

If you haven't starting "transforming" your IT Infrastructure yet, you should get going on it

Every day, you get emails about how you should either be moving all of your IT to the Cloud, investing big into some new technology, participating in another useless Webinar, conference, or similar. We get it; you're exhausted from all of the people and companies that are trying to reach you and show you how you're doing it all wrong.

Roundstone Solutions is different. We know you don't want to be sold; but you're willing to listen to educated viewpoints on things. That's what we try to provide. Sure, we make our money when you buy things, but we only want to work with companies and public sector entities that value experience and knowledge.

So, let's get to the topic of this article; transforming your IT infrastructure. The topic alone sounds daunting, but it doesn't have to be. Simply put, there are some newer technologies that are already proven that you probably want to look at to determine their appropriateness for your IT infrastructure. Why? Because some of them really do work better than your current environment.

At Roundstone Solutions, we try to work with newer technologies so that we can help you stay ahead of the curve. So, what are some of those technologies that are transforming IT infrastructure? Here are a few:

- 1) converged infrastructure
- 2) hybrid storage
- 3) software defined networking

While we're at it, here's a few that sounded great on paper but haven't panned out that well:

- 1) Fibre Channel over Ethernet
- 2) moving everything to the Cloud
- 3) tablets replacing everything from PC's to data centers

As an IT professional, you know that our industry is all about change. Not for the sake of change, but because what newer technologies can mean for our companies. Forward thinking companies consider technologies that offer better performance, faster time to market, easier and better management, and greater scalability and agility. Like it or not, it's part of what we're all about. It's not unsettling if you're working with the right partner.

Roundstone Solutions isn't tied to any one vendor. Sure, we have our favorites, but that's not going to cause us to recommend something that doesn't make sense for you. If we represent the best products, we would love to help you acquire them. If we can deploy them for you, we're happy to do so. We're also happy to tell you if we're not the right company for the particular need you might have.

Regardless, whether you use Roundstone Solutions or not, it's time to look to see if you're ready to transform your IT infrastructure. Give us at call at 925-217-1177 or email us at sales@roundstonesolutions.com for more information. Thanks very much.

We send this email version of the Roundstone Solutions Quarterly Newsletter to about 20,000 contacts every quarter. We try to keep our lists current, and only wish to send it to those who will find it useful. If you're getting this newsletter and you like it, please let us know. If you're getting it and you don't wish to continue to receive it, let us know. We'll remove you from our mailing list right away. Thanks.

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ProIntegrators provides customers with Professional Services expertise for IT Infrastructures

One of the principals of Roundstone Solutions has joined with two other individuals to create a new Professional Services company called ProIntegrators LLC.

ProIntegrators was formed to help End-Users get their IT infrastructures performing the way they are supposed to. Many End-User companies have not invested in “nuts and bolts” kind of talent, preferring to hire people that are more application focused. That’s all well and good, but you still have an IT infrastructure to manage, even if you run a lot of things in the Cloud.

That’s where ProIntegrators comes in; they know how to make networks behave like they are supposed to, know how to deploy and tune systems, and can troubleshoot most environments, including yours.

Give ProIntegrators a call at 925-217-1177 and get your IT infrastructure tuned up.

Time to get rid of your old EMC Clariions and Hewlett-Packard EVAs

We run into a lot of End-Users that still have EMC Clariions installed in their IT infrastructures. That doesn’t surprise us, because we all want to get the most out of our investments, don’t we? However, there comes a time when it’s time to get rid of the old device, because it costs more than you think, and doesn’t provide the performance and stability that you need.

EMC Clariions have been sold since 1992, when the technology was introduced by Data General, which EMC acquired in 1999. That makes the technology 23 years old. That’s forever in the computer industry. None of those Clarions are current technology.

In fact, EMC obsoleted the Clariions themselves when they introduced the VNX in 2011. That’s 4 years ago. Why would anyone still be running Clariions?

While we’re at it, if you are still running HP EVA’s, the same applies. The EVA was a product that Compaq sold, and you’ll recall that HP merged with Compaq 2001. So, EVA is at least 14 years old, and it’s older than that. It’s time to retire both of these technologies, and Roundstone can help you with their replacements.

Let us help you. There are some really great hybrid storage technologies that exist today, as well as converged infrastructure offerings, that offer a quantum leap over the old EMC Clariions and HP EVAs.

A couple of examples of hybrid storage to replace either Clariion or EVA include NexGen Storage, Nimble Storage, or Nexsan.

Should you wish to go the converged infrastructure approach, we would strongly recommend Nutanix.

While you might think you’re saving money by delaying their replacement, using Clariion or EVA is costing you in the following ways: 1) cost of maintenance, 2) lack of performance and function, 3) cost of software packages that run on these devices, and 4) lack of simplicity compared to new devices.

Call Roundstone Solutions at 925-324-1582 to start the process of transforming the store in your IT infrastructure.

How much more VMware do you still need to buy? Or are there other options? (YES!)

