

# Tech infrastructure on a platform

Nutanix, the US-based technology startup founded by Dheeraj Pandey, is giving stiff competition to the established big players in the cloud and data centre space

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**T**HE burgeoning number of computing transactions, be it from a desktop PC, laptop or mobile handsets would mean adding many more layers of technology to manage the entire process. This in turn actually leads to higher degree of complexity and probably confusion for enterprises.

To bring an end to this confusion and enable greater simplicity, Nutanix, the US-based technology startup founded in 2009 has set itself a goal to make the back-end technology infrastructure of servers and storage invisible. The startup, which is yet to go public enjoys a valuation of \$2 billion. It operates in a space generally referred as hyper converged infrastructure providing a single solution

combining hardware and software in the areas of data centre and cloud. The company has raised more than \$312 million from investors including Sapphire Ventures, the investment arm of the German enterprise software company SAP, Lightspeed Venture Partners, Battery Ventures, Khosla Ventures, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley and Riverwood Capital.

Dheeraj Pandey, founder & CEO, Nutanix is very clear that the idea of hyper converged is not a destination in itself but a means to an end. "The end being get me out of the rut of details and make it invisible," he remarks.

Pandey feels that enterprises spend tonnes of money in useless hardware and the idea of convergence will be a long lasting idea. The core focus of Nutanix is to make the technology infrastructure invisible as it is generally noticed that enterprises are irritated when more components are added to the platform. "We never do the things in a single machine and have shrink wrapped with a zero administration," he says.

The CEO who has taken potshots at its prime competitor VMware believes

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**DHEERAJ PANDEY,**  
Founder & CEO, Nutanix

that the company is eminently beatable despite its size. He is also a great proponent of automation where he believes machines will take over humans in a big way. "We have to imagine humanless data centres at scale and it is still a large problem to solve," he says. For example, this would in fact mean bringing in just in time cloud services, which is easier said than done.

As Nutanix goes about building the next level of technology it has also not lost the focus on the customer service. Pandey says that all great companies such as Apple, Amazon are built on the foundation of superior service.

Nutanix, which started focusing on the mid-market customer and later moved into the top end, is also now equally focused on the SMEs. "We are considered a premium brand but cannot absolutely ignore the base of the pyramid and for that we will need a large ecosystem of partners," Pandey says. At the same time, Nutanix realises that competition is going to be intense as it gains market share. "We are only a six year old company, and our business is as big as Oracle was in 1990. The question is what is going to be the next decade and it is going to be war," he remarks, adding that the big guys are not going to give up their territory so quickly and the competition is going to be intense in various technology platforms.

Nutanix also has its target on the India market where it believes that enterprises can bypass the entire gamut of compute, virtualisation and storage to get directly into the cloud market. Pandey feels that they would be drawing their experience from the US government market where they entered without much of a foothold. "Today we understand that market better than anybody. It was about tenacity and the big guys underestimated us," he says.

Nutanix believes that between computing, virtualisation and storage it is still a large market but what enterprises are looking at are platforms which are simple to use. This is the goal where it will remain focused. "One cannot argue against keeping things simple," Pandey summarises.

