

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white blazer, is shown in profile, talking on a mobile phone. She is looking towards the left of the frame. The background is a blurred office environment with blue and purple lighting. The overall tone is professional and focused.

veeam

7 Critical Reasons for Microsoft 365 Backup

The case for why organizations need to protect Microsoft 365 data

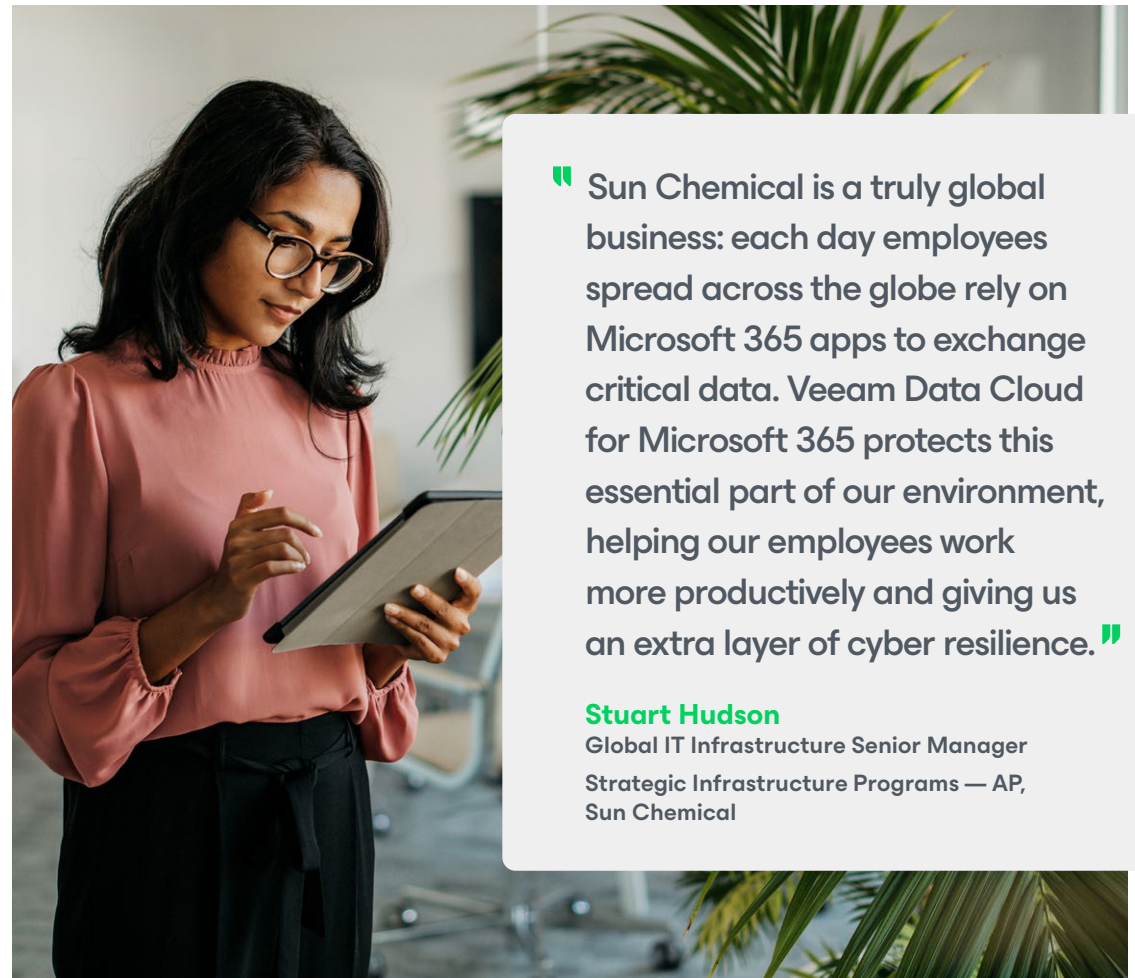
Introduction

Do you have control of your Microsoft 365 data? Do you have access to all the items you need? The knee-jerk reaction is typically, “Of course I do,” or “Microsoft takes care of it all.” But if you really think about it — are you sure?

Microsoft takes care of quite a bit. They provide a great service for their customers, managing Microsoft 365’s infrastructure and maintaining uptime for your users. But on the flip side, they are empowering YOU with the responsibility of your data. There is a common misconception that Microsoft backs up your data on your behalf by default, but a comprehensive backup of your data is not included in a standard Microsoft 365 license. Without a shift in mindset, there could be damaging repercussions when this responsibility is left unattended.

