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Delivering Agile Data Protection for Microsoft 365 with Veeam

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Abstract

This Technical Review from TechTarget's Enterprise Strategy Group documents the results of a detailed evaluation of Veeam's Microsoft 365 backup solutions, including validating granular backup management capabilities and agile recovery options.

The Challenges

For the right application, organizations can realize numerous benefits by migrating to the cloud. For instance, the responsibility of elements such as the physical data center, hosts, network, operating system, and application can be transferred to an organization's SaaS provider. However, for the majority of (if not all) SaaS applications, it is still the responsibility of the organization to manage and protect the data it puts into the application. Enterprise Strategy Group's most recent research revealed that one-third (33%) of respondents still erroneously believe that protecting the data in their SaaS applications is their SaaS vendor's responsibility (see Figure 1).¹ Our research also showed that SaaS is not immune to data loss. In fact, 53% of respondents reported SaaS data loss or corruption over a 12-month period.

Figure 1. The SaaS Backup Disconnect Persists

Which of the following best represents your organization's approach when it comes to protecting SaaS-resident application data? (Percent of respondents, N=398)



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

¹ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Research Report, [Data Protection for SaaS](#), February 2023. All Enterprise Strategy Group research references and charts are from this research report.

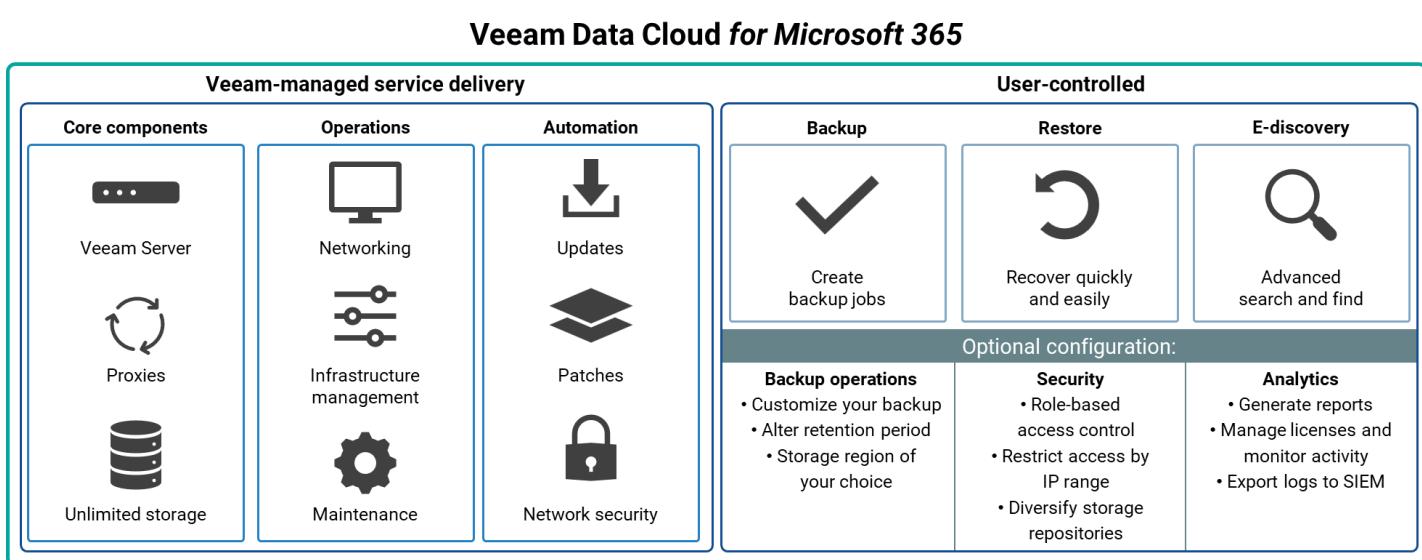
We asked organizations to indicate their primary method of protecting Microsoft 365 data, and their responses revealed no clear consensus. The top three responses were backup as a service for SaaS (34%), third-party to on-premises backup (23%), and third-party to cloud backup (18%), so flexibility of the solution delivery and repository target are essential.

