



Marist College Canberra switches IT focus to innovation with Nutanix

By deploying Nutanix Cloud Platform, the College moves away from routine IT management to new services while significantly reducing power consumption.

Marist College Canberra wanted its IT team to have more time to focus on innovation rather than deploying and managing IT infrastructure. It replaced a three-tier architecture with the Nutanix Cloud Platform to make the change and allow administrators to use their talents more effectively. As a result, there is now more capacity to take the school to the next level of IT integration in areas like sensor technology. Disaster recovery is more robust, IT consumes much less power, and the school can plan with clear pricing around the Nutanix platform.

KEY RESULTS

- **More bandwidth for strategic projects**
Took infrastructure management out of the to-do list to concentrate on innovation.
- **Better data protection**
Boosted resiliency, providing a DR cluster to efficiently backup and restore data.
- **Clear pricing for planning ahead**
Made it easier to budget, giving the school confidence of what would be the likely costs down the line.

INDUSTRY

Education

GEO

APJ

WEBSITE

<https://www.maristc.act.edu.au/>

APPLICATIONS

- Microsoft SharePoint
- Microsoft SQL Server databases
- Student Information System (e.g. registration, assessment portals)
- HYCU

SOLUTIONS

- Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery
- Business Critical Apps
- Databases

PRODUCTS

Nutanix Cloud Infrastructure

- AOS Storage
- AHV Hypervisor

Nutanix Unified Storage

- Files Storage
- Objects Storage



“We can get on with projects knowing that Nutanix will be working away, taking care of IT across the school. For me, it’s great that I don’t need to be making changes to it all the time — I can focus on delivering better IT services to students and teachers.”

– Sam Walton, ICT operations manager, Marist College Canberra

CHALLENGES

Marist College Canberra is a Congregational Catholic school for boys, which operates as part of ‘Marist Schools Australia’. The College has an enrolment of approximately 1800 students from Years 4 - 12 and enjoys an excellent reputation for its pastoral care of students, academic studies, cultural and sport pursuits.

For the College’s small team of five ICT professionals, including ICT operations manager Sam Walton, time is precious. Walton says, “We’re working with different departments, using different kinds of applications, and trying to run them in one kind of environment.” To give the team more time for new services instead of administering infrastructure, the College looked to replace the legacy three-tier architecture. “The public cloud was an option, but we wanted to avoid that route. My approach is hybrid. I don’t want to go all-in on public cloud because I’ve seen how much the costs can go up,” he explains.

SOLUTION

The College engaged with IT solutions company Qirx, which proposed the Nutanix Cloud Platform. The solution could support all workloads and use cases across on-premises private clouds and off-site public clouds if necessary. Plus, its one-click management simplicity and intelligent automation gave Walton the “hands off” approach he wanted to focus on services development.

Following an initial deployment of Nutanix, the College expanded the number of nodes, with the support of Qirx, to four in the production environment. It also added three nodes for disaster recovery (DR) and three as a backup target, running Nutanix Objects Storage and offering 60 terabytes (TiB) of capacity. HYCU is used as the backing up software. The overall infrastructure runs on AOS Storage, with AHV as the hypervisor and Nutanix Files replacing physical file servers, providing 10 TiB of storage for student and College data. “We run 80 to 85 percent of our applications on Nutanix,” says Walton. These include Microsoft SharePoint, Microsoft SQL Server databases and the mission-critical Student Information System (SIS).

CUSTOMER OUTCOMES

More bandwidth for strategic projects

The IT team can focus on helping the school make better use of technology now that the Nutanix Cloud Platform is taking care of IT. “We’re getting a lot of projects finished nowadays because we’re not working on hardware,” comments Walton. The projects are varied, but all of them vital, including overseeing the implementation of automatic door locks and updating alarm sensors. “We’re not being distracted by virtual machine hosts going wrong or basic infrastructure issues. I don’t think I’ve logged on to the Nutanix platform for a few weeks now.”

On-the-fly development and testing capabilities

Because the team can spin up development environments quickly, members can try out ideas for new services on-the-fly. Recent examples include whether single sign on works better on one file system compared to another. “It makes it easier to roll out services across the school, since we’ve done all the testing in-house previously. Nobody really notices because you know it works,” states Walton.

Learning without unexpected interruptions

Students, teachers and administrators are getting on with their work without interruption to key applications such as SharePoint and the SIS. The only downtime on the Nutanix Cloud Platform has been pre-planned and outside of busy periods to minimize any potential disruption.

Better data protection and control

The school now has better data protection with a separate Nutanix DR cluster for efficient backups and data recovery. In the past, data was stored on backup drives, using up a lot of resources. Walton and his team moved everything into the DR cluster without any disruption to operations or failures. Plus, they added Advanced Replication licensing to seamlessly move workloads across clusters in an instant. "It all helps me sleep at night because if something goes wrong with a production environment, I can rely on the DR."

IT consolidation of almost 86%, cutting power use

As a result of the migration to Nutanix, IT is better aligned with the sustainability goals of the school. The IT team consolidated its IT infrastructure by almost 86 percent from 42U of rack space to just six with Nutanix. This in turn has significantly reduced power usage and allowed the scrapping of a bulky uninterruptible power supply unit. "For sure, we've seen a substantial decrease in power consumption," confirms Walton.

Easy budgeting with clear pricing and support

The school can plan with certainty, having a clear idea of the costs of its Nutanix Cloud Platform. "I've seen a lot of IT managers pull back from the public cloud when they saw the costs unexpectedly going up. With Nutanix, it's different. I know how much it's roughly going to cost me in five years' time, making it simpler to budget for future developments," comments Walton.

NEXT STEPS

With its IT team liberated from having to keep the lights on, Walton and the Marist IT team can focus on the things that matter - like improving the student and educator experience - rather than putting out fires and constant maintenance. What's more, they are also looking to expand the use of Nutanix Objects Storage to support a dedicated cluster for College CCTV footage.

PARTNER

Headquartered in Canberra, Qirx provides IT services to Marist College Canberra, including IT support for the Nutanix Cloud Platform. Qirx has been the main services provider in the evolution of the Nutanix platform, helping ensure seamless deployments, on-time and to budget.



T. 855.NUTANIX (855.688.2649) | F. 408.916.4039
info@nutanix.com | www.nutanix.com | [@nutanix](https://twitter.com/nutanix)

©2022 Nutanix, Inc. All rights reserved. Nutanix, the Nutanix logo and all product and service names mentioned herein are registered trademarks or trademarks of Nutanix, Inc. in the United States and other countries. All other brand names mentioned herein are for identification purposes only and may be the trademarks of their respective holder(s).