



Beedie Development Group Builds Solid Real Estate Empire on Nutanix Hyper-Converged Platform

Canadian Developer Chooses Nutanix Web-Scale Converged Infrastructure to Support Multiple, Mixed Workloads and Launch New Disaster Recovery Facility

Company Background

Established in 1954, Beedie Development Group (BDG) is one of British Columbia's most respected companies specializing in land development, construction, and property management. As the largest private industrial land owner, developer, and landlord in Vancouver, Beedie has completed over 20 million square feet of new construction throughout Metro Vancouver and Alberta.

IT Challenges

Mark Wessel is the IT manager at Beedie Group. He is responsible for all new technology decisions and overall operations management of the company's Vancouver datacenter. BDG's IT environment was fully virtualized prior to moving to Nutanix, with a mix of IBM servers and an aging EMC SAN. "Our existing IT environment was far too complex," Wessel reported. "We were spending a lot of time configuring, integrating, and managing our separate SAN and server components. The other big challenge we were addressing was the lack of scalability. It required a significant amount of reconfiguration whenever we needed to add additional capacity of compute to the existing SAN and servers."

Finding Nutanix

Wessel and his team began the search for a better storage and server platform in 2014. "We needed to find something that was much simpler to configure and manage," Wessel said. "We also wanted to implement disaster recovery at a remote site. Our goal was to find a solution that had the DR component built-in, instead of having to add additional software functionality and complexity to the solution after the fact."

Beedie Group's IT reseller, Microserve, recommended Nutanix. Microserve is one of the largest independent IT solutions providers in Western Canada. Rooted in a philosophy of long-term partnerships and continuous innovation, its team of technology professionals has been delivering IT solutions and services to clients across BC and Alberta for more than 20 years.

"In addition to looking at Nutanix, we priced out several traditional server and SAN set ups," noted Wessel. "We also considered hosted solutions with the idea of moving our data center into the cloud. After reviewing the options, we decided to go with the Nutanix solution for its simplicity and ease of management." BDG purchased two Nutanix NX-1050 systems -- one for the company's head office, and a second appliance that would be placed at the company's disaster recovery co-location site.

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Industry

Real Estate Developer

Business Needs

Complexity of existing SAN and server infrastructure made it difficult to configure, manage, and scale the environment.

Solution

BDG is now using the Nutanix Virtual Computing Platform to support a wide variety of workloads and implement disaster recovery.

Benefits

- Shortened deployment times from several days to just a few hours
- Simplified management and enabled easy scalability
- Noticeably improved system performance
- Gained the ability to recover from a disaster in hours, versus weeks
- Provided a 4:1 reduction in datacenter footprint



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Faster Deployment and a Smaller Footprint

“It always took several days to get our old server and SAN setup up and running,” Wessel reported. “The actual deployment took just a few hours -- but configuring the systems and setting up communication between the server and the SAN equipment typically took multiple days. In contrast, it only took an hour or two to deploy the Nutanix systems. We migrated all of our data over to the Nutanix cluster very quickly, with absolutely no issues. The entire deployment process was quite simple and very painless.”

The Nutanix systems fit into a much smaller footprint, according to Wessel. “Our old EMC systems took up 8Us of space, but the same amount of Nutanix fits in just 2U. In addition to the smaller footprint, Nutanix compression and de-duplication have certainly given us more capacity in the same amount of space.”

High Performance for Multiple, Mixed Workloads on One Nutanix System

BDG is now running 8TB of data on just one Nutanix cluster. “We host all of our own email systems, SQL servers, databases for accounting systems, file servers, terminal remote servers, and application servers -- everything is running beautifully on the same Nutanix system,” noted Wessel. “It’s painless in terms of administration, resource allocation, and balancing for all of the different workloads and virtualized servers we run on the Nutanix cluster.”

“We originally split the workloads up into several different containers, but found that wasn’t necessary,” Wessel explained. “We now know that we can configure all of the containers the same way with compression on and it works beautifully. There’s always a concern about a performance hit with compression when using other storage systems, but that’s not the case with Nutanix. As soon as we moved our virtual servers over from the old SAN to the Nutanix cluster we noticed an immediate improvement in performance. It was definitely noticeable even for our end users.”

Easier Management and Scalability

Nutanix provides simple scalability and manageability for BDG’s IT team. “Administrative tasks are definitely a lot quicker and easier with Nutanix,” Wessel reported. “It used to take an hour to provision new storage with EMC; it takes just a minute with Nutanix. We recently added a fourth node onto the Nutanix cluster. The process went quickly and we increased capacity without any issues. It’s nice to know that we can easily scale to keep up with our increasing appetite for data storage. We expect to be adding another node or two to the cluster within the next year.”

Facilitating Disaster Recovery

“Prior to Nutanix, we were backing everything up to tape,” Wessel admitted. “If there was a major problem at our head office, there was no easy or quick way to stand up our operations in another location. Our old environment was just too complex; we would have needed to use third-party applications to facilitate the DR.”

BDG installed its second Nutanix system at a co-location facility in Edmonton, Alberta for disaster recovery. “Nutanix really simplifies DR,” noted Wessel. “It gives me a peace of mind to know that our entire data center is now replicated to another location -- ready and waiting should we need it. We could probably stand up our entire environment in just an hour or two, versus weeks or more to get something set up in our old environment -- if it worked at all.”

Relying on Nutanix Prism and Tech Support

BDG is using Nutanix Prism to monitor the company’s main datacenter and DR environment. “Prism is quite visual and provides a nice snapshot of our entire environment,” noted Wessel. “We can easily perform all of our key actions

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through it and monitor everything we need to. To be honest, the Nutanix cluster has so much horsepower we don't have to do much fine-tuning to get peak performance, so we haven't use the Prism analytics too much yet. We monitor the environment now and then just to make sure things look okay, but we don't have to babysit it."

Wessel has also been very impressed with Nutanix Technical Support. "Nutanix has a first-class tech support organization," he reported. "The Nutanix professionals I have worked with are all very knowledgeable and prompt getting back to us when resolving issues."

"The simplicity and the built-in DR functionality of Nutanix were both major selling points for us," Wessel concluded. "Having Nutanix in another location where we can easily replicate and failover if needed has been one of the big positives of Nutanix. We didn't run a POC; we jumped in with both feet and kept our fingers crossed that it would work - which it did. We are extremely happy with our decision to switch to Nutanix."

About Nutanix

Nutanix delivers web-scale converged infrastructure to medium and large enterprises with its software-driven Virtual Computing Platform, natively converging compute and storage into a single solution to drive unprecedented simplicity in the datacenter. Customers can start with a few servers and scale to thousands, with predictable performance and economics. With a proprietary elastic data fabric and consumer-grade management, Nutanix is the blueprint for application-optimized and policy-driven infrastructure.

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