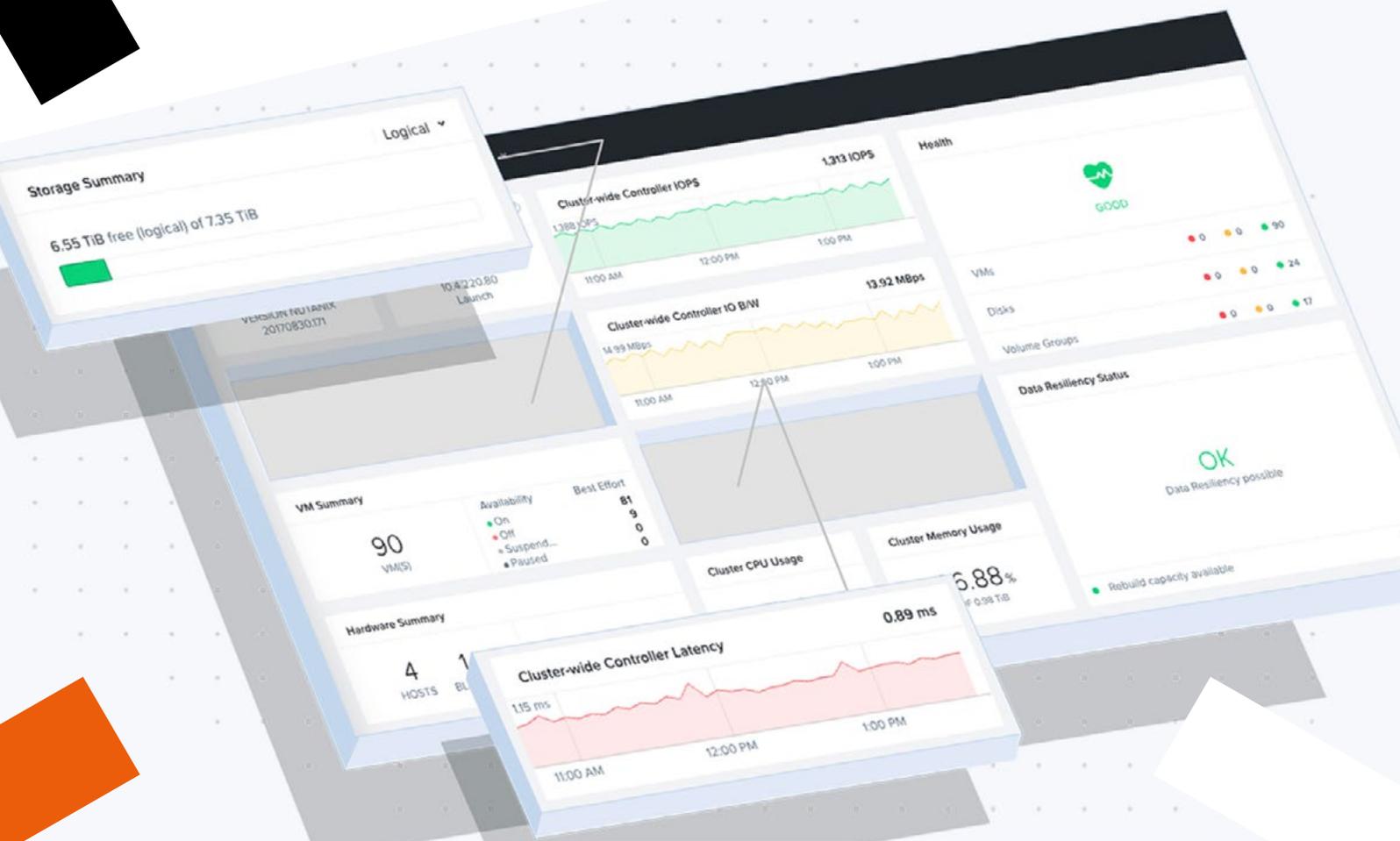


# Achieving better flexibility through virtualisation

Nutanix in media and broadcast

August 2021



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## It's time to get virtual

The corporate world has long embraced virtualisation, with HCI technology especially popular among blue chip businesses who appreciate its ability to provide immense amounts of compute power without the need to keep bulky hardware on their premises.

But in recent times, the media and broadcast sector has cottoned on, too – and that's no surprise.

HCI can be a great stepping stone towards a full move to the cloud. Many of the barriers to virtualisation that deterred media companies in the past have been removed, too. As technology has caught up, large memory footprints, file sizes and network capabilities are no longer an issue.

