Rabobank chooses Veeam for enterprise scalability

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— Colin Chatelier,
Manager of Storage and Compute,
Europe, Rabobank

The Business Challenge

Rabobank is a cooperative banking organization, rooted in agriculture and dating back more than 115 years. What began in the 1890s as a collection of small rural banks serving local farmers has grown into a global financial services leader and one of the world’s largest banks.

Rabobank has two types of banking customers: retail and international wholesale. Retail customers rely on Rabobank for traditional banking services to meet their personal and business needs. International wholesale customers rely on Rabobank for a broader range of financial services such as risk management. They include corporations and manufacturers, as well as agribusinesses, farmers and ranchers throughout the United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico, Asia and Australia.

A single IT infrastructure supports all banking customers, but that wasn’t always the case. Rabobank had operated as two separate banks, and each bank had its own IT infrastructure. In an effort to serve all customers better, Rabobank decided to merge the banks, which meant merging the infrastructures too.

“Each infrastructure had its own backup solution, so we had to decide which solution would be best for the business going forward,” said Colin Chatelier, Manager of Storage and Compute, Europe, Rabobank.

Chatelier and his colleagues considered the following requirements before making their selection. First and foremost, the solution had to provide enterprise scalability to protect more than 12,500 virtual machines (VMs).
Backup and recovery had to be exceptionally fast to ensure business continuity, particularly for Microsoft SQL Server as it supports nearly all banking systems. The solution also had to have the level of product maturity necessary to become a global standard for data protection and help protect against ransomware.

“Veeam was the clear winner,” Chatelier said. “We worked with Proact IT to purchase Veeam, and they made the process very easy. When we needed help with deployment, Veeam stepped in, and they’ve been our strategic partner ever since.”

The Veeam Solution

Rabobank chose Veeam® Availability Suite™ as its European standard for data protection. Veeam delivers enterprise scalability to protect a vast virtual estate, ensures business continuity by backing up and recovering critical banking systems up to four times faster and saves 50% in licensing costs annually. Alongside this, Rabobank has worked with Veeam to deploy an immutable backup solution to protect against ransomware.

“Veeam is our safety net,” Chatelier said. “When something goes wrong, you have to be sure you have all resources at your disposal to make it go right. Veeam provides those resources — technically and organizationally.”

Veeam backs up 3 PB across 12,500 VMware vSphere VMs on-premise in two data centers to Hitachi Storage.

“Success for our backups is critical,” Chatelier said. “Rabobank has high expectations regarding business continuity, so we have to be able to recover safely and quickly in any situation. Veeam is a mature product that offers functionality we’ve never had before, including everything we do in Veeam DataLabs.”

Veeam DataLabs provide Rabobank with first-time functionality such as SureBackup® to verify the recoverability of backups, Staged Restore to automate backup testing prior to recovery, Secure Restore to make sure backups are free and clear of malware and Instant VM Recovery® to recover in minutes.

“The confidence Veeam instills sets it apart from other vendors,” said Harry Grevinga, executive vice president of ICT infraservices, Europe, Rabobank. “Protecting SQL Server is critical because it supports most of our banking systems, including the mobile app used by our retail banking customers and risk assessment systems used by our international wholesale customers. Veeam simplifies protection for SQL AlwaysOn Availability Groups, putting our minds at ease.”

One of the fastest ways to restore data in AlwaysOn Availability Groups is with Veeam Explorer™ for Microsoft SQL Server. It provides an easy-to-use wizard-driven interface for restoring databases directly from a backup, so there’s no need to search for them.
“Something else sets Veeam apart,” Chatelier said. “It’s fairly rare to find a vendor that goes the extra mile, but Veeam does. When we needed advice during deployment, they were there. When we wanted to increase data security to protect against ransomware, they were there. At every bump in the road, Veeam technicians and management team have worked with us to understand the customer perspective and feed that into ultimately a better customer experience. Veeam isn’t our vendor — Veeam is our strategic partner.”

Ransomware is on the rise in banking. The Cost of Cybercrime Study conducted globally in 2019 by Accenture and Ponemon Institute reported the average cost of cybercrime in the banking industry was $18.4 million, 40% higher than the average cost across all industries surveyed ($13 million).

Veeam has helped Rabobank increase data security by creating a third copy of backups that can’t be updated or deleted, protecting the bank and its customers from malicious attacks. Veeam uses object lock technology provided by S3-compatible providers to prohibit data changes in backups (until the immutability expiration date).

Chatelier said cost was another significant factor in choosing Veeam.

“Cost and return on investment will always be a factor in any solution. In this respect we found Veeam was more affordable compared to our legacy solution. When comparing costs to back up a physical server, we calculated the legacy solution’s capacity-based license and compared it to Veeam’s very simple server-based license. Veeam delivers a savings of approximately 50% annually.”

**The results**

- **Delivers enterprise scalability to become a global standard for data protection**
  “Veeam provides the enterprise scalability and product maturity required to meet the needs of our banking customers,” Chatelier said. “Our customers expect 100% data integrity, and Veeam underpins our ability to provide it.”

- **Ensures business continuity by backing up and recovering up to four times faster**
  “One of our watchwords is always on, so we need to make sure systems and data are always available,” Chatelier said. “If there’s a problem, we have to be able to recover quickly. Finding the solution offering the fastest recovery was our goal, and we found it in Veeam.”

- **Helps protect against ransomware and saves 50% in licensing costs annually**
  “As a bank, we take security very seriously,” Chatelier said. “We take return on investment seriously too. Veeam delivers on both.”

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**About Veeam Software**

Veeam® is the leader in Backup solutions that deliver Cloud Data Management™. Veeam provides a single platform for modernizing backup, accelerating hybrid cloud, and securing data. With 375,000+ customers worldwide, including 82% of the Fortune 500 and 67% of the Global 2,000, Veeam customer-satisfaction scores are the highest in the industry at 3.5x the average. Veeam’s 100-percent channel ecosystem includes global partners, as well as HPE, NetApp, Cisco and Lenovo as exclusive resellers. Veeam has offices in more than 30 countries. To learn more, visit https://www.veeam.com or follow Veeam on Twitter @veeam.

**About Proact IT**

Proact is a leading provider of independent data center and cloud services. By delivering flexible, accessible and secure IT solutions, Proact helps companies and organizations reduce risk and cost while increasing agility, productivity and efficiency. Proact has successfully completed more than 5,000 projects for 3,500 customers worldwide. Founded in 1994, the company employs 1,000 people in 15 countries across Europe and North America.