

Converged Infrastructure: It's here, it works, and it'll save you money

We've all been hearing about converged infrastructure for many years. I remember that HP was one of the first companies that talked about it in the early-mid 2000's, as they were pretty much the only company that manufactured products in all three of the server, storage, and networking segments. A side note is that for many years, starting back in the 50s/60s, IBM was the only company that not only had all of the hardware components but also the operating system and application software.

About 4-5 years ago, EMC, Cisco, and VMware got together and created a company called VCE. This company was created to offer a converged infrastructure offering, which they call Vblock. Essentially, Vblock is a racked offering where you'll find EMC storage, Cisco UCS servers, Cisco networking, and VMware virtualization software. VCE has had pretty good market acceptance, but it's a tough sell, mostly because it's not cheap... convenience comes with a price.

NetApp, the next largest storage vendor to EMC, also partnered with Cisco to create a Vblock lookalike called FlexPod. Similar to the Vblock, it has also had decent acceptance in the market.

HP and IBM have their own offerings, as well.

Neither Vblock or FlexPod was created from the "ground up" for a true converged infrastructure environment. Enter a few newer companies that didn't have an installed base to protect, that could design a system from the beginning as a true

converged infrastructure solution. One of those companies is Nutanix.

Roundstone Solutions recently became a partner of Nutanix because we were finding customers asking for such a converged infrastructure offering.

The premise is simple; you acquire storage and compute as you need it, not before. There's no need to over provision either storage or compute, and you're free to use any network connectivity you wish. For example, Nutanix works just as well with Brocade as it does with Cisco. Also, Nutanix works with any of the recognized hypervisors (unlike most others), including VMware, Citrix, Microsoft Hyper-V, or KVM.

The most impressive thing about Nutanix is the price point. You'll find the converged offering to be at a much lower price point than either Vblock or FlexPod, and it's a more complete offering.

Roundstone Solutions is certified to be able to help you design and configure a converged infrastructure solution from Nutanix, and we will also involve the manufacturer in our efforts, giving you twice the attention. We're happy to arrange for an on-site presentation and discussion about your particular environment and how Nutanix could offer you a great option for growth.

Give us a call at 925-217-1177 or email us at sales@roundstonesolutions.com for more details.



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Fusion-io...lots of new products and a new owner

When we started Roundstone Solutions, we wanted to build on our track record of excellence in the IT reseller space, and couple that with a desire to focus on transformational technologies that could truly change the price/performance curve for our customers. That led us pay close attention to what is going on in the market, which trends are for real, which companies are delivering change, and what is best for our customers.



One of those technologies that we strongly believe in is Flash technology. We simply feel that Flash is the biggest game changer that we've seen in a very long time.

We chose to partner with the leader in Flash technology; Fusion-io. It's been a good decision, as they have the most complete suite of offerings for Flash technology in the industry. In addition, they are the largest and most advanced as it relates to furthering the technology.

In mid-2013, Fusion-io acquired NexGen Storage, a company that utilized their Flash technology on the server bus of their hybrid storage arrays. That acquisition has gone well, and has increased

the desire of Fusion-io to be the de facto leader in all things Flash.

However, as a public company, Fusion-io has continually been under the microscope because of the fact that over 50% of their business was done by 3 clients. There has been a need to diversify the client base, while at the same time, the need to continue development of newer ways to use Flash and ways to increase performance at lower costs.

Fusion-io recently announced (early June) their third generation of Flash technology, called Atomic. It's awesome, and might want to take a look at it. The cards scale to 6.4TB in a single card. It's such a powerful tool to improve anyone's deployment of servers, providing much higher performance. Details can be found at the Fusion-io website. Roundstone Solutions is happy to take you through all of the new announcements, and will be happy to involve the manufacturer so that you'll get twice the attention.



The other big announcement regarding Fusion-io is that it announced in mid-June that SanDisk is acquiring the company

for \$1.1B. SanDisk is a leader in the flash market, with a very high share of the consumer market. Most of the USB Flash drives that you see for sale are manufactured by SanDisk. SanDisk is a \$6B sales company, with a market cap of greater than \$20B. That's going to provide Fusion-io with the ability to continue to grow their business, and I expected we'll see more and more deployments of Flash as we move into the future.

Contact Roundstone Solutions and we'll help you take a look at Flash, and get you more performance and lower costs very quickly. We can be reached at (925) 217-1177 or sales@roundstonesolutions.com.

Information Technology manufacturer results and trends

In reading about technology, most tend to focus on new developments/products. While we do the same, we also look at the financial results the various manufacturers turn in on a quarterly basis. Why? Because we have a vested interest in the companies whose products we represent.

