

UK Payment Services Provider Gets Seriously Scalable, Available and Secure with Nutanix

Pay360 By Capita Extends, Secures and Future Proofs its Burgeoning Business with Nutanix Hybrid Cloud Technology.

INDUSTRY

Software and Payment Services

BENEFITS

- Much reduced payment processing times due to low latency storage improving database performance
- On-demand scalability enabling new VMs to be brought online in minutes rather than weeks
- Enhanced resilience and full virtualisation using bundled Nutanix AHV hypervisor
- Hybrid ready on-premise infrastructure to facilitate digital transformation plans

SOLUTION

- HPE ProLiant Servers
- Prism Management
- AHV Hypervisor
- Nutanix Flow Network Microsegmentation

APPLICATIONS

- PCI DSS compliant payment services
- Microsoft SQL Server
- HYCU Data Protection for Nutanix

BUSINESS NEED

As a major payment services provider, Pay360 by Capita is reliant on IT to deliver responsive, rapidly scalable and highly available services to a mix of small and high profile large businesses 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. That ability, however, was compromised by its outsourced legacy infrastructure, making it increasingly difficult to keep pace with growing workloads, attract new customers and exploit new cloud technologies.

“Nutanix just ticked all the boxes and has made a huge difference to our ability to do business. VMs that used to take weeks to provision can now be brought online in minutes and workloads sized on-demand as customer requirements change. We can also see and manage the whole infrastructure ourselves plus it’s all fully backed up, secure and PCI compliant.”

- Andy Wells, Lead Systems Engineer - Pay360 by Capita

CHALLENGE

Pay360 by Capita is a Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant provider offering a full range of telephone, online and mobile payment services. Customers include central/local government organisations and private businesses including Transport for London, TV Licensing and numerous local authorities, schools and colleges.

Demand for Pay360 services, however, was outstripping the capabilities of the company's legacy 3-tier IT infrastructure which was proving inherently slow to scale, unreliable and difficult to manage, as Andy Wells, Lead Systems Engineer explains:

“Our IT was really holding us back. It was compromising our ability to both handle escalating customer demand and onboard new business. It could take weeks, sometimes months, to bring new VMs online and there were continual availability issues, including a major outage in 2017 which took us offline for over a day. For a dynamic 24/7 payment service provider it just wasn't good enough.”

These issues were further exacerbated by reliance on third parties to manage both the physical and virtual infrastructure. This hampered the ability of the technical team to resolve its availability problems more quickly, let alone identify bottlenecks and investigate other ways of enhancing service performance.

A complete re-think of the Pay360 IT infrastructure was clearly required with the emphasis on scalability, performance and ease of management, albeit with the added complication of having to meet the stringent security requirements of PCI compliance.

SOLUTION

Having previously been tasked with evaluating Nutanix hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) as a platform for end user computing, the Pay360 team quickly realised the value of its cloud-like on demand scalability and single pane of management when applied to the company's customer facing business.

“It just ticked all the boxes,” said Wells, “from no-nonsense scalability and a single point of management, to high availability and the forward thinking needed to allow seamless adoption of new cloud technologies to allow us to build a full hybrid cloud infrastructure at our own pace.”

Following a proof of concept trial, Pay360 decided to deploy HPE ProLiant servers with Nutanix HCI software. One for its PCI-compliant customer applications and secure primary data, with another to handle less critical applications and secondary storage.

A further cluster was also specified for data backup and disaster recovery which, for PCI compliance, would normally have to be kept physically separate from the primary systems. However, with Nutanix, this requirement can be met by logical separation using the network microsegmentation capabilities of Nutanix Flow. Moreover, by also switching from VMware to the Nutanix AHV hypervisor, the whole solution – physical and virtual - can be managed from the same Nutanix Prism GUI.

The final piece of the jigsaw was HYCU Data protection for Nutanix. A purpose built backup and disaster recovery application, tightly integrated with the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud platform and able to protect file share, VM and business critical application data for PCI compliance, again, using the same simple management interface.

CUSTOMER OUTCOME

Following an uneventful migration, the first of many benefits was a significant step up in performance across all customer services. Wells and the team were also delighted by their newly won ability to see and manage the full infrastructure themselves, to both troubleshoot issues and scale resources to meet customer requirements.

“No more waiting weeks to get things done,” commented Wells. “With just a few clicks of the mouse we’re able to roll out new VMs, allocate additional resources and keep a close eye and tweak how systems are performing.”

The team has also used the tools in the Enterprise Cloud stack to build self-service portals, empowering customers to perform common day-to-day maintenance tasks, further freeing up the technical team to focus on future plans.

Importantly, too, there has been no downtime since switching to the Nutanix infrastructure.

NEXT STEPS

In the short term, the Pay360 team is taking full advantage of its new Enterprise Cloud to automate and enhance its catalogue of customer payment services.

In the longer term, the company has plans to take advantage of Nutanix Files and make wider use of public cloud services as part of a hybrid cloud approach enabling them to expand into different global markets.



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