The Service: Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365

Veeam offers three deployment, management, and delivery options for protecting Microsoft 365 data: via a backup service, backup software, and using managed services. In this report we'll be examining the service, *Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365*, as well as the *Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365* software.

Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365 is a data protection service designed to protect Microsoft 365 data from accidental deletion, security threats, and retention policy gaps. The service focuses on simplifying the backup experience, with the infrastructure managed by Veeam and unlimited storage included. As shown in Figure 2, Veeam manages all aspects of service delivery, giving organizations the power to control, manage, and customize backup, restore, and e-discovery operations.

Figure 2. Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365

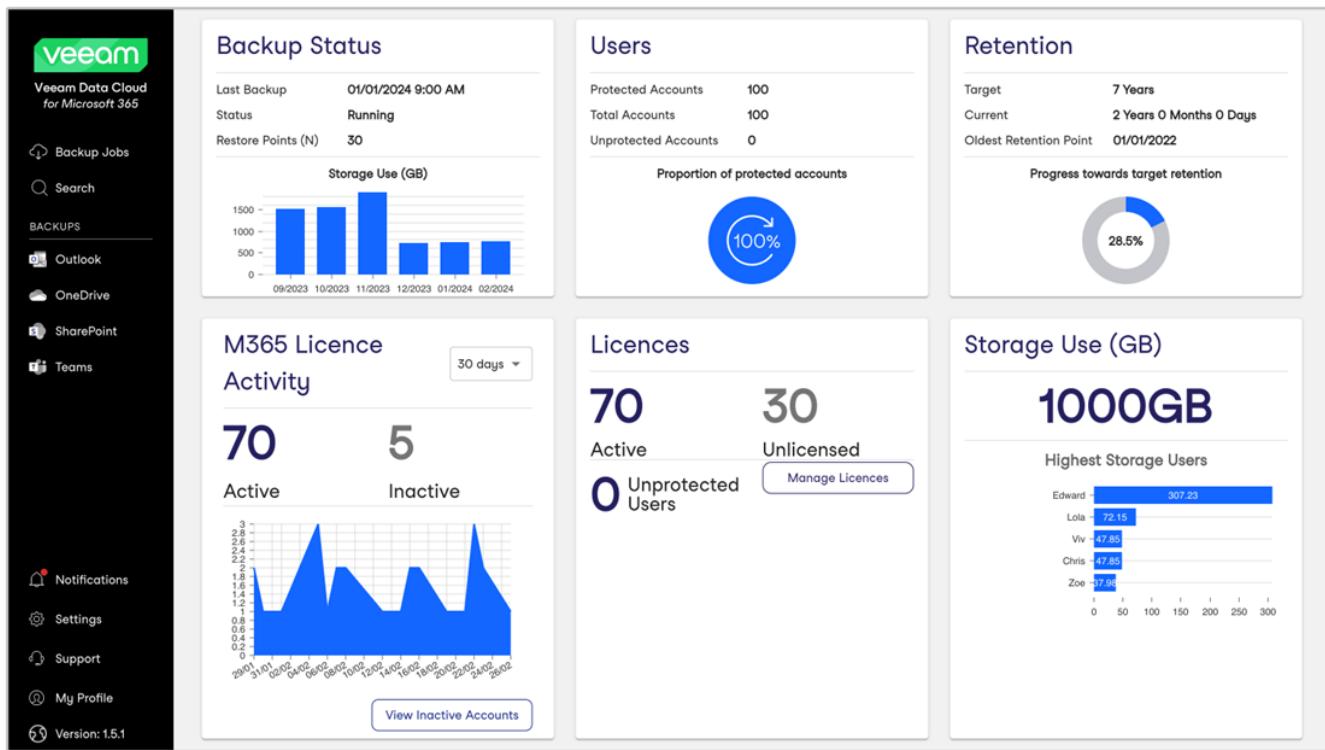


Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Using the service enables organizations to radically simplify their backup configuration and operations. Backup teams can log in through a web browser and begin backing up in minutes, with system maintenance and updates all taken care of by Veeam.

