

# BIDTravel transforms its IT infrastructure to optimise private cloud environment

## About BIDTravel

**Industry:** Travel

**Geo:** EMEA, South Africa

**Website:** <https://www.bidtravel.co.za/>

### Applications

- ERP
- Databases
- Infrastructure and server management

### Products:

- [AHV Virtualization](#)
- [Flow Network Security](#)
- [Nutanix Cloud Infrastructure \(NCI\)](#)
- [Prism](#)

## Ready to get Hands-On?

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Leveraging advanced technology to modernise its private cloud environment, BIDTravel enhances operational efficiency and business agility.

Embracing technological innovation, Bidvest Travel (BIDTravel) has redefined travel management services across corporate and leisure sectors. The company provides industry-leading travel management services to both corporate entities and leisure travellers through its extensive local, regional, international, and online networks.

A significant variety of brands fall under the BIDTravel umbrella offering customised services to both the corporate business sector and leisure travellers locally and globally. These services range from handling every facet of leisure vacations to corporate travel contracts, agreements and comprehensive Travel Management Services.

"BIDTravel consists of nine different legal operating entities. Diversity is important to us as it opens more opportunities for the business and technology enables all of this," says Herby Seedat, CIO at BIDTravel.

## Key Results

**Centralised Management**

**Seamless Upgrades and Simplified**

**Rapid Deployment and Business Agility**

Powerful management capabilities and simplicity provide complete visibility from a centralised dashboard, significantly enhancing operational efficiency.

#### Migrations

Firmware upgrades happen automatically in the background. Virtual machine migrations are simplified, and infrastructure downtime has been eliminated.

Ability to deploy new servers in minutes instead of days, enabling the company to become more agile and responsive in driving business growth.

“The benefit of going the virtualisation route with Nutanix means we can rapidly respond to new projects. For instance, a new server can be created in 10 minutes as opposed to the 10 days in the past we had to wait before it could go live. Nutanix has really been a business enabler for BIDTravel.”

Herby Seedat,  
CIO at BIDTravel

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## Challenge

The organisation began a process of centralising its technology infrastructure in 2008. During that time, it transitioned to a traditional three-tier private cloud architecture.

“Even though the technology served us well in those years, there were challenges. Most of these stemmed from a lack of expertise that we had to outsource at a considerable cost. However, the outsourced model was still more cost-effective than employing specialists in-house,” says Seedat.

In 2016, there was an internal technology shift for BIDTravel, with Seedat taking on the role of CIO.

“The infrastructure we put in place was starting to show signs of failure. This resulted in several business reliability issues. With the public cloud gaining traction in the market, we spent a lot of time investigating opportunities in that space. However, we found that our approach of investing in the private cloud to be still more cost-effective than going the public cloud route,” he says.

This was especially true given the scale of BIDTravel's infrastructure with 300 on-premise servers. To operate that amount of technology infrastructure in the public cloud would be cost-prohibitive.

“We were introduced to Nutanix at the end of 2016 and realised that the hyperconverged approach was the best strategy for our business. After looking at several options, we invested in Nutanix in 2018 and migrated our 300 servers to their platform.”

As part of this, BIDTravel aimed to optimise its environment and purposefully transition to the cloud. As such, it has taken its services to the cloud while its infrastructure is now managed on-premises with Nutanix.

“After having successfully run the Nutanix in our private cloud infrastructure for six years, we decided to embark on a new journey. While we wanted to move to the public cloud earlier this year, our research showed us that the private cloud would still be more commercially viable. We decided to remain with Nutanix as we have been very happy with their technology.”

BIDTravel began a complete upgrade of its entire Nutanix ecosystem in February this year (2024). It successfully migrated 80 servers within a month to the new Nutanix environment. It also moved away from Hyper-V to Nutanix as its hypervisor of choice which was also a significant shift for the organisation.

“Given the scale and complexity of the upgrade, there were some challenges. However, 95% of our workloads could be automatically migrated thanks to the power of Nutanix Move. For the rest, we made a few manual interventions, but all of this happened without interruption or downtime to our business,” says Seedat.

In fact, Seedat admits that the Exco did not want to believe him when he told them a migration had already occurred.

“We had no downtime across all nine of our operating divisions, which is unheard of. This is a testament to the power of Nutanix and the real win for me. BIDTravel has enjoyed a massive infrastructure upgrade without any negative impact on the business.”

## Solution

Today, BIDTravel runs its entire data estate on Nutanix infrastructure. Furthermore, its infrastructure servers, like domain controllers, also run exclusively on Nutanix. One of BIDTravel's key business applications -A Java-based load balancing solution – and its on-premises ERP environment are powered by Nutanix infrastructure.

“Nutanix has become a critical part of our business. As we continue to engage with Nutanix, we learn more about their technology and are

identifying new ways to enhance our environment. For example, the additional security layers that Nutanix offers are exciting, with many opportunities still to unlock with the technology,” says Seedat.

## Benefits

From a resourcing perspective, the business benefits of Nutanix have been clear.

“Our three-tier architecture used to require three very expensive specialist resources to manage. Today, we manage all our Nutanix infrastructure with just one person. Because of the powerful management capabilities provided by Nutanix and the simplicity of the environment, we now have complete visibility of our infrastructure from a centralised dashboard. This is a key value of Nutanix,” says Seedat.

Additionally, firmware upgrades are happening smoothly and have become a non-event for the business as they happen automatically in the background without disrupting the business. The Nutanix Move solution has also proved massively beneficial for BIDTravel in simplifying the company’s virtual machine migrations.

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He says that having TCM as an implementation partner for BIDTravel has also been significant.

“TCM understands our environment well and has been with us since the initial implementation phase. This puts a strong foundation in place for our infrastructure to run smoothly. An implementation of this scale and complexity means we are reliant on having a good partner who is actively engaged with us. In this regard, TCM has risen to the occasion, especially in showing the value of Nutanix to BIDTravel.”

Seedat adds that, unlike many other businesses where technology is left in the backroom, BIDTravel puts technology at the forefront.

“Our technology team is at the forefront of our operations. They are the business partners to our nine divisions and the key to us unlocking growth.”

## Next Steps

“For us at BIDTravel, the arrival of the Nutanix Cloud services in South Africa will be a game-changer when we start to put the option of using public cloud back on the table. Of course, the Nutanix technology we currently have in place already provides significant benefits and will assist us in making this a seamless transition,” adds Seedat.

One of these areas is Nutanix Flow Network Security. Even though BIDTravel is already using the system, it is identifying more ways to integrate it into its environment. There is currently an ongoing project to enable micro-segmentation through Flow to increase the security capabilities of BIDTravel’s infrastructure and better safeguard it from an operational aspect.

There are also capabilities within the AWS hyperscaler space to optimise Nutanix at BIDTravel and other areas where the technology’s services can be enhanced.

“Advanced technologies like AI and GenAI are important for us. Nutanix infrastructure provides BIDTravel with the enabling environment to adopt these technologies. We have been very specific in how we use AI and will look to introduce some exciting GenAI solutions over the next several months on top of our Nutanix infrastructure,” says Seedat.

# NUTANIX

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