National Bank of Abu Dhabi Trusts Veeam
For 24x7 Uptime and Data Availability

"Between superior recovery capabilities and built-in features that help us make the most of virtualization, Veeam is a hassle-free, plug-and-play, virtualization-aware availability solution. It has an arsenal of options that are a must-have for any modern enterprise."

— Mahmoud Yassin
   Lead Systems and Security Engineer
   National Bank of Abu Dhabi

INDUSTRY
Financial services

COMPANY:

NBAD

The National Bank of Abu Dhabi (NBAD) has one of the largest banking networks in the United Arab Emirates with 120 branches and 580 ATMs, as well as the largest global network with more than 50 locations in 18 countries. Since 2009, NBAD has been ranked each year as one of the world's 50 safest banks by Global Finance magazine.

CHALLENGE

As the leading bank in the Middle East, NBAD operates nonstop. When limitations in the backup tool (slow, unreliable recovery) made it challenging to meet key business requirements (24x7 uptime and data availability) NBAD sought a new availability solution.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

NBAD has received multiple accolades from the technology community including the prestigious ACN Arab Technology Award and the Asian Banker Award. NBAD is at the forefront of investing in technological improvements to remain an innovative leader in the financial sector. That explains why NBAD was an early adopter of virtualization. Approximately xx VMware vSphere servers host more than 1,280 virtual machines (VMs) running critical applications from Blackberry, Citrix and Microsoft.

As the leading bank in the Middle East and one of the safest banks in the world, NBAD would never let limitations in its legacy backup tool jeopardize business objectives, which include meeting recovery time point and point objectives (RTPO™) to ensure key business requirements – 24x7 uptime and data availability. When the legacy backup tool failed to recover VMs quickly and reliably, the bank's IT team began researching alternative solutions.

"We are responsible for supporting a financial institution where 24x7 uptime and data availability are key requirements, in addition to providing IT services in a timely manner," said Marwan El-Tawashi, Group Leader Defined Services for NBAD. "Our backup tool had several limitations that affected our virtual environment, and a lengthy recovery process was the most troublesome. Recovering a VM could take 45 to 60 minutes, and we didn't want to inconvenience internal users. Another limitation was related to snapshots. The legacy tool took multiple simultaneous and uncontrollable snapshots that impacted our production ESXi environment."

El-Tawashi said adding new VMs to backup jobs presented an additional limitation.

"When we created VMs for a cluster or datastore, we had to take the time to add them manually," he continued. "The final limitation was not being able to perform Linux file-level recovery from snapshots. We needed a virtualization backup solution with the necessary features and capabilities to resolve these issues."

Mahmoud Yassin agreed. Yassin is Data Center Manager for NBAD.

"NBAD operates nonstop – 24x7 – and it's our responsibility to make sure data is always available," said. "We needed a solution that would help us stay always on."

THE VEEAM SOLUTION

NBAD chose Veeam® Backup & Replication™ for a simple yet significant reason: Veeam enables *Availability for the Always-On Enterprise*™.

"We have total confidence in our ability to meet business requirements with Veeam," Yassin said. "We don't worry about meeting RTOs and RPOs."

The reason NBAD doesn't worry about meeting RTPOs can be summed up in two words: SureBackup® and SureReplica. Veeam automatically verifies the recoverability of backups and replicas by starting them in isolated environments called Virtual Labs. Veeam performs a series of tests against them and creates reports on their states and conditions.

SOLUTION
Veeam Backup & Replication

Veeam Backup & Replication helps NBAD maintain 24x7 uptime and data availability through automatic recovery verification and instant restore.

Veeam backs up 40TB of data on 1,280 VMs to EMC Data Domain in NBAD's primary data center. Veeam also performs onsite VM backup in several international offices and replicates VMs to a DR site.

RESULTS

- Meets business requirements to operate nonstop

- Verifies recovery of backups and replicas for business resiliency

- Provides high-speed recovery features for any restore scenario

ABOUT VEEAM SOFTWARE
Veeam® has pioneered a new market of *Availability for the Always-On Enterprise*™ to help companies solve the challenges of keeping their businesses up and running at all times. Veeam enables the Always-On Business™ with solutions that provide recovery time and point objectives (RTPO™) of less than 15 minutes for virtualized applications and data.

Learn more
www.veeam.com

Download free trial
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Before choosing Veeam, the IT team observed three major differences between Veeam and a competing solution: ease of deployment and management, built-in features and recovery capabilities.

"The first thing we noticed about Veeam was how easy it was to install and use, unlike the other tool, which required agents to be installed on each VM to be backed up," Yassin said. "Backup jobs with Veeam are dynamic. If we add a new VM to a cluster, it's automatically included in the backup of that cluster."

The second difference is built-in features. Veeam offers whole VM replication, while the other tool can only replicate backups between data stores. Veeam also has built-in intelligence to ensure simultaneous backups and snapshots don't burden the production environment. And, Veeam has built-in deduplication and compression. Backup files require 25% less storage space than before; NBAD saves thousands of dollars in storage purchases each year.

"The third major difference, and the most important, is recovery capabilities," Yassin continued. "With Veeam we can recover any virtualized application quickly. None of the backup tools we've used or researched was able to perform Linux file-level recovery from backup snapshots. Even restoring a file from a Windows VM was complex. Veeam is different. It supports multiple platforms and offers easy recovery."

While NBAD often uses Veeam Explorer™ for Microsoft SQL Server to gain instant visibility into SQL backups for fast recovery, the IT team's favorite Veeam feature is Instant VM Recovery™ because it helps recover a failed VM in as few as two minutes. Before Veeam, internal users had to wait up to 60 minutes while the team provisioned storage, extracted the backup and copied it to production. With Veeam, VMs are started directly from backups. Veeam also recovers files from any guest operating system and file system from a backup without booting the VM.

"One of the smartest things we did was extending Veeam from the production environment to the development environment," Yassin said. "About 75% of the restores we perform are in development. Unstable code is usually the issue, but Instant VM Recovery saves the day each time. Between superior recovery capabilities and built-in features that help us make the most of virtualization, Veeam is a hassle-free, plug-and-play, virtualization-aware backup solution. It has an arsenal of options that are a must-have for any enterprise."

THE RESULTS

- **Meets business requirements to operate nonstop**

  Veeam makes it easy for the IT team to meet RTPO and stay always on. Compared to the legacy tool, backup with Veeam is five times faster and recovery is 10 times faster.

- **Verifies recovery of backups and replicas for business resiliency**

  Veeam provides built-in features that help enterprises capitalize on virtualization. For example, NBAD can replicate VMs between data centers for migration, onsite for high availability or offsite for disaster recovery (DR). This ensures backups and replicas are ready whenever needed to restore files, applications and whole VMs.

- **Provides high-speed recovery features for any restore scenario**

  From a single image-based backup, Veeam provides a wide range of recovery features that help NBAD restore exactly what it needs in minutes with an agentless, easy-to-use interface.

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