Simplify Hyperconverged Operations: The Unmatched Advantage of Cisco with Nutanix

The combined impact of cloud-based infrastructure operations from Cisco and Nutanix sets a new standard for operational simplicity, visibility, and control for distributed hyperconverged clusters, Cisco Compute-Only nodes, and Cisco Unified Edge environments.



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The landscape of modern IT demands infrastructure that is not just powerful, but effortlessly manageable. With Cisco Compute Hyperconverged with Nutanix, Cisco Compute-Only nodes, or Cisco Unified Edge with Nutanix HCI, you get a transformative new level of operational simplicity, visibility, and control for your clusters. This is achieved through a unique and deeply integrated partnership that combines the SaaS power of Cisco Intersight® with Nutanix Prism Central.

Together, Cisco and Nutanix have jointly developed an integrated solution that enables their cloud management platforms to work seamlessly together, creating true synergy rather than simple compatibility. Cisco Intersight is a cloud-native IT operations platform that provides unified, intelligent management for your Cisco UCS, hyperconverged (HCI) and Cisco Compute-Only infrastructure across data centers, colocation, and edge environments. The solution supports HCI with Cisco® Unified Edge, rack servers, and modular servers while extending visibility to Cisco Compute-Only nodes. Intersight deployment options also include an on-premises virtual appliance and a private (air-gapped) virtual appliance, ensuring flexibility for any environment.

As Ketan Shah, VP of Product Management at Nutanix, aptly states, “Through Cisco Compute Hyperconverged with Nutanix, Cisco and Nutanix have for the first time integrated our software management planes together to deliver a new, integrated HCI architecture for customers. This is an important milestone in our global strategic partnership as we work together to simplify hybrid multicloud and fuel business transformations for our customers.”[1]

This unparalleled integration defines every aspect of the solution, from initial deployment to day-to-day operations and long-term scaling.

1 Cisco and Nutanix: Taking Hyperconverged Infrastructure to the NEXT Level, Cisco Blogs, May 16, 2024

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Zero-touch deployment and flexible onboarding

With intelligent orchestration between Cisco Intersight and Nutanix Prism Central, organizations can achieve true zero-touch deployment of Nutanix clusters. Cisco Intersight automates complex workflows, eliminating the need for skilled IT staff at remote or edge locations. Once servers are racked and connected to the network, the deployment process—including bare-metal firmware and operating system installation—is fully automated. Cisco Intersight manages the physical infrastructure, while Nutanix Prism Central orchestrates the Nutanix cluster deployment using Cisco Intersight policies. This bidirectional intelligence allows for fast, accurate, and repeatable cluster deployments globally, including air-gapped and high-security environments through dedicated Cisco dark-site bundles available for Cisco Intersight Device Connector for Nutanix Prism Central. Learn more in the Cisco Compute Hyperconverged with Nutanix IMM and ISM field guides.

For Compute-only deployments with external storage, refer to the dedicated FlashStack with Nutanix field guide.

Automated lifecycle management and unmatched scalability

The Cisco Compute Hyperconverged with Nutanix solution features fully integrated lifecycle management, allowing end-to-end cluster software and firmware upgrades directly through Nutanix Prism or Prism Central Life Cycle Manager (LCM). This includes upgrading Cisco UCS infrastructure and server firmware, hypervisor software (VMware ESXi and/or Nutanix Acropolis Hypervisor [AHV]), and Nutanix Cloud Infrastructure (NCI) software.

Cisco Compute-Only deployments support Nutanix AHV hypervisor only. For Cisco Compute-Only nodes connected to external storage, Nutanix LCM supports Nutanix software upgrades, while server firmware upgrades are managed through Cisco Intersight and are not automated by Nutanix LCM.

The solution also simplifies scaling by automating cluster expansion across Cisco UCS and Nutanix Cloud Infrastructure, driven from Nutanix Prism or Nutanix Prism Central. This includes identifying new Cisco UCS servers, creating server profiles for new nodes, performing hypervisor imaging, deploying Nutanix controller VMs on new servers, and joining these nodes to an existing cluster.

