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Nasuni Real-World Use Cases and Analysis

Customers Report Operational Efficiencies and Savings Across the Board

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Table of Contents

- 1 Summary
- 2 Users and Use Cases Highlights
- 3 Solution Analysis
- 4 Conclusion
- 5 About Enrico Signoretti
- 6 About GigaOm
- 7 Copyright

1. Summary

Nasuni offers a cloud-native, SaaS solution for enterprise file services, with an object-based global file system in the back end and familiar file interfaces, including SMB and NFS, at the front end. It is integrated with all major public cloud providers and also works with on-premises S3-compatible object stores. Nasuni is usually implemented to replace traditional NAS systems, and its characteristics enable users to replace several additional infrastructure components such as backup, archiving platforms, and more. Recently the company added features for improved ransomware protection and advanced data management, making the solution even more compelling to enterprise users.

Over the last year, organizations rushed to find adequate solutions to respond to several challenges imposed by altered work and business scenarios. A massive acceleration of digital transformation initiatives, combined with the need to align budget expenditures and infrastructure resources to business demands in real time, moved users to adopt hybrid cloud technologies that can be adapted quickly to ever-changing business requirements. In this context, hybrid cloud combines core, cloud, and edge technology, and it responds to business needs that every organization has now:

- **Data and applications must be globally accessible, scalable, and secure.** With users now spread across smaller remote offices or working from home, global access to applications and data is a requirement.
- **Flexibility and agility are fundamental requirements for an organization to be competitive.** Organizations ready to adapt swiftly to changing scenarios are those that can take advantage of new opportunities while putting pressure on the competition.
- **The ability to respond quickly to every business requirement, whether predicted or unforeseen, is essential.** The events of the last year are a great example of how quickly business requirements can change. Organizations should also take into account the proliferation of regulations and risks associated with security threats such as ransomware attacks.

GigaOm interviewed Nasuni customers to delve deeper into their use cases and workflows to analyze how they use the technology, get indications on the real total cost of ownership (TCO), the return on investment (ROI), and how this hybrid cloud approach is helping them to build a flexible and sustainable IT infrastructure. To get a better picture of the possibilities offered by Nasuni, we selected customers in different industries and market segments. No matter the size of the organization, flexibility is key, and the ability to start small and dynamically grow or shrink infrastructure without giving up any level of security, service availability, and efficiency remains a top priority.

All Nasuni customers reported impressive TCO improvements over the previous solutions they replaced. At the same time, the ROI goes beyond infrastructure and touches several aspects of user experience and organizations' overall level of productivity.

2. Users and Use Cases Highlights

To give the reader a good perspective on the potential of hybrid cloud in general, and Nasuni technology in particular, we selected three organizations in different industries, each of which operates in a completely different way from one another using applications and workflows that are specific for their industry segment:

Distributed publishing company with several locations and remote workers, and a total storage capacity of more than 300TB:

- Heavily virtualized environment with more than 700 VMs that went through a merger with another company of a similar size. The systems are used for media asset management and collaboration among authors, editors, external collaborators, and suppliers.
- Over time, Nasuni replaced 10 traditional file servers and NAS systems that are now consolidated in a single environment with no impact on the users, thanks to the support of Microsoft DFS. Data has been moved with Nasuni to AWS S3.
- Not only did the migration have no impact on the users, they also reported an improved user experience with more efficient workflows due to the ability to access and collaborate on the same data from multiple sites.
- Nasuni snapshots provided a simplified backup with faster file retrievals.
- The customer reported a **20% time savings for system administration compared to their previous solution.**

Manufacturing company with 12 production locations across the world and 20TB of storage capacity:

- 800 employees, an infrastructure primarily based on Microsoft technology with a highly diversified hardware environment, often based on entry level, cost-conscious storage systems.
- Nasuni is used for storing user profiles and data as well as shared volumes for CAD systems and files necessary for multiple production workloads. It replaced several storage systems from different vendors, enabling the customer to consolidate and simplify infrastructure management.
- By adopting this technology, collaboration between users in different locations has been dramatically improved. At the same time, users traveling between locations can now consistently operate in the same environment.
- Infrastructure operations to keep data synchronized and protected across sites have been dramatically reduced.
- Cloud resources and the Nasuni subscription are much easier to acquire than traditional on-

premises solutions, simplifying budget structure with an OpEx approach while keeping costs down.

