Nimble Storage vs Nutanix: A Comparison Snapshot
Founders incorporated Nimble Storage in 2008 with a mission to provide customers with exceptional enterprise application performance that would meet their increasing storage demands.

They believed flash, cloud and big data analytics were going to disrupt the storage market so they introduced several solutions over the years, including the integrated infrastructure solution, SmartStack, created with partner Cisco.

This versatile and predictive platform runs sustainably 24/7, allowing IT teams to free up important time and drive down OPEX without sacrificing performance.

You Will Discover a Side-by-side Comparison in the Following Areas:

- Performance & Capacity Efficiency
- Scalability & Integration
- Data Protection
- Solution Support & Simplicity
- Pricing
- Type of Business Solution is Best-Suited For
One year later in 2009, CEO Dheeraj Pandey founded Nutanix with the goal of bringing holistic computing to the storage game. He could see what was going on in the industry and knew that this kind of comprehensive approach was the future.

Nutanix now has a list of big-name clients, including Hallmark and Hyundai, and is moving companies in several industries forward with their invisible data center infrastructure and hyper-converged VDI solution.
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Performance & Capacity Efficiency

How They Compare:

- **Nimble**:  
  - Data reduction features  
    - Inline compression included  
  - Performance is only limited by CPU and doesn’t depend on disk, which leads to greater performance in a denser form factor.  
    - Nimble can lower datacenter footprint by 6x.  
  - Snapshots are efficient (compressed 4k) and offer deep retention period (i.e. 90+ days).  
  - Active/standby architecture guarantees consistent performance through failover.

- **Nutanix**:  
  - These virtual storage appliances, or “hyper-converged systems,” combine compute and storage components in a single appliance.  
    - Nutanix snapshots are VM-centric only, which is not useful in physical environments.  
    - Dedupe + compression are not necessarily included with solution (some license fees required).  
    - Lack of flexibility: It’s very difficult to re-purpose solution infrastructure for other applications, and there’s no support for physical hosts (VM-centric design).  
    - Number of nodes it takes to meet demanding IOPS or latency requirements can be quite big, and if you need to add, you must scale on all dimensions (see below).
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Scalability & Integration

How They Compare:

• Nimble:
  - Scales based on need
  - No forklift upgrade or PS engagement for scale-out capability
  - Automated load-balancing eliminates capacity silos and performance hotspots.
  - Simple and non-disruptive approach to system’s life-cycle management of arrays
  - Non-disruptive HW and SW upgrades

• Nutanix:
  - Nodes are housed in 2U blocks.
    - Nodes contain fixed ratios of compute, SSD and HDD resources.
    - Clustering of min 3 nodes and recommended max of 32, but can go higher
  - Non-disruptive upgrades
    - No disruption through HW/SW upgrade
  - Nutanix scales all components whether needed or not.
    - With Nutanix, companies have less flexibility as they cannot scale compute or storage independently and cannot vary the ratio of the two within a node.
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Data Protection

How They Compare:

• **Nimble:**
  - Built-in snapshots/replication – no extra licensing needed
    - Replication leverages thin, space-efficient snapshots and offers different retention schedules on each side of a replication pair.
  - Advanced data protection with high performance & efficient triple parity RAID
  - Store 90+ days of storage snapshots.
    - Nearly a third of Nimble customers store 90 or more days of snaps on primary storage.
  - WAN-efficient replication
    - No re-hydration of replicated data
    - Only compressed, changed blocks are sent over the wire.

• **Nutanix:**
  - Data Reduction:
    - Inline dedupe for DRAM/flash
    - Post-process dedupe for HDD storage tier
    - Thin provisioning and cloning included
  - Replication:
    - Some licensing fees required
    - SRM support for VMware
    - Metro-clustering feature based on synchronous mirroring
  - Protection:
    - Converged backup and recover of VMs
    - No RAID: Because Nutanix relies on copies of data for resiliency, its replication model compromises capacity utilization and requires 2 or 3 data copies to be created across the cluster for HA.
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Solution Support & Simplicity

How They Compare:

- **Nimble:**
  - Proven 5X9’s availability is based on real customer data via ASUPs.
  - Solution includes deep-data performance analytics with Cloud-based InfoSight.
    - Proactive support and actionable recommendations for tuning storage
    - Access to InfoSight enables channel partners to become trusted advisors to customers.
  - Single platform to manage: The CS-Series
    - Offers simple provisioning with global space allocation
  - No aggregates, LUNs, qtrees, reserves, etc.
  - All software is included.
    - With Nimble, everything’s included: No additional SW licenses to buy for any software capability.

- **Nutanix:**
  - No proven 5X9’s availability
  - Inefficient resiliency due to replication model
  - No advanced performance analytics included in solution
  - No unified management or support
    - Management gets more difficult at scale.
How They Compare:

• Nimble:
  - Everything’s included in the upfront solution price package.
  - There are no expensive or complicated software licenses to buy.

• Nutanix:
  - Pay-as-you-grow model
    • Can be quite beneficial for smaller companies that expect future growth.
    • Depending on HW and SW needed to meet demands, this could possibly be a cheaper solution than others from competitors that don’t offer this model.
  - Not all fees are included.
    • Some licensing fees required, especially as you scale.
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BEST-SUITED FOR

Take company specifics into consideration.

Both Nimble Storage and Nutanix offer solutions with pros and cons that may benefit different companies in different ways. Because your storage needs and future goals are unique, one solution will seem like a better choice than the other.

We believe Nimble Storage is best-suited for:
Companies interested in a dynamic hybrid flash solution that offers out-of-house management in the form of predictive analytics, easing workload while keeping system robust and running 24/7.

We believe Nutanix is best-suited for:
Companies with smaller VDI/ROBO that don’t mind less solution flexibility, need both compute and storage, expect future growth, and like the pay-as-you-grow economic model. Solution can also target analytics and private cloud environments.

If you need help narrowing down your options, call and speak to one of our experienced sales associates today.
CTC Technologies, Inc. Can Help With Your Next Steps To Implementing an Enterprise SAN Storage Solution.

Our team at CTC Technologies has implemented several SAN storage solutions for companies of all sizes in light of their growing storage demands and the increasing flash availability in today’s market.

Whether you’re looking for hybrid or all-flash storage, our sales team has the experience and the know-how to help you choose the right vendor, and our highly-skilled engineers can help implement whichever solution you choose.

We can help you find the perfect solution with respect to your budget, expected growth, physical data center space, storage demand and more.

Tell us a little more about your storage needs by filling out our form or giving us a call at 734.408.1993.