

# VEEAM PARTNER VIRTUALDCS OFFERS LOW COST, HIGHLY INNOVATIVE DATA PROTECTION WITH ZADARA

Bullet-proof cloud-based data protection with Veeam and Zadara provide virtualDCS customers with immutable object storage on a pay-per-use model.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Seamless integration with Veeam backup technologies
- Storage-as-a-service enables a shift to 100%-OpEx model
- VCSPs can offer object storage without a large capital investment
- 100% SLA proactively maintained and supported by Zadara.
- Up to 10x lower costs than AWS, Azure, and IBM object backup

Many factors accelerated business adoption of cloud-based data protection in 2020. Rapid data growth, the increasing threat of ransomware attacks, and new remote working practices in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have led organizations of all sizes to prioritize IT flexibility and choose managed cloud solutions.

Veeam backup is at the core of many such solutions, including those from virtualDCS, an award-winning UK-based provider of backup, disaster recovery (DR) and infrastructure as a service. Veeam provides industry-leading backup technologies that are used by more than 350,000 businesses worldwide. A long-standing Veeam Cloud & Service Provider (VCSP) partner, virtualDCS has leveraged Veeam backup technologies since it first opened for business in 2008. virtualDCS has utilized Zadara and Veeam technology to create CloudCover 365, a unique self-service portal that extends the Veeam platform with innovative features such as browser-based data management and end-user self-service with full granular restores, for use cases such as Office 365 backup.

*"Zadara storage-as-a-service gives us the ability to provide a great service without a large capital outlay."*

**Richard May**  
Managing Director, virtualDCS

To address customers' post-2020 needs, virtualDCS needed to evolve its as-a-service data protection portfolio by offering object storage that was competitive with major cloud providers. Object storage is ideal for low-cost backup, disaster recovery, and data archiving.

"We found two providers that could do the job," recalls Richard May, Managing Director at virtualDCS. "But we liked Zadara's commercial model, and as we got more involved with them, we found the way they operate was far superior."

## THE CHALLENGE

While virtualDCS could have offered its customers object storage via a major cloud platform, such as AWS or Microsoft Azure, the company prefers to operate its own equipment in its own data center; this enables virtualDCS to be in control of its infrastructure, to optimize performance, and to create innovative, end-to-end solutions that are price competitive. However, buying object storage equipment at the scale required to service its growing customer base was potentially cost-prohibitive for the company.

"Our CloudCover 365 backup platform performs best with object storage," explains Richard. "But we didn't want to go to Amazon or Azure because we would be bringing the data into our data center and then pushing it back out to a third party. We wanted to give our customers an end-to-end solution that we manage all the way through."

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**Richard May**

virtualDCS had also identified growing customer demand for immutable storage and air-gap architecture, which are proven approaches to managing risk from ransomware attacks and where an organization needs to prove that data has not been changed. Immutable storage devices can only be written to once; if a ransomware attack compromises a system, the immutable backup has protection. Air-gap architectures keep a backup on another network, where an attacker cannot physically reach it.

"We tell our customers: don't forget the security and protection that was such a huge focus before your hand was forced on cloud," says Richard. "On ransomware, we're helping them understand how immutability, air gaps, and training can help."

## THE SOLUTION

After discussing their requirements in detail with Zadara engineers, virtualDCS implemented a Zadara storage-as-a-service solution at its data center premises in Leeds, UK. The as-a-service element enabled virtualDCS to "pay as you go" for just the capacity its customers needed, and then add more capacity as they grew.

As Richard explains: "Rather than having to invest hundreds of thousands of pounds buying storage when we don't need it all yet, Zadara gave us the option to buy the capacity we needed and then pay for more capacity as we grow. There isn't really anybody else doing it like that at the moment."

The deep integration between Zadara and Veeam means that everything works seamlessly.

"The Zadara solution is very useful for us as a VCSP, because it adds new capabilities to our Veeam-based services," says Richard. "It backs our own CloudCover 365 service, it's available for Veeam direct off-site repositories, and it's also available for immutable backups of our Veeam Cloud Connect solution."

