Which part of Newton's Law do you follow?

Our company, Roundstone Solutions, is in the business of working with companies and public sector entities on newer technology platforms that offer great promise of improved IT infrastructure operations. What this often means is that we have to convince end users that changing from comfortable, familiar platforms is something they should consider doing.

IT is all about change, and in most cases, change has brought significant gains in performance, capacity, and lowered cost. So why, then, would an IT executive resist change?

Because of Newton.

Newton's Law of Inertia says "An object at rest stays at rest". In IT, that tends to mean "If I have a 3-tier infrastructure that has worked for us, I'm going to keep on using it until I have no choice". Which is a shame, because there are much better alternatives.

As an IT solutions provider, our job is to make sure you and your IT organization have the tools to not only do your job, but do it better than your competition.

There are studies that show over 70% of your efforts and money go into "keeping the existing stuff working". Wow! That means only 30% (at best) goes into innovation to make your organization better and more competitive. Seems to us that percentage is upside down.

How often are your existing VARs encouraging you to look at newer, better technologies? They probably introduce new stuff from time to time, but their interest is in keeping things on the same path, because they don't want to introduce different vendors and VARs that might upset the status quo.

Roundstone is not beholden to the older, 3-tier world. Nope, we bet our business on newer platforms, like hyper-converged infrastructure, newer backup platforms, Unified Communications as a Service, to name three. It's harder work, but it's much more rewarding.

We enjoy when our Clients deploy next generation platforms and see significant improvements to their IT operations. We've yet to have any of our Clients say that they wish they hadn't gone with newer technology.

Remember the second part of Newton's Law; "An object in motion stays in motion". Innovating with some of the next generation IT platforms that Roundstone works with will help your organization start moving towards a much more effective IT Infrastructure, and keep moving forward.

We've got many examples of companies we've helped in Northern CA with next generation IT platforms. We're not beholden to "legacy" vendors and can provide completely unbiased information.

Plus, we're enjoyable to work with.

Roundstone Solutions specializes in Next Generation IT Infrastructures. We'd like to help you. Call us at 925-217-1177 or email us at sales@roundstonesolutions.com. Thanks!

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

IN THIS ISSUE:

What is Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS)?

Do you still run your own email system on premises? Most companies no longer do. You probably don't either. Our guess is that you either run Microsoft Office 365, or you run Google Gmail. Why don't you run your own?

Simple. Microsoft and Google do it better than you do. For you and your company, all you have to do is provide email for your users, and you no longer have to pay for and provision servers, ensure upgrades are done, manage the overhead, etc. In other words, you got rid of a lot of hassle by moving your email to the Public Cloud. And, it's been working well.

So why do you still struggle with phone PBX and UC servers and software? We'd argue that managing phone systems and UC servers, storage, networking, and software is a bigger pain than running email systems. To us, it seems like a natural for you to consider moving your telecommunications to the Cloud.

Let's see…how much does your organization pay for telecommunications services today? Don't bother answering… you don't know. There are so many vendors you have to pay for that there's a tremendous amount of waste in your telecom costs. There's circuits, connection, usage (both US and international), equipment costs, and more. Huge.

Wouldn't it be easy if you could consolidate all of those costs down to a per user cost? At least the usage and equipment costs? You can. With Fuze.

Fuze is the leading Enterprise class UCaaS platform. They have some well known competitors (8x8 and Ring Central), but when evaluated, they don't really compare on both Enterprise functionality and international presence.

With Fuze, you can combine your voice communications (getting rid of your PBX and UC equipment and software) with video, messaging, and collaboration into one simple to use platform. Get rid of WebEx, GoTo Meeting, etc.

You can use Fuze from your desktop computer, your notebook computer, a wired desk phone, and as an app on your smartphone. Your choice…use one or all of these ways to connect. Work from anywhere.

Billing is simple. You take the number of users you have, and multiply it by the monthly cost. That's it. No more trying to figure out your costs. No need to pay TEMS companies to show you how to save money. It's as simple as deploying Fuze.

Here's how it works:

- Roundstone and Fuze will first discuss with you your existing environment to see if Fuze could provide value.
- If it can provide value (it can), we'll engage to do a complete evaluation and create a migration plan. By the way, you can use Fuze with your existing platform as you migrate, so there's no panic about a "heart transplant".
- Once the migration plan is agreed to, Fuze will start to provision the service for each user. You play only for the users that are on the service. You don't have to over-provision, and there's no such thing as being under-provisioned. And, you don't have to manage any hardware, software, or have expensive UC engineers on your team.
- You get billed on a monthly basis for services.
- Your users are thrilled with the added functionality and their ability to use Fuze anywhere

We have one issue we'd like to address, which we've noticed from some companies. We've run into some organizations that have their employees use their personal smart phones, which is fine. However, we suggest that every employee have a company phone number that they have to use to conduct business. The reason is that you need to be able to recreate things if that employee leaves. If they've never used a company phone number, you'll have no idea who their contacts are, and you're going to want to know. This might sound a little strange, but give it some thought.

Sound good? Let's have a discussion bout how we can help. Give us a call at (925) 217-1177 or email us at sales@roundstonesolutions.com to get started.

Nutanix's Enterprise Cloud Platform

For over 4 years, Roundstone Solutions has been partnered with Nutanix, and it's been an excellent partnership. We believe in the technology platform, and we think their HCI platform makes much more sense than what other infrastructure vendors are offering.