Ultimately, you need to ensure you have access to — and control over — your Exchange Online, SharePoint Online, OneDrive for Business, and Microsoft Teams data. What’s more, even if you don’t want to manage backup infrastructure, there are backup services which are quickly deployed without any on-going manual management or maintenance. Think about instant access to customizable data protection, lightning-fast recovery, and the confidence that you are always in control. Now think about what you’re risking by not having them.

This report explores the hazards of not having a Microsoft 365 backup plan in your arsenal. We’ll talk about how backup solutions for Microsoft 365 — particularly how cloud-based backup services — fill the gap of long-term retention and data protection and are truly critical for modern organizations.



“ Sun Chemical is a truly global business: each day employees spread across the globe rely on Microsoft 365 apps to exchange critical data. Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365 protects this essential part of our environment, helping our employees work more productively and giving us an extra layer of cyber resilience. ”

Stuart Hudson

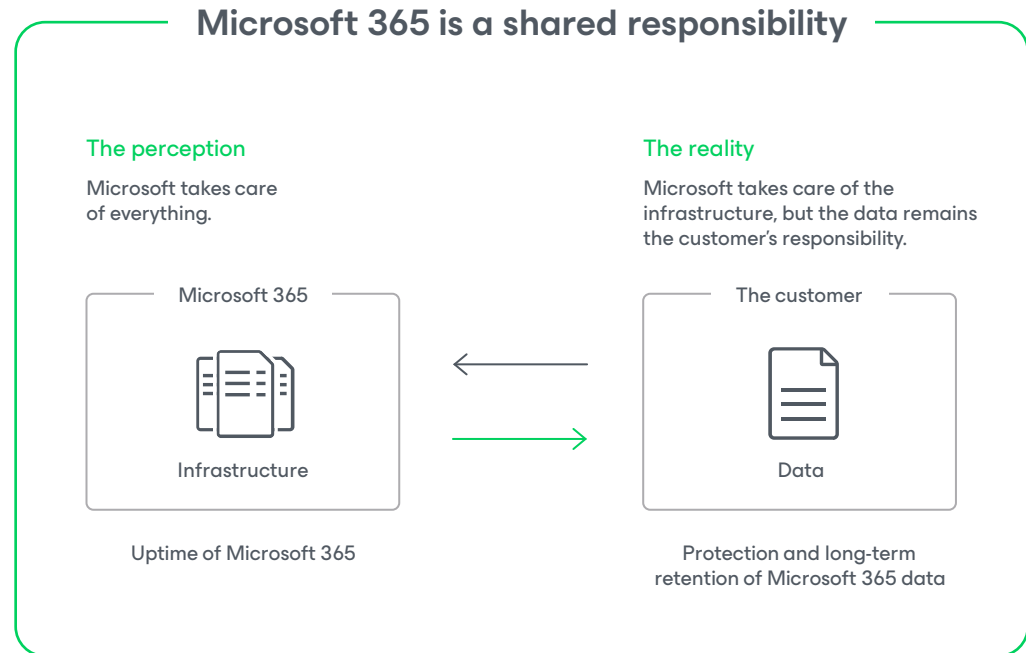
Global IT Infrastructure Senior Manager
Strategic Infrastructure Programs — AP,
Sun Chemical

The Big Microsoft 365 Misconception

The misunderstanding falls between Microsoft’s perceived responsibility and the user’s actual responsibility regarding the protection and long-term retention of their Microsoft 365 data. The resiliency and retention provided by Microsoft in a standard Microsoft 365 license and what users assume they are getting are often different. Meaning, aside from the standard precautions Microsoft 365 has in place, you may need to re-assess the level of control you have of your data and how much access you truly have to it.

Microsoft 365 offers geo-redundancy, which is often mistaken for backup. Geo-redundancy protects against site or hardware failure, such that if there is an infrastructure crash or outage, users will remain productive and often oblivious to these underlying issues. Backups, on the other hand, take place when a historical copy of data is made and then stored in another location, separate from the production environment. This ensures that a copy of your data exists regardless of what happens within Microsoft 365, and the option of recovery is always there.

Backups, more than geo-redundancy, are an organization’s last line of defense — but, equally as important as having them is ensuring you have direct access to and control over them. When data is lost, accidentally deleted, or maliciously attacked, you need to be certain you can quickly recover.



“For all cloud deployment types, you own your data and identities.”

