Canal+ builds and boosts the resilience of its infrastructure thanks to Nutanix efficiency.

When faced with the challenge of decommissioning a datacenter, the broadcast media giant chose Nutanix to rapidly build a resilient infrastructure, benefiting from coordinated support with Avid. Encouraged by this initial success, the Canal+ Group, now sees Nutanix as a long-term strategic solution for its mission-critical systems.

In less than 40 years, the Canal+ Group has grown from France's leading pay-TV channel to a global audiovisual giant. With more than 25 million subscribers in over 50 countries, the Group generates a turnover of nearly 6 billion euros. A Group entity and European leader in the production, distribution, rights acquisition and international sales of films and TV shows, StudioCanal owns 14 production companies in Europe and the United States and has the largest catalogue in Europe with over 8,000 titles from 60 countries, covering more than 100 years of cinema history.
To support this level of activity, the Group has opted for a "cloud-first" strategy. But as all projects are not eligible for the cloud, it retains some of its own datacenters. Forced to decommission one of them quickly, it chose the Nutanix platform to rebuild a resilient, high-performance infrastructure in just a few months to accommodate critical systems, especially those intended for editing.

Challenges

"In total, we had to migrate 800 VMs, 70 of which were mainly dedicated to our Avid editing system. However, our supplier did not guarantee support in the cloud. The new datacenter was still under construction and we only had a few months to build a complete infrastructure – including design, hardware purchase, installation and deployment – because we also wanted to take advantage of this fast-paced migration to update our environments," says Ludovic Trognon, Virtualization Tech Lead for the IS&T department, Canal+ Group.

In fact, Canal+ only had five months to find a solution, an extremely short time frame for such a large-scale infrastructure project. Drawing on a previous study carried out on hyperconvergence as part of another project, the IT decision-making team immediately turned to Nutanix, convinced that the platform's simplicity of deployment and resilience were the ideal solution in this context. "We consulted a number of other users, and their feedback was highly positive", says Ludovic Trognon. "At the same time, by consolidating computing, network and storage functions on a single server, hyperconvergence facilitates the physical partitioning of the environments we wanted to set up. Finally — and this was a key factor in our decision — Nutanix and Avid had a cross-validation agreement."

Industry
Broadcast media

Location
Issy-les-Moulineaux, France

Website
www.canalplusgroup.com

Benefits
- Quick and easy deployment
- Resilience and performance
- Security: easier physical partitioning
- Integrated support with Avid

Products
- Nutanix Cloud Infrastructure
- AHV

Applications
Broadcast environments

Solutions

In an environment where media production is central, it is easy to understand why this cross-validation was crucial for Canal+. It ensures full compatibility between critical media applications and the underlying infrastructure, enabling Canal+ to minimize risk. "What's more, Avid and Nutanix were very good listeners, understanding the full complexity of what we were planning to do, which involved deploying a complete infrastructure in a datacenter in less than five months. To help us achieve this, they offered coordinated support, which considerably simplified implementation. Still to this day, this integrated support simplifies operations, because it helps to resolve problems more quickly and efficiently," emphasizes Ludovic Trognon.

The decision was made in August 2022, and was immediately put into practice with an order for equipment delivered a few months later, even though construction of the datacenter had not yet been completed. "We had to install our first racks in the middle of bags of concrete," says Canal+ Group's Virtualization Tech Lead, half-jokingly. "Thanks to the efforts of all stakeholders, we were able to meet the deadline. Incidentally, such a rapid deployment in such conditions highlights the ease with which the Nutanix platform can be implemented."

Next steps

Building on this very positive experience, the technical department has since extended the use of Nutanix to other areas. As a result, Canal+ now sees Nutanix as a strategic solution for the future, particularly for environments requiring physical partitioning or with high performance requirements, including DMZs (demilitarized zones) and databases. This is particularly true given that the IS&T department took advantage of its first project to move away from its legacy hypervisor and adopt AHV, in order to simplify administration in particular. However, as Ludovic Trognon points out, AHV could become a strategic building block in future deployments: "With the recent changes occurring in the IT landscape, with the acquisition of our hypervisor supplier and the very likely change in licensing policy, Nutanix is more than ever a highly attractive alternative, both from a technological point of view and from a relationship point of view, as the responsiveness and expertise of the support team clearly proved its worth during our first project."

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> Ludovic Trognon, Virtualization Tech Lead for the Information Systems and Technology department (IS&T), Canal+ Group.

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