

JR Hokkaido consolidates almost all of its ICT systems onto Nutanix, promoting DX while avoiding risks

About JR Hokkaido

Industry: Transportation

Location: Japan; APJ

Website: www.jrhokkaido.co.jp

Applications:

- Core information and business systems such as personnel affairs
- Railway Operation Management System
- Track maintenance equipment management system
- RPA (Robotic Process Automation)

Products:

- [AOS Storage](#)
- [Intelligent Operations](#)
- [Life Cycle Manager](#)
- [Nutanix Cloud Infrastructure \(NCI\)](#)
- [Nutanix Cloud Manager \(NCM\)](#)

Solutions:

- [Business Critical and Enterprise Apps](#)
- [Private Cloud](#)
- [VMware](#)

Ready to get Hands-On?

[Take a Test Drive](#)

Nutanix supports future DX by reducing costs, simplifying processes, and minimizing workloads.

JR Hokkaido's biggest challenge was creating a company-wide optimized integrated infrastructure that can be seamlessly expanded and modified to suit market demands. They achieved this with Nutanix Cloud Platform software and HPE hardware, introducing "IaaS'20" in 2019. This has reduced operational burdens and ensured sustainable maintenance. Nutanix has operated reliably for nearly five years without issues, underscoring its credibility and performance on general-purpose x86 servers.

Key Benefits

Seamlessly scale and expand

To suit internal demands or meet external business needs

Ease of use

Compact maintenance management ensures sustainable maintenance and operation

High performance of distributed storage

Eliminate need for expensive dedicated storage

“ In 2024, we became convinced that actively pursuing digitalization would enable us to provide stable services to JR Hokkaido customers. Given the significant population decline and aging demographics in our region, it was essential to improve the efficiency of our operations by making full use of digital transformation. So we made a major shift to a digital-first approach, despite the effort and cost involved. Nutanix provided the foundation for this initiative. ”

Mr. Akira Fukushi,
Director, Information Systems Department, Corporate Planning Division, Hokkaido Railway Company

“ Key factors for JR Hokkaido in selecting a system were stability as a critical infrastructure operator and a proven implementation track record. Nutanix, a leader in multi-cloud platforms, offers unmatched advantages in these areas, which led us to place our trust in them. ”

Hokkaido Railway Company Corporate Planning Headquarters Information Systems Department

“ It felt like Nutanix had finally provided us with a system for integrating multiple virtualization platforms. With the previous three-tier configuration, we were spending money on each main department, creating unnecessary duplicate systems. Now, we have transitioned to an environment where we only need to add server nodes, significantly improving our efficiency. ”

Mr. Toshitaka Okuyama,
NetOne Systems Co., Ltd. East Japan 1st Business Headquarters Public 3rd Technology Department 4th Team Expert

Challenge

Hokkaido's population is rapidly declining and aging, leading to reduced future demand for railway and development businesses. To address this, expanding markets and securing human resources to operate the railway are crucial issues. Post-COVID-19, tourism is recovering, creating inbound demand for tourists, hotels, and real estate. Therefore, capturing this market growth is essential for JR Hokkaido. The company has set its sights on enhancing efficiency through digitalization, including implementing company-wide wireless LAN, expanding the use of RPA, evaluating generative AI, and cultivating digital champions within the organization. Automation tools are used for ICT infrastructure management, with efforts focused on consolidating and virtualizing hardware and software to overcome previous digitalization delays.

Solution

Previously, JR Hokkaido's business system infrastructure had a 3-tier structure built by each department, leading to low device consolidation and high costs due to wasted resources. Operational management was burdensome with many devices requiring oversight. In 2019, JR Hokkaido introduced the Nutanix Cloud Platform to create a common infrastructure with high consolidation, reducing costs and simplifying operations. Currently, nearly 200 virtual servers run on Nutanix's on-prem infrastructure.

After evaluating both cloud and on-prem options, JR Hokkaido has set their sights on the latter, because "we cannot risk having cloud service disruption suspend our train operations," explains Akira Fukushi, Director of Information Systems. However, if more datacenters are built in Hokkaido, they would hope to enable a multi-cloud operation.

On the other hand for security measures, JR Hokkaido adopts a cloud-first approach. Fukushi believes public clouds offer the latest developments in security services, which are crucial given the sophistication of cyber-attacks and the difficulty in securing dedicated security personnel. JR Hokkaido currently operates all website WAF and DDoS countermeasures in the cloud.

Customer Outcome

The biggest challenge for JR Hokkaido's business system infrastructure was to create a company-wide optimized integrated infrastructure that transcends departmental boundaries and can be seamlessly expanded and modified throughout multiple generations according to internal and external circumstances, rather than being a "build and forget" process. To achieve this, they decided that HPE, with a maintenance base in Hokkaido, was suitable for hardware, and Nutanix CloudPlatform, with a pioneer track record of building integrated environments and proven implementation, was suitable for software, according to Toshitaka Okuyama of NetOne Systems. They introduced and built an integrated infrastructure generation called "IaaS'20" in 2019.

JR Hokkaido's previous 3-tier configuration involved managing a large number of devices and resulted in significant operational and maintenance burdens. After adopting Nutanix Cloud Platform, the company was able to reap efficiencies in operations and maintenance. "It has been almost five years since we introduced Nutanix with IaaS'20, and it has continued to operate stably without any performance issues. We affirm that the distributed storage provided by Nutanix on a general-purpose x86 server is sufficient in terms of performance," says JR Hokkaido.

Next Steps

For future developments, JR Hokkaido plans to conduct a PoC to adopt AHV and move away from VMware. They aim to expand server infrastructure consolidation, currently at 90% in-house, to the 17 group companies across Hokkaido, creating a common infrastructure. Additionally, JR Hokkaido seeks to diversify from the railway business to hotels, real estate, and other ventures. The main department finds the current one-year project period for generation development too long. They aim to shorten this cycle and establish a system to provide resources timely for application releases. Promoting these efforts with group companies will advance new developments. They also look forward to utilizing Nutanix Kubernetes Platform (NKP), generative AI models, and Nutanix Enterprise AI (NAI) for simplified AI application development.

Learn more at www.nutanix.com

PARTNER

Since its establishment in 1988, Net One Systems has made a business of building information infrastructure incorporating the world's most advanced technologies, providing related services, offering know-how and references for achieving strategic ICT utilization, and supplying other high value-added services to major private corporations, government agencies and municipalities, telecommunication companies, and more.



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