About 10 years ago, End-Users bought separate servers for every application that they ran, and usually, there were 3-5 servers that were acquired for each application. I remember a bank we worked with bought 5 servers for every application they deployed. As a reseller, we loved it, since we sold a lot of hardware. Nothing was shared, and every server ran at about 10 percent utilization (at best).

I always wondered why the users didn't share servers between applications, but I was always told that the applications required their own servers. That wasn't really true, but who was I to argue?

As a result, there was a lot of unused capacity and performance sitting in every data center.

Along came VMware to provide a way to share servers. Server virtualization took off slowly, and once IT professionals saw that it worked, and worked well, it exploded. No longer did users have to buy separate servers, nor be content with 10% utilization. Theoretically, users could now get 100% utilization from their servers. Of course, no one did that, because there were other issues to consider, like the fact that VMware required shared storage, or a SAN.

In the 2010's, along came converged infrastructure. Gone were the days that compute and storage had to be separately provisioned; you could now acquire blocks of technology based on your needs. The cost of the hardware components of the compute and storage stack were able to get less expensive.

The greatest percentage of users use VMware for their hypervisor. With hardware cost coming down, the cost of the hypervisor software and support was now a greater percentage of the IT infrastructure costs.

Don't get me wrong; VMware is a terrific company that essentially created the virtualization market. They are responsible for helping End-Users save billions of

dollars in hardware costs. They have changed the way that we think of IT infrastructure. All good.



Well, along came Nutanix, the leader in converged infrastructure, or hyper-converged infrastructure if you like that term better. Aside from being a vendor of great converged systems, they took a look at the hypervisor layer and wanted to give customers some choice.

There are 4 main hypervisor vendors in the market; VMware, Microsoft Hyper-V, KVM, and Citrix Xen Server. Users tend to prefer VMware because of the function that is built into their vCenter management tool. But what if there could be similar function built into one of the other hypervisors, perhaps the one that is Open Source? Would that be good for End-Users?

That's what Nutanix has done. They've taken KVM, and added vCenter-like functionality to the product. They named it Acropolis, and are providing support for this hypervisor (much like Red Hat does with Linux).

The result is that End-Users now have choice. They can stay with VMware, and the costs associated with it. Or, they can completely eliminate the cost of the hypervisor with Nutanix Acropolis. Yep, that's right. Nutanix doesn't charge for Acropolis. Think about what that does to your cost of compute.

Finally, Nutanix provides a migration tool to make it easy for End-Users to move from VMware to Acropolis.

Roundstone Solutions is a primary partner of Nutanix in Northern CA. We'd love to work with you to show you just what Nutanix can do for your infrastructure, both with hardware and with the hypervisor. Call us at 925-217-1177 and we'll come by to talk.

Our customers love working with us...you probably will, too

We've been around as a new business for three (3) years now. We've enjoyed getting to know many companies and IT professionals in that time, and have provided a high level of service to all of them. Admittedly, it's not easy to begin conversations with newer prospects, because people tend to be comfortable with their existing relationships and IT infrastructure. We understand. We also know that no matter how much you want to be comfortable in your role, that's not what IT is all about. Our industry is all about change, and it's necessary to change to grow.

To date, our business is making good progress getting new customers. The best way to do that, of course, is to be introduced by other satisfied customers. That's happening, but we want to do more.

As the business of selling technology has changed, some things are still relevant/important. One of those things is the personal touch. We can prove this by disproving the opposite (remember this from HS Math?). If acquiring technology is only about buying the lowest priced equipment, then everyone should just look for the cheapest site on the internet and buy their IT infrastructure there. But we don't all do that. Why not?

It's because of a few things. First, we want someone to be "in the boat" with us if something goes wrong.

Second, we still appreciate expertise and the personal touch. After all, being a human being is about interacting with others, and that goes for business too. It's far more fun dealing with people than a faceless web page.

Finally, others might actually have some valued advice that they can offer. Here in the Northern CA market, many IT professionals think that they are the smartest guys in the room, and who knows, maybe they are. The rest of us appreciate expertise that others might have that they're willing to share. Roundstone Solutions has a wide range of experience, since we see many different companies and are involved in many types of technologies. In short, we're able to see more than many by nature of our business.

Why wouldn't you want to take advantage of that? Our customers seem to like working with us. Almost every one of them has done more than one deal with us, and we don't have a single disappointed customer. Join us, and let's transform your IT Infrastructure together!

Give us a chance to show you just how much we can help you and your company. Give us a call at 925-217-1177 or email us at sales@roundstonesolutions.com for more information.

We look forward to working with you!

About Roundstone Solutions

Roundstone Solutions is an IT solutions provider, based in Northern California. Roundstone is focused on helping companies and public sector entities transform their IT infrastructure. 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 in 2012. Roundstone's focus is to be the Northern CA VAR/ Reseller with the highest level of customer satisfaction. So far, so good.

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

We look forward to helping you transform your IT infrastructure!

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