THEMARSAGENCY®

INDUSTRY
Media & Marketing

CLOUD FILE STORAGE
Nasuni

OBJECT STORAGE
Microsoft Azure Blob Storage

USE CASES
File Storage Consolidation; Storage/Backup/DR to the cloud; Multi-Site Collaboration

BENEFITS
Flexible, on-demand capacity; conserving cash via opex spending; shorter time-to-market via fast collaboration; reduced risks through improved RPOs and RTOs; more IT FTE time for strategic projects

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The Mars Agency Upgrades to Nasuni for Unlimited Cloud File Storage, Faster File Recoveries, and Easy Collaboration

Founded in 1972 by industry pioneer Marilyn Barnett, The Mars Agency is a fiercely independent marketing agency that accelerates growth through shopper influence

The Mars Agency is headquartered in Detroit with 11 offices worldwide and 350+ employees affectionately known as "Martians." The company has earned a reputation as a technology innovator with an unparalleled dedication to helping clients find growth opportunities through consumers, shoppers, and customers – everywhere. The agency's clients appreciate that Mars will do whatever possible to exceed their business goals and maximize every marketing dollar.

These two hallmarks of its business, combined with consistently impactful creative work, have landed Mars some of the biggest brand and retail clients in the world. "Over the years, our clients have grown in sophistication and scale, and the business has had to grow in sophistication and scale as well," says Jason Hittleman, chief technology officer at The Mars Agency. "The complexities of our IT infrastructure grew as file sizes got bigger and our geographic footprint expanded. We had to find new ways to get the creative assets that our teams were working on to the people they were collaborating with."

NASUNI®

This was no small task as Martians regularly generate everything from 4K videos to high-resolution 3D displays. The need to support his colleagues and drastically improve data protection prompted Hittleman and his team to begin evaluating new ways to store, share, and protect files. After rigorously testing several solutions, the agency turned to Nasuni.

Nasuni Cloud File Storage

As the first and only cloud-native file storage, Nasuni met The Mars Agency's industry-leading technology and security standards. The Nasuni platform's proven success with two of the top advertising agencies in the world reassured Hittleman, and since modernizing its infrastructure with Nasuni, the agency has enjoyed multiple advantages.

Unlimited Cloud Capacity

Nasuni extends the unlimited scale of cloud file storage to every location while caching copies of frequently used files locally on lightweight Edge Appliance virtual machines. This way, Martians everywhere—including those working from home—have fast, secure access to files without needing duplicate storage arrays in each location.

Conserving Cash

Prior to selecting Nasuni, The Mars Agency had a much more capital-intensive infrastructure. "In the old days, we'd go and spend millions of dollars on a hardware refresh and we'd be stuck with that for years, even if we were only using a small percentage of it," explains Hittleman. "Moving to an operating expense mode with Nasuni has helped us even out our cash flow."

Optimizing Spending & Productivity

Nasuni's fast file synchronization and rapid recoveries dovetail with the agency's value-focused business model. "In our business, time is money. Our clients pay us for our time and we commit to being efficient with those dollars," Hittleman explains. "Having somebody wait for an upload to send to a colleague on the other side of the pond in London does not support our business model, and Nasuni helped solve that problem."

Previously, The Mars Agency set a goal of reducing its recovery point and recovery time objectives (RPOs and RTOs) to one hour, and they achieved that with Nasuni.

More Efficient Collaboration

At The Mars Agency, a new product launch or ongoing campaign involves different people in different places. Prior to Nasuni, a designer in New York and a creative in Detroit might unknowingly work on the same file at the same time, leading to productivity-killing version conflicts. Nasuni is designed to facilitate fast, secure, conflict-free collaboration. And that, in turn, means the agency's clients are getting the most for their dollar.

Vastly Improved RTOs

Previously, The Mars Agency set a goal of reducing its recovery point and recovery time objectives (RPOs and RTOs) to one hour, and they achieved that with Nasuni. "Our files are huge," says Senior Network Engineer Phil Mulloy. "How do you create a disaster recovery plan for hundreds of terabytes that will get all those files back in an hour? That's impossible unless you've got a solution like Nasuni."

Incremental RPOs

In the past, it might have taken hours or even days to restore a lost file, and even then IT might have to roll back to a previous version that was a day or two old. "Losing a day's worth of work is a big deal. I mean, that could have been the entire project," adds Hittleman. "We had to find a way to get our RTOs and RPOs down, and Nasuni is able to bring us back to a point in time within seconds, which is remarkable."

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> "Especially now in our COVID world, cash is a big deal, and Nasuni has really helped our business from a financial standpoint, not just an operational one."
>
> –Jason Hittleman, chief technology officer at The Mars Agency

Minimal Local Infrastructure

The Mars Agency has several satellite offices near the headquarters of major retailers like Kroger, Walmart, and Target, to facilitate strong relationships and provide in-market expertise for clients at the customer level. "Nasuni makes it very easy for us to not only open or expand an office, but to house a creative team in those offices, and that's a big difference," explains Hittleman. "Historically, it was very difficult for us to stand up a new office in a reasonable amount of time because of the infrastructure that was required, but now with the ability to just put a small piece of hardware there and a Nasuni virtual appliance, it's pretty painless."

> "We work with a lot of great companies, and Nasuni is one of them."
>
> –Jason Hittleman, chief technology officer at The Mars Agency

Freeing IT for Strategic Work

Since Nasuni automates and simplifies so many mundane tasks, IT has more time to focus on strategic projects like the agency's Marilyn℠ marketing technology platform, which helps the firm's clients deliver stronger results with their marketing investments.

Looking Ahead

Hittleman sees his agency's relationship with Nasuni as a long-term infrastructure solution. The Mars Agency is already using artificial intelligence and machine learning to scour its file data for strategic insights, and Hittleman is looking forward to leveraging Nasuni's Analytics Connector to make running analytics even easier. As the agency looks ahead at a post-pandemic business world, Hittleman is also glad to have a more flexible file infra-

structure with Nasuni. "We're thinking about what the implications are to the current infrastructure and how we support a longer-term work from home environment," he notes. "I think Nasuni and The Mars Agency are going to be well-positioned to deal with that on a long-term basis."

More generally, the pandemic has strengthened the agency's resolve to work with the best technology providers, both to support its own users and to show its clients that The Mars Agency is doing everything possible to deliver results. "Our clients are thankful for a lot of the things that we've been able to do to support them through this pandemic and part of it is because we are on the front lines in terms of finding the right partners," Hittleman says. "We work with a lot of great companies, and Nasuni is one of them."

About Nasuni

Nasuni is a file storage platform built for the cloud, powered by the world's only global file system, UniFS®. Nasuni consolidates Network Attached Storage (NAS) and file server silos in cloud storage, delivering infinite scale, built-in backup, global file sharing, and local file server performance, all at half the cost of traditional file infrastructures. The Nasuni software-as-a-service platform is most often used for NAS consolidation; backup and recovery modernization; multi-site file sharing; and rapid, infrastructure-free disaster recovery, while also serving as a foundation for data analytics and multi-cloud IT initiatives.

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SAL-0135   09/20