THE PHIA GROUP

Nutanix Enables The Phia Group to Dramatically Improve Disaster Recovery, Customer Satisfaction, and Company Profitability

Xi Leap DR as a service reduces RPO from 1 day to 1 hour and cuts RTO in half

BUSINESS BENEFITS

By moving to Nutanix, The Phia Group was able to improve the performance of its key proprietary application by 5-10x and improves its client backlog. Customer information is now accessible online in one day, vs. the 10-15 day implementation on the legacy 3-tier system. As a result, business continuity, customer satisfaction, and company profitability have all improved dramatically.

> "Nutanix Xi Leap has eliminated all of the complexity of deploying and managing multiple point solutions for DR. It's great to know that we'll be back in business very quickly during any emergency."
>
> – Hemant Dua, VP of Technology, The Phia Group

CHALLENGES

The Phia Group, LLC is the leading cost-containment and consulting firm in the health insurance industry. Its mission is to reduce the cost of healthcare through innovative technologies, legal expertise, and focused, flexible customer service.

The Phia Group had been running its IT operations in a 3-tier IT environment with separate servers, storage, and networking infrastructure. Multiple issues emerged in that set up, including an unacceptably slow speed for its customer-facing

INDUSTRY
Legal Services, Healthcare Industry

CHALLENGES

- Inadequate performance for mission-critical applications
- 10-15 day backlog for on-boarding new clients
- 3-tier environment was difficult to manage
- Recovery Point Objective (RPO) and Recovery Time Objective (RTO) were both unacceptably long

SOLUTION
Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform
- Acropolis Software, including built-in hypervisor, AHV
- Xi Leap for Cloud DR
- Prism management plane

Applications
- Phia proprietary claims processing application on SQL Server
- Skype for Business

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website and its 3TB proprietary application used by 150 client service personnel. The IT team tried tuning the database and application to improve performance, but they discovered it wasn't a problem with the software, it was a problem with the legacy hardware infrastructure.

When fewer than ten people were using the Phia application, the speed was adequate. But the system was unable to refresh pages in a timely manner when the number of users increased. "When our Phia app is down, our customer service personnel can't access the data they need to answer customer inquiries," explained Dua. "They have to ask clients to hold or call them back later in the day. As a result, client satisfaction was not nearly as high as we'd like it to be."

SOLUTION

When it came time to renew the legacy environment, Dua started looking at hyper converged infrastructure. "Several of our colleagues were already using Nutanix and they recommended the solution very highly," said Dua. "Once we saw a demo, we knew it would be a great fit for our organization." The Phia Group became a Nutanix customer in June 2018.

CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

Faster Performance
It used to take 5-10 seconds to open a page on Phia's website using the 3-tier infrastructure. When all production workloads were moved over to Nutanix, the lag dropped to just 2.5 seconds. Reporting time is also 5-10x faster since the upgrade. Reports that used to take 2 to 3 minutes to complete, now finish in 20-25 seconds on Nutanix.

Eliminating Backlog
The move to Nutanix has also enabled The Phia Group to eliminate its 5-10 client backlog. "Since implementing Nutanix, all of our claims are entered into the system the same day we receive them," said Dua. "As a result, the number of clients we're able to serve is increasing dramatically."

Reduced Management Time
"Since moving to Nutanix, I don't have to go into our server room anymore—everything I need is available on the web using my cell phone," Dua said. "We used to have to go into the server room, manually check all of the cables, shut down systems, troubleshoot any problems when they didn't come back up, and occasionally do a hard reboot. System maintenance used to consume a full weekend. On Nutanix, it takes just a couple of hours."

Using Xi Leap for Cloud DR
The Phia Group is using Xi Leap, Nutanix's DR as a service offering. "Extending our on-prem environment with Xi provides us with a hybrid cloud deployment that eliminates the boundaries between private and public clouds," explained Dua. "When we were using legacy infrastructure and the VMware hypervisor, we had to install and manage multiple products to achieve DR protection. We had to provision a secondary site, install a DR appliance, set up automation, and configure the recovery site with the needed networking and security policies. Nutanix Xi Leap has eliminated all of the complexity of deploying and managing multiple point solutions for DR. It's great to know that we'll be back in business very quickly during any emergency."

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24:1 Improvement in RPO

The Phia Group's previous DR solution provided a 24 hour RPO. By using Xi Leap, the RPO is now under one hour. "Anything that's on the SQL Server at 2pm, is available at 3pm in the cloud," explained Dua. "If the primary system goes down, we only have to reenter the last hour of data. That's a huge efficiency improvement for us in protecting our data."

RTO Cut in Half

"We tried to recover from our VMware-based DR environment a couple of times, but weren't able to easily bring back the system," said Dua. "After more than 8 hours of struggling between vendors, we were finally back on line. But we were still a day behind based on our 24-hour RPO. Our entire production system now runs on Xi Leap. In the case of a disaster, we're back in business in less than four hours with only a one-hour RPO."

Eliminating Help Desk Tickets

"We used to receive a lot of emails about poor system performance in our legacy environment," admitted Dua. "One of our KPIs measured how often the words 'slow' or 'not working' were mentioned in those emails. That metric is no longer useful, since it has dropped to zero. Like any IT organization, we know we're doing a great job when we don't hear anything bad from our end users. No news is always good news when you are managing applications and infrastructure."

NEXT STEPS

"There are a lot of great things coming down the Nutanix pipeline," noted Dua. "We're really looking forward to trying Nutanix Files and Nutanix Frame in the next few months. I don't think we could support our company's fast growth rate if we weren't running everything on Nutanix."

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