Nominee: The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine/ Veeam Software

Supporting Vendor: Veeam Software

Nomination title: The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine Achieves 60% Cost Savings With Veeam Backup & Replication

At the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) the majority of critical operations such as the library management system run on virtual machines (VMs). Physical machines are equally important because they also run key systems such as email.

At one time, the IT team performed file-level backup in the virtual and physical environments and storage-level replication of VMs between its two data centres. During a discussion about the school's storage setup with System Professional Ltd, a consulting firm that assists companies with their virtualisation strategies, the team mentioned its concern about rising storage area network (SAN) costs.

"It was becoming too expensive to maintain identical storage systems in both data centres," said Dan Johnson, Systems Manager for LSHTM. *"Purchasing hardware, and to a lesser extent agents, was becoming cost-prohibitive, so we had to find a better solution for replication."*

Johnson and his colleagues didn't expect to find a better solution for VM backup as well.

Johnathan Wates, Account Director at System Professional, and his colleagues conducted a thorough examination of the school's storage environment.

"We took a detailed look at the current state to understand the team's concerns," Wates said. *"It didn't take long to determine that Veeam would solve all the issues in one fell swoop. Sometimes we have to create a solution by using multiple products, but Veeam was the answer to each issue in this case."*

Veeam® Backup & Replication™ provides fast, flexible and reliable recovery of virtualised applications and data for VMware vSphere and Microsoft Hyper-V. The school's IT team found that image-based replication with Veeam was fast, efficient and cost-effective.

"Veeam is easy and straightforward to use, and it's quick because it takes advantage of changed block tracking," Johnson explained. *"We found that it's far less expensive to buy an additional ESX server to run Veeam than maintaining two identical production-spec SANs. Veeam doesn't require us to purchase and maintain agents either, which saves money and time. With Veeam, we save 60% of what we would have spent if we continued replicating VMs using the mirrored system."*

In addition to saving money and time, Veeam replication provides peace of mind for the IT team because it offers near-continuous data protection (near-CDP) through frequent VM snapshots. If a production VM goes down, the IT team can immediately fail over to a replica VM.

Johnson said that once he and his colleagues realised the simplicity, reliability and dependability of Veeam replication, they decided to test its backup capability. Veeam performs image-level backup

rather than file-level backup like ARCserve (the previous tool); therefore, the IT team can backup and recover the whole VM, not just part of it.

"Being able to restore the whole VM is a big benefit for us because it saves time," Johnson said. *"File-level recovery with Veeam is fast and efficient, too. It takes minutes."*

The IT team discovered one more thing that is fast and efficient: Veeam software upgrades. *"We've upgraded Veeam twice, and each time it's been really easy and really quick,"* Johnson said. *"Overall, Veeam is simpler to implement and manage for VM backup and recovery. We'll continue to use ARCserve to backup our physical machines and to write Veeam backups to tape. For us, Veeam is a complement to ARCserve. They each work well in their respective areas."*

The team has recently upgraded to the new Version 7 of Veeam Backup & Replication and is already seeing the benefits of the more than 75 enhancements the new product offers: such as WAN Acceleration for faster remote backups and restoration from SAN snapshots. The upgrade itself was completed with no issues, allowing LSHTM to concentrate on how best to use the new technology.

Thanks to the extensive preparation and research conducted by LSHTM and System Professional, the transition to Veeam was near-seamless. Veeam Backup & Replication proved simple and intuitive for LSHTM's team to use, while training on the software was provided in advance of the transition: meaning that users could quickly begin using the tool to the best of its capabilities.

- Veeam Backup & Replication is cost-effective for LSHTM, saving 60% of what the school would have spent if it continued using storage-based replication. The IT team found it's more economical to purchase an extra ESX server to run Veeam than to maintain and refresh the hardware in two identical SANs. Veeam doesn't require the IT team to purchase and maintain agents either, saving money and time.
- Once the IT team realised the simplicity, reliability and dependability of Veeam replication, they decided to test its backup capability. Since Veeam performs image level backup rather than file-level backup like the physical backup tool, the IT team can backup and recover the whole VM, not just part of it. File-level recovery is also quick, taking minutes.
- LSHTM will use Veeam for VM backup, and they'll continue using ARCserve to backup their physical machines and to write Veeam backups to tape. Veeam and ARCserve complement each other at the London School.

LSHTM has now upgraded for Veeam Backup & Replication v7, bringing a new range of enhancements and features within its reach.

Why nominee should win:

- After the implementation of Veeam, replication has become cost-effective: saving 60% of what the school would have spent if it continued using storage-based replication.
- Backup and recovery have become more efficient: LSHTM can backup and recover the whole VM, not just part of it. File-level recovery takes minutes.
- Agentless solution: Veeam doesn't require LSHTM to purchase and maintain agents either, which saves money and time.
- DR processes complement each other: LSHTM uses Veeam for VM backup, and they'll continue using ARCserve to backup their physical machines and to write Veeam backups to tape.