

Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform enables Millennia Computer Services to offer robust disaster recovery (DR) as a service to ticketing customers

Zero Downtime Service Provider Comes Back to Nutanix for More



BACKGROUND

Millennia Computer Services is an IT cloud-enabled service company that specialises in hosting software defined data centre technologies. The reliability of the infrastructure coupled with their ability to become an extension of customers' IT departments has allowed Millennia to develop long term partnerships with key ticketing and leisure customers who require a reliable platform for the sale of millions of tickets annually.

The year was 2014 and Millennia Computer Services was looking to upgrade the IT infrastructure underpinning its hosting services to the leisure and ticketing industry, as John Thorpe, Technical Director explains.

"We needed an easily scalable solution to allow us to both cope with growing demand from existing customers and handle new business without the forklift upgrades required to extend our existing 3-tier Infrastructure."

Beyond that, Thorpe was looking for a system that would be both highly reliable and easy to manage.

"It had become a real battle trying to maintain a seamless service for our customers," said Thorpe, "with regular compatibility and availability issues plus lengthy timescales trying to get server and storage vendors to take ownership of the many problems we were having."

At this point the company decided to migrate to the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform, a decision that has enabled the company to not just meet, but exceed its goals, as Thorpe enthuses.

"Instead of continually firefighting problems and worrying over scalability, the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform has freed us up to spend more time developing the business, confident in our ability to rapidly scale our IT infrastructure no matter what size of customer now walks through the door."

"When it comes to high availability, hyperconverged systems are not all made equal."

- John Thorpe, Technical Director
Millennia Computer Services

CHALLENGE

Fast forward to 2016 and the team at Millennia felt that the time had come to upgrade its disaster recovery capabilities to keep pace with the enhanced production platform.

“The one thing a DR system has to be is reliable and we were finding it increasingly hard to meet that requirement using the disparate collection of backup servers and storage left over from when we switched to the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform.”

Nutanix was the preferred supplier for this project but budget constraints initially forced the company to look at an alternative from a low-cost Hyperconverged Infrastructure (HCI) vendor. This, however, failed to live up to its initial billing, falling far short of expectations when trialed in the Millennia Computer Services data centre.

“It soon became apparent that, when it comes to high availability, hyperconverged systems are not all made equal,” confirms Thorpe, “The low cost option simply wasn’t robust enough to risk with sensitive workloads like the hundreds of SQL Server databases employed by our customers whose income streams would instantly dry up in the face of any downtime.”

“It was a major wake up call,” he continued. “Reliability really is a key differentiator.”

SOLUTION

Given the importance of its DR service to Millennia’s fast evolving cloud hosting business the decision was taken to abandon the low-cost alternative and replace the legacy DR system with the same Nutanix Enterprise Cloud technology employed in the hosting company’s core data centre.

Providing much needed simplicity as well as resilience, at the heart of the Nutanix offering is the ability to leverage web-scale engineering and consumer-grade design to natively integrate together compute, storage and virtualisation into a robust solution ideally suited to the DR role.

“It put us exactly where we wanted to be,” said Thorpe, “with the same enterprise grade infrastructure for disaster recovery as for our core hosting services, giving us real confidence in our ability to deliver DR as a service to our customers.”

As well as powerful and easy to scale hardware the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud comprises Nutanix Acropolis, a turnkey infrastructure platform able to support all the leading virtualisation hypervisors plus Nutanix Prism, a single pane management and analytics solution enabling Millennia to monitor and manage its core hosting and DR platforms together, as Thorpe explains.

“The fact that we can manage not just all of our physical but virtual resources together from one console is hugely liberating, freeing staff up to concentrate on our core business – delivering reliable, high quality, cloud services to our customers.”

RESULTS

Following the swift and seamless integration of the new DR platform into Millennia's existing infrastructure, the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform has given the hosting company complete confidence in its ability to deliver on service level agreements.

Thorpe is delighted. "Everything has been transformed. Using the Nutanix platform across our datacentre locations has given us real confidence in our ability to provide advanced business continuity and disaster recovery services to our customers – from basic offsite data replication through to live VM replication for sub-minute recovery of vital running systems. From feeling like it was all held together with string and likely to come crashing down at any moment I now get to sleep at nights."

As a business disillusioned with the inefficiencies of dealing with disparate hardware and different vendors, the simplicity of the single ownership of the Nutanix platform has also been a real eye opener.

"Instead of the lengthy and complex processes previously involved in trying to get to the root of a problem, the support from Nutanix and its highly qualified engineers has proven seamless," he says, "their expertise extends well beyond their own product to the hypervisor and beyond – one call really does do it all."

NEXT STEPS

In terms of the future it's business as usual at Millennia Computer Services underpinned by the power of the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud.

"We're ready and waiting for the next big customer," proclaims Thorpe, "and when they come along we don't have to worry about forklift upgrades or support issues, all we have to do is work out how many extra Nutanix nodes we need. Added to which we can deliver seamless enterprise-grade DR as well. The proposition is improving all the time."

Thorpe is also keen to take advantage of the Acropolis Hypervisor (AHV) included as part of the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform.

"We would desperately like to switch from VMware to the Acropolis Hypervisor as it would save money and give us a much more stable platform to work with," explains Thorpe. "We just need to wait for it to be supported by Zerto, the provider of our replication software, and we'll switch like a shot." Which could be any day now, as Nutanix is actively working with Zerto to provide support for its products on AHV – so watch this space.



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COMPANY

Millennia Computer Services is an IT cloud-enabled service company that specialises in hosting software defined data centre technologies.

INDUSTRY

Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)

BUSINESS NEEDS

Robust, high performance and easy to manage disaster recovery platform.

SOLUTION

- › Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform in main data centres and remote DR site
- › VMware hypervisor
- › Zerto Replication Software

BENEFITS

- › 100% platform uptime since inception
- › 50% reduction in rack space
- › Single pane of management for production and DR infrastructure
- › Reliable performance SLAs
- › Single point of contact for service and support

Nutanix makes infrastructure invisible, elevating IT to focus on the applications and services that power their business. The Nutanix enterprise cloud platform leverages web-scale engineering and consumer-grade design to natively converge compute, virtualization and storage into a resilient, software-defined solution with rich machine intelligence. The result is predictable performance, cloud-like infrastructure consumption, robust security, and seamless application mobility for a broad range of enterprise applications. Learn more at www.nutanix.com or follow us on [Twitter@nutanix](#).

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