

North Pacific Bank Non-Disruptively migrates Mission-Critical Business Environments at Branch Counters with Zero Downtime

Migrated Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops environment of approximately 6,000 terminals and tablets to Nutanix AHV hypervisor without service disruption

BENEFITS

- Migration of virtual desktop environment that hosts business applications used by all employees without downtime
- Improved availability of thin client systems
- Reduce the total cost of the virtualization infrastructure by migrating from Hyper-V to Nutanix AHV hypervisor



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- Noriyuki Wachi, General Manager, System Department,
The North Pacific Bank, Ltd.

CHALLENGES

North Pacific Bank, Ltd. is the largest regional bank in Hokkaido, with its head office in Sapporo. With an eye on the increasingly competitive business environment, including population decline, the bank has formulated a new group management philosophy of “opening up Hokkaido's future by taking a thorough customer-oriented approach to solving a wide range of issues. Based on this philosophy, the bank is working to become closer to its customers and to provide consulting services and the best possible service solutions with a deeper consideration of our customers.

In 2010, the bank decided to switch to thin clients as a counter measure to the aging of the PCs used as business terminals and began the phased transition in 2012. The infrastructure was server virtualization using Microsoft Hyper-V and desktop virtualization using Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops, but they felt that there were operational issues.

INDUSTRY

Financial Services

CHALLENGES

- Migration of mission-critical business environments
- Aging of thin client systems
- Insufficient expertise to perform a hypervisor migration

SOLUTION

Nutanix Cloud Platform

- Nutanix AOS
- Nutanix AHV
- Nutanix Prism
- Nutanix Move

Nutanix Consulting Services

Nutanix Technical Account

Management (TAM) Services

Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops

Applications

- Applications for bank employees' intranet operations, call center operations, etc.



Hideki Ito
Deputy General Manager,
System Department,
North Pacific Bank, Ltd.



Hirokazu Takahashi
Assistant General Manager,
System Department,
North Pacific Bank, Ltd.



Katsutoshi Tanino
Manager,
System Department,
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However, the company was experiencing operational issues. “With 3-tier traditional infrastructure configuration, the cost of building and maintenance of infrastructure is high. The timing of system renewal is also different, so each renewal incurs a large cost. The banking business cannot afford any unscheduled downtime, even during system migration. The bank needed to prioritize service availability and operation stability. Because of these considerations, we felt that legacy infrastructures are reaching their limits,” recalls Noriyuki Wachi, General Manager of the Systems Department at North Pacific Bank. Ltd.

SOLUTION

In 2015, the Bank started looking into hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI). When the maintenance of the thin client system expired, the bank decided to implement Nutanix HCI, moving away from traditional infrastructures. Hideki Ito, Deputy General Manager of the System Department, said, “In addition to the advantage of allowing gradual investment, the bank felt that it would be easy to expand and renew the system. The bank decided to implement the Nutanix Cloud Platform for long-term use and simplification of system upgrades. Since the initial implementation, the bank has also experienced system upgrades, which were completed smoothly without any business downtime.”

Another deciding factor was availability. Hirokazu Takahashi, Assistant General Manager of the Systems Department, said “In the previous system, the server containing the user profiles for the virtual desktop system was redundant with hot standby or RAID, but the system would sometimes stop, inconveniencing some users. With Nutanix, the bank was able to use RF3 (Replication Factor 3) to keep the same data on three nodes without stopping the system even if there were simultaneous failures of two nodes.”

“The bank used Nutanix Consulting Services and Technical Account Management (TAM) Services to facilitate the migration. We didn’t have the knowledge about hypervisor migration, so we decided to go with technical support services. Nutanix’s experts were also well-versed in products outside of Nutanix, and so we were able to execute the migration with confidence,” Katsutoshi Tanino, Manager, of the System Department said. We then completed building the system by Nutanix AHV as the migration platform in 2019, and migrated the Citrix Virtual Apps and Desktops environment from Microsoft Hyper-V to the Nutanix AHV hypervisor in phases starting in May 2020. Kindryl Japan LLC (then IBM Japan) and Nutanix Consulting Services collaborated on a detailed plan for the migration, which took place over 12 weekends.

CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

The bank was able to migrate without interruption to Nutanix AHV using Nutanix Move, an environment running on approximately 6,000 terminals and tablets in its branches and call center.

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Takahashi said, “The bank also migrated hypervisors from Microsoft Hyper-V to Nutanix AHV. The new hypervisor supports a much wider range of operating systems, and we feel that we have benefited from Nutanix deployment in this respect.”

NEXT STEPS

This time, the migration project was in the area of IT systems, but in January 2023, The North Pacific Bank plans to migrate its host environment to a joint core system under the TSUBASA Alliance, a framework for wide-area collaboration with other regional banks.

The bank is now evaluating what to do with the system after the migration to TSUBASA. The bank is also looking into further promoting remote work and using the cloud. In addition to Nutanix Cloud Platform, the bank is also looking forward to providing consulting services and various other proposals for the creation of these new systems,” said Wachi.



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