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Bringing Order To Data Chaos: Why Wing Invested In Cohesity

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Wing first invested in Cohesity in 2013 and we are proud to be a part of its latest financing round, the details of which can be found here (http://wing.vc/news) . The company solves a huge headache for many firms that is linked to a profound transformation taking place in the business world.

Competitive advantage used to be dependent on securing access to scarce physical resources. Now it is increasingly predicated on something that is abundant: the oceans of digital data being generated by individuals and companies themselves. Finding smarter ways to collect, store and mine these data is a massive challenge for all organizations—and a hugely exciting opportunity for startups that can deliver innovative solutions to it.

Many companies still employ a plethora of different solutions to handle data storage for DevOps, data-protection backups and other uses such as Big Data analytics. This drives up both complexity and cost. It also makes information harder to access, which helps explain why huge reserves of data are not being mined at all for potentially valuable insights.

Singular focus...

Cohesity brings order to this chaos by converging secondary storage workflows into a single, intelligent data platform. This saves customers money and eliminates the need to deal with multiple vendors and systems. The platform can be expanded easily, allowing companies to reap the same kinds of economies of scale as web giants such as Google and Amazon, and it integrates seamlessly with third-party cloud providers so that customers can leverage the economic benefits of the public cloud as an additional tier of storage. When it comes to analyzing information, Cohesity's technology delivers real-time insights with integrated data analytics. It indexes all data as they are ingested, delivers pre-defined reports about data type and usage, and makes it easy for users to create custom queries.

It was this innovative approach to helping companies simultaneously manage, store and learn from their data that attracted us to Cohesity. We also saw an opportunity to disrupt secondary storage, which is still a massive but somewhat sleepy and fragmented industry. Webscale firms had already pioneered the move to distributed systems in the datacenter that enabled high availability and plug-and-play growth. The storage business is destined to experience a similar transformation.

... and visionary leadership

I first met Mohit Aron, Cohesity's founder, in September 2013 when he was an advisor to another startup company. It was apparent even in the very first meeting that he had the ambition, vision and clarity of purpose to create a significant business, building on what he'd already learned and accomplished during his experience as CTO and co-founder of Nutanix. Combined with his ability to attract talent and his irreverence for the status quo, these qualities made him the ideal person to identify a significant, unsolved problem and to build a company around it.

When Mohit laid out his vision for Cohesity, both Peter and I found the idea spectacularly ambitious—in other words, exactly the kind of venture that we were looking to support when we founded Wing and laid out our vision in the Wing Manifesto (http://wing.vc/perspectives/essays/the-wing-manifesto-part-i) . We invested in Cohesity in October 2013 in the Series A round with Sequoia, which is represented by Bill Coughran. Bill and I joined the board at the time. Peter has more direct storage experience than I do, so we decided that we would both pitch in, and he comes to almost every board meeting. We are both actively involved in helping Mohit to build Cohesity.

Since our initial investment, the company has developed a product and architecture of sweeping scope. We started testing the product at customer sites a couple of months ago and it has had a rapturous reception. Cohesity is looking forward to meeting the market in general availability soon.

It is truly a delight to be working with a team that is determined to create a substantial and enduring company in a $50 billion market. That is precisely why we are in business at Wing—to help build technology ventures from scratch into substantial and profitable public companies, and to enjoy the journey that we undertake with their exceptional founders.

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http://wing.vc/blog/cohesity
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