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How Ivy League Dartmouth College Moved to a Future-Ready IT Platform

Dartmouth College Director of IT Infrastructure Services Ty Peavey explains how moving away from VMware software to the Nutanix Cloud Platform helped his team manage virtual machines and container orchestration across hybrid cloud resources, enabling the University to adapt quickly to rising needs for enterprise AI capabilities.



By Calvin Hennick August 7, 2025



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When Broadcom acquired VMware in 2023, many IT departments across different sectors were left scrambling to understand their options. Many faced dramatic changes to pricing, product line up and licensing. But Dartmouth College, the Ivy League [RI research university](#) in Hanover, New Hampshire, avoided those challenges after it transitioned away from VMware software to Nutanix several years prior to Broadcom's acquisition of VMware.

The Dartmouth IT team began looking at Nutanix in 2018 then began a project in 2021 that led to replacing VMWare with Nutanix software. Ty Peavey, director of infrastructure services for Dartmouth told *The Forecast* in an interview at Nutanix's 2025 .NEXT event in Washington DC.



“We completed the full technical migration off from VMWare in the summer of 2022,” he said.

It was a significant, timely move.

“The acquisition of VMware by Broadcom is a first for me in my 30 years supporting infrastructure, in terms of shaking up the market,” said Ty Peavey, director of infrastructure services for Dartmouth.

“We dodged that bullet. Adapting to that and trying to come out the other side with an equal or better technology has been really important, and we’re really happy about our decision to move to Nutanix.”



The migration to Nutanix didn’t just prevent a potential cost crisis, Peavey said. It also simplified infrastructure management and set Dartmouth up to adapt to change, something that has been a constant during Peavey’s three-decade career in IT.

Peavey describes himself as a “late bloomer” who had trouble deciding what he wanted to do in his twenties before finding his way into an IT help desk role and working his way up to the director level. Early in his career, he worked primarily on email, backups and storage, and he was an early advocate for virtualization. Today, he’s helping Dartmouth navigate AI adoption and the trend toward cloud-native, containerized applications.

“Change is a pattern that we see in technology,” Peavey said. “My philosophy has been to try to be open-minded, and go slow but steady. What you’ll find is that there’s no perfect answer. It isn’t about one thing completely replacing another. It’s about finding the right tool for what you’re trying to accomplish. That’s something that I’ve learned over the years.”

Breaking Down Silos

When Dartmouth first looked at hyperconverged infrastructure several years ago, most of Peavey's team had never even heard of the Nutanix AHV hypervisor. But when the organization tested several vendors, it was Nutanix that came out on top.

Peavey remembered the meeting when he asked the IT team to vote for their choice.

"Okay, you've seen VxRail, you've seen Cisco's product, you've seen HP's product, now you see Nutanix," he recalled saying. "What are we going to do? And we unanimously said, let's go Nutanix and let's go AHV. Let's go all in. It was a bit of a shock. I didn't expect it, but it was unanimous."

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Peavey explained that they started a formal RFP (request for proposal) process in 2021 with multiple groups involved. It was approved a few short months later.

"We were at a point where our existing computer and storage hardware was ready for replacement," he said. "It had reached its useful life and there were a few areas we knew we wanted to address."

Those areas included:

- ▀ The desire to move towards more a “scale out” architecture with hyperconverged infrastructure as opposed to traditional three tier computer, switching, and SAN storage.
- ▀ Adopt an automation-first mentality by selecting products with a strong API interface.
- ▀ Shrink the need for IT team specialists

Initially, the IT team believed moving to different virtualization software would be difficult.

“We had imagined a very complicated experience, but found Nutanix AHV to be familiar and logical in its navigation,” Peavey said. “Many operational tasks like taking a snapshot or cloning a VM felt familiar.”

Then their concerns around performance subsided.

“Although we didn’t get a full understanding of exactly what our performance experience was going to be like until we deployed the final product, we started to appreciate the architectural design of Nutanix while we investigated the solution.”

The operational transition to Nutanix was an “easy adoption,” Peavey said. “There was a lot of similarity to concepts that we already knew. A lot of the fears were just in our head, and Nutanix did a really good job partnering with us and easing that fear of the unknown. I think we are better for it, and I think Dartmouth is better for it.”

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The simplicity offered by Nutanix's hyperconverged infrastructure has allowed Peavey's department to completely rethink how IT professionals do their jobs. Historically, he said, infrastructure management roles were highly siloed, with employees dedicated specifically to environments like Linux and Windows.

"What we really wanted to do when we brought in Nutanix was to try to flip that a little, and try to break down the silos of the organization and have our people be generalists," Peavey said.

Peavey noted that Dartmouth's chief information officer often speaks of the importance of "T-shaped" employees, meaning people who have experience across a wide range of technologies and skillsets, but who also have more depth in particular areas.

"We no longer have different systems administrators for different environments, and I'm very proud of that," Peavey said. "You may be on my team and work on Kubernetes in the morning and VMs in the afternoon using Nutanix. We've found that it brings really good job satisfaction. People like what they're doing. It is challenging at times, but a good challenge. Nutanix has really helped facilitate that for us."

Infrastructure that Enables Innovation

Dartmouth first began experimenting with Kubernetes around a decade ago, for niche use cases where containerization was a good fit. Today, the school has more than 400 containers spread across four Kubernetes clusters. Peavey said the IT team is migrating all of these to the [Nutanix Kubernetes Platform \(NKP\)](#) solution, which provides a unified runtime, orchestration, and management environment for cloud-native applications and allows for management of Kubernetes clusters across on-premises and cloud environments.

Dartmouth is continuing to increase its use of containerization, especially as more software vendors leverage the approach.

“We find the adoption is great,” Peavey said. “I think we’ll always have a fair amount of full virtual machines, but off-the-shelf software is starting to normalize the deployment of applications in containers. As that number starts to grow, we’ll see our Kubernetes stack grow even more.”

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Peavey explained that the Research Computing group inside Dartmouth’s IT department works on AI LLM efforts and collaborates closely with his Infrastructure Services team to support researchers at the university. His team has access to ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, and

Google Gemini to help them with their daily work. Looking at the picture, he sees AI tools not as a replacement for human workers, but rather as a tool to help them in their work.

“We’re right in that sweet spot, where we have time to learn and understand how AI is changing the environment, but yet we have a little bit of time to play and have fun with it and learn how to really incorporate it into our work,” Peavey said.

“It’s a way to do things easier, faster, better. But at the end of the day, the human really matters.”



Calvin Hennick is a contributing writer. His work appears in BizTech, Engineering Inc., The Boston Globe Magazine and elsewhere. He is also the author of [Once More to the Rodeo: A Memoir](#). Follow him [@CalvinHennick](#).

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