

Cerner and IBM Send Industry Message that Nirvanix is How Enterprise Cloud Storage Will Be Done

By DCIG Lead Analyst Jerome M Wendt



Service providers like Cerner and IBM are getting the message loud and clear that their enterprise clients are sick of “cloud washing” where vendors repackage existing storage solutions as “cloud storage.” To meet their clients’ demands both Cerner and IBM have announced they will offer Nirvanix Cloud Storage to their clients. In so doing, they have sent more than a signal that cloud storage is enterprise ready. They have put the industry on notice that Nirvanix Cloud Storage is how it will be delivered—now and in the future.



Company

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Enterprise Cloud Storage Announcement

- Nirvanix Cloud Storage available from Cerner and IBM

Key Announcement Takeaways

- IBM integrating Nirvanix into IBM SmartCloud Enterprise storage services portfolio
- Cerner offering Nirvanix to all of its health care customers as a cloud storage solution
- Cerner and IBM customers want a real cloud storage solution as opposed to “cloud washing”
- Nirvanix Cloud Storage best aligns with requirements of their clients
- Cerner and IBM help validate that Nirvanix Cloud Storage technology is enterprise-ready

Anyone who still doubts that Nirvanix is poised to deliver the same type of solution for cloud storage that VMware already delivers for cloud computing got a serious wake-up call in October, 2011. Announcements that both Cerner and IBM entered into strategic relationships with Nirvanix are more than just validations of Nirvanix’s cloud storage technology. They signal that Nirvanix is poised to become how enterprises of all sizes will eventually implement cloud storage.

Cloud Storage Achieves a Seminal Point with Nirvanix’s Strong Market Traction

There are seminal points in the adoption of any game-changing technology. This happened in late 2003 when EMC acquired VMware and then proceeded to introduce it into its enterprise accounts. In so doing EMC almost single-handedly transformed VMware vSphere from a compelling technology into one that enterprises felt they could begin to safely run their business and mission-critical applications on.

Something similar occurred recently in the maturation of the cloud storage space. While no acquisitions have yet occurred, what may be a precursor to such an acquisition occurring is IBM’s announcement that it has formally entered into a strategic five year OEM relationship with Nirvanix and Cerner almost simultaneously announcing that it is offering Nirvanix Cloud Storage to all of its health care customers. These announcements should give the entire industry—vendors, VARs and enterprise organizations—pause for a number of reasons.

IBM Integrates Nirvanix into SmartCloud Enterprise Storage Services Portfolio

First, embedded in the first paragraph of the IBM announcement with Nirvanix is IBM’s intent *to integrate cloud storage technology from Nirvanix as part of an expanded IBM SmartCloud Enterprise storage services portfolio.*

The term *integration* suggests that this is much more than just IBM offering Nirvanix’s solution to pass the time until a better cloud storage comes

along. It *implies* that this is *THE* cloud storage solution that IBM wants and that IBM is now betting its global cloud storage strategy on Nirvanix’s cloud storage offering.

Making this announcement more interesting is that Dan Galvan, IBM’s VP Storage Systems Marketing and Strategy and who is responsible for marketing IBM SONAS (*an IBM scale-out storage solution that competes with Nirvanix at the private cloud level*) *refused* to comment on this announcement when asked about it at the Fall Storage Networking World (SNW) 2011 conference. *This refusal suggests that at higher levels within IBM that it is placing a premium on IBM being a cloud storage provider over selling its own private cloud storage solutions.*

Cerner and IBM Want to Offer Cloud Storage not “Cloud Washing”

Second, announcements on consecutive days from both Cerner and IBM about their decision to offer Nirvanix cloud storage instead of either their own solution or solutions from other vendors indicate that:

1. A change is occurring in how the clients of Cerner and IBM are asking them to deliver cloud storage
2. Nirvanix offers a cloud storage solution that meets the demands of how the clients of Cerner and IBM want it delivered: consumed by the GB—not all up-front

These announcements from Cerner and IBM signal to enterprise organizations that cloud storage is a viable option for them and that Nirvanix is the solution they should use to confidently implement it.”

