

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Rocks 24.7.365 Availability with Veeam; Saves \$150,000 Per Year



“Veeam helps us deliver on our mission to create authentic experiences that rock. Even during our busiest months, when we host several conventions and hundreds of thousands of people, Veeam gives us complete confidence that our IT systems are able to support guest experiences 24.7.365.”

— Kevin Ragsdale
 Director of IT
 Hard Rock Hotel & Casino

The Business Challenge

It’s rare for a brand to gain critical mass globally and still maintain its authentic spirit, but Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Las Vegas has succeeded in delivering experiences of a lifetime.

The Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Las Vegas is famous for its music scene (Rolling Stones, Bon Jovi, Paul McCartney, Incubus and Nine Inch Nails have all performed there), state-of-the-art gaming tables, the hottest slots, lavish accommodations, gourmet restaurants and floor-to-ceiling rock ‘n’ roll memorabilia.

Las Vegas is a popular place. More than 42 million people visited the city in 2015 and spent \$6.3 billion in gaming according to the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, many of them staying at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino.

What drives success at the world-renowned resort? It begins with Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Las Vegas’ mission: Create authentic experiences that rock.

“Our number one priority is delivering exceptional guest experiences, and we cannot begin to contemplate having critical services offline, such as our bars or the casino floor,” said Kevin Ragsdale, Director of IT for the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Las Vegas. “Whether guests are listening to live music, playing slots, eating in our restaurants, attending conventions, relaxing by the pool or shopping in our boutiques, we make sure their experiences are stellar.”

To deliver that level of service, the IT systems supporting guest experiences must be available 24.7.365, such as keycard access to hotel rooms, automated minibars, casino e-cards and hundreds of point of sale (POS) systems throughout the resort.

“Let me paint you a simple picture of how critical IT is to our operations,” Ragsdale said. “We are moving to a virtualized mini-bar system, so when guests consume products from their mini-bars, the IT system automatically takes an inventory and bills our guests for what they consume. If the system goes down, we’re not able to bill customers, and that can cost us a huge amount of money, so availability in that respect is a big issue for us.”

Industry

Entertainment

Company



The Hard Rock Hotel & Casino is Las Vegas’ rock ‘n’ roll playground. Situated on 26 acres and employing 2,200 people, the resort combines an energetic entertainment and gaming experience with the services and amenities of a boutique luxury hotel.

When the IT systems supporting guest experiences were threatened by agonizingly slow recovery, the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino wasted no time fixing the problem. With a busy convention season approaching (January, February and March), just one hour of downtime could destroy guest experiences, diminish their loyalty, and damage Hard Rock Hotel & Casino's reputation.

The Veeam Solution

Veeam® Availability Suite™ helps the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Las Vegas provide exceptional guest experiences, maintain guest loyalty, preserve brand value and protect revenue.

"Veeam helps us deliver on our mission to create authentic experiences that rock," Ragsdale said. "Even during our busiest months, when we host several conventions and hundreds of thousands of people, Veeam gives us complete confidence that our IT systems are able to support guest experiences 24.7.365."

No matter how busy the resort gets and regardless of how large the resort's virtual infrastructure grows, Veeam is fully capable of scaling efficiently and effectively.

"Enterprise scalability is what we like best about Veeam," Ragsdale said. "Legacy backup had limited scalability. With our old solution, we could only back up our IT systems once a day, and recovery could take hours, which was a big headache. How do you tell casino guests to wait a few hours while you restore Microsoft SQL Server? How do you explain to the casino floor teams that we have to shut down the tables? We simply cannot. Veeam meets our enterprise needs by providing enterprise scalability. We back up more often and restore systems in minutes so guests can move on to their next stellar experience."

Guest experience is highly correlated with loyalty and brand value, and loyalty in the hospitality sector can't be underestimated. Research by the Harvard Business Review demonstrates that customers who've had the best experiences spend 140 percent more compared to those who've had poor experiences. While guests are rocking out and playing hard, Veeam is saving the resort \$150,000 each year.

"Legacy backup was too expensive," Ragsdale said. "We paid \$100,000 in annual licensing renewal plus \$50,000 in specialized hardware. "Saving \$150,000 every year gives us the opportunity to consider additional technology initiatives that will help ensure optimal guest experiences."

Ragsdale said his next project is mastering Veeam Availability Orchestrator.

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Las Vegas has disaster recovery (DR) plans in place, but for more enterprises, testing, executing and documenting these plans is complex and cumbersome. This can lead to untested and outdated DR plans, putting compliance — and Availability — at risk.

"We'll use the Veeam Availability Orchestrator to validate and substantiate our DR plan," Ragsdale said. "We'll also use it to expedite gaming audits."

Each year, the resort must demonstrate reliable data storage, retention and recovery to meet regulatory requirements in the gaming industry. Ragsdale said Veeam will streamline and shorten the auditing process by several hours.

"Veeam makes our job easier," Ragsdale said. "Veeam rocks."

Challenge

Providing exceptional guest experiences is the number one priority at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. When the IT systems supporting guest experiences were threatened by agonizingly slow recovery, the resort wasted no time replacing its legacy backup solution. With the busy season approaching (back-to-back conventions and hundreds of thousands of guests), just one hour of downtime could destroy guest experiences, diminish their loyalty, damage Hard Rock Hotel's reputation and cost millions of dollars.

Solution

Veeam Availability Suite

Veeam delivers 24.7.365 Availability of the IT systems supporting guest experiences, including casino operations and the point of sale (POS) infrastructure, enabling Hard Rock Hotel & Casino to set the stage for rock star treatment. Veeam backs up hundreds of VMware vSphere virtual machines.

The Results

- **Stellar guest experiences to sustain loyalty**

Visitors to Las Vegas can choose from more than 300 hotels and resorts, so memorable guest experiences involve far more than good gaming, a nice meal and a decent night's sleep. The Hard Rock Hotel & Casino sets the stage for rock star treatment, providing guests with everything they want in one hot spot.

- **Enterprise scalability to protect the brand's reputation**

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino boasts one of the world's most recognized brands. Veeam's enterprise scalability protects the resort's virtual infrastructure regardless of how large it grows, enabling Hard Rock Hotel & Casino to deliver unending, exceptional guest experiences.

- **Backup costs that decrease by \$150,000 each year**

Veeam is the affordable Availability solution. Powerful, high-performance backup and recovery not only deliver 24.7.365 Availability of IT systems, but also save money so Hard Rock Hotel & Casino can consider additional technology that will help ensure great guest experiences.

Source: "The Value of Customer Experience, Quantified," Peter Kriss, August 1, 2014

Results

- Stellar guest experiences to sustain loyalty
- Enterprise scalability to protect the brand's reputation
- Backup costs that decrease by \$150,000 each year

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
veeam.com/availabilitysuite

Global Alliance Partner:



DELL EMC

Hewlett Packard
Enterprise

Gold
Microsoft
Partner

NetApp®
ALLIANCE PARTNER

