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Addressing the Challenges of Remote and Hybrid Work with the Nasuni File Data Platform

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Abstract: Remote and hybrid work—especially remote file access—comes with challenges. Until now, trying to address those challenges with stop-gap measures has negatively impacted IT resources and further fueled overall IT complexity. Fortunately, Nasuni has recently expanded its file data services offering with the Access Anywhere add-on service that helps users simplify and secure their hybrid work environment by standardizing on a single cloud file data platform.

Overview

Data plays a valuable role in all facets of business operations. Today, most businesses surveyed by TechTarget's Enterprise Strategy Group (57%) agree that data is their business.¹ Essentially, organizations are reporting this because their digital initiatives are fueling advances in so many areas related to operational efficiency, new product development, and better customer engagement.

Over the past few years, however, the locations in which data is collected, accessed, and analyzed have become increasingly distributed and fragmented. Nearly every IT organization is running either a hybrid or a multi-cloud environment now. Edge and remote operations also continue to be a source of data growth, with 65% of storage decision-makers agreeing that managing data and data storage at edge locations is a significant burden to IT operations.²

And notably, remote work has become common, but the quick-fix solutions that IT teams put into place during the COVID-19 pandemic to enable workers to remain productive now need to be more properly addressed and formalized.

Overall, the distribution of data, especially file data, has become a pain point for business units and the IT organizations that serve them. Storage systems and cloud service usage are sprawling. Right now, many organizations are storing, protecting, securing, and managing application file storage and collaboration data separately, often using multiple tools and systems to do so.

Remote and Hybrid Work and the Challenge of Secure File Access and Sharing

Even as data is scaling and sprawling seemingly everywhere, organizations' leaders continue to push their IT teams for increased productivity and improved sharing capabilities. Twenty-two percent of organizations surveyed by Enterprise Strategy Group identified improving internal collaboration capabilities as a business initiative they expect to be among their top-five spending priorities for 2023.³

¹ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Research Report, [The Evolution of Intelligent Data Management](#), January 2022.

² Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Research Report, [Data Infrastructure Trends](#), November 2021

³ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Research Report, [2023 Technology Spending Intentions Survey](#), November 2022.

Efficient business operations today require supporting remote and hybrid work, simplifying file access, and ensuring secure external file sharing in order to deliver the right file to the right location at the right time.

The Need for Secure Data Access to Those Who Need It, When They Need It

At a fundamental level, the culprit behind IT complexity is often the sheer volume of disparate technologies that large, distributed organizations now need to use. The typical enterprise can often leverage a variety of different platforms and point solutions to access and share data. Often, those solutions don't interoperate. Traditional platforms can often create isolated data siloes with limited control, while contributing to data sprawl and adding to overall cost and complexity. In addition, virtual private network (VPN) issues and bandwidth and/or latency limitations often negatively impact user experience and productivity. The need to use multiple tools can add cost, increase complexity, and open up the potential for human error.

As file environments scale in capacity, the ability to support effective and secure remote file access becomes more complex. The movement of large files is a challenge that routinely hinders operational efficiency, especially in industries such as media and entertainment. As operations become increasingly remote, the cybersecurity risk and exposure opportunity increases. More than one in three organizations identified strengthening cybersecurity capabilities as a top-five spending priority for 2023.⁴

Ultimately, the goal must be accelerated productivity everywhere. According to Enterprise Strategy Group research, 53% of respondents reported that their organization's IT environment has become more complex over the past two years.⁵ Not taking action to overcome this complexity can bring negative consequences in terms of IT inefficiency, lowered worker productivity, and missed opportunities for revenue. As Figure 1 shows, the top drivers of IT complexity today all appear to relate in some way to remote work and operations and distributed data access, storage, and security.⁶

Increased complexity hinders and slows digital operations, it adds cost and risk, and it can limit the potential of new digital initiatives to meet the company's long-term goals. Addressing the challenge of distributed data storage, access, and security must be a top priority.

