Cornell Maintains Business Continuity and Saves $50,000 Each Year with Veeam & Wasabi

Cornell University

"Being able to back up our entire IT infrastructure under a single pane of glass is huge, but being able to tell leaders in the business college that we can recover their data almost instantly and maintain business continuity is even better."

— Chris Garlington, system administrator in the SC Johnson College of Business at Cornell University

INDUSTRY

Education

USE CASES

Backup & Recovery

CHALLENGE

Maintain regular backups to ensure business continuity

SOLUTION

Veeam + Wasabi hot cloud storage

RESULTS

- Reliable backup and recovery ensure data availability

- Business continuity becomes the norm, not the exception

- Annual savings of $50,000 lets the IT team focus on the future

Overview

Founded in 1865 and based in Ithaca, Cornell has 60,000 students, faculty and staff on campuses in New York, Washington, D.C., Italy and Qatar. Cornell is continually ranked as a top business school in the United States and the world by Bloomberg Businessweek, The Economist, U.S. News & World Report and the Financial Times. The Cornell SC Johnson College of Business is renowned for groundbreaking research and creative solutions that solve local and global problems.

Challenge: High Availability Backup with Room to Grow

The Cornell SC Johnson College of Business is an academic powerhouse. It transcends traditional boundaries of business education and research to transform critical thinking into practical solutions.

"Our job is to maintain the highest level of data availability," said Chris Garlington, System Administrator in the SC Johnson College of Business. "In addition to traditional data required by faculty, staff and students for teaching and learning, we have a tremendous amount of data based on decades of research, as well as data that helps run a hotel."

The Statler Hotel is a living laboratory on Cornell's campus that educates the world's emerging hospitality leaders. Hundreds of students work alongside seasoned professionals to hone their skills across all hotel and restaurant operations. If data isn't available, the hotel may not live up to its reputation as an award-winning, full-service luxury establishment.

Garlington said unreliable backup and recovery threatened data availability.

"We were using a combination of solutions to back up different IT systems, hypervisors, and servers. They were complicated and unreliable, so we had very high failure rates. We spent 20 hours each week trying to keep backups running successfully, but even if they did run successfully, we weren't confident we could restore quickly. Business continuity became a big concern."

Solution: Veeam Backup & Replication + Wasabi hot cloud storage

The IT team replaced four backup solutions with one: Veeam Backup & Replication, with cloud storage provided by Wasabi.

"Being able to back up our entire IT infrastructure under a single pane of glass is huge," Garlington said. "But being able to tell leaders in the business college that we can recover their data almost instantly and maintain business continuity is even better."

Garlington said the IT team chose Veeam because it can back up anything, beginning with different hypervisors (VMware vSphere and Microsoft Hyper-V) and continuing with clusters of SQL and file servers. Veeam Agents back up the clusters, along with physical servers hosting domain controllers.

Veeam backs up a total of 120 virtual servers (60 TBs) to Dell EMC Unity so quickly and reliably that the IT team saves 20 hours in troubleshooting time each week. Team members use this 'extra' time to work on a new business continuity and disaster recovery (BC/DR) strategy based on cloud integration. Wasabi's immutable buckets and 11 nines of data durability provide multiple layers of protection to this vital data.

Cornell's BC/DR strategy takes advantage of a feature called Veeam Cloud Tier. It enables considerable cost savings on long-term retention because data is offloaded as blocks to object storage, leaving just the metadata in the main repository. The result is a space-saving, smaller footprint on Wasabi that does not sacrifice performance.

"It's obvious Veeam Software is passionate about availability because their solution will back up anything," Garlington said. "Veeam's affordability is impressive too. When you combine our cost savings leveraging cloud storage with our time savings of 20 hours per week, the total is $50,000 each year." Additionally, Wasabi's storage is also 1/5th the cost of Amazon S3, saving the Cornell team even more.

Garlington said the IT team will use the savings to fund additional technology that supports the SC Johnson College of Business, and it will be backed up by Veeam.

"Veeam affords us a wider scope of consideration when we look at new technology because it can back up everything," he said. It's very satisfying to focus on the future rather than fight fires like we did with legacy backup."

Results

Reliable backup and recovery ensure data availability

The combination of Veeam's backup software with Wasabi's highly secure cloud storage ensures optimal data availability. "We pride ourselves on achieving the highest levels of availability, and that's why we use Veeam," Garlington said. "It's simple, flexible and reliable, and great for business continuity."

Business continuity becomes the norm, not the exception

"Veeam delivers on its promise of reliable backup and recovery, which helps us deliver on our promise of business continuity," Garlington said. "Veeam is the most reliable software I've used. I wish every company developed their products like Veeam does."

Annual savings of $50,000 lets the IT team focus on the future

Wasabi hot cloud storage is 80% less than Amazon S3 and does not charge for egress or API requests. This along with Veeam's low price has yielded significant savings to Johnson College. "The cost savings with Veeam is so substantial that we can fund additional technology to move the Johnson College forward," Garlington said.

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