Nutanix is a fan of Roundstone, as well. Roundstone has focused on Nutanix for a major part of our business, and the investment we've made in learning and understanding the technology platform differentiates us from our competition. We know the platform, and we know how to introduce it to companies.

Nutanix introduced their platform in 2011, so they have been shipping working product for over 7 years. It's fair to say that they have been market proven, and their platform works as advertised. We have many Nutanix customers, and they are thrilled with the platform…all have added to it.

But Nutanix hasn't stood still. They recognize the world is about a hybrid IT model, and that means HCI vendors have to not only co-exist with the Public Cloud vendors, but also enable users to be able to use their platform wherever they see fit. Nutanix has invested a lot in making your experience the same on-premise as it is in the Public Cloud, if not better.

Nutanix has acquired a number of companies where it made sense to bring on technology faster. Some of them are Calm, Minjar, and others. Those products have been integrated into the Nutanix product line, all enabling more and more for end users.

In Northern CA, users like to do things on their own. We have very astute customers here. Initially, some of these users felt they could create their own Private Cloud without the need to acquire Nutanix. Interestingly, we're now seeing many of them reach out to Nutanix to "just get it done".

We're also seeing some companies realize that putting some workloads into the Public Cloud wasn't the panacea that was expected. Flexibility was less and costs were higher. That was to be expected… the Public Cloud companies are in business to make a profit. Using Nutanix in your own data center will end up being being 40-70% less expensive, and give you far more control over your destiny.

Nutanix, in their last fiscal year, showed revenue of over $1B. This year, it's expected that the figure will top $1.5B, showing over 50% growth in a market that is growing fast. A solid company.
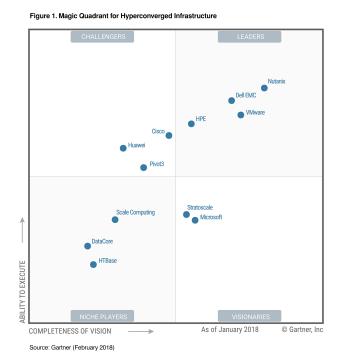
If you haven't taken a look at Nutanix yet, it's probably time to do so. You'll quickly see how you can benefit, and you'll be pleased. We can help… call us at 925-217-1177 or email us at sales@roundstonesolutions.com. Let's get started!

Gartner's Magic Quadrant for HCI

Nutanix is the leader in every report that's written about HCI; Gartner, Forrester, and others. You'll see Nutanix is ahead of all others in Gartner Magic Quadrant for HCI.

Nutanix is the only vendor that completely rewrote the file system, which gives it a performance advantage over all comers. You'll typically find pricing from Nutanix to beat others.

Let us help you with Nutanix. We're the experts in Northern CA.

Figure 1. Magic Quadrant for Hyperconverged Infrastructure

Source: Gartner (February 2018)

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SOLUTIONS

When do you engage Vendor Sales Reps these days?

The principals of Roundstone Solutions have been involved in the sales of IT infrastructure products and services for many years. We've seen everything there is to see, and are now seeing a big change in how products are sold.

The biggest change in sales of IT infrastructure products is due to the wealth of information readily available on the Internet. It used to be that end users needed to engage with a vendor sales rep to get information on existing products and future direction. No longer. Vendors place most of that information on their websites, in hopes that prospective Clients will automatically read what's online and draw the correct conclusion about how the Vendor's products can offer value to them. Nice idea, but that's not always how it works.

We find the consultative approach that Roundstone Solutions follows is still one that works. Sure, our prospective Clients read about products and services on the Vendor's websites, but we don't think it's an automatic that the proper connection is made. After all, Vendors don't list their competition on their websites, so in order to understand competitive offerings, prospective Clients have to visit multiple websites. There's no real independent source to evaluate which vendors' products are superior. It's all marketing.

We have a suggestion. In addition to getting information from vendor websites, give us a call early. We'll help you compare alternatives, and put you in touch with companies that have already acquired the products so you can get real feedback. The less you rely on marketing and more you can rely on actual data, the better.

You're still going to have to engage a Sales rep at some point to get pricing and complete an acquisition. After all, engineered IT products are not conducive to buying online, despite what CDW would have you believe. By the way, rarely is CDW the least expensive source to acquire from…just sayin'.

Roundstone Solutions would like to work with you as you look to evaluate new technology and make your acquisition. We're going to be the most competitively priced alternative, as well. Call us at 925-217-1177 to email to sales@roundstonesolutions.com. We look forward to working with you.

About Roundstone Solutions

Roundstone Solutions is an IT Infrastructure Solutions Provider now based in Orinda, CA (we moved in mid-2018). We help our Clients by enabling much higher performing, lower cost, scalable, simpler, Next Generation IT Infrastructures.

Our relentless focus is to be Northern California's leading VAR/Partner/Reseller with the highest level of satisfaction as measured by our Clients. We accomplish this by using our deep experience in the IT Infrastructure business, then by understanding our Clients' business objectives, which includes understanding their current state IT infrastructure and what the desired state should be. We then match appropriate technology solutions to get the job done right. **We succeed when our Clients improve their IT infrastructures, resulting in better business outcomes.**

Please see more about Roundstone Solutions at www.roundstonesolutions.com. Our blog can be found at http://timjoyce-roundstonesolutions.blogspot.com, and is updated regularly. We can also be found on Twitter at @TimRoundstone.

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