FILE SERVERS: IS IT TIME TO SAY GOODBYE?

Storage Switzerland, LLC

NASUNI

Unstructured data is the fastest-growing segment of data in the data center. A significant portion of data within unstructured data is the data that users create though office productivity and other specialized applications. User data also often represents the bulk of the organization's intellectual property. Traditionally, user data is stored on either file servers or network-attached storage (NAS) systems, which IT tries to locate solely at a primary data center.

Initially, the problem that IT faced with storing unstructured data was keeping up with its growth, which leads to file server or NAS sprawl. Now the problem IT faces in storing file data is that users are no longer located in a single primary headquarters. The distribution of employees exacerbates file server sprawl. It also makes it almost impossible for collaboration on the data between locations.

IT has tried various workarounds like routing everyone to a single server via a virtual private network (VPN), which leads to inconsistent connections and unacceptable performance. Users rebel and implement workarounds like consumer file sync and share, which puts corporate data at risk. Organizations are looking to the cloud for alternatives. Still, most cloud solutions are either attempts to harden file sync and share or are Cloud-only NAS implementations that don't allow for cloud latency.

NASUNI
A FILE SERVICES PLATFORM BUILT FOR THE CLOUD

Nasuni is a global file system that enables distributed organizations to work together as if they were all in a single office. It leverages the cloud as a primary storage point but integrates on-premises edge appliances, often running as virtual machines, to overcome cloud latency issues. The hub and spoke model mean that users in each location can access their files at local performance levels while still having access to all of the organization's file data. Nasuni reports that their caches achieve a 98% "hit" rate, meaning it's rare for users to have to wait for the cloud.

In the distributed enterprise, multiple users around the world are likely working on the same project at the same time. These users mustn't overwrite each other's changes. It is also critical that they don't have to wade their way through several "conflicted copies" of files. The Nasuni global file system supports global file locking so that users can't overwrite each other's data. The solution also promotes multi-region cloud support to make sure that when there is a cache "miss," the files are retrieved from the closest possible data center. Multi-region support also helps organizations to meet data sovereignty requirements.

Nasuni provides continuous and immutable snapshots. New or modified data, after being stored on the local edge appliances, are immediately replicated to the cloud and then replicated again to at least one other cloud location. Nasuni also makes disaster recovery (DR) for file data easier. When IT establishes a DR site, they need to install another edge appliance. All data is then instantly available as the cache warms.

In its latest release, 8.7, the Nasuni File Service Platform adds Google Compute to the supported cloud storage options, joining its support for Azure and AWS. Also, Nasuni now supports additional private cloud offerings, including NetApp StorageGRID, Nutanix Objects, IBM Cloud Object Storage, Hitachi Vantara HCP, Scality Ring, and many others. Nasuni customers have tremendous flexibility as to where they store their data.

Also, in the 8.7 release is the Nasuni Analytics Connector that enables a customer to use cloud services to derive higher value from their file data. The Analytics Connector temporarily exports a second copy of file data in a cloud-native format, so cloud-based artificial intelligence tools like AWS Recognition and Macie can access it. The new release also features support for leading search software, including SharePoint Search, Acronis Files Connect, Cloudtenna, SearchBlox, GrayMeta, and NeoFinder.

Nasuni's 8.7 release also makes it easier for a large enterprise customer to make the migration to the cloud. With Nasuni Migration Services for AWS and Azure, customers can send data directly to the cloud, initially bypassing the on-premises edge appliance. The Migration Services also supports bulk data load mechanisms like Amazon Snowball and Microsoft's Data Box.

"NASUNI PROVIDES CONTINUOUS AND IMMUTABLE SNAPSHOTS"

STORAGESWISS TAKE

Using file servers or NAS systems to store user data seems outdated, given the reality of today's distributed organization. There are plenty of choices in the market, including enterprise file sync and share, and cloud-only NAS solutions. The Nasuni approach, however, provides organizations with a solution that enables them to maintain control over and protection of their organization's intellectual property. The latest release not only increases a Nasuni customer's flexibility, but it also allows them to better leverage cloud resources.

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Storage Switzerland is the leading storage analyst firm focused on the emerging storage categories of memory-based storage (Flash), Big Data, virtualization, and cloud computing. The firm is widely recognized for its blogs, white papers and videos on current approaches such as all-flash arrays, deduplication, SSD's, software-defined storage, backup appliances and storage networking. The name "Storage Switzerland" indicates a pledge to provide neutral analysis of the storage marketplace, rather than focusing on a single vendor approach.

NASUNI

Nasuni is a file services platform which runs in AWS and is powered by the world's only global file system, UniFS. Nasuni consolidates Network Attached Storage (NAS) and file server silos to cloud storage, delivering infinite scale. What makes it unique is that it also provides built-in backup, global file sharing, disaster recovery, and local file server performance. by combining all this functionality with the economics of the cloud it is able to provide file services at half the cost of traditional file infrastructures.