Enterprise Strategy Group examined *Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365* and found that the solution offers the simplicity and ease of use users expect from an as-a-service solution. The dashboard (Figure 3) presents a view of the Microsoft 365 data protection environment, highlighting key metrics.

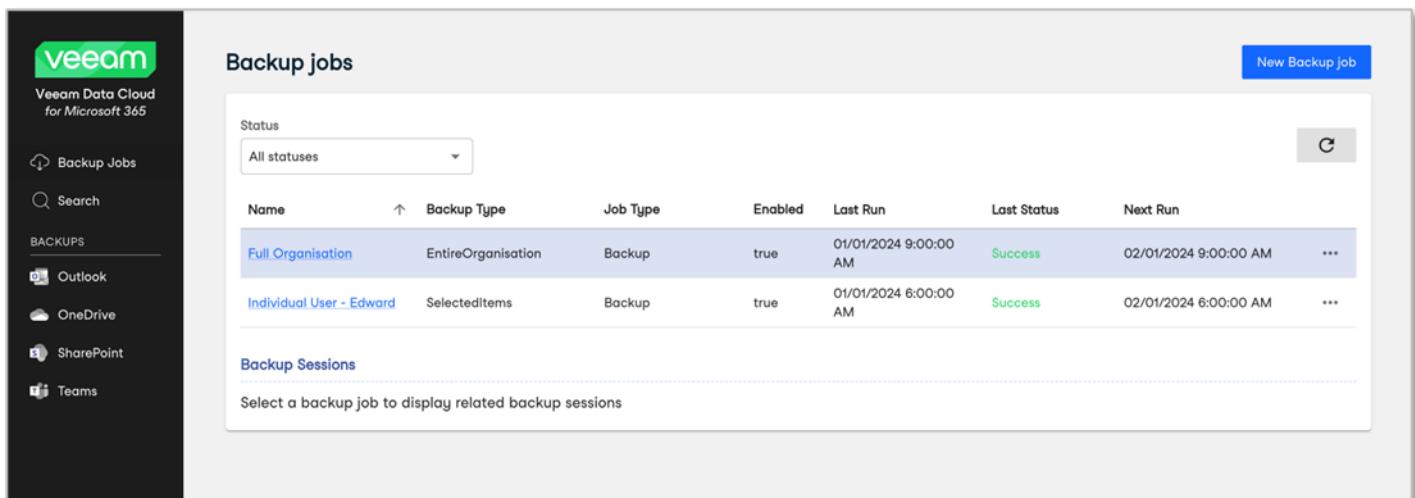
Figure 3. The Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365 Dashboard



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Navigation is simple, with one-click access to the most commonly used features, such as backup jobs (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft365—Backup Jobs



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

The search function (Figure 5) enables users to quickly locate data within backups based on extremely granular criteria.

Figure 5. Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365—Search

Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

The service also enables quick restore of individual Microsoft 365 items and files with recovery flexibility, as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Granular Restore Capabilities

Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

In short, Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365 offers the same flexibility as Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365, including creating backup jobs, monitoring and reporting, controlling data sovereignty, and keeping the environment

