

Mall of America® Increases Productivity and Drives Continued Innovation with Rubrik



INDUSTRY

Retail

RESULTS

- 80% reduction in backup management (52 days per year of additional productivity back to the business)
- 90% faster restores
- Seamless archival to Microsoft Azure
- Protection for Microsoft Hyper-V environment

CHALLENGES

- Complex, time-consuming management of legacy solution
- Unreliable, lengthy restores for painful upgrades
- Inadequate customer support

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Rubrik's management simplicity has allowed Mall of America to increase their IT team's productivity. This allows them to spend more time on digital transformation initiatives that optimize employee efficiency and enhance overall guest experience, supporting their reputation as a world-class destination. Rubrik has also allowed Mall of America to advance their cloud-first initiative with data archival to the public cloud, saving money on tape.

Mall of America (MOA), located in Bloomington, Minnesota, is the largest mall in the United States. In addition to over 520 stores, Mall of America is home to Nickelodeon Universe, a 7-acre indoor amusement park. MOA also houses the 1,300,000-gallon Sea Life Minnesota Aquarium. Since opening its doors in 1992, MOA welcomes an average of 40 million people from around the world per year and generates nearly \$2 billion in economic impact each year.

Janette Smrcka, IT Director, manages MOA's 20-person IT team and believes in cultivating memorable moments for guests through streamlined IT operations. "Our team is made of problem-solvers," said Smrcka. "It's unique in that many of them came from other departments within Mall of America. They know exactly how the business operates on a wider scale, what IT means to the business, and how IT can either enable or inhibit a guest's experience. Whether it's empowering our employees or creating technology that guests interact with directly, IT is paramount in elevating customer satisfaction."

"Our number one priority as a business is to make sure that our guests have an amazing experience on our property, and we help create those moments through digital transformation initiatives driven by our IT team," said Smrcka. "To us, that means constantly reevaluating our processes for opportunities to increase efficiencies. We've never been a company that sits still; having partners like Rubrik that think outside the box helps us move even faster."

QUEST FOR INNOVATION STIFLED BY COMPLEX LEGACY SOLUTION

Prior to Rubrik, MOA struggled with a legacy solution that required an inordinate amount of care and feeding. "For our team, backup isn't something we should be spending time worrying about," said Smrcka. "With our previous solution, failed jobs were difficult to troubleshoot and would often create a backlog of issues that even their support team couldn't diagnose." In order to best enable their IT team, MOA needed a reliable data management solution that could eliminate complexity and accelerate their cumbersome processes.

"Every vendor has nice marketing materials, but hearing a peer testimony carries so much weight because it's honest," said Smrcka. "While networking with a few CIOs, we heard a story about Rubrik's radical simplicity that seemed too good to be true. Further research only validated those claims. Dynamic innovation is baked into the DNA of Mall of America, which is why partnering with solutions like Rubrik who share our relentless attitude towards problem-solving is key to how our entire IT organization develops."

“We’re cost-conscious buyers, both from a hard cost and opportunity cost perspective, and could already see how Rubrik’s simplicity would give valuable time back to our team every week,” said Smrcka. “Despite having already paid for another year of support on our previous solution, we made the move to Rubrik—it just made sense. Knowing that Rubrik was built from the ground up to integrate seamlessly with our Hyper-V environment made the choice even easier.”

RAPID RESTORES FOR STREAMLINED UPGRADES

Availability is paramount for MOA, whose legacy backup solution threatened their “always on” mindset with slow restores and clunky system upgrades.

“We had little confidence in our previous solution that we would be able to perform timely restores, a critical part of maintaining our availability requirements,” said DJ Mulugeta, IT Manager. “Previously, I would have to spend 8 hours restoring our SQL servers in preparation for critical upgrades. If that information was on tape, we would sometimes have to spend several days just finding and indexing the right information. It was a painfully long process that severely impaired our productivity.”

“Rubrik’s unmatched speed and simplicity gives us the confidence that backup is not going to be a bottleneck,” said Mulugeta. “Our largest servers can now be restored in just 30 minutes, streamlining our upgrade process and giving me back 7 hours of my day.”

SUPERIOR GUEST EXPERIENCE WITH SIGNIFICANT TIME SAVINGS

With Rubrik’s simple, automated data management, MOA is spending considerably less time monitoring backups. From proactively preventing against data loss by implementing encrypted email capabilities to enhancing their mobile work environment so that employees can remotely access their applications, the team is now able to focus on optimizing IT processes to deliver more value back to the business, in addition to enhancing the safety of MOA’s environment.

“Every morning, our maintenance staff and operational staff do a safety check for the Nickelodeon Universe amusement rides,

a process done via paper for the past 20 years,” said Smrcka. “Our increase in productivity post-Rubrik allowed our team to develop and launch a new internal application that will help perform that manual check electronically, allowing us to not only report on that data, but also get our staff back on the floor with guests faster. With Rubrik, our team is able to be curious and suggest even more ways to benefit our property through transformative technologies; that sort of innovation isn’t possible when your team is busy just keeping the lights on.”

Mall of America protects their 100% virtualized environment and mission-critical applications with Rubrik. Additional benefits include:

- **80% reduction in backup management:** “With our previous solution, we were spending at least 10 hours per week managing our backups. With Rubrik, that time has gone down to 2 hours at most, giving back 52 days per year of productivity to our team.”
- **Seamless cloud archival and cost savings with Microsoft Azure:** “Rubrik will be an integral part of our cloud roadmap over the next few years. Cloud integration was too complicated with our previous solution. Rubrik’s native integration with Azure ensures we’re able to maximize our storage efficiency as we scale our cloud footprint. This also allowed us to migrate off tape, eliminating unnecessary overhead and leading to immediate hard savings.”
- **Hyper-V integration:** “We were early adopters of Hyper-V for its high performance and cost-effectiveness, so having a solution like Rubrik that can navigate our existing infrastructure with policy-driven intelligence was essential.”
- **World-class support:** “With our legacy solution, our team would have to spend hours on the phone with support. I would also have to get on the phone in order to escalate and get the issue fixed. With Rubrik’s team, we’re always able to reach a skilled support engineer and our issues are often and solved within 15 minutes, including a detailed follow-up”
- **Easy to use:** “With Rubrik’s consumer-friendly interface, I always know where my data lives and exactly how to find it.”



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Rubrik delivers a single platform to manage and protect data in the cloud, at the edge, and on-premises. Enterprises choose Rubrik’s Cloud Data Management software to simplify backup and recovery, accelerate cloud adoption, and enable automation at scale. Rubrik’s run-anywhere, scale-out architecture is built to empower IT departments today and in the future, reducing total cost of ownership while enabling infrastructure flexibility for a multi-cloud world. For more information, visit www.rubrik.com and follow @rubrikInc on Twitter.