Each Prism Central instance supports a standard configuration of up to 65 clusters, 260 nodes, and 1300 virtual machines. Larger-scale configurations can support up to 300 clusters, 1200 nodes, and 6000 virtual machines with a Prism Central resource resize. For scaling beyond the standard configuration, customers should contact Nutanix support for assistance.[2]

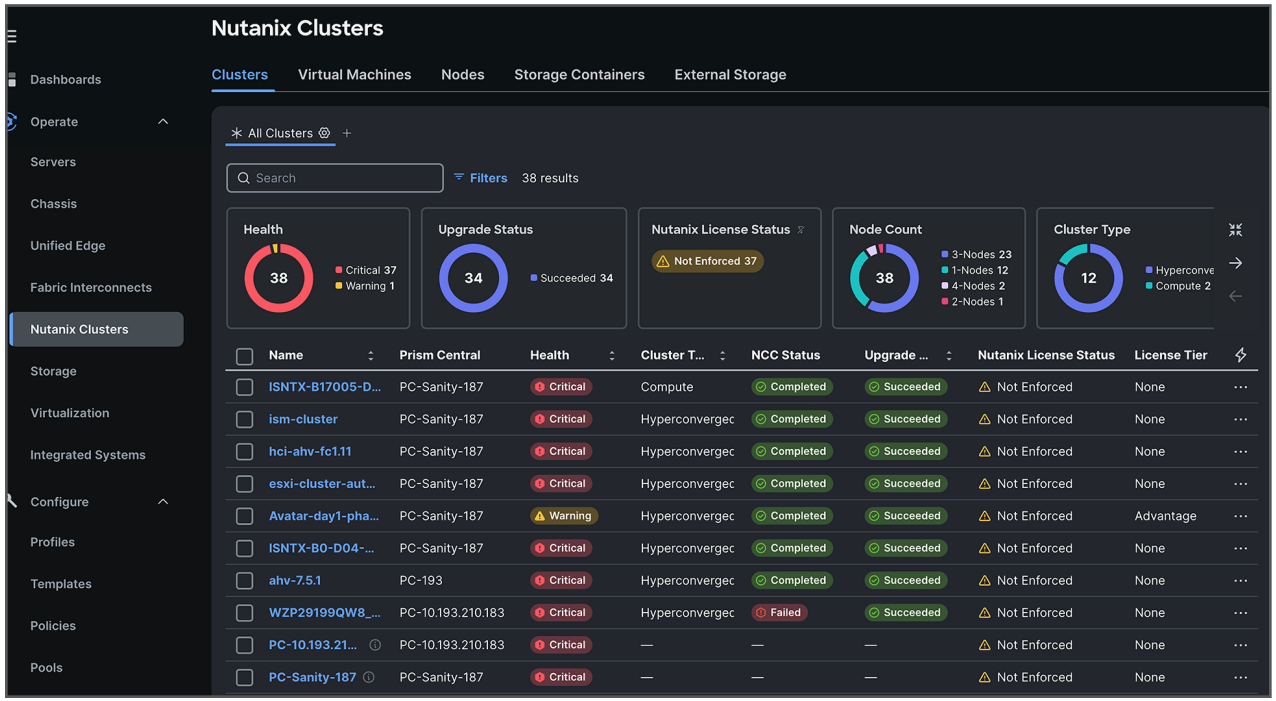


Figure 1. Intersight provides visibility across Nutanix clusters, nodes, storage containers, and external storage, with key details such as NCC status, licensing, cluster type, node count, hypervisor type, AOS version, and more.