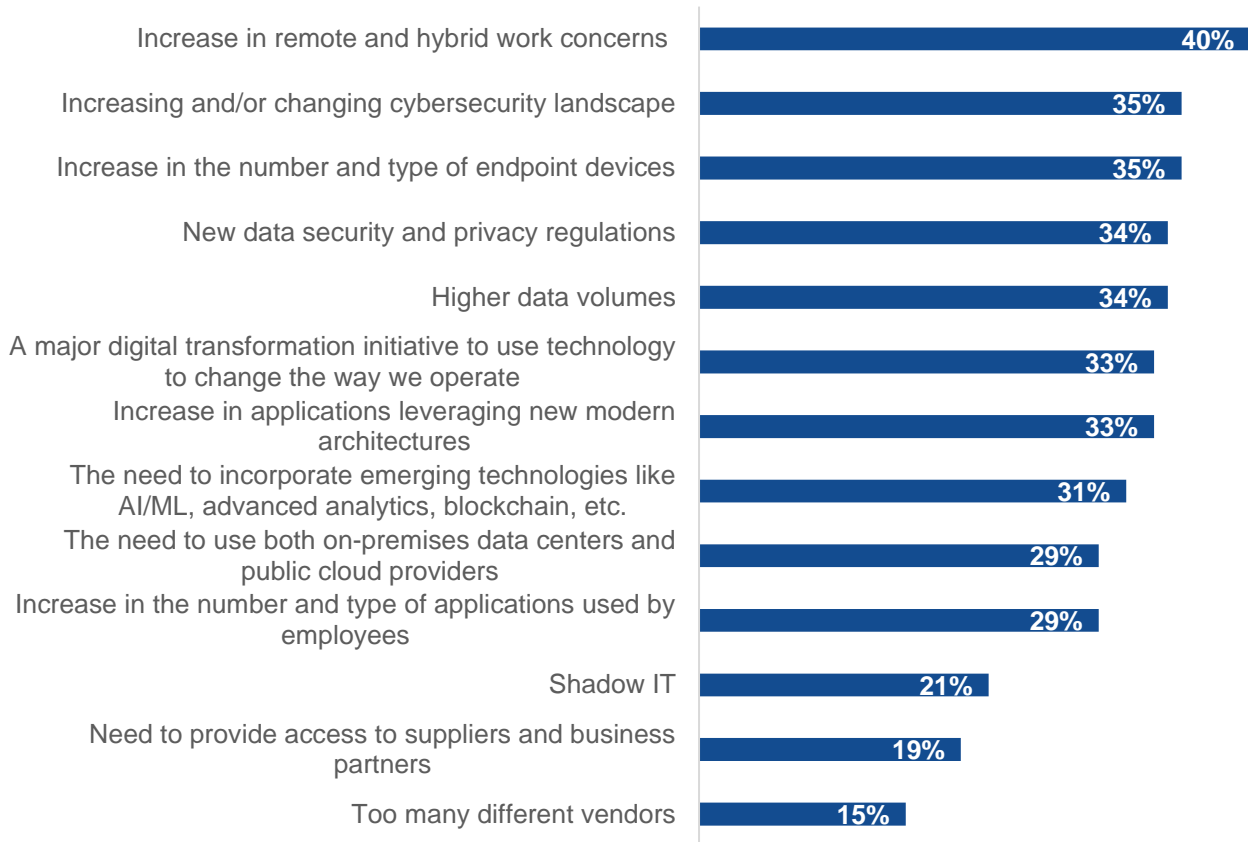
⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

Figure 1. Remote and Hybrid Work Concerns Continue to Create IT Complexity

What do you believe are the biggest reasons your organization’s IT environment has become more complex? (Percent of respondents, N=392, five responses accepted)



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Businesses need to consolidate. They need to find solutions that are able to span multiple locations, including their data centers, branch offices, cloud repositories, and edge/remote locations. These solutions should be capable of simplifying and accelerating data movement, when necessary, and, conversely, should not move the data when it isn't necessary to do so. (Movement of data often comes with a heavy price.) Additionally, the solution should be able to integrate with tools already in use, rather than forcing IT teams and end users to learn a new platform.

Nasuni Is Addressing the Challenges of Hybrid and Remote Work

[Nasuni](#) has an established history of successfully addressing the challenges of managing large, distributed file data environments. The advanced file data services offered via the [Nasuni File Data Platform](#) can deliver a single view of every file across hybrid and multi-cloud environments, simplifying file access and management, along with protection. Nasuni has already had success building backup, disaster recovery, and ransomware mitigation into its file data platform offering. Now, Nasuni is extending this expertise to address the distributed data challenges found in hybrid and remote work.

Nasuni recently introduced the [Nasuni Access Anywhere](#) add-on service to its file data platform, making files accessible to users, no matter where they are physically located. Nasuni Access Anywhere allows users to access their files while working remotely or offline. Users have visibility and can manage their files regardless of their

location. As an add-on service, Nasuni helps consolidate file data management efforts with a single solution rather than multiple disparate point products.

As a result, Nasuni can:

- **Simplify and optimize remote file access and external sharing with a single view**—Nasuni’s approach helps minimize the burden on IT operations by reducing the number of disparate tools and simplifying the process of delivering a secure remote solution. With two-factor authentication and traceability of file sharing and access, Nasuni adds an extra layer of needed security with or without the use of a VPN. Nasuni’s architecture also offers integrated data backup to further simplify management of and access to all file data.
- **Improve productivity and seamlessly integrate into the existing user experience**—The goal of collaboration is to optimize productivity, but the integration of new tools and processes can hinder those efforts with unnecessary complexity. If new training is required and if the experience changes, users will require time to get back up to speed. Nasuni’s approach offers integration with Microsoft Teams and other Microsoft Office 365 apps, as well as Slack, so users can keep the experience they are used to while simplifying the data management efforts on IT. Nasuni can augment the experience with productivity tools for remote teams to synchronize, manage, search, and access files from anywhere.
- **High performance file access for an optimized user experience**—In order to further optimize productivity, Nasuni delivers predictable, low latency accessibility to file content for remote and hybrid work environments. For example, Nasuni’s architecture is able to split large files into multiple pieces and then move content via parallel streams to accelerate file movement. For remote/hybrid work to achieve optimal levels of productivity, the experience needs to mirror on-site accessibility, Nasuni can deliver that experience.

Conclusion

For today’s organizations, it has become imperative to find a better, easier way to connect hybrid and remote workers to various company file systems. Point solutions, in general, have seen a tremendous boom in recent years. They have become essential for many employees, especially remote-based workers. Now, integrating existing technology-stack data with popular collaboration tools such as Microsoft Teams and other Office applications is also essential.

Users need access to all appropriate corporate data, wherever they are and wherever they go. The ideal solution should ensure that the user experience is non-disruptive, while simultaneously providing better performance and better security and allowing for better governance of all corporate data.

Nasuni has put considerable energy into providing a way for organizations to offer a “single source of truth” regarding all corporate file data to remote workers in particular. These users need easier access to data. IT teams, meanwhile, need a solution that is easier to manage and is more scalable. A single source of truth provides better control and visibility, thereby reducing costs in the long term.

Businesses today are hosting a wide range of fragmented tools and want to cut costs. It’s time to switch to a different approach and seek out a solution that addresses multiple uses—and multiple types of users—with centralized management.



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