Georgia Secretary of State renews and enhances IT infrastructure with Nutanix partnership

About the Georgia Secretary of State

Industry: Government
Employees: 450
Geography: Georgia, US
Website: https://sos.ga.gov/

Products:

- ◦ AHV Virtualization

- ◦ Flow Network Security

- ◦ Nutanix Cloud Infrastructure (NCI)

- ◦ Nutanix Unified Storage (NUS)

Ready to get Hands-On?

Take a Test Drive

Georgia Secretary of State's IT department optimizes election operations with Nutanix hyperconverged infrastructure

The Georgia Secretary of State's office is a cornerstone of state government operations and oversees elections, business and corporate licensing, and regulatory services for cemeteries and securities. This office serves Georgia's businesses, voters, and residents by ensuring reliable services, efficient processes, and secure election operations.

Jonathan Reich, the Georgia Secretary of State's Chief Information Officer (CIO), leads the IT operations. He oversees the management of internal technology systems and election technology infrastructure, ensuring the seamless execution of essential functions like the state's voter registration system, ballot check-in processes, and overall election security. Supported by a team of 26 IT professionals serving 450 employees, the department is dedicated to delivering scalable, secure, and reliable technology solutions that uphold the integrity of Georgia's government operations.

Key Results

Enhanced reliability
Dependable IT infrastructure, reducing unplanned outages, and delivering continuous system uptime are critical to supporting Georgia's election processes and government operations.

Simplified operations
A streamlined management system provides a unified, "single pane of glass" interface for consistent performance and operational efficiency.

Cost savings
Achieved approximately 25-30% cost savings due to reduced need for specialized staffing and multiple licensing costs by migrating from VMware.

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> **Nutanix lets me use the dollars taxpayers entrusted to me to maximize our operation, and I get every penny out of it. We also have very few unplanned outages, allowing me to sleep at night. I am a fierce advocate.**
>
> **Jonathan Reich,**
> CIO, Georgia Secretary of State Office

Challenge

Before adopting Nutanix, the Georgia Secretary of State's office struggled with aging hardware and the complexities of a three-tier IT infrastructure that required separate components. Reich described this setup as increasingly outdated and inefficient: "If you're in a three-tiered environment, you've got your compute, storage, and networking separate. That seems more legacy now."

This fragmented system required specialized expertise, such as SAN administrators and networking specialists, which added complexity and increased costs. "Not needing to have separate skillsets saves both money and time," Reich shared. Additionally, nearing the end of its hardware lifecycle, the office faced rising costs and inefficiencies, particularly with VMware's multi-layered licensing requirements for disaster recovery and hot spares. "That licensing made it much more expensive and complicated," Reich explained.

Recognizing the need for a streamlined, scalable solution, the office initially adopted Nutanix years ago to simplify operations and consolidate its critical workloads. With this latest renewal and expansion, the team continues to benefit from Nutanix's efficiency and cost savings. "At the end of the day, Nutanix's simplicity overrides the complexity competitors offer," Reich concluded.

Solution

The Georgia Secretary of State's office has relied on the Nutanix infrastructure for years and, with this latest renewal, has upgraded its investment in the Nutanix Cloud Platform (NCP) solution. The integration of AHV hypervisor, Nutanix Unified Storage, and Nutanix Flow enhances security, scalability, and disaster recovery, reinforcing an already solid foundation.

This transition maintains a streamlined, hyperconverged environment that consolidated all critical workflows onto Nutanix. These workflows include internal systems, databases, websites, and election management technology, such as poll pad check-in processes.

Nutanix's single-pane-of-glass management interface, the Prism management console, continues to simplify IT operations, providing a centralized platform for monitoring and managing workloads. Reich highlighted the efficiency of this design, emphasizing how it allows for seamless operations and improved visibility across the infrastructure.

One standout success story was Georgia's November 2024 presidential election, during which Nutanix assisted systems facilitated averaged sub-minute check-in times for voters at the polls. Jonathan Reich highlighted this as a critical achievement for his team, emphasizing how the infrastructure's reliability and efficiency enabled voters to sign in and register that took around 50 seconds on average. This performance underscores Nutanix's scalability and dependability in supporting the Secretary of State's mission to deliver fair, secure, and efficient elections.

Customer Outcome

Enhanced reliability and uptime

Nutanix has significantly enhanced IT reliability for the Georgia Secretary of State's office, helping to keep critical systems operational when needed most. "The huge benefit to external customers is reliability and uptime. We have very few unplanned outages," said Reich. "I don't worry about the infrastructure anymore."

This continued investment in Nutanix has been vital in supporting Georgia's election management tools, where uninterrupted performance is critical. From voter registration databases to poll pad check-in processes, the infrastructure provides seamless operations during high-pressure elections, minimizing downtime and boosting confidence in the system's dependability.

Cost savings with simplified management

By renewing its Nutanix infrastructure, the Georgia Secretary of State's office continues to realize significant cost savings, particularly regarding staffing and licensing. "From a staffing perspective, we've reduced the need for specialized skill sets," Reich explained. "Historically, you'd need a SAN administrator, a compute specialist, and networking management. With Nutanix, I need a more generalist skill set."

Reich emphasized the importance of financial stewardship, particularly in a government role. "My responsibility is to the taxpayers of Georgia, and I work really hard at maximizing the dollar that's been entrusted to me," he shared. "Nutanix lets me use the dollars entrusted to me to maximize our operation. At the end of the day, I'm not worried that I'm being nickeled and dimed on all the other things I need in order to do it as I would be with somebody else, potentially."

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Scalability and disaster recovery

The office leverages Nutanix's native disaster recovery capabilities with dispersed hot-hot data copies for high availability, ensuring critical operations remain uninterrupted even during unexpected events. "We don't have to worry about separate DR design—it's native to Nutanix," Reich said. This built-in disaster recovery solution simplifies continuity planning, allowing the IT team to focus on optimizing other areas of the infrastructure. With seamless scalability, the office can easily accommodate growing workloads and evolving requirements, ensuring long-term flexibility and reliability in supporting Georgia's mission-critical services.

Next Steps

The Georgia Secretary of State's office plans to continue improving constituent experiences through technology. "The future is making the citizens who are required to work with us less frustrated and improving those efforts," Reich explained. Potential advancements include AI and automation to enhance customer service and operational efficiency. By focusing on these initiatives, the office aims to simplify interactions, reduce errors, and ensure that every Georgian receives timely, accurate, and efficient services, setting a new standard for government operations in the United States.