— Jerome Wendt, DCIG Lead Analyst

Their clients only want to pay for the amount of storage they actually use. They do not want to pay for a bunch of storage capacity up front in anticipation of eventually using it. Even IBM’s Galvan at the Fall SNW 2011 went so far as to say that IBM’s clients are *“sick of cloud washing.”*

IBM’s customers no longer want today’s existing storage solutions simply repackaged with the label of “cloud storage” slapped on them. They instead

want real cloud storage solutions that are “storage capacity in the cloud” not “storage capacity in a box.” After all, “cloud in a box” does nothing but cause condensation.

Nirvanix Satisfies Real World Cloud Storage Requirements

So is it any real surprise that Cerner and IBM have to look beyond current storage solutions to find a cloud storage solution that better aligns with how their customers are defining “cloud storage?” Cerner and IBM are both smart, profit-driven companies and they know their customers are no longer buffaloes by cloud storage terminology.

They want a cloud storage solution that:

- Automatically distributes data across multiple geographic sites and regions so it is protected
- Dynamically scales up (or down)
- Is configurable as either a private or public cloud (or both)
- Provides metered billing
- Offers secure multi-tenancy so data from multiple clients may be stored on the same physical platform
- Requires no up-front capital investment to get started
- Offers “Pay by the drink” (only pay for what you use)
- Provides enterprise level support
- Puts data on the right tier of storage according to its usage
- Scales to handle *petabytes or even exabytes* of storage capacity
- Provides data consistency and a global namespace for upload-once-access-anywhere ease-of-use

So when Cerner and IBM look at what their clients want and what storage providers have to offer, Nirvanix is the solution that best aligns with this diverse set of customer requirements.

Nirvanix Cloud Storage Gets Further Enterprise Validation

But possibly the biggest implication of Nirvanix’s announcements with Cerner and IBM is that cloud storage as a whole overcomes a larger perception problem: *that it is not enterprise ready*. By both Cerner and IBM selecting Nirvanix as the cloud

storage solution that they will deliver to their global enterprise customer base, cloud storage as a whole gets the validation it needed from two enterprise-level service providers with Nirvanix being the sole beneficiary of this validation.

As DCIG knows from the regular conversations it has with end-users, they do want great technology. But they also want a great company with an established reputation to deliver it so if things go south (*and things inevitably go south at some point*) that there is someone reputable to call upon anytime day or night to fix it and make things right. So while Nirvanix’s cloud storage technology is sound, Nirvanix does not have the same reputation as either Cerner does in the health care industry or IBM does globally.

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By Cerner and IBM both offering Nirvanix’s cloud storage technology *and* putting their respective names behind it, their customers have more confidence to move ahead with cloud storage in general and Nirvanix specifically without lingering questions about how it will be supported. They know it will be supported in the same manner as other products that they currently use from these two companies.

So in much the same way the future of enterprise cloud computing got a boost when EMC acquired VMware, the future of what enterprise cloud storage will look like got a big boost this week with both Cerner and IBM announcing that they will deliver Nirvanix as their enterprise cloud storage offering.

This signals to enterprise organizations that cloud storage is more than just a viable option for them. They just got a strong message from Cerner and IBM that Nirvanix is the solution they should use to confidently implement it. ■

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DCIG analyzes software, hardware and services companies within the storage and ESI industries. DCIG distributes industry, company and product analysis by way of viral marketing and community building using the burgeoning blog infrastructures created worldwide.

About Nirvanix

Nirvanix is the leading provider of enterprise-class cloud storage services. The company offers cloud storage services designed specifically for customers with expectations of extreme security, reliability and redundancy levels. Under its CloudComplete™ portfolio, Nirvanix is the only company that provides variable cloud deployment options, including public, hybrid and private cloud storage services. The company’s battle-hardened, proven second generation technology is fully integrated with Symantec backup and archiving products and enables One Click to the Cloud™ for secure and seamless data migration. Nirvanix has over 1,200 global customers accessing its Cloud Storage Network(tm), from SMBs to Fortune 500.

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