

Risk Management Firm ADD Ensures Optimal Infrastructure Performance with Nutanix

Background

ADD is one of Belgium's largest insurance and risk management firms, trading for over 60 years. It forms part of the KBC banking group and employs 100 specialized workers across two offices, one in Heverlee and the other in Merelbeke. It offers advice on reducing and avoiding business risk, and its insurance plans are designed to be unique for each client.

Maintenance Issues

Like so many businesses across the world, ADD was reliant on a traditional three layer architecture made up of server, storage and networking. However, the IT team at ADD was spending more of its valuable time simply keeping the system running; upgrades and maintenance were time consuming, complex and expensive, and power consumption was an ongoing concern.

In addition to this, the variety of ADD's operations means the company runs a lot of applications, each with many different components. Furthermore, as part of a banking group, security is paramount for ADD. Combined, it was proving too much for the small team to manage. Upgrades had to be carried out after business hours as the downtime would have been unacceptable during trading hours.

Search for a Better Solution

Geert Celie, ICT Manager at ADD, and his team started researching a better solution, one that was more efficient, had a smaller footprint and was easier to manage. Nutanix was brought to Celie's attention by an acquaintance working there. "He said he was working on some very exciting technology so I started to look into it," Celie says.

Impressed by the solution's potential, Celie says it was an easy job to sell Nutanix and its benefits to ADD's CEO, who trusted Celie's judgement. "We explained it all, why we needed it, how simple it would be to upgrade and how easy it is to use. IT cannot be a bottleneck for us, so we needed a simple solution for complex IT infrastructure," he explains. "Nutanix did all that and was priced very competitively, offering excellent value for money."

Quick Installation and Migration

"The installation of the Nutanix Virtual Computing Platform took only a few hours and migration started after just half a day," says Celie. "It was simply a case of copy and paste! Ultimately it was very easy, very fast to install and migrate." Perhaps most importantly, all this was done without any downtime, so productivity at ADD was not affected. In fact, workers were not even told the upgrade to Nutanix was happening. "We just did it and told them once it was finished," Celie explains. "The first thing anyone said was how much faster it all was."



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- Geert Celie, ICT Manager, ADD



Industry

Financial Services

Business Needs

A simple virtual infrastructure that is easy to manage and upgrade.

Solution

The Nutanix Virtual Computing Platform (NX-3000 Series)

Benefits

- Non-disruptive upgrades leading to zero downtime
- Rapid deployment of virtualized workloads
- Faster rollout of new technological innovations



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Celie has also been very pleased by the fast response he has received from the Nutanix support team. "We ran into a brief interruption during the installation process when an issue was discovered but the Nutanix support staff had it resolved within 10 minutes. That's the fastest response time I have ever seen; in my experience other vendors can take days to offer a solution to problems," says Celie.

All Virtual

ADD has been so impressed with the benefits that the Nutanix Virtual Compute Platform has brought to the business that everything virtual now runs on Nutanix, from servers to desktops to Lotus Notes. Test and development, grid servers, web servers and telephony services all now run on Nutanix's fast, easy to use and elegant solution.

"Now there is no downtime at all, all updates and upgrades just happen when everyone is working. It's been very easy to move to Nutanix," says Celie. In addition to vastly improving ADD's upgrade cycle, Nutanix has proven to be extremely easy to manage. "The graphical user interface provides a one-stop shop for ADD to monitor and manage its virtualized environment. In fact it is so easy to use that it is just like surfing the net," says Celie.

The vast improvement in the ease of use and performance of its virtualized environment has put ADD a long way ahead of schedule on other IT projects across the business. Its move to a virtual desktop infrastructure was planned to take place during the second half of 2014, but with Nutanix in place, ADD was able to start the project at the end of 2013. This project, planned to run for over over three months, was completed in just 14 days.

Additionally, plans to replace ADD's telephony server and rollout Microsoft Lync have been preponed. As part of ADD's plans to transform its IT department, it had planned to run a rigorous test and development platform to test new developments before rolling them out on a larger scale; IT feels enabled to bypass this stage with Nutanix in place now.

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The Best Solution

Ultimately ADD is very pleased with the Nutanix solution. "It's meeting our expectations because it does exactly what it says on the tin. I didn't think there was another architecture that could be as fast as a SAN, because that was developed to handle lots of data quickly, but now I am convinced that Nutanix is the best solution we could have chosen," concludes Celie.



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- Geert Celie, ICT Manager, ADD

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About Nutanix

Nutanix provides datacenter infrastructure solutions that are hyper-efficient, massively scalable and elegantly simple. The award-winning Nutanix Virtual Computing Platform has disrupted the market by seamlessly and natively converging compute and storage in a single appliance. Headquartered in San Jose, Calif. with offices and authorized solution providers throughout the world, Nutanix is privately held and backed by top-tier VC firms. For more information, visit www.nutanix.com.