2 See this KnowledgeBase article for details, or reach out to Nutanix support

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Simplified operations and proactive support

Cisco Intersight simplifies operations and maintenance across Cisco Compute with Nutanix environments by combining infrastructure visibility, proactive support, and integrated health-check workflows in one operating experience:

- **Nutanix Cluster Check (NCC):** NCC is Nutanix's built-in health and configuration validation tool for checking cluster readiness and identifying potential issues. Users can initiate Nutanix Cluster Check directly from Intersight to validate cluster health and configuration. Checks can be run across all eligible policies or narrowed by policy filters such as entity type, impact type, or name. NCC reports are delivered by email, with the option to add additional recipients.
- **Connected TAC:** Cisco Intersight integrates with the Cisco Technical Assistance Center (Cisco TAC) to provide proactive support. It automatically opens Cisco TAC cases for certain faults, attaches log files, and analyzes them for known issues—also sharing case notes with Nutanix—speeding up case resolution and increasing system uptime.
- **eBonding:** Used for seamless collaboration between Cisco and Nutanix support teams to ensure that cases are routed to the appropriate team based on the issue, this process preserves a single view of case interactions. Cisco is the only infrastructure vendor with the backend connectivity to Nutanix to enable case sharing and collaboration to get your issues resolved quickly.
- **Proactive RMA:** For specific hardware failures, Cisco Intersight can automatically open Return Materials Authorization (RMA) cases, allowing for the replacement of components before nodes fail, thus minimizing downtime. Cisco Compute Hyperconverged integration with Nutanix Pulse and Nutanix Insights also provides advanced detection of potential hardware failures.
- **Security advisories:** Users receive important security advisory alerts and field notices for impacted Intersight-connected devices, helping to stay ahead of potential security threats and ensuring continuous risk mitigation.

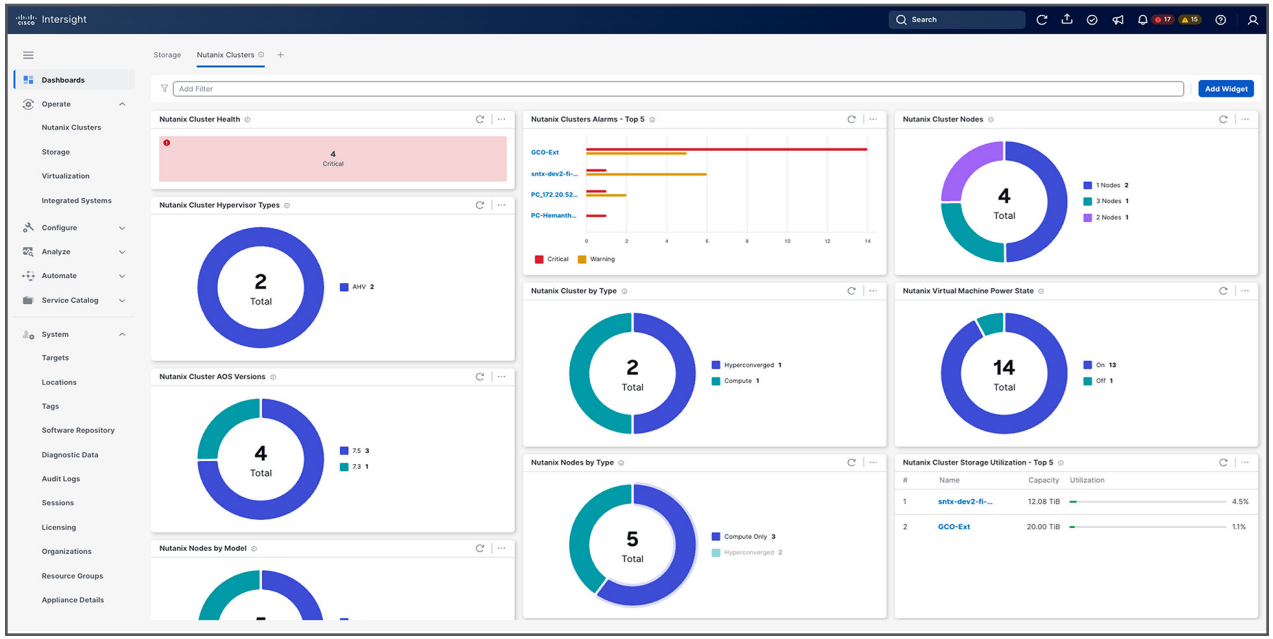


Figure 2. Nutanix Clusters dashboards provide a real-time view of Nutanix environments, including cluster health and alarms, VM types and power states, node and cluster insights, and storage utilization, for faster troubleshooting and resource planning.

