

TT Electronics increase efficiency and remove complexity with Nutanix

A Nutanix solution has enabled TT Electronics to rapidly expand and streamline onboarding for new company acquisitions. They now benefit from a centrally managed standardised infrastructure and have a clear cloud journey moving forward.

INDUSTRY

Electronics design and manufacturing

BENEFITS

- Capex & Opex Cost Savings
- Simplified Operations frees staff to work on high value projects
- Streamlined Onboarding Process for New Acquisitions speeds time to value
- Standardised Infrastructure removes complexity and increases efficiency
- Centralised Management removes IT burden and speeds IT delivery for remote sites

SOLUTION

Nutanix Cloud Platform

- Acropolis (AOS) Software
- Prism Pro IT Operations
- Nutanix NX Hardware

Applications

- SAP ECC6
- Microsoft SQL Server
- Microsoft Exchange

BUSINESS NEED

For TT Electronics, a business continuity issue at the global data centre turned into an opportunity to roll out Nutanix Cloud Platform built on powerful hyperconverged infrastructure technology across its global fleet of manufacturing and design sites. A local deployment of a standard three node infrastructure solution rapidly expanded into a global IT strategy, benefiting from centrally managed standardised infrastructure and a clear cloud journey.

“Having a hyperconverged solution that was built from the ground up provided a clear advantage. At the time, Nutanix technology and its approach to invisible infrastructure with one click simplicity was developing rapidly. This compared with the rival offerings comprised of expensive traditional SAN infrastructure. The Nutanix solution really matched where we needed to go as an organisation. That just left me needing to demonstrate to management why Nutanix was right for the business. Since moving forward with Nutanix, everyone from the IT team to the ^{3,500} users to the management is delighted with the outcome.”

- Jaye Tillson, Head of Global Architecture, TT Electronics

CHALLENGES

TT Electronics is a UK headquartered, global provider of engineered electronics for performance critical applications. TT designs and manufactures a wide range of electronics for sensing, power management and connectivity primarily for applications in the aerospace and defense, medical and industrial sectors.

TT Electronics has multiple manufacturing sites across the world, providing a full range of design, engineering and manufacturing solutions from concept through to complete product integration. The vast majority of its IT is provided from on-premise infrastructure. Much of its data is stored locally.

Its engagement with Nutanix began when the company experienced a business continuity issue at its US data centre.

A sluggish incumbent supplier response and an offering which was little more than an expensive, upgraded traditional SAN solution created an opportunity to explore alternatives that would lead to a global rollout of the Nutanix Cloud Platform.

At the time of the initial engagement, Nutanix technology and culture was relatively unknown to TT Electronics. The Nutanix account team handled queries with fast and knowledgeable responses. Meetings with Nutanix technical teams, technology evaluation, and customer references followed. In parallel TT Electronics spoke independently to Nutanix customers to gather views on technology performance, service regimes and support.

A promising picture emerged. Nutanix customer responses were consistent. Not only did the product perform beyond expectations in terms of installation, commissioning and operation but the solution driven approach from the Nutanix technical support teams was highly praised. The technical evaluation showed Nutanix to be a better solution and the capex and opex evaluation showed it was more cost effective, delivering a 20% saving.

SOLUTION

Fast forward a few years, and today all 30 TT Electronics sites are running centrally managed Nutanix infrastructure.

The company now has Nutanix installed at major sites in the UK, US, China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Mexico.

TT Electronics workloads range in size from a global SAP ERP solution hosted in its San Diego data centre to small design centres and factory sites running a range of applications. Manufacturing sites run local file services along with SharePoint, SQL and CAD type packages. From a storage perspective, the smaller sites operate with around 10 terabytes, a medium sized facility will run 30-50 terabytes scaling to a large US site with 60+ terabytes and China manufacturing sites running at 80+ terabytes.

A small, medium & large 'T-Shirt sizing' approach was taken for the various different global sites to simplify the budgeting process. This translates into single Nutanix NX node deployments across its smaller sites, with 2 to 4 nodes in the medium size sites and then in the larger manufacturing sites, 5 or 6 nodes depending on the site's capacity need.

Everything is visible from a centralised operations centre with Nutanix Prism Central, with Nutanix Prism Pro deployed for detailed monitoring and analytics together with capacity planning functionality.

On the support side, other customers from Tillson's own personal network had reported that Nutanix support was different from anything previously experienced. While support teams from rival suppliers seemed intent on passing the buck, Nutanix support focused on finding solutions. With such a large geographically dispersed IT estate this was vital to TT Electronics.

It found that the Nutanix skill set in virtualisation meant it could offer sound advice and support on VMWare, with whom TT Electronics had an existing enterprise agreement.

“Nutanix has such a skill set in virtualisation that we found that it was better to go to it as a source of support for different hypervisors. When presented with a problem, even where it was unclear where the issue had originated, Nutanix technical support would own it and fix it. It was never a case of being passed around,” says Tillson.

CUSTOMER OUTCOME

Prior to working with Nutanix, TT Electronics was managing a multitude of infrastructure, storage and networking stacks across the world. This made operations, management and maintenance of its critical infrastructure at existing and new sites extremely complicated. Today the company effortlessly operates centrally managed standardised infrastructure built on Nutanix Software.

The days of IT operations being spent on repetitive tasks are over. No longer are the IT teams stuck constantly querying and investigating technology. Centralised management has freed people up to perform value added tasks with a comfort factor of knowing it is going to work.

Adding new nodes or hardware upgrades to any site is straightforward. The IT teams are happy to upgrade a lot of different system parts at once as nodes integrate seamlessly into the cluster, resiliently sharing data across each node. Whether for maintenance to patch the firmware or upgrade systems, Nutanix one click technology makes changes straightforward.

Due to the simplicity associated with the Nutanix environment, the IT team now has more time available to perform other critical tasks. In the last 18 months TT Electronics has been able to perform much needed upgrades to its Server Operating System and is able to upgrade its Microsoft SQL Server platforms ‘because now we have time to do that thanks to the Nutanix virtual platform which does all that for you.’

TT Electronics makes several acquisitions each year. Thanks to Nutanix ease of integration it is now the standard platform for newly acquired companies. In early 2020, at one newly acquired company, TT Electronics performed a full integration and replaced all its systems within one month. This included on-boarding the entire operation onto its network, full active directory, email migration and replacing all of its storage infrastructure.

NEXT STEPS

TT Electronics’ move to a standardised Nutanix platform has opened up cloud opportunities. Where its SD-WAN deployment allows, it plans to start data replication from its smaller node sites to larger node sites—saving cloud backup costs in the process.

For longer term cloud strategies, Nutanix broader collaborations together with its automation features and improved security is opening doors for TT Electronics to exploit hyperscale cloud platforms. The stability being achieved with Nutanix and the ability to move VMs around on a single platform is providing the flexibility for TT Electronics to think seriously about hybrid cloud. Thanks to Nutanix the goal is a totally flexible approach of pay-as-you-go service models with instances deployed wherever they work best.



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