Manufacturer Standardizes 24x7 Availability and Disaster Recovery Globally with Veeam

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>
> — Raymond Ciscon
>   Senior Systems Engineer
>   MacLean-Fogg Company

INDUSTRY
Manufacturing

COMPANY

MACLEAN-FOGG

In 1925 MacLean-Fogg offered one lock nut to North America's railroads, and business took off. Today MacLean-Fogg Company is a leading manufacturer of products for the automotive and power utility industries. Headquartered in Mundelein, Illinois, the family-owned business has grown into a global enterprise employing more than 3,500 people throughout North America, Europe and Asia.

CHALLENGE
MacLean-Fogg manufactures products nonstop and strives to deliver them on time every time. That level of business requires a highly responsive IT infrastructure that keeps core Microsoft, ERP and specialized manufacturing systems available 24x7. MacLean-Fogg faced two challenges associated with 24x7 Availability: inconsistent backup and long, drawn-out recovery. A short time later the company faced another challenge: a hardware refresh.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

The world of global manufacturing is extremely competitive. MacLean-Fogg Company differentiates itself from peers by combining top-rated customer service with advanced engineering and precise manufacturing. That's why the company's wheel nuts are in every car Ford manufactures.

MacLean-Fogg's success depends on a number of business factors, including IT availability, agility and scalability. When the company sought to maximize IT efficiencies, improving availability of critical systems was at the top of the list.

"Our business banks on nonstop manufacturing and on-time product delivery," said Ray Ciscon, Senior Systems Engineer at MacLean-Fogg Company. "We require a highly responsive IT infrastructure to keep core Microsoft, ERP and specialized manufacturing systems available 24x7."

The biggest roadblocks to 24x7 Availability were inconsistent backup and long, drawn-out recovery. Backup failed three out of five times, and recovery was arduous, particularly for application items like email. Another tedious process was getting technical help from the vendor.

"Calling technical support was like falling into a black hole," Ciscon said. "We dreaded those calls because the technical support people had limited knowledge of their products and often read responses from a script. Getting elevated to the next tier of their support organization was a very slow, difficult process."

Agents were another challenge. They had to be installed and maintained in every virtual machine (VM), and they required considerable CPU and memory.

"When we backed up Microsoft Exchange and ERP, two of our largest and most critical systems, VMs running each system took hits," he said. "It wasn't worth risking our production environment for agents. Instead, we needed a solution that was actually designed for virtualization and would help us advance the business."

THE VEEAM SOLUTION

MacLean-Fogg implemented Veeam® Backup & Replication™ in a relatively small VMware vSphere deployment, and soon Veeam was sanctioned the 24x7 Availability and disaster recovery (DR) standard companywide.

"Any MacLean-Fogg location that has a VMware host has Veeam—it's that good," Ciscon said. "We're all drinking the Veeam Kool-Aid."

Shortly after deploying Veeam, MacLean-Fogg was due for a hardware refresh. The company replaced its data center platform with FlexPod, which includes Cisco Unified Computing System™ (Cisco UCS®) servers and NetApp unified storage.

"Combining Veeam and FlexPod was a big win for us," Ciscon explained. "Together they keep core Microsoft, ERP and specialized manufacturing applications available 24x7 so we can move the business forward. Plus, we reduce our risk of data loss with every restore point we add."

NetApp

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AVAILABILITY
for the Always-On Enterprise™

1 + 1 = 3
NetApp + Veeam
Better Together

Customer
Story

Veeam and FlexPod helped MacLean-Fogg increase the number of restore points
in two ways. Backup windows decreased, enabling the company to back up more
frequently. Veeam and NetApp deduplication conserve backup storage, making
room for additional restore points. Plus, Veeam backup doesn't impact the company's
production environment, so VMs running Exchange and ERP aren't compromised.

"Performance with Veeam with FlexPod is stellar," Ciscon said. "Making backups and
replicas from NetApp FAS snapshots is fast, easy and reliable, saving us up to 10 hours
each week in troubleshooting time—the equivalent to more than 500 hours each year."

MacLean-Fogg saves time during DR tests as well. Veeam SureBackup® and
SureReplica verify the recoverability of backups and replicas, giving the company
full confidence that Veeam has DR covered.

"Before using Veeam I spent 20 hours conducting quarterly tests to verify DR
processes," Ciscon said. "Verifying DR with Veeam takes 5 hours per quarter,
saving me 60 hours each year.

"Veeam saves money too," Ciscon continued. "Veeam is agentless, saving $5,000
each year in license renewal fees."

Ciscon said another Veeam benefit is the number of restore features, such as such
as Instant VM Recovery®.

"You can restore in any kind of DR scenario," he sad. "When the VM running the file
server for our corporate office failed during a Windows installation, we instantly
recovered from the previous night's backup. Users had access to their files in minutes.
Before Veeam, recovering that VM would have taken hours and inconvenienced users."

Another helpful recovery feature is Veeam Explorer™ for Microsoft Exchange, which
lets IT browse Exchange backups and quickly restore emails back to users' mailboxes.

"There's something else we like about Veeam," Ciscon said. "Technical support
doesn't become a black hole. Our questions are answered quickly by people who
understand the software."

MacLean-Fogg upgraded to Veeam Availability Suite™ a few years after deploying
Veeam Backup & Replication. The reason for upgrading was threefold: advanced
monitoring, reporting and capacity planning.

"Limited monitoring was the catalyst for our upgrade," Ciscon explained. "We wanted
visibility into backups, enabling us to determine 'what went wrong' if a backup issue arose.
Veeam monitoring alerts us to issues, and we fix them before they impact the business."

In addition to monitoring, MacLean-Fogg finds reporting helpful because data regarding
unprotected VMs and datastore performance help optimize backup. Capacity planning
features, including the ability to forecast resource shortages, make budgeting easier.

"Monitoring, reporting and capacity planning contribute to 24x7 Availability,"
Ciscon said. "Upgrading to Veeam Availability Suite was a no-brainer."

THE RESULTS

- **Reduces the company's risk of data loss**
  Veeam and FlexPod reduce MacLean-Fogg's risk of data loss by helping the
  company increase the number of backup restore points. More frequent backup,
  thanks to shorter backup windows, and conserved storage, thanks
  to deduplication, allow for additional restore points.

- **Saves the business $5,000 and 560 hours each year**
  Veeam is agentless for all virtual workloads, saving the business $5,000 in yearly
  license renewal fees. Veeam is also fast and reliable, saving 500 hours' worth
  of backup and restore troubleshooting and 60 hours of DR testing each year.

- **Enables fast resolution of backup issues before they impact operations**
  Monitoring, reporting and capacity planning with Veeam give MacLean-Fogg
  complete visibility of the backup environment so issues can be identified and resolved
  before they escalate into problems that might negatively impact business operations.

■ NetApp