

The Introduction of Enterprise File Sync and Share into Mid-to-Enterprise Class Arrays; Interview with Nexsan CeO Robert Fernander, Part 2

Formally or informally, almost all size organizations currently implement file sync and share in some capacity. However, almost all organizations have reservations about its implementation, especially when using public cloud file sync and share solutions such as DropBox. Nexsan's UNITY™ represents the first storage platform in the mid-to-enterprise market to introduce enterprise file sync and share that operates inside of corporate file walls. In part 2 of my interview series with Nexsan's CEO, Robert (Bob) Fernander, he explains how this works and what benefits early Nexsan customers are seeing from it.

Jerome: *Please tell me more about your new [UNITY](#) product line and what differentiates it in the mid-to-enterprise array space.*

Bob: The [Unity](#) platform is a unified storage array on steroids. We have unified NAS and SAN as people would typically expect. But we have also integrated it with our object store, [Assureon](#), such that we can have a file system watcher on the NAS side. That is a feature we will have later in the year. Simultaneously, we have the ability to natively create a volume and have that volume be a synchronized volume across the enterprise between different UNITY front end heads.

For instance, if an organization has three sites and wants to

synchronize a group of files, it simply creates a volume which then becomes the sync volume. Approved users within the organization can save local data to that volume, that volume syncs with all of the other sites, so that all approved users have local access to that content.

The use cases that have come out of providing what we call “enterprise sync” on a mid-to-enterprise class array have been surprising to us. Everything from, *“Oh gee, this changes the way I look at availability and redundancy”* to *“It will really change my data protection mechanisms.”*

If organizations access files locally, and then those files on the local resources go away for some reason, they have instantaneous access to those files at other facilities since all files are synchronized across all of the facilities. In this way they do not have any downtime.

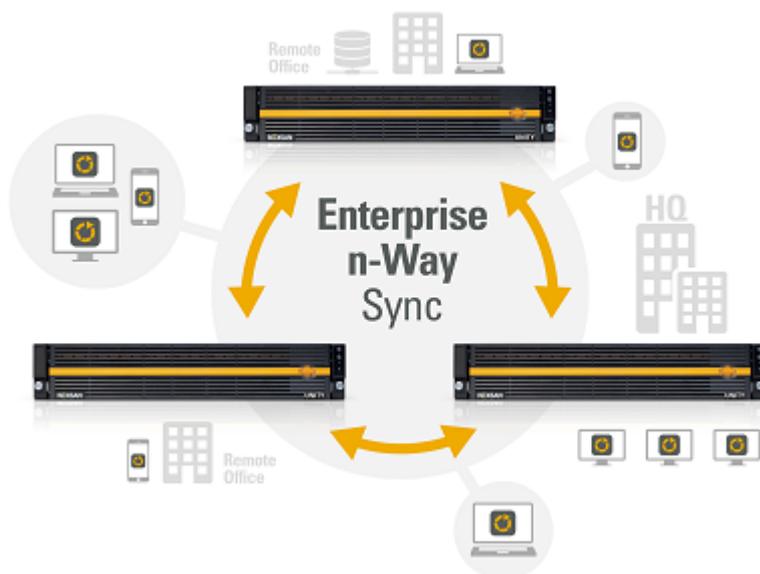
Granted, they may operate at WAN bandwidth speeds, but at least they have access to the files and do not have to recover from a backup. In most case, they do not have any downtime at all. Then when the local system comes back up, it immediately resynchronizes with everything else before it makes itself available to the local users again.

One of the benefits of Connected Data’s [Transporter](#) software was the complex file system they built that provided for this n-way synchronization. The first thing we have done in launching UNITY is to provide this enterprise sync function.

The feature set is pretty straightforward from the point of view of integration of our existing products and this new global file system. When you layer that on top of the Nexsan NST’s existing value, it reads like buzzword soup, which I don’t like, but it helps people understand the flexibility of the product.

I have customers today that say, I’m a Nimble customer and a NetApp customer, and with [NST](#) I can buy a single product and

it's as fast as Nimble on the block side, it's as flexible as NetApp on the file side, and it's less expensive for me to deploy and maintain. When they add this n-Way Sync capability, they see even greater value.



Source: Nexsan

For example, one of our archive customers is a huge call center operator and they use Assureon to archive all the phone calls they make on behalf of their customers. They like to expose those phone calls to their customers for review. They are looking at this ability to have a volume, a shared volume, between themselves and their customers who see this as a great value. Using UNITY, every time there is a new phone call, they can save the audio file to this file system and it immediately syncs with the customer's version of the file system giving their customer fast and easy local access to it.

Another example. We were at [NOAA](#) (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) in Denver last month and these guys have all kinds of needs to create sensor data and capture it. That data is distributed globally to something like 26 sites. They are a current NST user. They were like, "Wow, the ability for us to acquire information and sync it to a volume

back here where we do analysis, and then on the reverse side have another volume where it went post analysis, we can disseminate information to our clients, is of great value. To do that in an automated, unburdened fashion that is secure and inside our private environment is exactly what we need.” They are going to be an early customer.

In [Part 1](#) of this interview series, Bob provides a peek beneath the covers of the “New” Nexsan.

In [Part 3](#) of this interview series, Bob talks about how the UNITY platform helps to address the world of shadow IT.