HBC taps Veeam for multi-cloud data protection, ransomware resilience and saves millions

"Veeam provides policy-driven data protection to cover all of our assets. Having a single solution that backs up natively everywhere, including multiple clouds, used to be a dream scenario. Now it's reality."

— Ope Bakare,
Chief Technology Officer,
HBC

The Business Challenge

From the fur trade to Fifth Avenue, HBC has been in business for more than 350 years. North America's oldest company began in 1670 with a royal charter from England to seek a northwest passage to the Pacific Ocean, occupy the lands adjacent to Hudson Bay and set up commerce. Innovation has always driven the business.

"Innovation is baked into our DNA, and it's the primary reason behind our Digital Transformation," said Ope Bakare, Chief Technology Officer at HBC. "Our goal is an unrivaled customer experience, so to improve on the experience we began a Digital Transformation to accelerate our omni-channel e-commerce business. Operating multiple data centers didn't make sense in our customer-centric world, so we adopted a multi-cloud strategy."

As HBC moved IT systems and data to Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Microsoft Azure, Bakare said he and his colleagues discovered something unfortunate about the legacy backup solution. It began to show signs of failing.

"Failing backups can lead to downtime, and downtime can lead to big problems in retail," he explained. "Downtime can drastically impact a company's logistics ecosystem, leading to a domino effect that can break the business. We have a complex logistics ecosystem, so keeping it healthy and functioning is an absolute priority. An hour of downtime could cost our company millions of dollars in logistics and shipping."

Matthew Pick, Senior Director of Cloud Architecture at HBC, said there was another challenge with legacy backup.

"It was inflexible and didn't integrate with our multi-cloud workloads," he continued. "We began using tools provided by AWS and Azure for backup to Amazon Simple Storage Service (Amazon S3) and Azure Blob Storage, but they came with constraints like operational overhead, which is time consuming. We needed one flexible, powerful and scalable solution to protect every workload everywhere."

Industry

Retail

Company

HBC

HBC is a holding company of investments and businesses at the intersection of technology, retail operations, and real estate.

It is the majority owner of iconic ecommerce companies: Saks, a leading online destination for luxury fashion; The Bay, a Canadian ecommerce marketplace; and Saks OFF 5TH, a premier luxury off-price ecommerce company offering top brands at the best prices. These businesses were established as separate operating companies in 2021. HBC also wholly owns Hudson's Bay, the operating company for Hudson's Bay's brick-and-mortar stores, as well as SFA, the entity that operates Saks Fifth

The Veeam Solution

Veeam® Availability Suite™ gives HBC a single platform that simplifies and centralizes data protection and provides visibility into every workload on premises and on multiple clouds. Veeam also helps the company ensure business continuity, meet internal governance compliance requirements and protect against ransomware.

"One of the things I love about Veeam is operational consistency," Bakare said. "We can protect every asset wherever it resides in a consistent way. Veeam takes the complication and noise out of data protection, allowing our engineers to focus on innovating for the business rather than worrying about backups."

Pick said operational consistency also allows for data retention to be a shared responsibility across teams.

"Operational consistency places the onus on each business unit that wants to protect data," he continued. "If they tag their VMs correctly, Veeam will back them up, without question."

Pick is referring to Veeam's fully customizable policies that automate backup and data lifecycle management. He said policy-based automation also provides an easy way for the IT team to show each business unit how much data protection will cost.

"Veeam enables us to have more productive conversations with each unit so we can set expectations appropriately. We also have visibility into our overall spend, and this is where the Veeam Universal License comes in handy. We can move licenses across business units and workloads to maximize our spend."

Bakare added that policy-based automation also ensures business continuity, supports internal governance compliance requirements and protects against ransomware.

"We had been going through a process to validate and close gaps in our business continuity strategy, so Veeam's ability to use tagging for cloud backup was a massive step forward for us. Tagging also ensures internal governance compliance and helps us fight ransomware. Veeam lets us separate our backups from our IT systems with a barrier, so if ransomware strikes our IT systems, our backups are safe."

Bakare said Veeam saves money too.

"Before we began the cloud migration we were closing in on a hardware and software refresh. Since Veeam is hardware, software and cloud agnostic, we avoided the refresh, saving more than $1 million in a one-time capital expenditure and $600,000 in recurring operating expenses annually. That's a significant savings."

Avenue's physical locations, and O5, the operating company for Saks OFF 5TH stores.

With assets spanning top markets and prime locations across North America, HBC owns or controls — either entirely or with joint venture partners — approximately 40 million square feet of gross leasable area. HBC Properties and Investments, the company's real estate and investments portfolio business, manages these assets along with additional real estate offerings, including Streetworks Development, its property development division.

Founded in 1670, HBC is North America's longest continually operating company and is headquartered in New York and Toronto. For more information visit: **www.hbc.com**.

Challenge

HBC's legacy is providing an unrivaled customer experience. To improve upon that experience, the company began a digital transformation to accelerate its omni-channel e-commerce business through a multi-cloud business strategy. The challenge was finding a single solution to simplify and centralize backup and recovery on premises and in AWS and Azure, while also providing visibility into every workload. Downtime can be disastrous in the retail industry. One hour of downtime could cost HBC millions of dollars in logistics and shipping.

The Results

- **Provides a single platform to simplify and centralize data protection everywhere**

  Veeam backs up 80 TB of data across more than 2,000 instances in AWS and Azure to Amazon S3 and Azure Blob Storage. Veeam also backs up 40 TB of data across 14 physical machines on premises to Dell EMC Data Domain.

  "More than anything, we needed centralized backup," Pick said. "Veeam delivered on that but also lets us move licenses across business units to optimize spend."

- **Ensures business continuity, governance compliance and ransomware resilience**

  "Veeam's policy-driven protection covers all of our assets," Bakare said. "Having a single solution that uses tags to backup natively everywhere, including multiple clouds, used to be a dream scenario. Now it's reality."

- **Saves more than $1 million in one-time CAPEX and $600,000 in recurring OPEX annually**

  "Veeam saved us over $1 million in cash savings, but in addition to saving money, Veeam is transparent," Bakare said. "We know exactly how much it costs to protect the business. There are no surprises."

→ **Learn more
www.veeam.com**

Solution

Veeam Availability Suite

Results

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- Ensures business continuity, governance compliance and ransomware resilience

- Saves more than $1 million in one-time CAPEX and $600,000 in recurring OPEX annually

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About Veeam Software

Veeam® is the leader in backup, recovery and data management solutions that deliver Modern Data Protection. The company provides a single platform for Cloud, Virtual, Physical, SaaS and Kubernetes environments. Veeam customers are confident their apps and data are protected and always available with the most simple, flexible, reliable and powerful platform in the industry. Veeam protects over 450,000 customers worldwide, including 82% of the Fortune 500 and 69% of the Global 2,000. Veeam's global ecosystem includes 35,000+ technology partners, resellers and service providers, and alliance partners and has offices in more than 30 countries. To learn more, visit **www.veeam.com** or follow Veeam on LinkedIn **@veeam-software** and Twitter **@veeam**.