Why engineering leader Vössing chose Nasuni hybrid cloud file storage

As a leading engineering firm in consultancy, management, planning, project, and construction supervision, Vössing has been implementing infrastructure projects of every scale for 40 years.

With over 600 employees at 20 locations in Germany and abroad, Vössing plans and designs national and international projects, from concept all the way through to implementation. Through an extensive network of branches, Vössing engineers are always close to customers, and working with them to develop tailor-made solutions to the highest specifications.

In 2016, Director of IT Bernd Gewehr and his team determined that Vössing's traditional storage hardware and backup solutions no longer fit into the highly innovative IT strategy of the company.

VÖSSING
INGENIEURE

Industry
AEC

Cloud file storage
Nasuni

Object storage
Vodafone, Microsoft Azure Blob Storage

Use cases
File storage consolidation; storage/backup/DR to the cloud; multi-site collaboration

Benefits
Unlimited cloud capacity; efficient collaboration to leverage distributed engineering talent; fast restores at all offices; one solution to manage all storage and data protection; massive hardware reduction

Vössing wanted a scalable, highly available, and branch-latency-optimizing storage service. The 700 staff members spread across some 25 offices were increasingly looking to collaborate on the same projects. Backups were cumbersome, restores took far too long, and managing capacity at so many sites was a major headache. Vössing set out to find alternative solutions that addressed three specific goals:

1. Improve backups of virtual machine data

2. Accelerate restores at branch offices

3. Support cross-branch collaboration with low latency

Ideally, a single system would address each of these needs, and at first Vössing considered designing one themselves. "We were wondering how we could create an intelligent swarm of file servers that, although they are not one, act as one," Gewehr recalls, "and that's when someone in the room said, 'I heard of a solution called Nasuni.'"

Nasuni cloud file storage

After some technical due diligence, Gewehr and his team discovered that the cloud-native Nasuni platform offers:

• Limitless on-demand storage capacity in the cloud

• Easy on-demand delivery of cloud content to the edge

• Cost-effective NAS consolidation that reduces disk space on-prem

• Faster file recoveries through Continuous File Versioning®

• Cloud-based file sharing that scales to hundreds of locations

• Enhanced management tools for IT

Ransomware readiness
Vössing has used Nasuni to test how the company would respond in the event of a distributed ransomware attack on Windows servers; Gewehr and his team ran through a scenario and successfully restored VM snapshots from minutes before the hypothetical attack. Later, an IT associate at a hospital relayed his own ransomware horror story, and how it took the hospital more than 2 months to return to normal. "I told him, well, you should think about a better file service solution," Gewehr recalls. "With Nasuni, it would only take us a few hours to create a state where we could have been working again."

Furthermore, Nasuni delivered these and other benefits through a single solution that met Vössing's initial requirements:

⬇ Efficient file data backup

Virtual Nasuni Edge Appliances cache files locally for fast access, but all files are automatically versioned to and protected in the cloud, and can be restored within minutes.

🔄 Fast branch office restores

The company's prior NetApp-centric infrastructure was difficult to manage and costly to protect— Gewehr saw no value in buying an extra machine to back up his first one, and a tape library to protect that pair. Nasuni extends fast, simple recoveries to every office. "I didn't want to have multiple machines consuming lots of power and not generating any value," he recalls. "When we learned that the Nasuni solution is just a pointer to move back to an older version, well, that was when I started smiling."

🕐 Accelerated multi-site collaboration

Nasuni's cloud-centric architecture allows for unprecedented file synchronization and collaboration capabilities – even on large AutoCAD files and other complex project data. Multiple offices enjoy fast access to the most recent versions of files, and the Nasuni Global File Lock® limits productivity stopping editing conflicts.

> Nasuni decouples the size of the file system from local hardware, allowing many **Nasuni customers to reduce local storage hardware needs by 80–95%.**

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>
> **Bernd Gewehr**, Director of IT, Vössing

Additional benefits

Reduced local infrastructure

Nasuni decouples the size of the file system from local hardware, allowing many Nasuni customers to reduce local storage hardware needs by 80–95%. "You do not need to provision as much storage to the location as you did before," Gewehr explains. "This is a simple benefit of the Nasuni architecture. We can buy smaller, less expensive disk subsystems for branch servers. We buy flash only now because for smaller storage sizes, this is affordable and raises UX a lot."

Increased resilience

Previously, Vössing would have to outfit each branch with storage hardware and a backup solution, and restoring data in the event of a failure or disaster still would have taken days. "When we create a new branch server now it's just a few 3TB SSDs," Gewehr says, "and if they break, you lose five minutes of work. That's the beauty of Nasuni."

Value-added cost reduction

At first, Vössing deemed the Nasuni solution expensive, but once IT factored in the value delivered, and the costs that could be removed, their thinking changed. Shutting off one large NetApp array alone drove significant savings: "The power consumption cost at our HQ dropped significantly when we switched that thing off," Gewehr says.

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Bernd Gewehr, Director of IT, Vössing

Simpler IT management

One other unexpected cost benefit has resonated with Gewehr on a direct level: "Nasuni was possibly one of the best investments we ever made because it removed all the stress of owning millions of files at 25 branches— and backing them up quickly and safely— and being able to restore them quickly and completely. This is the real beauty of Nasuni. I don't think about backup and restore anymore. I had this complex topic that had kept me busy for part of my day, sometimes all day, and when we introduced Nasuni, this whole problem was solved. That freed my schedule for more important things than how to operate and backup file servers."

Best practices and future plans

As experienced IT innovators, Gewehr andhis team have offered Nasuni valuable insights into how the product functions in the field – and suggestions on how to improve certain aspects. He also has advice for any prospective customers: "I would suggest everyone using Nasuni think about bandwidth. We heavily invested in bandwidth and really made Nasuni fly."

Ultimately, Gewehr comes back to the fact that a single solution satisfies multiple company needs. "There were three areas where we were looking for new solutions," he notes. "They were all separate solutions within a traditional IT infrastructure, but Nasuni solved all three problems for us at once."

≡ NASUNI

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Nasuni is a fluid data platform for enterprises facing an explosion of unstructured data in an AI world, eliminating the choice between expensive tinkering or an overwhelming transformation of your entire data infrastructure.

The Nasuni File Data Platform delivers effortless scale in hybrid cloud environments, enables control at the network edge, and meets the modern enterprise expectation for protected, insight- and AI-ready data. It simplifies file data management while increasing access and performance.

Consolidate data, cut costs, and empower users — all while transforming your data from obstacle into opportunity.