- **The customer reported time savings for the entire IT team after adopting Nasuni.**

Large construction group, with more than 200 offices across Europe, Canada, and the U.S. and 230TB of storage capacity:

- This public company experienced major growth over the last 10 years, mostly due to a series of acquisitions, and now has 20,000 employees.
- The file storage system is growing organically, with backup, security, collaboration, and archiving functions serving a varied virtualized environment composed of Linux and Windows systems.
- Nasuni started as a replacement for remote data synchronization and DR solutions for remote offices, but quickly became the only platform for all file services, including backup archiving and collaboration.
- The customer is moving as many workloads and applications as possible to Microsoft Azure, and Nasuni is enabling them to simplify the process and keep data accessible no matter where the user and applications are, including Cloud VDI.
- Most operations for management of the file storage infrastructure are now delegated to junior system administrators, saving the time of senior sysadmins for other tasks.
- Nasuni is now used for file sharing, collaboration, backup, archiving, and ransomware protection. **The customer estimates that, using traditional solutions, backup alone would cost as much as Nasuni for similar capacity—without taking into account the time savings.**
- The simplicity of the solution allowed the customer to deploy Nasuni in production immediately after the initial evaluation period.

3. Solution Analysis

In all the cases analyzed for this report there are five common traits:

- **All customers decided to adopt the solution immediately after the initial evaluation.** The cloud back end, the scalability, and the friendly consumption-based licensing model enables users to avoid any complex capacity planning, while the configuration flexibility of the edge VMs installed on-premises or in the cloud allows them to support any sort of environment with minimal tuning. The ease of use and the broad feature set enable the user to adapt the solution immediately to a large number of use cases.
- **When asked how Nasuni improved their user experience, customers frequently used the phrases “[the ability to] sleep at night” and “peace of mind.”** The general consensus is that the platform delivers what it promises, and the benefits are clearly visible in infrastructure stability, flexibility, and time savings.
- **Important infrastructure TCO improvement.** Even though they used different evaluation metrics, all the customers reported significant savings and a general improvement in TCO. Either time dedicated to infrastructure management has been dramatically reduced, or fewer skilled resources are now dedicated to these tasks.
- **Impressive overall ROI.** All customers interviewed acquired Nasuni for a primary use case and then discovered other features that could be used in place of existing infrastructure components, simplifying infrastructure and operations while providing a better user experience.
- **Simplified cloud transition and freedom of choice.** Nasuni was frequently praised for its flexibility in offering multiple options, whether data is consumed on-premises or in the cloud. This flexibility is simplifying the transition to the cloud for many users.

4. Conclusion

GigaOm purposely interviewed customers of different sizes and in different industries to verify Nasuni's claims about TCO and ROI. The initial analysis demonstrated that the benefits of this solution are consistent across the board, regardless of the organization's size or industry sector.

In general, Nasuni allows customers to move file storage quickly and smoothly to the cloud, and Nasuni architecture enables them to use the product even when connectivity is not optimal. In fact, operations in the back end are highly optimized, allowing the customer to choose between several cloud and on-premises object stores to save data—even multiple ones at the same time. Several customers see Nasuni as an enabler for data mobility in their multi-cloud strategy.

Nasuni customers reported that, thanks to Nasuni adoption, they were able to improve storage infrastructure TCO and consolidate several services on a single platform. Additionally, the ability to leverage it to remove other components of the stack, and for multiple use cases, all contributed to increasing the ROI of this solution.

5 About Enrico Signoretti



Enrico has more than 25 years in technical product strategy and management roles. He has advised mid-market and large enterprises across numerous industries, and worked with a range of software companies from small ISVs to global providers.

Enrico is an internationally renowned expert on data storage—and a visionary, author, blogger, and speaker on the topic. He has tracked the evolution of the storage industry for years, as a Gigaom Research Analyst, an independent analyst, and as a contributor to the Register.

6. About GigaOm

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GigaOm works directly with enterprises both inside and outside of the IT organization to apply proven research and methodologies designed to avoid pitfalls and roadblocks while balancing risk and innovation. Research methodologies include but are not limited to adoption and benchmarking surveys, use cases, interviews, ROI/TCO, market landscapes, strategic trends, and technical benchmarks. Our analysts possess 20+ years of experience advising a spectrum of clients from early adopters to mainstream enterprises.

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