

# Flash-Optimized from the Ground Up

Nimble Storage arrays are the industry's first flash-optimized storage designed from the ground up to maximize efficiency. Built on the patented Cache Accelerated Sequential Layout (CASL™) architecture, Nimble Storage features scalable performance, unparalleled efficiency, integrated data protection, and simple push-button management. As a result, customers can run more workloads and backups with less storage infrastructure, and empower IT to take on new projects with higher returns.

CASL accelerates applications by using flash as a read cache coupled with a write-optimized data layout. It protects data by supporting instant snapshots for easy backup and restoration, along with efficient replication for disaster recovery. Nimble Storage's intuitive, automated tools greatly simplify storage and data management, reducing operations overhead. In addition, customers can use VMware vCenter and other familiar tools for provisioning, monitoring and data protection.

## Benefits of CASL

Cache Accelerated Sequential Layout (CASL™) is the foundation for Nimble Storage's high performance and capacity savings, integrated data protection, and easy lifecycle management.

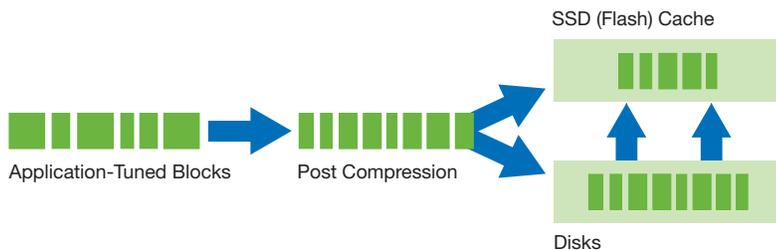


Figure 1: CASL architecture—data is compressed inline and stored to disk as a full stripe and if applicable cached in SSD.

CASL features include:

### Flash-Based Dynamic Cache

Accelerate read access to application data by holding a copy of active “hot” data in flash; customers benefit from high read throughput and low latency.

### Write-Optimized Data Layout

Data written by a host is first aggregated or coalesced, then written sequentially as a full stripe to a pool of disk; CASL's sweeping process also consolidates freed up disk space for future writes. Customers benefit from fast sub-millisecond writes and very efficient disk utilization.

### Inline Universal Compression

30 to 75 percent with no added latency; customers gain much more usable disk capacity with zero performance impact.

### Instantaneous Point-in-Time Snapshots

Fast restores without copying data; customers benefit from a single, simple storage solution for primary and secondary data, frequent and instant backups, fast restores and significant capacity savings.

## Accelerate Performance and Optimize Capacity

- Get sub-millisecond latencies on random IO
- Reduce data footprint by 30-75 percent
- Scale to fit capacity and performance requirements

## Instant Backups and Restores

- Take months of easy-to-restore backups on same array
- Backup windows virtually eliminated
- Efficiently replicate for affordable DR

## Empower IT

- All-inclusive features and functionality
- Application profiles make provisioning a snap
- Lower risk with Proactive Wellness
- Secure remote support and non-disruptive upgrades

## Efficient Integrated Replication

Only copy compressed, changed data to a secondary site at a pre-set schedule; customers benefit from affordable disaster recovery.

## Zero-Copy Clones

Created instantly, customers get great space efficiency and performance on cloned volumes, making them ideal for virtualization, virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) and test and development environments.

## Accelerate Performance and Optimize Capacity

Nimble Storage arrays efficiently store and serve up data fast enough to satisfy even the most demanding applications, from Microsoft SQL Server to VDI. Using flash SSDs to dynamically cache hot data to accelerate reads and leveraging a write-optimized data layout to speed up data written to storage, Nimble delivers more IOPS than traditional storage at proven sub-millisecond latencies (measured across Nimble's installed base).

CASL uses multiple mechanisms to optimize disk utilization, allowing more data to be stored in the same capacity. These include inline data compression that reduces the data footprint by 30 to 75 percent; instant redirect-on-write snapshots; zero-copy cloning based on snapshots; and thin provisioning that allocates blocks of data on demand.

Nimble Storage scales to fit IT and business needs, enabling customers to boost performance, capacity or both flexibly and non-disruptively for full investment protection. Customers can scale up performance with more compute power for higher throughput and IOPS and with more cache to accommodate more active data. To scale capacity, simply add additional storage disk shelves to an existing array. Demanding environments can scale both performance and capacity beyond a single system by combining multiple arrays into one scale-out storage cluster.

## Protect Data with Instant Backups and Restores

Reliability is built into the CASL architecture starting with integrity checks that ensure data consistency; highly available, redundant controllers with quick failover for continuous operation; and RAID-6 to transparently protect against dual-disk failure. In addition, Nimble Storage provides the ability to store primary and secondary data, including backups, on one array. This greatly simplifies backup operations, eliminates the need for separate backup storage, and makes backup windows a thing of the past. Nimble Storage's integration with leading hypervisor and application solutions, such as VMware and Microsoft, ensures virtual machine and application-consistent backups.