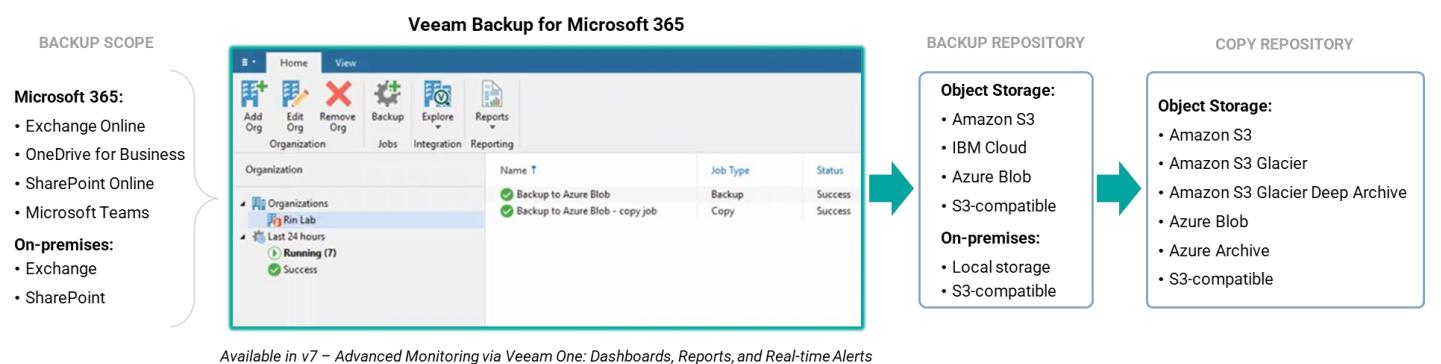
secure with encryption, multifactor authentication, and service-level immutability with the ease of an as-a-service solution.

The Software: Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365

Unlike Veeam Data Cloud, which focuses on delivering a simple experience with no backup infrastructure to manage, Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 gives organizations more control over their backup customization, including the ability to connect a variety of different types of storage.

Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 is a data protection application designed to protect Microsoft 365 data and on-premises data for Microsoft Exchange and SharePoint from accidental deletion, security threats, and retention policy gaps. As shown in Figure 7, Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 gives organizations the power to securely back up Microsoft 365 to any location, whether on-premises or in cloud object storage, including Amazon S3, Azure Blob, IBM Cloud, or S3-compatible providers on-premises. The application is quick and easy to install on any Windows machine and can be found for download on the AWS and Azure marketplaces, as well as the Veeam website.

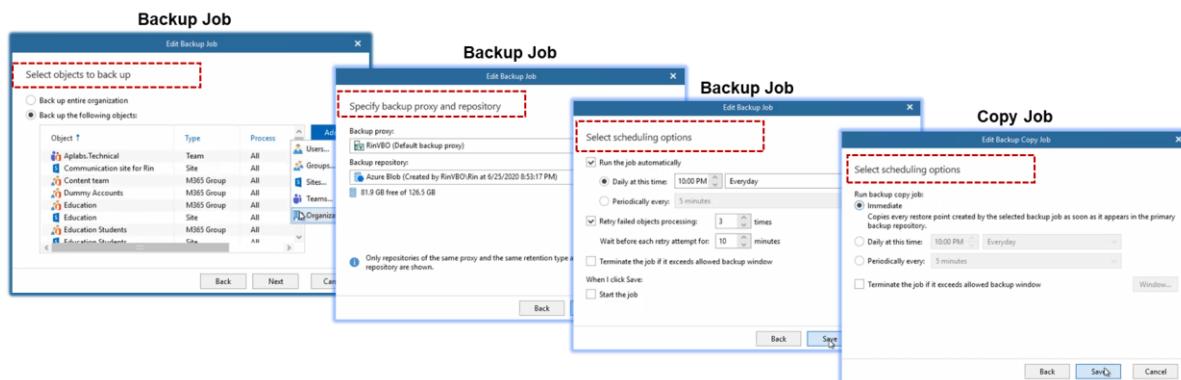
Figure 7. Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 also enables quick restore of individual Microsoft 365 items and files with recovery flexibility. As shown in Figure 8, the granular management capabilities also give administrators the data freedom they need to match Microsoft 365 protection to their business recovery requirements. The solution's ease of use makes it easy to define and implement data protection jobs.

Figure 8. Granular Management Capabilities



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

For example, key management features include a backup job configuration wizard that grants organizations the ability to easily select the Microsoft 365 elements they want to protect; the granularity to specify the backup proxy and repository where they want to store their backup data; and the flexibility through the scheduler to select the time and frequency for which they want the backup job to run. Also, it has the ability, as shown on the far-right side of Figure 8, to select when a copy job should run for a specified backup job. In this case, we told the copy job to run immediately after the backup job completes—a feature we expect many administrators to leverage.

Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 also lets organizations make backup copies immutable on any object storage to protect them from ransomware attacks and further ensure recovery integrity and confidence. Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 integrates with Veeam ONE to provide advanced monitoring and reporting. This integration enables proactive monitoring of Microsoft 365 backup and storage resources, alerts to help organizations resolve issues quickly, and service-level agreement reports to ensure recovery point objectives can be met and organizations can satisfy compliance requirements.

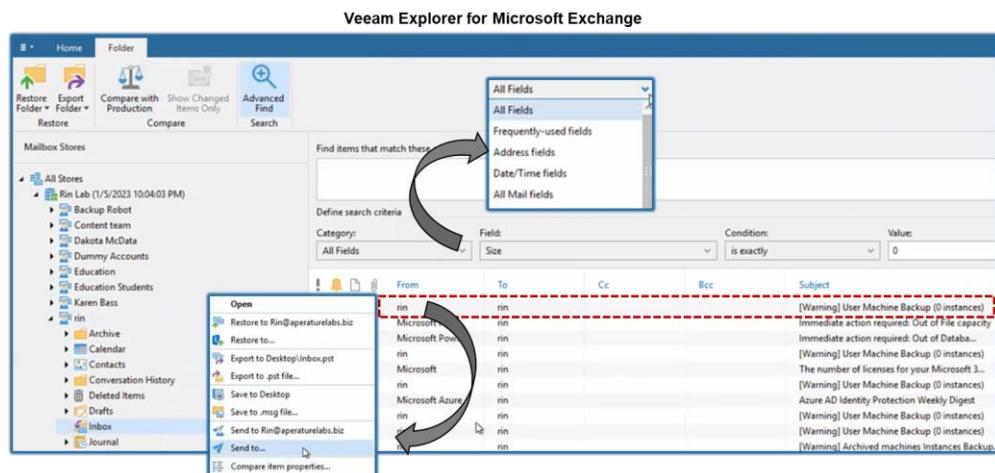
Enterprise Strategy Group Validated

In the previous solution section of this report, Enterprise Strategy Group reviewed the extensive capabilities of Veeam Backup *for Microsoft 365* data management capabilities. In the following section, we will explore the flexibility or “data freedom” attributes a data protection administrator needs in order to deliver efficient and successful recovery.

Agile Data Recovery for Microsoft 365

Enterprise Strategy Group started its evaluation of the Veeam solution by exploring its granular recovery feature for Microsoft Exchange. Exchange is an industry-leading email and calendaring server developed by Microsoft that can be deployed on premises or delivered as a service through Microsoft 365. As shown in Figure 9, we used Veeam Explorer for Microsoft Exchange to review the capabilities of the solution. It should be noted that each of the Veeam Explorer modules covered in this paper include advanced search functions and the ability to compare a recover point with the current production environment. These features are critical for quick recovery, especially at scale. As shown in Figure 9, we navigated to a user inbox, selected an email message to restore, and chose the “Send to” option from the comprehensive recovery-options list. It should also be highlighted that, in addition to the UI shown in Figure 9, there is a browser-based explorer specifically designed for restore that can be leveraged for tasks such as self-service recoveries.