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Unified visibility and control: the power of the Cisco Intersight Device Connector

The Cisco Device Connector (available on the Nutanix Prism Central Marketplace) is the cornerstone of this unique integration. It creates a bidirectional, secure communication channel between Intersight and Prism Central, enabling both platforms to provide comprehensive observability and monitoring features.

With the latest enhancements, the integration extends Day-1 visibility across Nutanix clusters, virtual machines, nodes, storage containers, and external storage. Intersight can display cluster and node types, VM inventory details such as VLAN ID and storage container, and Everpure FlashArray-backed external storage relationships when available. Administrators can also initiate Nutanix Cluster Check (NCC) directly from Intersight and receive NCC reports by email, helping to simplify health validation and proactive operations across data-center and edge environments.

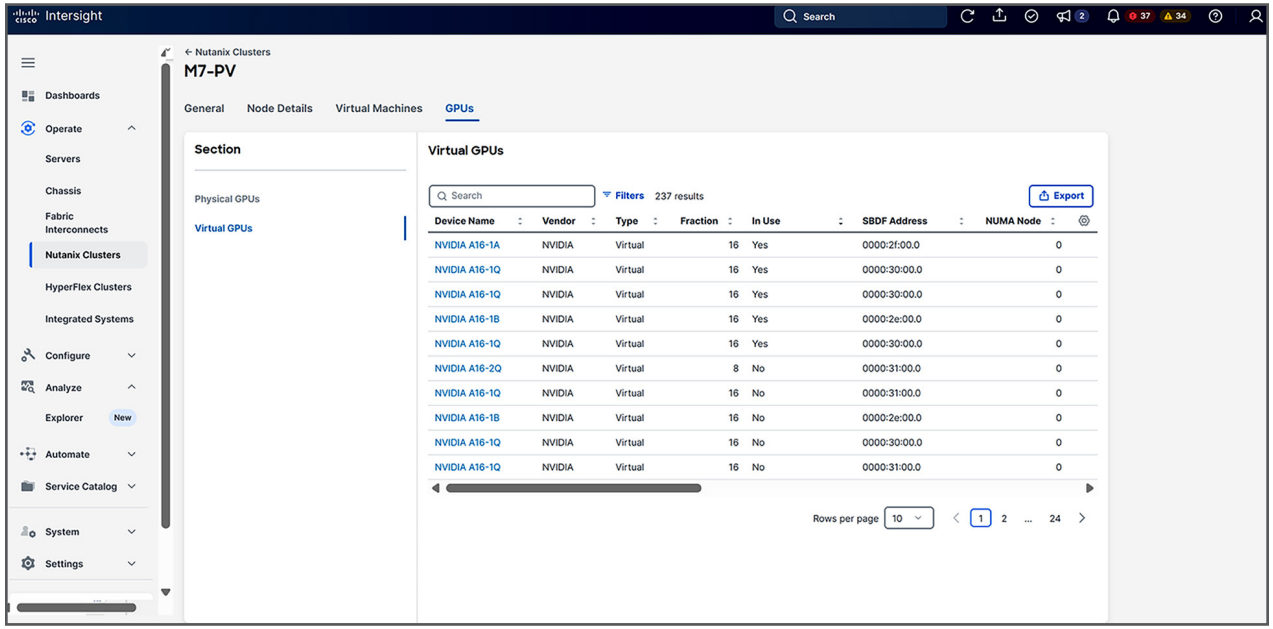


Figure 3. Gain comprehensive visibility into both physical and virtual GPU inventory across all nodes in your Cisco Compute Hyperconverged with Nutanix clusters, enabling optimal resource utilization.

