

Bandai Namco Studio powers remote branch office with Nutanix

Simplified operations and management with substantial cost savings by migrating to Nutanix AHV

INDUSTRY

Media & Entertainment

BENEFITS

- Seamless migration process with great support from consulting team
- Simplified operation and maintenance process without local support in remote site
- High performance gives peace of mind and require less than 10% of previous work
- Easy troubleshooting and training with intuitive UI
- Reduced total operational costs

SOLUTIONS

Nutanix NX Series
Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform

- Nutanix AHV
- Nutanix Move
- Nutanix Prism

Nutanix Consulting

APPLICATIONS

- Active Directory Domain Controller
- Communication tool including chat server
- Version management system

BUSINESS BENEFITS

By moving to Nutanix Enterprise Cloud, Bandai Namco Studio is able to create a comprehensive environment for their game developers in subsidiaries outside of Japan's headquarters. With the ability to allow remote site-support, Nutanix enables control of datacenter to remain solely in the headquarters without any need for incurring costly on-site supervisions.



“With a global operation centered on Tokyo, we like the fact that simple and stable operation is possible even from remote sites, and this is due to the Nutanix platform.”

- Takeshi Isobe, General Manager, IT Services Planning Department, Administration Division, Administration Unit



“In the past whenever we had to update the system, we had to first notify users and then head to Singapore to shut down the system and conduct the update. But now, we are able to conduct updates even from home with just a single click, without shutting down the system or even notifying anybody. Updates are simple, as they can be done while multitasking, and only need to be confirmed after they have finished.”

- Kazuyuki Ishida, Storage Master, IT Services Section, IT Services Planning Department, Administration Division

CHALLENGES

Under the motto of “Innovation through Creativity,” Bandai Namco Studios develops and operates entertainment content. With overseas locations in Singapore and Malaysia, it has built an environment for game development and operation worldwide.

Difficulties in remote operation from Tokyo

Bandai Namco Studios Singapore had an existing communication environment with servers installed when launched, but the company wanted to position the Singapore office as the hub within Asia and so plans were made to rebuild a platform in the datacenter to cater for expansion in functionality. The team “wanted a platform that can be controlled and managed easily even from remote sites to maintain a global operation system centered on Tokyo from IT control perspective,” recalled Takeshi Isobe, General Manager of the IT Services Planning Department in the Administration Division of Administration Unit.

Inflexibility and operational difficulties with legacy IT architecture

The scale and the number of creators at the Singapore office was constantly growing. Kazuyuki Ishida of the IT Services Section of Administration Division could see that it was difficult for 3-tier architecture to match the speed of growth in an efficient way, for example, without having to create a new environment in Tokyo every time the need arose. “It was necessary to prioritize operating expenses over capital expenditures, and we felt that an environment with 3-tier architecture would present many issues in terms of operation,” said Ishida.

Losing control over data on cloud and cost-sensitive concerns

Though the team deliberated on using public cloud services, they were met with doubts from concerned clients about storing data externally and the efficiency of having large data traffic flows on cloud. “After considering factors such as processing speed and communication costs, we decided that an on-premise solution was ideal for use with our operations,” said Isobe.

SOLUTION

“We wanted to quickly construct a Software-Defined Data Center (SDDC), or a virtual data center built with software, which at the time was popular. It was Nutanix that fulfilled the functional requirements,” said Ishida, and Nutanix’s easy scalability was a highly regarded feature.

In the beginning, VMWare ESXi was the hypervisor selected to run on Nutanix and operated mainly communication tools. However, the company soon faced performance issues and stopped short of building a VMware SDDC environment. So in 2019 after three years of operation, the firewall in the virtual environment was replaced with a physical appliance. It was at this time that the decision was made to switch from VMware ESXi to Nutanix AHV. “We had constructed a test environment using Nutanix AHV, and the fact that we had a track record of stable performance in-house was significant. We were also hesitant to continue paying for the expense of a hypervisor,” said Ishida.

In addition, the company saw that appealing new solutions for Nutanix AHV were being released one after another, which led it to want to use other new features as well. Nutanix Calm was one of these that Ishida noticed. “I really wanted to build an environment in which we could use Nutanix Calm for cataloging and automated delivery,” said Ishida.

Currently, the production environment is running on NX Series and Nutanix AHV handles various workloads including communications tools such as chat, Active Directory domain controller and version control system for core product development.

CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

Seamless migration process with great support from consulting team

With the help of Nutanix Consulting, Bandai Namco Studios was able to complete all migration onto Nutanix AHV, without any incidents, in just one week using migration solution Nutanix Move. The process included migration environment research, workshops, migration planning, pre-migration testing, backup planning, and on-site migration operations and document creation. "There was a lot of pressure for this migration process but we found ourselves in good hands as the consulting team tailored the migration support to meet our needs. This is the first time we have received such red-carpet treatment," said Ishida glowingly.

Simplified operation and maintenance process even without local support in remote site

"In the past whenever we had to update the system, we had to first notify users and then head to Singapore to shut down the system and conduct the update. But now, we are able to conduct updates even from home with just a single click, without shutting down the system or even notifying anybody. Updates are simple, as they can be done while multitasking, and only need to be confirmed after they have finished," said Ishida.

"Until now, I have not experienced a situation in which maintenance was fundamentally completed remotely without an engineer on site. Not only does someone need to be present if a maintenance engineer comes, there is also the consideration that we have to rely on that person's skill. But now, we only have to launch the computer screen and have the proper maintenance conducted remotely," said Ishida, who was also surprised at the difference with Nutanix's support system compared to those of the past.

High performance gives peace of mind and require less than 10% of previous work

Since migrating to the new environment, Nutanix has continued to run stably without even a single problem arising. In fact, the system has continued to operate stably while requiring less than 10% of the previous labour. "It is a big deal to us that we can operate the system without emotional stress. It is really tough to work under the pressure of knowing the impact can be serious if something goes wrong, especially when you realise that you're controlling something in an overseas location while sitting in Tokyo. It is truly a benefit to be able to operate the system with confidence and peace of mind," said Isobe.

Easy troubleshooting and training with intuitive UI

"When operating the system with another company's management console, there were times when unexpected problems would arise from making a small modification in settings. But now with Nutanix Prism, operation has become simple, and it is possible to achieve stable operation without a lot of trouble. In addition, it's possible to operate the system from a single console without needing to print out detailed instructions, so training has become simple," said Ishida.

Reduced total operational costs

By migrating to AHV, Bandai Namco Studios has saved unnecessary license fees on hypervisors, and also reaped substantial savings in operation costs with the introduction of Nutanix Prism, said Ishida.

NEXT STEPS

Moving forward, Bandai Namco Studios is considering the adoption of new solutions such as Nutanix Karbon, a Kubernetes solution that enables operation and management of container environments, and Nutanix Xi Frame, a DaaS (Desktop as a Service) solution for testing designed for work style reform.

Should a similar environment be planned for Japan, Bandai Namco Studios has hinted at the possibility of considering Nutanix Xi Leap, which can be used to build a disaster recovery environment, as Japan has a higher risk for natural disasters when compared to Singapore.

“By choosing Nutanix, it is simple to deploy a hybrid cloud, and we are grateful for the ability to scale out,” said Ishida. “With our plan to continue to bolster global management, it will become increasingly important to reduce costs as much as possible, and at the same time construct environments with solid governance. We will be counting on Nutanix in the future,” concluded Ishida and Isobe.



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