

Nutanix Odds-On Favourite With Sports Betting Technology Supplier

FSB Technology Takes Back Control Of Its IT With Nutanix Hyperconverged Infrastructure And AHV Hypervisor

INDUSTRY

Online betting and gaming

BENEFITS

- Immediate performance uplift, no need to burst workloads to the public cloud during periods of high demand and no increase in overall costs
- Greater agility delivered by 10-fold increase storage performance, support for 10Gbit network connectivity and virtualisation of physical database servers
- Enhanced visibility and direct control of outsourced infra-structure using Prism Central management console
- Faster application deployment with 50% reduction in timescales
- High availability and disaster recovery using built in data replication and failover tools
- Hybrid-ready on-premise infrastructure to accommodate future plans for automated workload balancing and support for End User Computing (EUC)

SOLUTION

- Nutanix Enterprise Cloud
- Prism management plane
- AHV hypervisor

APPLICATIONS

- Custom gambling/gaming applications running on Linux VMs
- PostgreSQL database servers
- Windows Active Directory

BUSINESS NEED

With IT at the heart of its rapidly growing global sports betting & iGaming platform business, FSB Technology was finding itself handicapped by the limitations of a once adequate outsourced infrastructure. Short term fixes were helping to paper over the performance cracks but, in order to extend and grow the business, a more agile and scalable solution, directly managed by FSB itself, needed to be found.



“We were just about making do by bursting workloads to the public cloud to cope with spikes in demand and running physical rather than, more agile, virtual database servers. But it was a constant struggle and, with no direct control of the infrastructure, we were seriously handicapped when it came to developing the business further.

We desperately needed something better and with Nutanix, that's exactly what we got. There have been no negatives!”

- Andrew Jobson, Head of IT, FSB Technology

CHALLENGE

As the provider of the high tech services behind some of the world's best known betting and gaming brands, FSB Technology is totally reliant on its IT to do business. Unfortunately that ability was increasingly compromised by the limitations of its existing outsourced infrastructure, as Andrew Jobson, Head of IT, explains.

"Despite paying for a 'premium' service we had constant issues with performance, bandwidth and even basic availability. Issues which meant we were unable to virtualise business-critical database servers and had to burst applications to the public cloud in order to cope during periods of high demand. Worse still, it could take weeks to get problems fixed, new VMs spun up or extra memory and storage allocated with serious implications for development timescales and our reputation."

Rapid business growth was further exacerbating the problems, making it imperative to find a solution able to deliver the mix of performance, scalability and reliability needed to cope with that demand.

SOLUTION

Wholesale migration to the public cloud was ruled out, mainly on grounds of cost and security. A number of alternative, on-premise, proposals were then considered including an upgraded and significantly more expensive, product from the incumbent provider. Following a successful proof of concept trial, however, Jobson and his team decided to migrate to a Nutanix hyperconverged infrastructure. Moreover, this would be hosted by London-based Nutanix partner Skye Cloud, but monitored and managed remotely by FSB staff.

All-flash Nutanix clusters were soon installed across two Skye Cloud data centres and built in data replication tools employed to provide for rapid failover and disaster recovery. As part of the project network bandwidth was upped, from 1Gbps to 10Gbps Ethernet, and the decision taken to use the Nutanix AHV hypervisor to virtualise all of the company's business critical workloads, including resource-hungry PostgreSQL servers.

CUSTOMER OUTCOME

According to Jobson the results have been "Nothing short of amazing" with no negatives and no downtime since the new infrastructure went live.

"The combination of all-flash storage, greater bandwidth and the ability to virtualise our database servers has led to a significant increase in application performance," he told us. "More than that we can see exactly what's happening as well as scale and fine tune resources ourselves. So, no more having to burst workloads to the public cloud to handle a big match and no three week wait just to spin up a new VM. We can do it all ourselves, whenever we need to and with no waiting."

Jobson estimates that development timescales have been cut in half, freeing up staff to further improve and add features to an already highly competitive service portfolio.

Furthermore, there have been tangible cost benefits. Indeed, according to Jobson, ongoing costs for the hosted Nutanix solution are little more than for its underperforming predecessor. Added to that are the not insignificant performance benefits, on-demand scalability and reassuring but, previously, entirely lacking failover and disaster capabilities.

"We finally have the infrastructure we need to both maintain and grow the business," commented Jobson. "I just wish we could have done it sooner!"

NEXT STEPS

As well as taking full advantage of the step up in performance afforded by the Nutanix infrastructure, Jobson and the team at FSB have been busy pushing ahead with development of its core applications and services, despite having to switch to remote working during the first COVID-19 lockdown just as the migration project was ending.

Keen to make a positive out of this necessity, the company has downsized its London offices and is looking to ramp up support for remote desktops with plans for a comprehensive End User Computing (EUC) solution in the coming months. Automated workload balancing across its two data centres is also on the cards along with other enhancements to the FSB service portfolio facilitated by the firm's now 'fit for purpose' Nutanix infrastructure.



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