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From Cisco Intersight, you can

- Use a single dashboard to visualize and monitor Cisco Compute with Nutanix environments across multiple Nutanix Prism Central instances, including cluster health, alarms, node insights, VM status, and storage utilization.
- View detailed Nutanix cluster and node inventory, including cluster type, node type, node model, hypervisor type, AOS version, license status, and NCC status.
- Initiate Nutanix Cluster Check directly from Cisco Intersight, select eligible checks or filter by policy, and receive NCC reports by email.
- Access a consolidated “Virtualization” dashboard to monitor cross-platform VM environments (running Nutanix AHV and/or VMware ESXi).
- View Nutanix storage containers and identify whether they are backed by local HCI storage or external storage.
- Discover external storage relationships for supported Everpure FlashArray-backed environments, including associated storage containers, VM disk associations, and links to Everpure inventory in Cisco Intersight when available.
- Gain comprehensive insights into your virtualized environment, including Virtual Machine (VM) listing, inventory, information placement, type, alarms, status, and VLAN ID.
- Access detailed GPU inventory, encompassing both physical and virtual GPUs, for all nodes within your Cisco Compute Hyperconverged with Nutanix clusters.
- View cluster-level alarm aggregation and acknowledge alarms.
- See Nutanix license entitlement, compliance status, and any violations.
- Automatically update the Cisco Device Connector for Intersight SaaS and virtual appliance deployments.

What’s more, only Cisco Compute with Nutanix delivers this unparalleled level of increased visibility and control across distributed clusters. It does this through the tight, native integration of Cisco’s and Nutanix’s operational platforms, Cisco Intersight and Nutanix Prism Central.

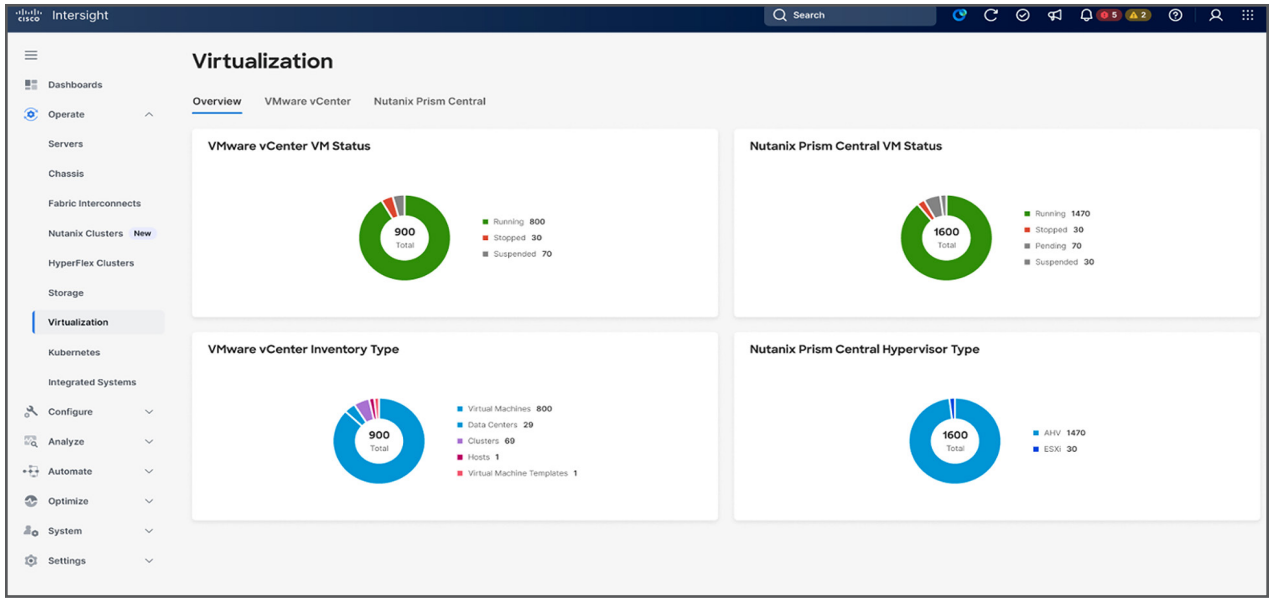


Figure 4. Gain real-time visibility into VMware vCenter and Nutanix Prism Central virtualization environments from a single pane of glass.

