



McConnell Dowell leverages Druva to protect Microsoft 365 data and ensure business continuity

2.58x

Global deduplication storage savings

100%

Of Microsoft 365 data is secure 24/7 and recoverable in minutes

About McConnell Dowell

For 60 years, customers have been coming to McConnell Dowell with complex construction projects that require innovative solutions. This is why it is known as “the Creative Construction company.” With over 3,500 people, and professional engineering and construction teams in Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific Islands, and Southeast Asia, its customers benefit from combined local knowledge and international experience.

The challenge

McConnell Dowell is known for tackling big construction challenges across the Asia Pacific (APAC) region. Their IT team has an equally big task – keeping its mobile, dispersed workforce connected. That’s why it relies on Microsoft 365 productivity tools, particularly SharePoint and Teams.

Leveraging software-as-a-service (SaaS) tools is a part of the company’s multi-cloud strategy. Several years ago, McConnell Dowell started its cloud journey by moving the bulk of its on-premises infrastructure stack to a private cloud. While it still has on-premises file servers backed up by Veeam, the team virtualized its IT environment with VMware.

McConnell Dowell’s staff embraced Microsoft 365, and the number of critical documents and data stored in OneDrive grew exponentially. But, the IT team was concerned about



Challenges

- Reliance on Microsoft’s recycle bin to recover Microsoft 365 data, including SharePoint, OneDrive, and Teams, made the company vulnerable to data loss and ransomware
- Veeam didn’t have a cloud-native solution for Microsoft 365, and the small IT team didn’t want to buy, provision, and manage hardware
- Reliance on Microsoft file sync left no way to recover data older than 90 days

Solution

- Multiple restore options to recover data at a granular level (any level, point in time, or an entire site)
- Isolated, long-term backups on the AWS platform, keeping backups fully separate from the primary Microsoft Azure environment
- Cloud-native backup and recovery means no hardware and minimal administration, and the flexibility to grow and scale infrastructure on demand

Results

- 100% of Microsoft 365 data is secure 24/7 and recoverable in minutes
- Data sovereignty and long-term retention of business-critical Microsoft 365 data helps the team comply with regulations like GDPR and PDPA
- Rapid and easy restoration of files after an accidental deletion or when required for litigation

protecting that data from corruption and accidental deletion. It became evident that Microsoft's native data storage tools, while providing high uptime, weren't enough to ensure business continuity. Plus, the litigious nature of construction meant the firm needed the ability to retain and access data for decades. Microsoft's native protection didn't allow the company to grab snapshots of data at a point in time.

So, the team started searching for a more robust, cloud-native backup solution that didn't rely on Microsoft to mitigate the risk of both production and disaster recovery (DR)/continuity being hosted in the same platform.

The solution

While Veeam was initially considered, it didn't have the slick integration with Microsoft 365 and granularity of restore capabilities that the team needed. The team also wanted a solution hosted on Amazon Web Services (AWS) to ensure that the backups are isolated from the primary workloads in Microsoft Azure.

That's when they found Druva, which was recommended by AWS. The team conducted a month-long proof of concept (POC) to see how Druva performed, according to Heinrich Kukuk, head of IT at McConnell Dowell. "We threw whatever we could at Druva to see how long it took to upload and ingest workloads," Heinrich said. "It didn't even break a sweat."

Not only was the Druva solution powerful, it was easy to use, Heinrich said. "We needed something simple because we didn't want to introduce complicated software at the height of the pandemic when the team was already overstretched."

Once he saw how quickly the team picked it up, he knew Druva was the right choice. Plus, Druva can scale to meet business needs. "The construction industry is really unpredictable," Heinrich said. "Druva gives us the flexibility to back up 10 new projects one month, and 100 the next."

A final factor was cultural fit. "Druva's customer support and close relationship with AWS made the process easy," Heinrich said. "It's really important for us to work with companies who have similar cultures and values, and with Druva that was certainly the case."

The results

Now, McConnell Dowell has the AWS-hosted, cloud-native data protection it needs to ensure business continuity. "Druva's great because of the granularity of restores it facilitates," Heinrich said. "We wanted to restore a document within a SharePoint site, rather than an entire site, and Druva was one of the only solutions that let us do this."

This came in handy when over 100 files were accidentally deleted and it wasn't detected for several weeks. "We only had to enter the Druva console, click a few buttons, and within minutes we had restored all files," Heinrich said.

The company also has the long-term data retention capabilities it needs. "We often need to retain data for the life of the asset, and the assets we build have very long lifespans," Heinrich said. As data ages, Druva's policies move rarely accessed data to Amazon S3 Glacier Deep Archive for secure long-term retention (LTR). "Finally, backups of business-critical Microsoft 365 data don't keep me up at night."

The company is also compliant with data protection laws in the countries where they operate, including Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand. Heinrich said compliance with regulations like General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA) is much easier, thanks to the data sovereignty made possible by AWS availability zones and Druva.



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