Source: <https://learn.microsoft.com/en-us/azure/security/fundamentals/shared-responsibility>

7 Reasons Why a Microsoft 365 Backup Plan is Critical

As a robust and highly capable Software as a Service (SaaS) platform, Microsoft 365 fits the needs of many organizations perfectly. Microsoft 365 provides application availability and uptime to ensure your users never skip a beat. But a comprehensive backup solution can protect you against many other security threats, providing peace of mind and robust data protection.

You or your boss might be thinking, “The recycle bin is probably good enough.” This is where many people get it wrong. The length of time from data compromise to discovery can be around 140 days, a shockingly large gap. It’s highly likely that you won’t notice something is missing or gone until it’s too late for the recycle bin — and this is far from the most pressing issue.

Source: <https://info.microsoft.com/rs/157-GQE-382/images/EN-GB-CNTNT-eBook-Security-HolisticVision.pdf>

We spoke with hundreds of IT professionals across the globe who have migrated to Microsoft 365, and from their insights, seven vulnerabilities in data protection rise to the top:



1. Accidental Deletion



2. Retention Policy Gaps and Confusion



3. Internal Security Threats



4. External Security Threats



5. Legal and Compliance Requirements



6. Managing Hybrid Email Deployments and Migrations to Microsoft 365



7. Teams Data Structure



1. Accidental Deletion

Let's say you delete a user. Whether you meant to or not, that deletion is replicated across the network, along with the deletion of their OneDrive for Business account and mailbox. Without any alternatives, Microsoft 365's native recycle bins and version histories have limited data loss protection — turning an otherwise-simple backup job into a big problem after Microsoft 365 geo-redundantly deletes that data forever, or if the retention period has passed.

There are two types of deletions in the Microsoft 365 platform: soft delete and hard delete. An example of soft delete is emptying the "Deleted Items" folder. It is also referred to as "Permanently Deleted," though in this case, permanent is not completely permanent, as the item can still be found in the "Recoverable Items" folder. A hard delete is when an item is tagged to be purged from the mailbox database completely. Once this happens, it is unrecoverable — period. But with a backup solution as a proper failsafe, losing data to accidental deletion is impossible.





2. Retention Policy Gaps and Confusion

The fast pace of business in the digital age lends itself to continuously evolving policies, including retention policies that are difficult to keep up with, let alone manage. Just like hard and soft delete, Microsoft 365 has limited backup and retention policies that can only fend off situational data loss — and is not intended to be an all-encompassing backup solution.

Another type of recovery, a point-in-time restoration of mailbox items, is not in scope with a standard Microsoft 365 license. In the case of a catastrophic issue, a backup solution can provide the ability to roll back to a previous point-in-time prior to this issue, saving the day. Even more, with a backup solution specifically tailored for Microsoft 365, there are no retention policy gaps or restore inflexibilities. Short term backups or long-term archives, granular or point-in-time restores — everything is always at your fingertips, making data recovery fast, easy, and reliable.





3. Internal Security Threats

The idea of a security threat brings to mind hackers and viruses. However, businesses experience threats from the inside, and they are happening more often than you think. Organizations fall victim to threats posed by their very own employees, both intentionally and unintentionally. Access to files and contacts changes so quickly, it can be hard to keep an eye on those in which you've installed the most trust.

Microsoft has no way of knowing the difference between a regular user and a terminated employee attempting to delete critical company data before they depart. In addition, some users unknowingly create serious threats by downloading infected files or accidentally leaking usernames and passwords to sites they thought they could trust. Another serious example is evidence tampering. Imagine an employee strategically deleting incriminating emails or files — keeping these objects out of the reach of the legal, compliance, or HR departments. When your Microsoft 365 data is properly protected, off site and in the cloud, layers of protection are added to combat these internal threats, ensuring that your data remains secure and recoverable.



4. External Security Threats

Then, of course, there are external, malicious threats. Malware and viruses, like ransomware, have done serious damage to organizations across the globe. Not only is company reputation at risk, but the privacy and security of internal and customer data as well.

External threats often easily sneak in through emails and attachments. It isn't always enough to educate users on what to look out for, especially when the infected messages seem so compelling. Exchange Online's limited backup and recovery functions are inadequate to handle serious attacks. Regular backups, especially those managed off site and in the cloud via a backup service, guarantee a separate copy of your data is uninfected and quickly recoverable — far exceeding Exchange Online's limited backup and recovery functions. In addition, top backup service solutions have integrated with Microsoft 365 Backup Storage, making fast ransomware recovery of large data sets a reality for organizations.





