. Jassal. “The entire process was transparent to all of our physicians, local staff, and remote users, which now is a benchmark for how we go about delivering infrastructure upgrades and migrations. It was the fastest and by far the easiest deployment I have experienced in my career as a technologist.”

Simplified Management and Increased Visibility with Prism

The association’s Network Services team appreciates the increased visibility they get with Nutanix Prism. “Our network and storage administrators love the advanced analytics and the proactive notifications they get from Prism,” Mr. Jassal said. “It’s by far much easier to manage the hyperconverged AHV environment, versus the legacy solution we had before, which provides freedom for our network team to focus on many other areas of operations. At one point, we were planning to add more network team resources, but with Nutanix, we were able to reduce the complexity and deliver an even better user experience with the resources we already had on board.”

Since switching to Nutanix, Doctors of BC’s Network Services team spends 50% less time switching back and forth between the separate management tools needed for the legacy SAN and EqualLogic systems. By relying on Prism’s single pane of glass for system management and streamlined operations, the Network Services team can now focus on other infrastructure-related projects, including the implementation of a new disaster recovery (DR) site and improvements to the association’s network and security incident event management (SIEM) solution.

Faster Applications

Doctors of BC's end users as well as its external member physicians have reported increased performance to many existing web applications and reports that run on the newly deployed Nutanix system. "We've seen significant performance improvements in all of our applications," noted Mr. Jassal. "Also, we've able to reduce logon times in our environment from an average of one minute to under 20 seconds, improving employee productivity and delivering an even better user experience for all of our end users."

Easy Scalability Enables Quick Launch of New Projects and Services

Nutanix is providing Doctors of BC with the ability to quickly scale the infrastructure when launching new projects and services. "In order to be successful with our initiatives and responsive to our constituents, we have to be very agile from an IT perspective," said Mr. Jassal. "When handed new initiatives and programs, we're often expected to deliver a solution within tight timelines.

"For example, we had less than a month to implement a centrally supported, provincially standardized data management system, designed to facilitate the delivery of integrated support services using a private cloud approach and standardized reporting that supports data collection for quality improvements across all Health Authorities, Divisions of Family Practice, and the Doctors of BC. The delivery of such projects directly impacts the quality of healthcare we provide to our physicians and the public, so agility and scalability are critical to our business."

In addition to meeting short deadlines for new projects and program requirements, especially around data regulations which are changing very quickly, the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud approach has enabled the organization to scale, innovate, and execute. "Scalability and resilience without complexity is what Nutanix delivers; any fool can make things complex," noted Mr. Jassal.

Gaining Knowledge from Nutanix User Groups

"I believe in the power of communities getting together to solve a lot of problems," Mr. Jassal shared. "Nutanix has a very proactive user group community, and our network services team has been actively participating. The user groups give our team a platform to share their experiences and ask questions very openly, enabling our team to stay informed on Nutanix technology and industry trends."

Looking into the Future

Doctors of BC is currently operating a 'warm site' for disaster recovery, with three-tier architecture infrastructure at a remote colocation facility.

Considering the aging factor of the DR three-tier architecture, Mr. Chemi, along with Trevor Millius (Nutanix account executive) and Jeremy Carr (Nutanix system engineer), demonstrated the value-add of 'stretching' the current Nutanix production environment by replacing the aging DR three-tier architecture with a three-node Nutanix environment using AHV, the built-in Nutanix hypervisor.

Benefits include:

- A resilient DR/failover environment
- Power, cooling, and footprint savings
- Ease of management with a single pane of glass central management console for the entire compute/storage infrastructure
- The elimination of the existing VMware subscription costs
- Single "button click" capabilities for updates, resulting in reduced management overhead

The Network Services team at Doctors of BC is excited to scale Nutanix across their DR environment with another three-node Nutanix cluster acquisition. The team has evaluated the use of data replication across nodes and has been busy architecting the distribution of selective workloads across clusters.

“Nutanix has created strong partnerships with the leaders of cloud, including Google, Amazon AWS, and Microsoft Azure. By investing in Nutanix, we’ll be ready for the cloud, whether private or hybrid, and there will be nothing to rip and replace. One of the reasons we chose Nutanix, versus Simplivity or some of the other hyperconverged offerings, was how Nutanix has addressed the enterprise issues around cloud. A lot of technology vendors call themselves ‘hyperconverged’ players today, but only Nutanix has the maturity and a well thought out vision to execute on their strategy,” concluded Mr. Jassal.

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Company Specifics

Doctors of BC, formerly known as the BC Medical Association (BCMA), is a voluntary association of 14,000 physicians, residents, and medical students in British Columbia, Canada. The association’s mission is to promote a social, economic, and political climate in which members can provide the citizens of BC with the highest standard of healthcare, while achieving maximum professional satisfaction and fair economic reward.

Industry

Healthcare

Business Need

Aging legacy three-tier compute and storage architecture was not easy to scale and upgrades were complex and time-consuming.

Solution

- › Nutanix Enterprise Cloud
- › Performance mission-critical applications: MS SQL Server, Citrix XenApp, Microsoft Exchange, ERP and CRM

Benefits:

- › Reduced user logon times to as low as <20 seconds, improving the end-user experience
- › Cut the time needed to manage multiple management tools in half
- › Provided the ability for IT personnel to focus on other key strategic projects, disaster recovery, and security improvements
- › Launched the solution in under 48 hours with zero downtime
- › Enabled easy scalability to meet short-term and long-term initiative launch timeframes
- › Eliminated the need to recruit additional network resources, saving on operational expenses

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