SYNEXTRA™

SYNEXTRA | PROBLEM SOLVED

To expand its market reach, Synextra created the wildly popular Platform On Demand private cloud service based on NetApp® solutions, including ONTAP® Select and StorageGRID®.

Leveraging NetApp Portfolio for Highly Successful Platform On Demand

UK cloud provider Synextra recently took the market by storm—and doubled its monthly revenues—with Platform On Demand (POD), combining dedicated servers with a shared storage array to deliver true cloud benefits at an affordable cost. Underlying the POD offering are NetApp storage and data management, including ONTAP Select and StorageGRID.

2x
Revenue growth
over three months

8x
Projected ROI
in one year

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>
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> Cofounder and Technical Director, Synextra

MARKET EMBRACES SYNEXTRA POD OFFERING

Launched in 2014, Synextra has achieved rapid growth to quickly become one of the UK's leading cloud providers. Synextra was built on three core pillars:

- Make consumption of complex technology platforms simple.
- Offer a predictable cost model.
- Build it right, build it once.

After a successful second year of operations, the company has now pivoted toward the future of enterprise IT consumption.

"Our clients want optimum performance and instant control without the onerous upfront cost of buying their own infrastructure," said Chris Piggott, co-founder and technical director of Synextra. "We identified a gap in the market and created POD, using NetApp technology, to provide private cloud services for midsize and enterprise customers. POD is the best way we know to support their business growth."

The POD offering combines dedicated servers with a shared storage array to deliver all the benefits of a true cloud—flexible scaling, guaranteed performance, and backups for disaster recovery—at a much more affordable cost than other private cloud solutions. Each POD is a bespoke build, made to the customer's ideal specifications with dedicated servers for maximum performance, speed, and data security. Enterprise-level support from Synextra engineers ensures smooth operational transitions. The shared storage platform from NetApp provides low latency, high performance, and encrypted data.

NETAPP DELIVERS EFFICIENCY, PERFORMANCE, AND MANAGEMENT EASE

When Piggott launched Synextra, NetApp enabled the company to stand out from competitors by guaranteeing levels of storage performance. Today, the breadth of NetApp offerings also allows Synextra to match solutions to a wide range of use cases.

"In our market, you see a lot of providers offering a defined maximum IOPS capability. But they don't guarantee a minimum performance level, and that's what we wanted to do that would differentiate us," Piggott said. "I've looked at other

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Using NetApp ONTAP Select, SnapMirror, StorageGRID, and AFF allowed Synextra to:

- Launch highly popular Platform On Demand
- Double monthly billable revenue in three months
- Achieve 8x projected ROI in one year
- Extend services to midsize and enterprise customers
- Develop disaster recovery as a service
- Innovate use case of StorageGRID as a bucket for Commvault, S3 connector

■ NetApp®

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Synextra's primary storage is the NetApp AFF system. Its back-end storage platform is NetApp E-Series Hybrid Flash Storage. Recently, Synextra also deployed NetApp ONTAP Select and NetApp StorageGRID, at times surprising even NetApp with its use-case innovations.

ONTAP SELECT UNDERLIES DISASTER RECOVERY SITE
To run its disaster recovery (DR) data center, Synextra chose ONTAP Select software-defined data storage. Part of the NetApp Data Fabric, ONTAP Select can quickly communicate with and transfer data among other storage endpoints across the fabric. As Synextra's secondary storage solution, ONTAP Select leverages the company's back-end E-Series

platform. Synextra uses it in conjunction with NetApp SnapMirror®, which provides unified replication for the Data Fabric and leverages ONTAP storage efficiencies by sending only changed blocks over the network. Synextra took advantage of NetApp's 90-day software trial offer to evaluate ONTAP Select and saw how simple it would be to deploy and scale.

"Being software defined, ONTAP Select gives us a lot of ease, flexibility, speed, and scalability," Piggott said. "You can buy any quantity you require. If you buy a 50TB license, you can add 10TB or 20TB more as needed, then run it off essentially any storage. It's very reliable and efficient; we can simply mirror our primary system, taking full advantage of dedupe and compression."

Synextra plans to use ONTAP Select to further extend its storage offerings. "The next iteration for us is giving customers a local repository of their data that's in the cloud,"

Piggott said. "We can sell them an appliance that lives in their office."

STORAGEGRID ENABLES SERVICE INNOVATIONS
StorageGRID software-defined object storage enables organizations to store and manage unstructured data at scale. Synextra uses it as a backup solution and as a bucket for Commvault as an Amazon S3 cloud storage connector.

"We have several different use cases for StorageGRID," Piggott said. "We've got your typical S3 object storage, into which customers can deposit data through web APIs or scripts. We also use it with Commvault and to clear aggregates, so we can send all the Snapshot copies off into an S3 bucket. That gives us a lot more efficiency in space utilization on our AFF platform.

"Probably the most interesting use case we have seen is DR as a service," Piggott continued. "Using StorageGRID, you can restore an entire virtual machine from that S3 bucket back to the hosting platform."

NETAPP RELATIONSHIP PROVIDES NEXT-GENERATION DATA CENTER ROADMAP
Synextra chose StorageGRID and ONTAP Select for their ease

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NetApp®

of deployment, ease of use, and scalability. The company's overall relationship with NetApp, meanwhile, provides a comprehensive, future-oriented portfolio combined with expert support.

"Rather than using open source, we wanted to be able to turn to a trusted vendor for advice," Piggott said. "NetApp brings the compelling advantage of a unified approach to storage, as opposed to having lots of different vendors. It's also important that our cultures align. Like us, NetApp is continuously developing its solutions, and our direct relationship gives us insight into their roadmap. That's critical to the work we do and to keeping us competitive."

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

NETAPP PRODUCTS

NetApp ONTAP Select
NetApp StorageGRID object storage software
NetApp SnapMirror
NetApp AFF system
NetApp E-Series Hybrid Flash Storage

LEARN MORE

netapp.com/us/products/data-management-software/ontap-select-sds.aspx

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