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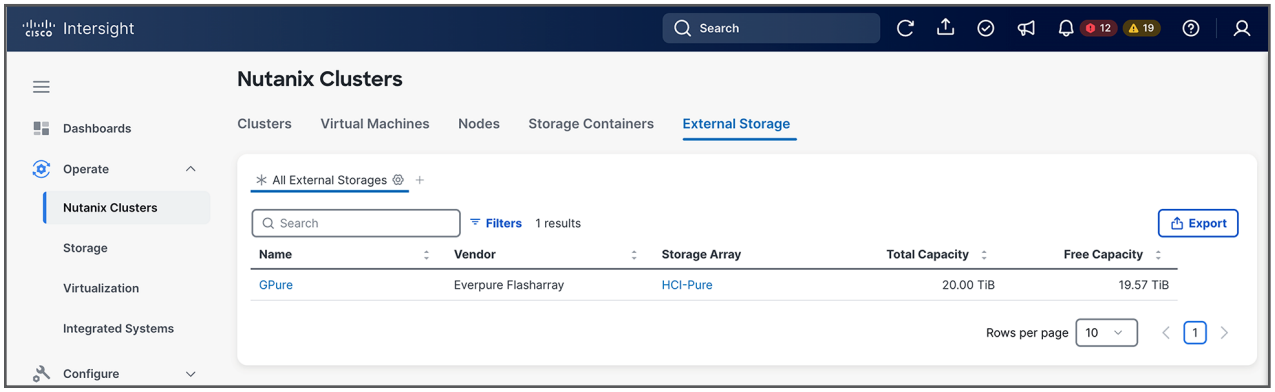


Figure 5. Intersight provides comprehensive visibility into the external storage infrastructure.

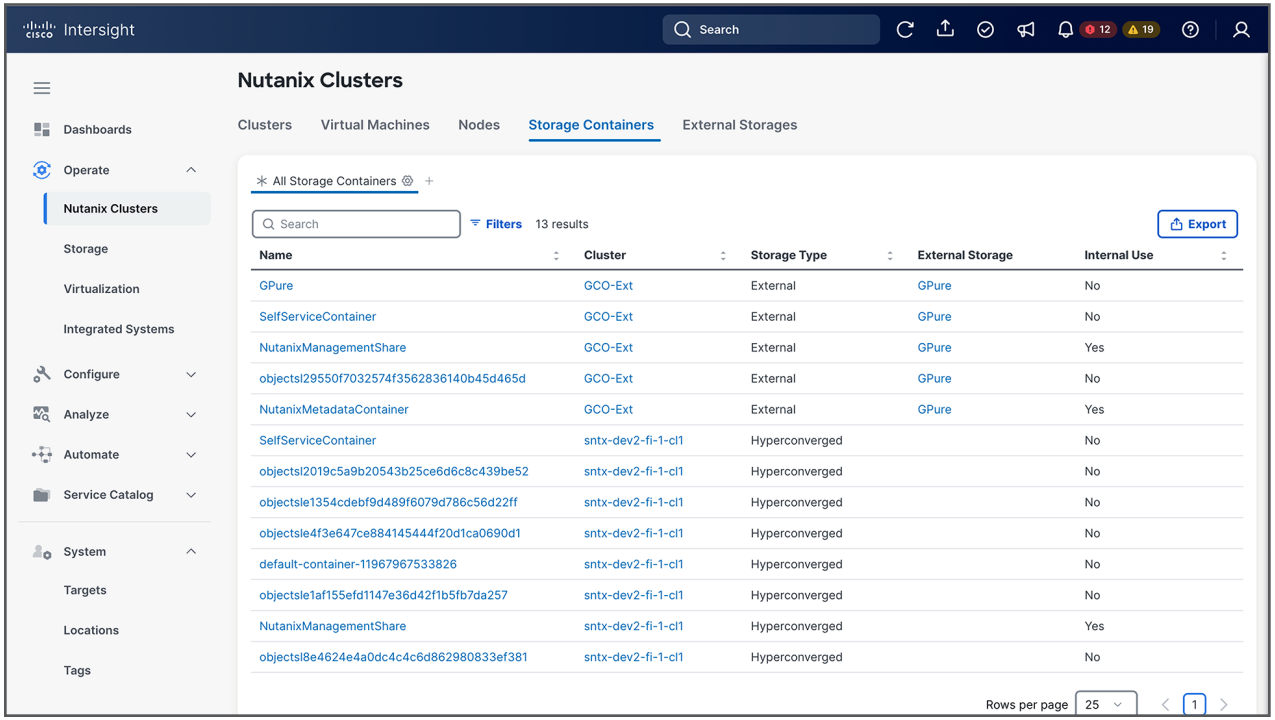


Figure 6. Intersight shows Nutanix storage container details, including local HCI or external-storage backing.