Figure 9. Veeam Explorer for Microsoft Exchange



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

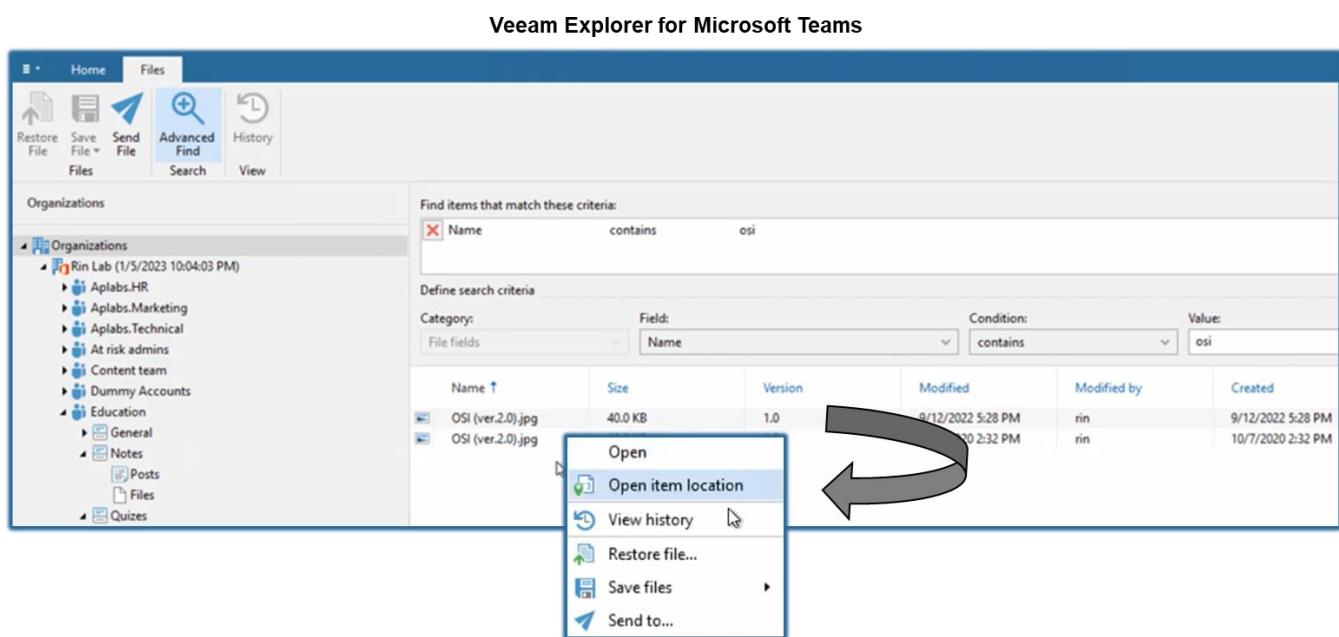
Other key features and capabilities of Veeam Explorer for Microsoft Exchange include the following:

- Restore an Exchange item to Exchange Online mailbox or items.
- Restore an Exchange item to Exchange on-premises mailbox or items.
- Compare an entire folder or mailbox and restore the missing or changed items.
- Self-service restores for Exchange items.
- Service provider restore of an Exchange item for a tenant.
- Email Exchange item as an attachment.

Recovering Teams with Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365

Microsoft Teams is a real-time collaboration and communication tool that makes it easy to stay in contact within and outside an organization. This means that business collaboration data is exchanged and must be protected to meet business, compliance, and data governance mandates. As shown in Figure 10, we searched for files with *OSI* in the name and found two versions. We selected one file and were then able to open the item location, view its history, restore the file, save the file, or send the file as an attachment.

Figure 10. Highlights of Veeam Explorer for Microsoft Teams



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365 helps make Microsoft Teams recovery intuitive and simple with the integrated Veeam Explorer views, as shown in Figure 10. It also adds these additional functionalities to provide a robust solution that protects any organization's critical data residing in Microsoft Teams on Microsoft 365:

- Restore a team with its membership and settings.
- Restore missing or changed team members.
- Self-service restore of an entire team.
- Export and restore selected posts as HTML.
- Export or restore posts within the specified time period.

- Self-service export of team posts to an HTML file.
- Restore a file, tab, or channel to its original location.
- Save or send posts as an MSG file.
- Self-service restore of a channel, tab, or specific team.