Using point-in-time, space-efficient snapshots, Nimble can backup and restore data in minutes. Snapshots are instantaneous and occupy minimal space on disks, so customers can back up data frequently and store months of incremental snapshots on the same array. Backups can be set to run automatically and locally stored snapshots can be instantly restored because no data needs to be copied, delivering better Recovery Time Objectives (RTO) and Recovery Point Objectives (RPO).

Nimble Storage can also automatically and efficiently replicate data offsite for disaster recovery or archiving. The array only transfers the compressed, block-level changes over Ethernet to a secondary array. As a result, customers can protect more applications and data, maximize uptime, and further improve RTO and RPO service levels.

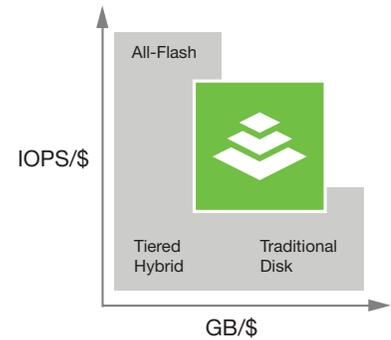


Figure 2: Nimble Storage delivers the best of both price/performance and cost-effective capacity.

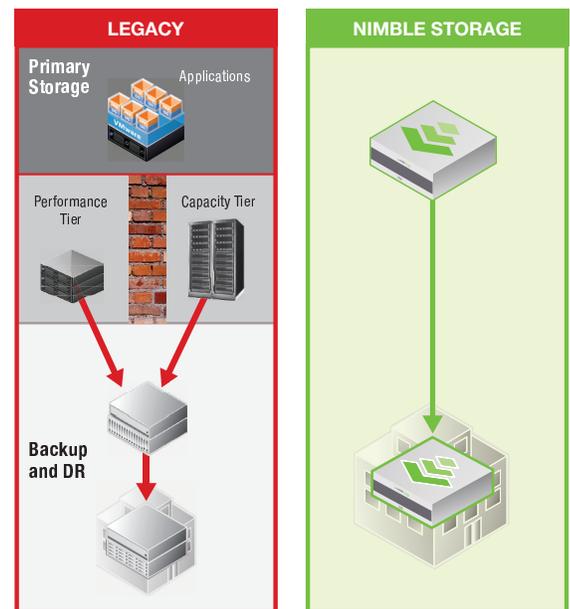


Figure 3: Nimble Storage simplifies IT infrastructure by eliminating the need for separate storage solutions for backup/restore and disaster recovery.

## Empower IT with Simplified Management

Nimble Storage's lifecycle-based management approach makes it easy to size, configure, and operate its arrays, saving IT time and precious budget. Nimble Storage products are all-inclusive, so there is no need to purchase separate feature licenses or host/guest agents. In addition, with non-disruptive upgrades, customers can upgrade Nimble Storage arrays and get new features and software releases with no downtime.

Nimble's wizard-driven user interface and automated capabilities ensure push-button deployment. New storage volumes can be provisioned in three easy steps. Nimble Storage application profiles automatically tune arrays for maximum performance and configure data protection policies, reducing manual tasks. Likewise, zero-copy cloning creates clones of volumes instantly, saving hours of configuration and substantial capacity. These clones are ideal for deploying virtual machines and virtual desktops, as well as creating data sets for test and development purposes.

IT can easily monitor storage, back up data, and perform other tasks from the Nimble Storage management tools and VMware vCenter using the Nimble Storage plug-in. From one console, IT can create data stores, set snapshot and replication schedules, restore data from snapshots, track capacity and performance, and create groups of clones in a single operation.

In addition, Nimble Storage's unique proactive wellness capabilities help IT address issues before they escalate. Nimble Storage support tools and staff monitor information (heartbeats) from installations; provide real-time analysis of system health; and alert customers to potential problems such as performance, error, and capacity issues. Nimble's support staff can also perform secure remote troubleshooting, configuration, and problem resolution. Customers benefit from optimal storage performance and higher application availability with fewer management headaches.