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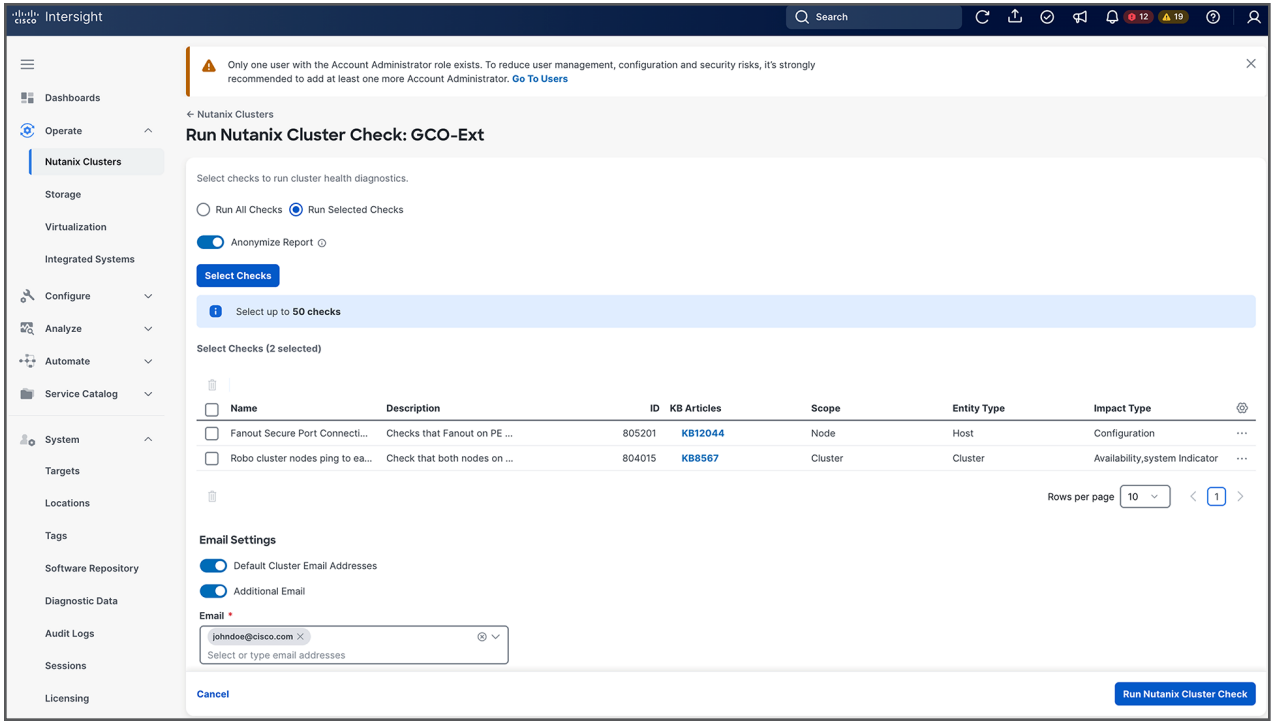


Figure 7. Users can initiate Nutanix Cluster Check from Intersight, select checks or policy filters, and receive NCC reports by email for proactive health validation.



Get started

Learn more about Cisco Intersight, request a demo, or visit our website to learn more about Cisco Compute Hyperconverged with Nutanix.

Explore the demos here to gain hands-on experience with Day 1 monitoring features.

For detailed information on the integration of Cisco Intersight & Nutanix Prism Central, refer to the Intersight documentation.

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