



AEC firm bolsters ransomware protection & cyberinsurance with Nasuni

Founded by architects and engineers in 1988, Highland Associates has designed everything from residential properties to mission-critical facilities, including cloud data centers. This deep familiarity with the cloud is one of the many reasons the firm’s IT department initiated a shift away from traditional file storage infrastructure.

The VPN connection between Highland Associates’ main locations was horrible, according to Director of IT Bruce Sobocinski, Sr. “Syncing Revit models would take way too long, and if anybody wanted to do any renderings, it was just brutal,” he recalls. Highland Associates had begun using the Autodesk Construction Cloud, but this wasn’t fast enough for internal revisions. Sobocinski was wary of his next storage refresh, given the increasing cost of hardware, and the threat of ransomware had turned cybersecurity into an executive-level concern.

Then a new hire told them about Nasuni – the hybrid cloud platform his previous architecture firm had relied on. Sobocinski was sold on Nasuni’s scalability, flexibility, cost structure, multi-site collaboration capabilities, and ransomware protection package.

HIGHLAND
ASSOCIATES
 architecture | engineering | interior design

Industry

AEC

File data platform

Nasuni

Use cases

Data protection;
 NAS consolidation; global file synchronization; data intelligence

Benefits

15X faster to open Revit models; intelligent ransomware protection; effortless scalability; high-speed multi-site collaboration; rapid ROI; cyberinsurance preparedness

Bolstered ransomware protection & cyberinsurance with Nasuni

Ransomware protection

The Nasuni File Data Platform automates data protection through continuous file versioning to the cloud. Highland Associates chose to further strengthen its security with Nasuni's Ransomware Protection Service, which proactively detects, alerts, quarantines, and reports on incidents.

Cyberinsurance ROI

One of the unexpected benefits? Cyberinsurance is essential for some of its customers, but prior to Nasuni, few carriers would offer the firm a policy. Once Highland Associates strengthened its position through Nasuni and other solutions, the firm received bids from 4X as many carriers. Highland Associates was able to choose a policy 2X as large for roughly the same price, and from a better provider.

"We have a more robust carrier and better coverage, so the ransomware investment paid for itself," Sobocinski explains. "Cyberinsurance is like car insurance. It's not if you're going to use it, but when, and you better have a good policy."

Sleeping soundly

For Sobocinski, Nasuni's ransomware protection has additional advantages. "Honestly, my sleep has gotten a lot better since moving to Nasuni, now that I'm not worrying about failed backups or ransomware," he says.



Nasuni hybrid cloud storage

Highland Associates was drawn to the flexibility of the Nasuni File Data Platform, and the ability to opt for multiple clouds. The data center design business at Highland Associates has been expanding rapidly in recent years. The strategic alliances Nasuni fosters with leading hyper-scalers are critical to the firm's growth.



The implementation team was unbelievable, it was like we had worked together for ten years."

Bruce Sobocinski, Sr, Director of IT

Since then, Highland Associates has been seeing multiple benefits from the switch to hybrid cloud storage with Nasuni.

Flexible scale

Capacity now scales cost effectively in object storage. "The scalability, given our data growth, and the way Nasuni links us all together on one platform is amazing," Sobocinski notes.

Multi-Site access

Each office enjoys fast, secure access to file data. High-speed file synchronization and global file locking eliminate version conflicts and ensure architects are working on the most recent versions.

15X performance boost

"It used to take 15 minutes to open a file," says Sobocinski. "Now it takes maybe a minute." Yet this 15X gain in performance is not just a convenience, it's business critical.

Speed = savings

Sobocinski says the faster performance translates into cost savings — a message that resonates powerfully with the executive board.



That reduced loading time on people's workstations, multiple times over the course of a day, pays for Nasuni in a few weeks."

Bruce Sobocinski, Sr, Director of IT

Shrinking infrastructure

Highland Associates only needs to cache around 5% of its total storage on local appliances to provide the rendering performance and flexibility the firm's architects and designers need. "Our next server refresh is coming up, and I'm excited because our footprint should be shrinking a lot because we're pushing so much data out [the cloud]," adds Sobocinski.

Data intelligence & beyond

The IT team at Highland Associates has been experimenting with Nasuni IQ to capture insights into the firm's data growth vectors and user behaviors relating to file revisions and overwriting.

"Our board had really been after us to capitalize on all this new technology and install a robust system," says Sobocinski. "Nasuni checks all the boxes. It made our bosses happy."



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Nasuni is a scalable 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.