5. Legal and Compliance Requirements

Sometimes you need to unexpectedly retrieve emails, files, or other types of data amid legal action. Something you never think is going to happen to you until it does. Microsoft 365 includes a few safety nets (litigation hold and retention), built into the software, but these are a far cry from a robust backup solution, and will not keep your company out of legal trouble.

With a reliable backup service, if you accidentally delete emails or documents before implementing a legal hold, you'll still be able to get them back to ensure you meet your legal obligations. Legal requirements, compliance requirements, and access regulations vary between industries and countries — but fines, penalties, and legal disputes are three things your to-do list is happy to be lacking.

Better yet, if you don't know where to start — as many of us simply don't have the bandwidth to keep up with changing legislation, regulations, and requirements — a backup service will take care of this for you. With monitoring and reporting capabilities to help you meet compliance and regulatory requirements, and with the speed and ease backup service deployments are capable of, the peace of mind that you are meeting these requirements can be gained within minutes.





6. Managing Hybrid Email Deployments and Migrations to Microsoft 365

Organizations that adopt Microsoft 365 typically need a transitory window between on-premises Exchange and Microsoft 365 Exchange Online. This setup — where part of the email system remains on-premises while the rest moves to Microsoft 365 Exchange Online — can offer added flexibility and control and is indeed common. In turn, however, it introduces additional management complexities, particularly when it comes to backups. Managing multiple environments requires careful oversight for data to flow smoothly and protected.

This is where a Microsoft 365 backup service becomes invaluable. The right Microsoft backup service handles hybrid email deployments efficiently, treating Exchange data from on-premises systems and Microsoft 365 the same. It makes the source location irrelevant, simplifies the backup process, and eliminates the need to manage multiple, separate systems.





7. Teams Data Structure

More than ever before, people are spinning up Teams for collaboration, projects, and special initiatives, all at an increasingly rapid rate. But once you complete a project, it's important to keep a copy of it for long-term needs such as legal and compliance requests. This is where organizations often find trouble. More often than you'd like, these Teams get mistakenly deleted or retention misapplied, and in doing so make files and essential documents unavailable.

With a Microsoft 365 backup service, this is never the case. Your data is always there, no matter who or what deletes it. It can even help in short-term scenarios. For example, if an employee says something inappropriate in a Teams conversation, then deletes the message, backups are easy to get your hands on. Teams data is always just a couple clicks from being recovered and available to HR for review.

More than anything, faith in your backups is fundamental. Knowing that they exist and are properly protected provides protection from the unknown, but also offers a variety of ways to restore missing or accidentally deleted Teams or channels. Adopting a backup service purpose-built for Microsoft Teams ensures that your data is always available, no matter what or when.



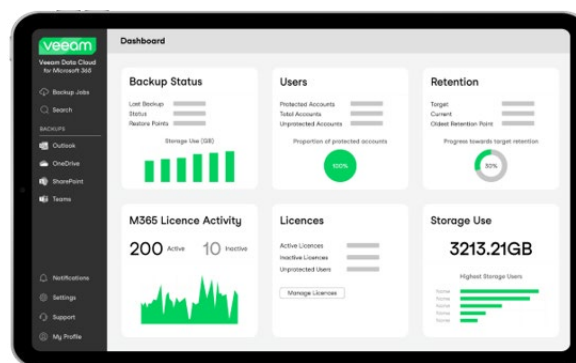
Conclusion

Take a moment to evaluate your current security posture. There may be gaps you didn't realize existed. You already made a smart decision by deploying Microsoft 365. Now, pair it with a backup service that provides complete access and full control over your data — and avoid the unnecessary risks of data loss.

You no longer need to invest the time, money, and resources associated with a software solution. With **Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365**, you can leverage an all-one-service with unlimited storage included, and choose from one of three plans to meet your backup and disaster recovery objectives. Whether you need backup and recovery speed and scale, control and flexibility, or a combination of both — Veeam has partnered with Microsoft to ensure your data is always protected, recoverable, and scalable to your business's needs.

If you found this report helpful, we encourage you to email it to a colleague: [Forward this report](#).

Veeam Data Cloud for Microsoft 365: Resilient data protection made simple



- Trusted, industry-leading Microsoft 365 Backup technology
- All-inclusive backup service with unlimited storage
- Powered with new Microsoft 365 Backup Storage

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