And because media and broadcast facilities need to handle increasingly complex workflows with ever-changing project pipelines, HCI offers an attractive solution for deploying and redeploying edit workstations and servers.

The rise of remote working also tallies well with virtualisation; if your post-production teams are now working at home or on a hybrid arrangement, giving them access to their workflow via a HCI solution will be particularly timely.

Similarly, if you've been put off by the costs and complexities of running an expensive alternative like VMware, embracing new virtualisation technology now presents an innovative new alternative for you to move to.

But why's virtualisation relevant to media and entertainment, and how does HCI work?

In this whitepaper, we'll answer all these questions, give you an overview of what you can expect, and explain why it's an increasingly popular choice for running creative compute workloads in media and broadcast businesses.

You'll learn how virtualisation can offer long-term cost savings, as well as what it could mean for your media and broadcast company if you want to be able to scale up your number of edit suites quickly and easily.



## The benefits

The big advantages virtualisation offers to media and broadcast companies are flexibility, security and simplicity.

With flexibility also comes long-term savings, as there's less of a need to invest in a specific workstation. As your needs grow, so does the hyperconverged pool of resources, meaning your previous investment can be augmented by newer servers that become nodes in the cluster from which more virtual workstations can be created. There are no obsolete workstations here.

Plus, you can always fully utilise all your resources. If your edit suite isn't booked, you can simply change your cluster's configuration in response – meaning no more expensive workstations sitting unused. Likewise, you can scale up your cluster over time by adding additional CPU cores or RAM, too.

Another benefit of HCI is that it is 100% redundant, so your edit suites can be more reliable and there's never downtime caused by a faulty workstation. That gives you peace of mind and confidence.

Take Nutanix as an example – one of the leaders in HCI virtualisation (more on them later).

Their partnership with Avid means Media Composer is fully supported on the virtual machines our experts build, while Adobe Creative Cloud also runs great on the same workstations, too.

Typically, an entry-level Nutanix setup can host as many as 12 instances of Avid Media Composer (and is able to scale up to host far more).

That's an awful lot of post-production potential, all thanks to HCI virtualisation.

## Nutanix in a nutshell

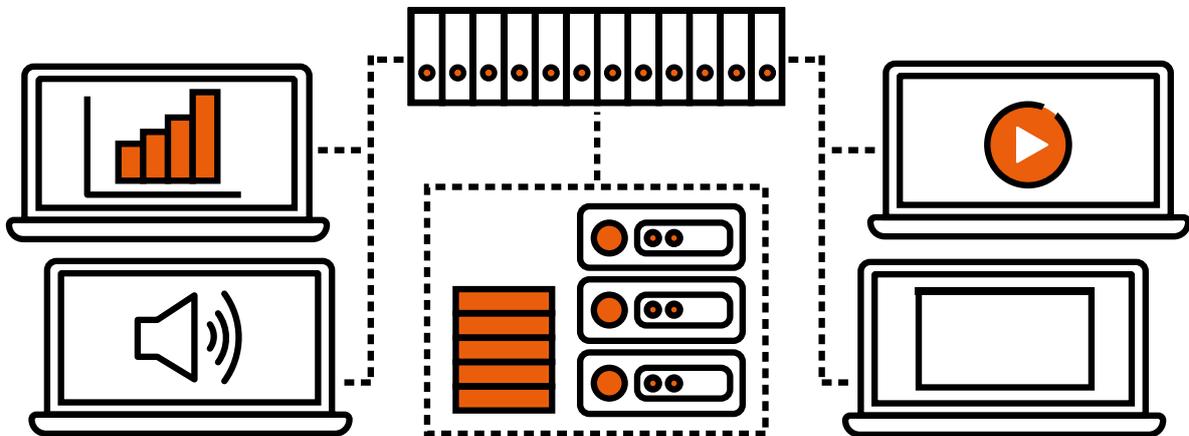
Nutanix's virtual computing solution offers some significant benefits to media and broadcast companies.

The technology harnesses the potential of hyperconverged infrastructure to provide virtualised computing power, letting customers spin up machines or servers without having to buy expensive individual physical devices that may sometimes sit idle.

That can make it easier to create lots of high-power workstations at once, with greater flexibility to increase or decrease your resources. In effect, it's all about getting maximum utilisation from your hardware investment – which means greater operational flexibility and a lower total cost of ownership.