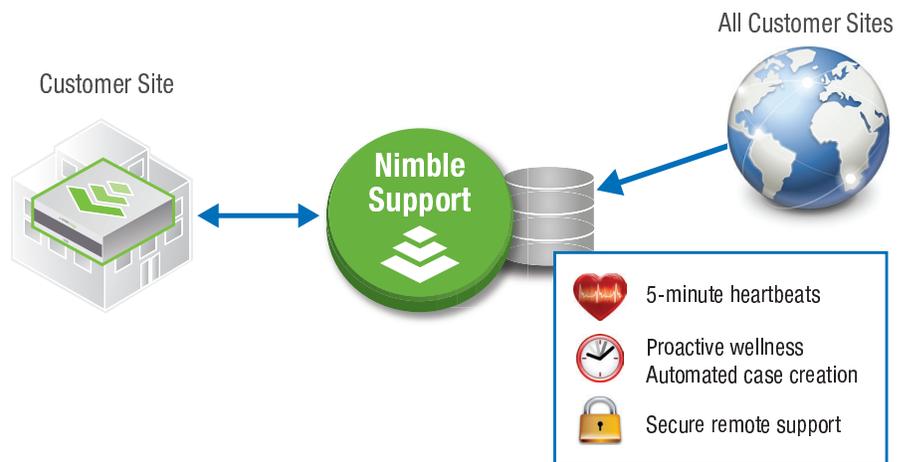


Figure 4: Nimble Storage Proactive Wellness ensures optimal operations by actively monitoring and analyzing arrays and proactively creating and in most cases resolving support cases.

## Nimble Storage Software Features

Feature	Function	Benefits
<b>Cache Accelerated Sequential Layout (CASL)</b>		
Dynamic Caching	Reads active “hot” data from flash which is populated on writes or first read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerate reads, resulting in sub-millisecond latency</li> </ul>
Write-Optimized Data Layout	Coalesces random writes and sequentially writes them to disk as a full stripe; optimizes free space in the background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerate writes as much as 100x, and get sub-millisecond latency and optimal disk utilization</li> </ul>
Application-Aligned Block Size	Enables variable blocks to match application data block size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Optimal application performance</li> </ul>
Universal Compression	Always-on inline compression for all workloads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce capacity needs 30-75% for all workloads with no performance impact</li> </ul>
Thin Provisioning	Allocates disk space as data is written	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pool storage and maximize utilization</li> </ul>
Zero-Copy Clones	Create copies of existing active volumes without needing to copy data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create clones in seconds and save diskspace – ideal for VDI and test/development</li> </ul>
Hot-Swappable Controllers	Fast, automated failover of controllers without disruption (active/standby)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce impact to end users or applications</li> <li>No performance hit or capacity overhead</li> </ul>
RAID-6 and Hot-Swappable Disks	Fast implementation of dual-parity RAID-6 with background scrubbing and support for disk hot swap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fast rebuild times with better resiliency than RAID-10</li> <li>No performance hit or capacity overhead</li> </ul>
Improved Data Integrity	Block-level checksum and descriptor verified when data is accessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve data integrity with no performance impact</li> <li>Eliminate erroneous data access due to incorrect addressing</li> </ul>
Instant Snapshot and Recovery	Backup and restore data using point-in-time, space-efficient snapshots taken at regular intervals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take thousands of snapshots per volume with no performance impact</li> <li>Back up and restore data in minutes (RTO) and create frequent recovery points (RPO)</li> </ul>
Efficient Replication	Copy compressed, changed data to the secondary site for disaster recovery or other use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fast, affordable disaster recovery and backup remote sites over the WAN</li> </ul>
Scale-Out Clustering	Combine multiple arrays non-disruptively into a scale-out storage cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scale performance and capacity beyond a single array</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Host and Application Integration</b>		
Custom Application Profiles	Pre-defined policies for block size, caching, compression, and data protection for Microsoft and VMware	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eliminate the need for manual application tuning and data protection configuration</li> </ul>
Connection management for Microsoft Windows and VMware	Provide connection / path management for Microsoft and VMware using scale-out clusters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Get lower latencies and higher throughput with direct parallel access</li> </ul>
Windows VSS Enablement	Nimble provider/writer for Microsoft VSS framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take application-consistent backups, simplify data protection for Exchange, SQL Server</li> </ul>
Plug-in for vCenter	Monitor, provision and protect volumes and virtual machines from vCenter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage storage from vCenter and take consistent backups of virtual machines</li> </ul>
Adapter for VMware Site Recovery Manager	Automate disaster recovery for VMware, including failover and failback support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simplify disaster recovery, including testing failover/failback</li> </ul>
VAAI Support	Support VMware vStorage API for Array Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accelerate provisioning and improve performance</li> </ul>
Oracle Snapshot Manager	Application-consistent backups of Oracle databases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simplify backup and recovery of Oracle databases</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Management and Proactive System Support</b>		
System Administration	Manage Nimble Storage arrays, including scale-out clusters, from a single console	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a single console for administrative tasks and automate data protection tasks</li> </ul>
Proactive Wellness	Real-time monitoring and analysis; sends alerts on critical issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spot and remedy potential issues, maximizing uptime, performance and utilization</li> </ul>
Secure Remote Support	Allows remote troubleshooting, configuration and problem resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduce burden on IT staff and quickly resolve problems</li> </ul>
Non-Disruptive Upgrades	Upgrade software with no disruption to applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximize uptime and user productivity through continuous availability</li> </ul>



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