Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. Sets Sail with Hyper-Availability from Veeam

"Veeam is the only solution that can accommodate our massive data growth. Enterprise scalability is what sets Veeam apart."

— Renata Kobylinski,
    Director of Hosting and Engineering Services,
    Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.

The Business Challenge

After more than 40 years of cruising, Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. knows how to deliver exceptional guest services. The company works tirelessly to innovate, astound and amaze in a sea of competitors.

"The cruise industry is defined by the guest experience," said Renata Kobylinski, Director of Hosting and Engineering Services at Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. "The guest experience is driven by innovation, and innovation is in the DNA of our company."

Always a pioneer, Royal Caribbean was the first to put ice skating rinks and rock climbing walls on ships, followed by water parks, surfing simulators, skydiving and bumper cars. Royal Caribbean was also first in the industry to integrate the Internet of things (IoT) into the guest experience. IoT is the centerpiece of Royal Caribbean's digital transformation program.

"The guest experience has always been our competitive advantage, and IoT enhances it," Kobylinski said. "The boarding process is a great example. No one wants to start a vacation waiting in line, so we are rolling out expedited boarding processes. Our mobile app will pair with facial-recognition technology to verify guests' identities as they board, which will enable them to transition into vacation mode faster. Then the fun begins."

Guests will be able to head straight to the pool, order a beverage on the app, and relax. A crewmember will deliver drinks wherever they are on the ship. Guests will also be able to make dinner reservations, sign up for shore excursions and schedule a day of indulgence in one of the ship's spas—without leaving their deck chairs. When they do leave their deck chairs, virtual reality will come to life, including a bungee trampoline. Guests will be able to bounce over moon craters and compete in intergalactic games.

Industry

Recreation

Company

Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. is a global cruise vacation company that sails 59 of the world's most innovative ships to 540 destinations on all seven continents. For 15 consecutive years, Royal Caribbean has been voted "Best Cruise Line Overall" in the Travel Weekly Readers Choice Awards. Founded in 1969, the company is based in Miramar, Florida, and employs more than 66,000 people.

"With every bold endeavor comes a challenge," Kobylinski said. "For us it was ensuring the data driving digital experiences is hyper-available. If data isn't available every minute of every cruise, we risk disappointing our guests and losing them to competitors."

Cruising has become a favorite among vacationers, making the industry extremely competitive. According to the Cruise Lines International Association, an expected 27.2 million passengers will sail in 2018, up 10 percent from 24.7 million passengers in 2016. Cruises generated $36 billion in revenue in 2017, and that number is expected to rise to $57 billion by 2027.

Kobylinski said the sheer quantity of data intensified the hyper-availability challenge. With 59 ships and two more coming online each year through 2022, Royal Caribbean's 3 PB of data on 8,000 virtual machines will likely double to 6 PB.

The Veeam Solution

Veeam® helps Royal Caribbean provide exceptional guest experiences to nearly 6 million passengers each year by delivering hyper-availability of the company's data.

"Veeam is the only solution that can accommodate our massive data growth," Kobylinski said. "Enterprise scalability is what sets Veeam apart."

Veeam automates the provisioning and management of the colossal, constant flow of data running across Royal Caribbean's IT infrastructure so the company can respond instantly to the needs of the business. This strategy is called intelligent data management, and Royal Caribbean is mastering it with Veeam.

No one understands intelligent data management better than Brian Harris, Manager of Engineering and Operations for Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. His job is making sure the IT infrastructure supports current and future digital experiences. This includes virtual reality dining, which will transport guests to new landscapes based on the cuisine they're eating, and a futuristic stateroom, which will have screens in the ceiling, floor and walls that display images of the ocean below, the sky above and the scenery outside.

"None of this is possible without hyper-availability from Veeam," Harris said. "We have peace of mind that our data is available all the time—across 59 ships and counting."

Every ship has a data center, and every data center has Veeam. Al Lowe, Senior Engineer at Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. deployed Veeam in 2012. He said Veeam has saved the day several times.

"One morning I got a call at 6 a.m. because the IT system supporting debarkation failed on one of our ships," Lowe said. "Guests were scheduled to disembark at 7 a.m. for shore excursions, so we had to restore the system quickly. Veeam restored it in minutes, and guests left as scheduled. Not one person was inconvenienced."

On another occasion, the electronic gaming system failed in a ship's casino.

Challenge

The Internet of Things is transforming the cruise industry. Virtual reality and artificial intelligence deliver remarkable digital experiences for guests, turning Royal Caribbean's ships into high-tech playgrounds for all ages. The challenge is protecting and managing the enormous amount of data required for these experiences. The sheer volume of data (3 PB that will likely double by 2022) intensifies the challenge.

Solution

Veeam Backup & Replication

Results

- Supports extraordinary digital experiences for nearly 6 million guests annually

- Delivers intelligent data management to respond to the needs of the business

- Provides enterprise scalability and hyper-availability to accommodate massive data growth

"Veeam restored that system quickly too," Lowe said. "If it had been offline for just one day, Royal Caribbean could have lost up to $250,000 in gaming revenue."

Lowe said that's not the only thing Veeam has saved.

"We save hundreds of hours in training each year because Veeam is so intuitive and easy to use — IT personnel can switch from ship to ship without missing a beat. We use this extra time to strategize ways we can make the guest experience even better."

The Results

- **Supports extraordinary digital experiences for nearly 6 million guests annually**
  Veeam delivers hyper-availability of Royal Caribbean's data so the company can maintain its competitive advantage of providing extraordinary guest experiences.

- **Delivers intelligent data management to respond to the needs of the business**
  Royal Caribbean is mastering intelligent data management of a colossal, constant flow of 3 PB on 59 ships. By 2022, the company will have 6 PB on 74 ships.

- **Provides enterprise scalability and hyper-availability to accommodate massive data growth**
  Veeam is the only solution that can accommodate Royal Caribbean's data growth. Enterprise scalability translates into smooth sailing.

About Veeam Software

Veeam is the global leader in Intelligent Data Management for the Hyper-Available Enterprise. Veeam Hyper-Availability Platform is the most complete solution to help customers on the journey to automating data management and ensuring the Hyper-Availability of data.

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