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Client Success

Samana Group, Omnissa and Nutanix: How a Global Aviation Company Modernized Its End-User Computing Estate

Omnissa Horizon 8 Deployment on Nutanix AHV

BACKGROUND:

Client is a global aviation business that designs and manufactures military aircraft, business jets and space systems, operating over a complex, geographically distributed IT environment that supports engineering, completion-center operations, customer support, and corporate functions, with end users spanning multiple datacenters and active directory domains.

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THE CHALLENGE:

Client's existing virtual desktop infrastructure ran on VMware Horizon hosted on VMware vSphere. Following Broadcom's subsequent establishment of Omnisia as an independent company from VMware's End-User Computing business unit, our client was facing a critical decision: continue paying for vSphere through the new combined-offering bundle or break the hypervisor dependency that had defined the Horizon stack for over a decade.

Our client chose to break the dependency. The decision to move the underlying hypervisor to Nutanix AHV, combined with a desire to retire the existing VxRail platform, created a time-sensitive project with added pressure to maintain existing applications and legacy Windows 10 images.

Specifically, our client needed:

A clean, modern Omnisia Horizon 8 architecture designed for production scale across two datacenters that aligned with the company's strict security and compliance requirements.

A reference-architecture-aligned approach to App Volumes and Dynamic Environment Manager that would simplify Day-2 operations rather than recreating the technical debt of the previous environment.

A controlled migration model that protected the existing user base during cutover while preserving their established applications and workflows.

A partner that had Omnisia-on-AHV experience at a time when that combination was still maturing under Omnisia's stewardship.

SAMANA IN ACTION:

Samana engaged with our client on a structured Omnisia Horizon 8 greenfield implementation aligned with Samana's standard engagement methodology: Kick Off, Discovery, Design, Deploy, Test, and Production Rollout.

- **Architecture and Design.** Samana led a discovery and design phase covering infrastructure inventory, SLA and uptime requirements, application performance requirements, security and compliance requirements, and storage and data design. The resulting target architecture included up to two Horizon Pods across two datacenters, each configured with paired Horizon Connection Servers and paired Unified Access Gateways for resilient external access. The design corrected an original architecture that relied on outdated concepts unnecessary for Horizon 8 and applied inconsistent HA requirements well above what the business needed. By adopting a best-practice, right-sized approach, our client was able to reduce Microsoft server licensing costs for both Windows and SQL.
- **Application Delivery.** Rather than perpetuating the legacy environment's disparate, unsynchronized application strategy, which had greatly increased management complexity, Samana designed an App Volumes 4.x implementation. Existing App Volumes packages were converted and carried forward without requiring full reinstallation. Application packaging was evaluated against the existing environment to determine the right delivery methodology per application, separating those that belonged in the base image from those better delivered through App Volumes packages.
- **User Environment and Identity.** Dynamic Environment Manager was designed and deployed to handle user profile and configuration management. Samana enabled the full set of DEM functionality, including computer policies that had been missing or incorrectly configured in the prior environment, and provided knowledge transfer to the client team on DEM features and recommended practices.
- **Migration and Rollout.** Samana executed a controlled pilot, followed by validated functional and acceptance testing, before promoting users to the new production Horizon Pods on Nutanix AHV. The project followed a pragmatic lift-and-shift approach where needed to maintain existing applications and legacy Windows 10 images under the aggressive timeline driven by VxRail retirement, while still delivering a modernized foundation.

Results:

Samana Group, Omnisca and Nutanix helped our client achieve the following business outcomes:

- **Reduced Long-Term OpEx and Hypervisor Licensing Exposure.** By breaking the Horizon-on-vSphere dependency and moving to Nutanix AHV, DFJ eliminated the recurring VMware vSphere hypervisor licensing line item from its EUC stack and removed its exposure to the Broadcom VVF for VDI bundle pricing trajectory.
- **Modernized, Reference-Architecture-Aligned Omnisca Environment.** The new Horizon 8 environment is built to the current Omnisca reference architecture, correcting earlier flawed design elements and positioning the client team for cleaner upgrades, faster feature adoption, and lower long-term Day 2 management overhead.
- **Improved Application Delivery Agility.** App Volumes 4.x replaces image-baked application sprawl with a portable, dynamically attached delivery model. By standardizing proven best-practice design concepts and converting existing packages, our client reduced management complexity, improved consistency across datacenters, and lowered the operational cost of future application changes.
- **Consistent User Experience Across Datacenters.** The modernized environment, supported by full DEM capabilities, delivers a more reliable and manageable end-user experience across sites.
- **Resilient Multi-Datacenter Architecture.** The paired Connection Server and paired UAG design across two datacenters provides the high-availability foundation required for production EUC at the client's scale, with no single point of failure at the access tier.
- **Controlled, Low-Risk Migration.** The pilot-first rollout pattern protected the live user population during cutover and gave the client's IT team a validated, repeatable migration model for the remainder of the user base while respecting the need to maintain existing applications and Windows 10 images under tight timelines.
- **Foundation for Predictable Day-2 Operations.** The new platform is architecturally positioned for ongoing monitoring and management.