

Nominee: Nutanix

Nomination title: Nutanix: The Hyperconvergence Pioneer Driving All

Nutanix didn't just help itself and its customers last year. It helped a lot of other storage companies create a better world for themselves, their staff and their clients. It even helped its rivals to improve their efforts to make software define everything we store and process in the datacenter.

2014 saw hyper convergence in the storage sector take off, and a number of new competitors entered the market and started to make a good living from it. In fact, analysts predict that the hyperconverged market will be worth around \$18 billion by the end of 2016.

But for all the sales, marketing and technical support working for the new competitors in this market – not to mention the customers enjoying the productivity benefits that the technology has brought them – owe a debt of gratitude to the pioneer in this field. Nutanix.

Indeed, Nutanix's contribution to the datacenter market was also finally given official recognition by market analysts this year.

Software is key

Nutanix's software integrated server and storage resources. By re-organising storage, it saved everyone time, money and an awful lot of effort, both now and (thanks to the fluency that software brings) in the future. Nutanix doesn't just help you build datacenter infrastructure quicker. The software means that you are not locked into that model.

Software is indeed the key to the increasing adaptability of the storage market. The foundation of this in 2014 has been Nutanix's software. You cannot achieve a tight convergence of storage, networking and computing without being able to adapt to every tiny nuance that might exist between systems. That sort of flexibility can only be achieved by creating intelligent software that helps to shape everything.

Innovate or replicate?

Nutanix's software definition of storage - and indeed everything else in the datacenter - has become increasingly influential. In 2014 a number of other vendors began to imitate this model and use it to improve their own offerings.

Last year, Dell signed an OEM agreement with Nutanix, so that it could bring the benefits of software defined storage - and software definition of everything else involved in hyperconvergence - to its global customer base. The benefits of the years of research and development put in by Nutanix's founders are now being enjoyed by clients and competitors alike. If IDC estimates that hyperconvergence technology will generate \$18 billion in revenue in 2016, that implies that Nutanix's pioneering efforts have brought \$18 billion dollars worth of benefits, at least, to the world. According to the analysts, 2014 was the year when Nutanix's influence began to be more widespread.

The types of workloads running on Nutanix systems have diversified from targeted or specialised workloads like VDI (virtual desktop infrastructure) to Tier 1 applications and highly virtualised general business workloads like SAP, Oracle, Microsoft Exchange, SQL Server, SharePoint, Splunk, and Unified Communications (UC) Applications.

Setting the pace

Even the most influential pace setters in the software world were influenced by Nutanix last year.

After Dell signed its OEM partnership deal with Nutanix, our software defined storage model gained further validation from VMware, which announced a major change in direction with its first ever virtual SAN software. This was quickly followed by its EVO: RAIL initiative, which is an initiative to allow storage array vendors to launch systems with Virtual SAN software. The fact that VMware has been influenced by Nutanix's storage software is quite a tribute!

Nutanix's influence in the market reached its height in 2014. Nutanix should be recognised not just for its own software storage products, but for those it inspired in others. We would argue that 2014 was the best year for Nutanix because this was the year that our software

didn't just define the data center and the storage infrastructure, it helped to define everything.

In the year ahead, Nutanix won't have everything its own way. We will have to work harder than ever as the software defined hyperconverged storage market has welcomed new competitors. Then there are the giants like EMC, Dell, HP and NetApp who will certainly raise their game in storage software in the years to come. Our success has inspired great new ideas from other hyper-converged newcomers who emerged in 2014, such as Maxta, Gridstore, Nimboxx and OpenStack-based Stratoscale.

Inspiring a generation

For its achievement in setting software standards, and inspiring a generation of players to raise their game, we would argue that Nutanix deserves to win this award. However, Nutanix hasn't just been busy raising awareness and helping others to improve. As a company, it has made significant achievements in its own right. Having inspired so much competition, we too have to keep moving forward.

In 2014 Nutanix built on its early success and applied the customer knowledge it has worked so hard for years to accumulate. Partnerships with top tier OEMs were a massive boost to our sales channel and helped us reach a much broader customer base. Nutanix reached 1,200 customers in 2014 and sold \$300m worth of goods and services. Fifty enterprise customers each spent over a million dollars with us as they used Nutanix to bring about efficiency improvements that could be worth billions to the global economy.

Many of the world's largest enterprises are using Nutanix to turbo drive their databases, Oracle and SAP, Microsoft Exchange, unified communications and other industry specific applications. If software is a service, Nutanix has certainly sassed up the global economy.

Nutanix has been a key player in the emergence of the hyperconverged market, according to analysts across Gartner, IDC and 451 Research. Additionally, Nutanix's software generated 52 per cent of all global hyperconverged revenue during the first half of 2014 and the company also won the Omega NorthFace Award for exceptional customer satisfaction and loyalty for second year in a row. However, we are not complacent. Nutanix knows that it will face intensified competition in 2015 and will have to break productivity records in order to

maintain our impressive lead in the years ahead. But 2014 was the year when Nutanix provided the inspiration for every other vendor, leading by example. We will continue to both lead and inspire.

Why nominee should win

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- Fifty enterprise customers each spent over a million dollars with Nutanix as they used us to bring about efficiency improvements that could be worth billions to the global economy.
- For its achievement in setting software standards, and inspiring a generation of players to raise their game, Nutanix deserves to win this award.