The Zadara hardware is deployed on premises and connected directly to virtualDCS's other hardware, but the solution is delivered as a service with 24/7 support and maintenance provided by Zadara. virtualDCS is able to deliver end-to-end solutions, controlling the customer data it manages without relying on external providers. "With our solution we are the sole processor, we have no sub-processors," says Richard.

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**Richard May**

*"Zadara is available for immutable backups of our Veeam Cloud Connect solution"*

**Richard May**

## THE BENEFITS

### A COMPETITIVE EDGE ON COST

The Zadara solution has enabled virtualDCS to operate its backup services at a significantly lower cost than if it had leveraged a major public cloud platform. The company has been able to pass those savings on to its customers.

virtualDCS ran tests that compared the cost of a large “seeding” backup job on its Zadara and Veeam-powered CloudCover solution, versus three leading platforms.<sup>1</sup> The cost with virtualDCS was more than 10 times lower than the nearest competitor.

“Our competitors may offer a lower price per gig, but they also charge you every time you read and write to the storage,” Richard explains. “On a major public cloud platform, restoring a large backup could result in a bill of thousands of pounds. Our customers get a very predictable monthly bill, and they know where it’s coming from.”

*“Our customers have a very predictable monthly bill”*

**Richard May**

### ENABLING GROWTH

While VCSPs often need to make a large capital investment to offer object storage to their customers, the pay-as-you-go model provided by Zadara has enabled virtualDCS to reduce capital expenditure and align storage costs with business outcomes.

“We haven’t had to go and spend £150,000 to £200,000 and then try to recoup it,” Richard explains. “We’re paying for what we use and we’re billing our customers as they use it. We haven’t got that headache – some VCSPs are looking at how they’re going to get their investment back, while we’re focused on delivering great services for our customers.”

*“We’re paying for what we use and billing our customers as they use it”*

**Richard May**

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<sup>1</sup> Veeam, virtualDCS & Zadara. 2020. Storage Overview for Veeam 365.

## SIMPLIFIED OPERATIONS AND SERVICES

Because it is delivered as a managed service, with hardware deployed on premises, the Zadara solution has made life simpler for both the virtualDCS team and its customers.

"It's simple, because Zadara is responsible for making sure the storage is running," says Richard. "We have the peace of mind that if things go wrong, Zadara will sort it out, while the storage is still in our data center and in our control."

"We're also selling Zadara storage raw. For the customer, they use our self-service portal to say, 'I want to put data on the object store', and the software does it all for them."

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**Richard May**

## DELIVERING VEEAM BACKUP BEST PRACTICE

Thanks to Zadara immutable object storage and the partnership between Zadara and Veeam, the Zadara solution is helping virtualDCS customers to achieve the Veeam 3-2-1-1 backup strategy for data protection. "3-2-1-1" means having three copies of your data on two different media, with one online off-site copy and one offline "air-gapped" off-site copy.

"Immutability is a bit like putting something on to a record," says Richard. "Once you've put it on there, you can't change it. If a customer gets hit with a ransomware attack, the ransomware wouldn't be able to change the things you said were unchangeable. The air gap is another important part of our service, which keeps an unreachable backup on another network."

*"If a customer gets hit with a ransomware attack, the ransomware wouldn't be able to change data"*

**Richard May**

## THE FUTURE

With a storage solution that has primed the company for growth, virtualDCS is now focused on expanding and evolving its data protection portfolio. The company will continue to collaborate with Zadara in exploring new ideas and strengthening its offering as a VCPS.

"Working with Zadara is a true partnership," says Nicola Towler, Marketing Manager at virtualDCS. "From technical support to sales and marketing, there's always somebody to discuss ideas with."

"I've been quite impressed with Zadara's partnership approach," adds Richard. "They get involved in marketing, we have checks with their technical team, and they actually listen and act on our suggestions. It's quite refreshing compared to other hardware vendors."

*"Working with Zadara  
is a true partnership"*

**Nicola Towler**  
Marketing Manager,  
virtualDCS

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*Thank you to Richard May, Managing Director and Nicola Towler,  
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Learn more about virtualDCS at [www.virtualdcs.co.uk](http://www.virtualdcs.co.uk).

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