Why This Matters

Protecting the critical messaging data residing in Microsoft Exchange and Teams is vital to organizations of all sizes. The data within these applications has its own retention policy but is not fully protected against accidental deletion or security threats that can lead to data loss. Exchange and Teams retention policies can also fall short in the ability to enable long-term retention for compliance or regulatory reasons. For a complete solution with full accountability, organizations are turning to third-party vendors, such as Veeam, to meet their Microsoft 365 data protection requirements.

Recovering OneDrive for Business with Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365

Microsoft OneDrive for Business is a file-hosting service that enables users to share and synchronize their files. OneDrive also works as the back-end storage for the web version of Microsoft 365.

Veeam protects OneDrive for Business because it is a business-critical application. More and more companies are using OneDrive to share files, folders, and OneNote books internally. We performed a granular restore with Veeam Explorer for Microsoft OneDrive for Business, as shown in Figure 11. A search was run for documents in a Veeam OneDrive backup; we then had the option to select a file and take actions such as view history, restore, copy, save, or send the document as an attachment. The application can restore data in place to another OneDrive user or to another folder in OneDrive. If there is a ransomware attack and an organization's OneDrive folder becomes encrypted, Veeam can easily enable the organization to perform a full restore.

Figure 11. Highlights for Veeam Explorer for Microsoft OneDrive for Business

Veeam Explorer for Microsoft OneDrive

The screenshot shows the Veeam Explorer interface for Microsoft OneDrive. The left sidebar shows a tree view of 'Content Databases' with nodes like 'Organizations', 'Rin Lab', 'Backup Robot', 'Dakota McData', 'Karen Bass', and 'rin'. Under 'rin', there are sub-folders: 'Desktop', 'Documents', 'Excel Sheet', 'External people folder', 'Files from desktops', 'Finished videos', and 'Flowers'. The main pane displays a table of search results for 'Flowers'. The table has columns: Name, Size, Version, Checkin comment, Url, and Created By. Two files are listed: '003.JPG' (2.1 MB, Version 1.0) and '002.JPG' (1.5 MB, Version 1.0). A red dashed box highlights the '003.JPG' row. A context menu is open over this row, with 'View history' highlighted in blue. Other options in the menu include 'Restore document...', 'Copy document...', 'Save document...', 'Send document...', and 'View properties'. A large gray arrow points from the 'View history' option in the menu back towards the '003.JPG' row in the table.

Name	Size	Version	Checkin comment	Url	Created By
003.JPG	2.1 MB	1.0		personal/rin_aperturelabs_biz/Documents/Flowers/003.JPG	rin
002.JPG	1.5 MB	1.0		personal/rin_aperturelabs_biz/Documents/Flowers/002.JPG	rin

Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Veeam Explorer for OneDrive for Business includes these additional key features and capabilities:

- Restore folder or files to OneDrive for Business.
- Restore any file to a prior version.
- Restore with extended attributes and custom access controls.
- Restore without extended attributes and custom controls.
- Restore and overwrite users, folders, or files.
- Restore but keep original users, folders, and files.
- Self-service restore for OneDrive for Business files.
- Save multiple files and folders as a ZIP file.
- Restore OneDrive file, folder, or user for a tenant.

Why This Matters

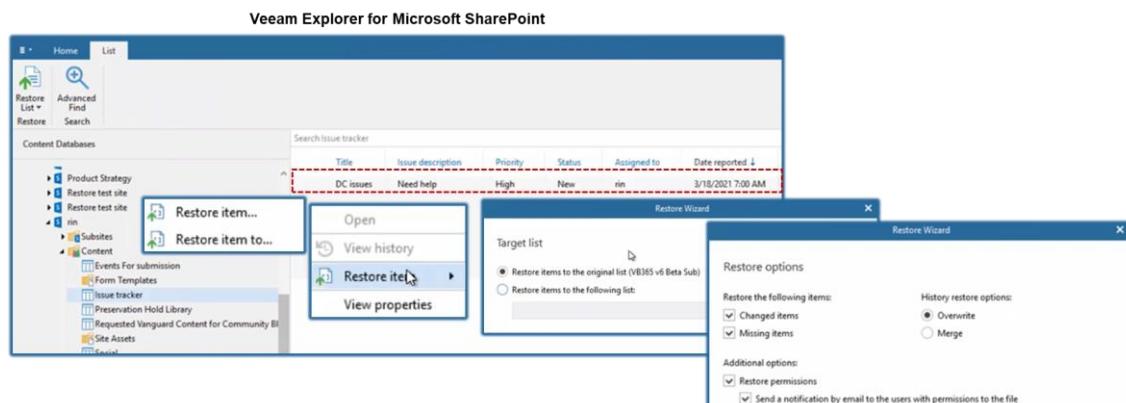
Microsoft OneDrive for Business has become pervasive in organizations since users often find it convenient for synchronizing their files between devices. This use case makes it essential for organizations to add protecting OneDrive data to the guidelines of their corporate data protection policies and procedures. Veeam offers a comprehensive protection option across all of Microsoft 365.

