GKVSC

"With PRIMEFLEX for Nutanix Enterprise Cloud, we have a completely integrated and future-proof hyper-converged infrastructure, which we can scale flexibly and administer easily."

Bernhard Fahr
Technical Director
GKV Service Center GmbH

Fujitsu has implemented a future-proof and stable solution based on FUJITSU Integrated System PRIMEFLEX for Nutanix Enterprise Cloud for the GKV Service Center.

At a glance

Country: Germany
Industry: IT services
Founded: 2001
Website: www.gkvsc.de

Challenge

As a popular IT partner for statutory health insurance providers, the GKV Service Center needs a high-performance and reliable IT infrastructure that offers maximum economic efficiency, flexibility and scalability.

Solution

Fujitsu replaced the GKV Service Center's classic 3-tier architecture with a hyper-converged infrastructure based on FUJITSU Integrated System PRIMEFLEX for Nutanix Enterprise Cloud. The customer benefits from a cutting-edge, future-proof and high-performance IT environment.
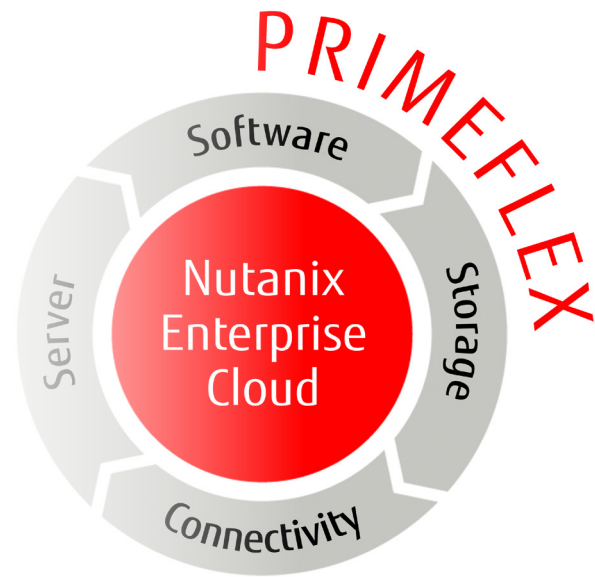
Benefit

- Completely integrated and future-proof hyper-converged infrastructure
- Reduces complexity through easy administration
- High degree of modularization, flexibility, stability and scalability
- Consistent complete solution from a single source
- Lower overall operating costs and higher economic efficiency of the IT infrastructure

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Customer

As a popular system provider and certified data center, the GKV SC implements customized, flexible and modular IT services for its customers in the statutory health insurance market. These services include supplying customers with the necessary infrastructure, providing IT services or support as well as technical consulting and software development. More than 30 employees in Münster, Germany, meet daily challenges in a professional manner. The GKV SC always collaborates with its customers at eye level through individual consulting, a wide range of services and maximum accessibility.

Products and services

- FUJITSU Integrated System PRIMEFLEX for Nutanix Enterprise Cloud based on 16 x FUJITSU XF8055
- Replaced the existing classic 3-tier architecture
- Comprehensive consulting
- SPOC support for the entire infrastructure solution

High availability through two separate data centers

In its capacity as an IT service provider for the statutory health insurance sector, the GKV Service Center GmbH (GKV SC) supports the data centers of various guild and company health insurance funds. In processing data of insured parties, the latter use special industry-specific software that requires a powerful hardware infrastructure. Specific regulatory provisions require the statutory health insurance funds to be able to access a highly available, failsafe IT landscape with two separate data centers. The GKV SC therefore operates two data centers in a metro cluster at its Münster headquarters, which are situated six kilometers apart. They operate in active/active mode and must enable one-hundred-percent productivity in both locations. If one data center is down, it must be guaranteed that all resources are immediately up and running in the other location.

To ensure the necessary high availability, the GKV SC used a classic, three-tier infrastructure virtualized with VMware. However, this approach was extremely complicated to administer and required correspondingly trained specialists in the areas of computing, storage area networks (SAN) and virtualization. Moreover, the existing environment could not be adequately scaled and was therefore difficult to be adapted to changing requirements. "Our goal was to build an architecture that could be easily administered and flexibly scaled. We also wanted to provide our customers with the necessary resources faster and ensure a high degree of self-service. We felt that a hyper-converged infrastructure was the best way to do this," remembers Bernhard Fahr, Technical Director at GKV SC.

Modern, hyper-converged infrastructure with Nutanix

The IT service provider therefore went looking for an appropriate solution. During the course of the benchmarking process, the team led by Bernhard Fahr reviewed several offers and came to a sobering conclusion. "There is an astonishingly large number of suppliers on the market who describe their infrastructure solutions as hyper-converged. However, few of them can back up this claim and provide consistently hyper-converged systems in a stack," says the IT expert. Nutanix, which supplies powerful enterprise software for multi-cloud architectures, was different. "The Nutanix solution has the very features that we need to build and operate a hyper-converged infrastructure," Bernhard Fahr confirms. The IT manager brought Fujitsu on board as the implementation partner. The GKV SC has already enjoyed a successful business relationship for decades with the all-in-one IT provider.

Working closely with the customer, the Fujitsu experts implemented the Integrated System PRIMEFLEX for Nutanix Enterprise Cloud, which includes both hardware and software. It can be implemented in a private cloud infrastructure in a data center as well as at the network edge, and it allows easy integration with public clouds. The integrated turnkey system combines the powerful, energy-efficient PRIMERGY servers with XF8055 nodes with firmware optimized for Nutanix with the Nutanix Acropolis Cloud OS software.

The proprietary Nutanix Prism Management Suite ensures smooth administration of the overall solution. "The Prism Central software enables us to administer all Nutanix components in our metro cluster via a common URL from a web browser, which saves us a lot of work," explains Bernhard Fahr. The ability to rapidly expand the stack confirms the successful practical use of the Nutanix solution. Although it started out with six nodes, the solution now has 16 nodes, and another eight will be added next year. In addition to a five-year warranty, Fujitsu also offers corresponding consulting services as well as SPOC support for the entire infrastructure solution.

Easy to implement in cloud models

"With FUJITSU Integrated System PRIMEFLEX for Nutanix Enterprise Cloud, we now have a completely integrated and future-proof hyper-converged infrastructure, which we can scale flexibly and administer easily," says the Technical Director at GKV SC. The high technological standard and straightforward implementation in different cloud models were crucial to the decision to invest in the joint solution from Fujitsu and Nutanix. The IT service provider thus benefits from a consistent overall system from a single source, which offers maximum stability, modularization and automation. The GKV SC can thus significantly reduce complexity, lower overall operating costs and thereby operate its entire IT infrastructure more economically.

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