And with Avid having embraced Nutanix and certified the virtualisation itself, there's a clear case for its use in media and broadcast.

So how does Nutanix work? And why is it better than buying lots of individual workstations and servers to handle workloads and run apps found in a post house or broadcaster?



## How Nutanix works

The technology behind Nutanix's solution may be innovative and complex, but the principle behind it is simple.

Nutanix creates a pooled resource of hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) – think hardware, software, servers and storage – running on industry-standard commodity servers from a wide range of vendors.

Each server is a 'node' of Nutanix, which each contain CPU, fast storage, RAM and GPU. Together, these nodes form a 'cluster', from which virtual computers can be created using the hyperconverged pool of resources from the cluster to underpin the virtual machines that a business needs to perform its varying workloads.

Nutanix clusters can be virtualised into multiple workstations – more than physically exist – and these virtual machines can vary in power and size according to the jobs that need doing that day or week.



## Virtualisation the flexible way

That flexibility is Nutanix's big advantage – you can change your configuration over time to best suit your workflow, in ways that would be prohibitively expensive with traditional infrastructure.

And because Nutanix are working with lots of the usual suspects in the media and broadcast world, there are an increasing number of vendors that have approved Nutanix as a platform to run their software in a 'supported' configuration.

For example, you could have the equivalent of 12 less powerful workstations on one day, but six of these and four more powerful workstations the next day in order to maximise different projects' productivity, all built from the same hyperconverged pool of resources.

Building and managing virtual machines is done through Nutanix's Prism dashboard, which is user friendly and powerful. Clusters in different buildings or countries can all be managed in one 'single pane of glass' so that creating and changing virtual machines, wherever they are needed, is child's play. Even upgrading the Prism software takes just one click.

The software architecture is hardware agnostic, so it works well with servers from big-name manufacturers including Dell, Cisco and Intel. That means that if you prefer a particular brand, you can buy your nodes from them if you want.

Effectively, Nutanix's HCI solution functions like a private cloud with all the advantages and flexibility normally associated with public ones. But it's better suited for media and broadcast workloads as the virtual machines can be connected to on-premise storage like Avid Nexis, so moving huge amounts of media to and from the public cloud is not required.

## Is Nutanix right for us?

With any new technology, it can be hard to know if your company will be able to take full advantage. How can you be sure virtualisation will suit your workflow, or that Nutanix will prove cost-effective?

Whenever we talk to customers about HCI, one of the first questions we ask is how many edit suites they have (or need to have). If the answer is fewer than 10, other solutions are likely to be more appropriate – but at this level or above, Nutanix really comes into its own from a return on investment perspective.

Another thing to consider is the extent to which the number of edit suites you operate fluctuates in line with demand. Do you experience peaks and troughs of workload? If so, being able to quickly create additional edit suites on demand with Nutanix could be a big boon.

You'll get the most out of Nutanix if you are a medium to large post-production house, a broadcaster (or a broadcast managed service provider), a production company with a large post department, a media and broadcast equipment hire company, or a higher education establishment with media courses.

Per workstation, Nutanix's solution can be much more cost-effective than buying traditional equivalents. The software licensing is purchased on a subscription basis, but you own the hardware outright – so if you divide the total cost by the number of workstations you'll be able to use, you may find you can make a hefty saving.

What sets Nutanix apart from the virtualisation competition, though, is its power and simplicity.

Everything is configured within a browser, and the focus is clearly on apps and usage, not on maintaining the stack. Many of the behind-the-scenes processes are automated and hidden from the user, and maintenance is much easier as a result.

## Getting started with Nutanix

We work incredibly closely with Nutanix, but we also provide an unrivalled blend of media and broadcast experience and IT expertise. We've been running virtualised media workflows since 2015, virtualising our own back operations as far back as 2007, and regularly work with enterprise customers to help them reap the rewards of hyperconverged infrastructure.

Our knowledge of production and post – fields in which most of our experts have worked themselves – means we're not only the specialists in virtualisation, but also familiar with our industry, your priorities and your challenges, too.

No other Nutanix partner is focused on media and entertainment in the same way, and our broader strength with other solutions allows us to build a wider workflow for you around Nutanix. We can provide consultancy, design, deployment, workflow integration and collaborative environment support – whatever you need to find the right solution.

We're already helping many of your competitors in the sector to roll out Nutanix, and we're here to talk to you about how you can take advantage too.