Recovering SharePoint with Veeam Backup for Microsoft 365

Microsoft SharePoint is a web-based collaborative platform that integrates with Microsoft 365 and acts as a document management, collaboration, and storage system for many organizations, making it a vital business and collaboration data repository that needs protection and recovery capabilities.

Veeam provides data protection with granular restore capabilities to SharePoint, as shown in Figure 12. We ran a search in a SharePoint backup to find individual items needed for recovery. These items can include documents, calendars, libraries, and lists. We chose a list to restore and were able to restore it to its original version. This same process could be used for other types of items, including the option to restore an entire SharePoint site if needed. Veeam can also help SharePoint back up data being migrated from an on-premises instance or running in a hybrid environment.

Figure 12. Veeam Explorer for SharePoint



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Some of the core features of Veeam Explorer for Microsoft SharePoint include the following:

- Restore online sites, libraries, and documents to SharePoint Online.
- Restore an object to a prior version.
- Email SharePoint objects as an attachment.
- Restore on-premises sites and more to SharePoint on premises.
- Restore SharePoint items to another location.
- Save SharePoint objects as a file.
- Save multiple SharePoint objects as a ZIP file.
- Self-service restores for SharePoint objects.
- Restore of a SharePoint object for a tenant.

Why This Matters

SharePoint has become widely used within organizations and their ecosystems of partners to facilitate collaboration on documents and provide centralized repositories of documents with strong access controls. As such, protection and restoration features are of the utmost importance. Veeam not only provides the granular capabilities needed for SharePoint backup and restore, but it also enables an organization to have one solution, driven by corporate governance, that covers all critical data.

Conclusion

Mission-critical data and applications have moved to the cloud in the past few years, and organizations of all sizes are now running many business-critical functions in the cloud. This is particularly true for collaboration and communication platforms such as Microsoft 365, which is a standard tool for a vast majority of organizations around the world. Wherever applications and data live, data protection and recovery mechanisms must be applied. It is, quite literally, the law. There are too many threats, whether criminal or just simply technical, that can damage data and halt critical business applications, often causing irreparable harm to the business should recovery be impossible.

The problem is that many organizations wrongly believe that because their data and applications are now delivered as a service, it will be automatically backed up and recovered. The reality is that this is just not the case. While the SaaS provider will protect its own infrastructure and data for the purposes of running its service, customer satisfaction, and compliance, the end-user organization is always responsible for its own data.

Enterprise Strategy Group research made this disconnect very clear. When we zoomed in on Microsoft 365, we identified that a vast majority of organizations reported not being able to recover 100% of their data, which is the design point for mission-critical applications. That's why a solution like Veeam's is key. It makes business sense, it makes technical sense, and it does not require anyone on your team to have a Ph.D. in backup and recovery to deploy.

Veeam is one of a very few vendors in this space that offers all three deployment, management, and delivery options for protecting and recovering Microsoft 365 data: via a backup service, backup software, and using managed services. Backup is key, but the real prize is recovery, and that's what we believe makes the Veeam solution for Microsoft 365 a solution you should consider evaluating.

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