Here, then, is a review of the most current quarterly financials for the companies that we represent. Please note that the information we have is only for public companies, as private companies tend to keep their financials, well, private.

Hewlett Packard: Revenue of @27.3B, down 1% from the year earlier quarter

EMC: Revenue of 45.5B, up 2% from the year earlier quarter

Cisco: Revenue of \$11.5B, down 5.5% from the year earlier quarter

Brocade: Revenue of \$537M, unchanged from the year earlier quarter

Fusion-io: Revenue of \$87.7M, down 7% from the year earlier quarter

Nimble Storage: Revenue of \$41.7M, up 107% from the year earlier quarter

Here's a few others:

IBM: Revenue of \$22.5B, down 4% from the year earlier quarter

Oracle: Revenue of \$11.3B, up 3% from the year earlier quarter

Juniper: Revenue of \$1.17B, up 10% from the year earlier quarter

So, what does this all mean? Well, first off, a lot of hardware is still being sold. The IT industry appears to be very healthy. Many of the firms' results are lower than the previous year because of the reduced cost of technology, and also because of product transitions.

We are bullish about our industry, and you can feel comfortable that the industry is healthy.

Contact Roundstone Solutions at 925-217-1177 or sales@roundstonesolutions.com for more information.

Enterprise class “Dropbox/Box” functionality

Growth in the use of Dropbox and Box has been unbelievable. The reason for this is that there's a real business need for “file synch and share” as well as collaboration on documents/objects between users. And, there's a need to do so at a reasonable cost.

Dropbox and Box have taken this market by storm. Both are easy to use services, at pretty competitive prices. The problem with these services is that security and control of corporate data has been an afterthought. It's probably against most corporate security policies to store corporate data outside of the corporate data center.

There's a company that can provide this functionality with “enterprise class” security and policies. CTERA offers such a service, and Roundstone Solutions can demonstrate how it works. Please contact us if you like the functionality of Dropbox/Box, but you need more in the way of “enterprise class”.

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Upgrade your network to 1GB/10GB and pay as you go with Brocade Network Subscription

Higher speed networking has been around for quite some time. Many companies and public sector entities have already upgraded to 10GB from the core to the Edge. In fact, 40GB and 100GB are already deployed in some core infrastructures. So why haven't you upgraded to 1GB/10GB?

One of the reasons that we often hear is the cost to upgrade from 10MB/100MB to 1GB is high, especially if you happen to have a large network. The fact is that upgrading to 10GB will be much cheaper than when you initially deployed your 10/100 network.

Most IT departments are being asked to deliver services that essentially require 1GB speed at a minimum. Video, VoIP, and other new applications are putting higher demands on the network.

It's time to take a hard look at upgrading your network, and we can help. Working with Roundstone Solutions and Brocade, we can get you into 1GB and 10GB technology, and we can help you do so at a lower

cost than any of the other network equipment manufacturers.

One way to help you with the financial aspects of the upgrade, is through a program called Brocade Network Subscription. This program allows you to acquire network equipment without purchasing it. No one else in the business offers users a way to acquire equipment this way.

How does it work? Simple...all you do is configure your desired network using Brocade equipment, and we'll give you a price to pay for it on a month to month basis. Don't worry...you don't get hammered with a high rental price; it's actually very competitive.

Why would Brocade do this? Well, they want to give users every opportunity to experience Brocade's IP networking products and this allows a user to pay for it using OpEx.

Brocade's not stupid; they know that most users have Cisco installed, and that's usually what people say to

push off on considering Brocade. Well, it's tough to say no to a great deal like this. Users can try Brocade technology and if they don't think it's better than what they currently run, they can simply cancel it and return it to Brocade. No muss, no fuss. Of course, most users that have installed Brocade equipment using Brocade Network Subscription have kept the equipment for a longer term. Using Brocade Network Subscription allows those users to stay current with their networking equipment, as there's no depreciation schedule to consider.

Give us a call and we'll be happy to explain how it all works. You're going to be pleasantly surprised when you learn how Brocade can upgrade your network for less.

Contact Roundstone Solutions for help in how to acquire your IT assets.



About Roundstone Solutions

Roundstone Solutions is an IT solutions provider, based in Northern California. Roundstone is focused on the data center environment for small, medium, and large enterprises. As more and more workload moves to the Cloud, we specialize in helping companies and public sector entities implement IT environments that are higher performing and lower cost than their previous environments.

Roundstone Solutions was founded by Tim Joyce, an industry veteran who has run similar companies for many years, always with an eye towards earning the highest level of customer satisfaction.

Please see more about Roundstone Solutions at www.roundstonesolutions.com
Our blog can be found at www.timjoyce-roundstonesolutions.blogspot.com

We look forward to helping you achieve your business goals!

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