



TECHNICAL WHITE PAPER

Simplify Office 365 Backup with Rubrik Polaris

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- THE RISE OF SAAS 3**
- THE POPULARITY OF MICROSOFT OFFICE 365..... 3**
- THE IMPORTANCE OF BACKUP AND RECOVERY FOR MICROSOFT O365 3**
- A LITTLE MORE USER-FRIENDLY PLEASE 4**
- INTRODUCING SIMPLE, FASTER RECOVERIES FOR MICROSOFT O365..... 5**
- STRAIGHTFORWARD SETUP..... 5**
- POLICY-BASED SIMPLICITY 6**
- SCALE-OUT CLOUD-NATIVE ARCHITECTURE 6**
- COST-EFFECTIVE DESIGN 7**
- SECURE DESIGN..... 7**
- GLOBAL SEARCH 7**
- FAST DATA RECOVERY 8**

THE RISE OF SAAS

CIOs and IT Leaders are making the move to Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) as a part of their IT and business transformation agenda. Applications typically consume over a third of an average IT organization's time, making them a quick target for optimization. Moving a commodity workload to a SaaS-based offering can reclaim time and allow IT staff to work on more differentiating, higher value projects. It is not only about shifting a utility workload though. SaaS offerings help the business punch above their weight class without requiring teams of specialists and developers. The business also benefits from shifting budget from an up-front expenditure to an opex-friendly subscription model. It may seem like a simple choice to shut down on-premises workloads and catapult them to the cloud, but there are some downsides that are frequently overlooked in the decision-making process.

THE POPULARITY OF MICROSOFT OFFICE 365

Exchange and SharePoint have played a central role in end user productivity and collaboration services hosted in the data center for many years. Email and content collaboration platforms are no longer a unique service with web-based startups vying for a piece of the pie. Microsoft's response to the growing wave of online services such as file sync and share, web email, and collaboration was to bundle the familiar data center applications, include a few new ones like OneDrive, and offer Office 365-as-a-service. Adoption of the service has been robust. Microsoft combined the appealing familiarity, usability, and popularity of Microsoft Office with an easy to understand à la carte and 3-tiered licensing model that offers increasing levels of functionality, capacity, and locally installed Office.

Often O365 customers assume backup is included—making it an unexpected add-on purchase.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BACKUP AND RECOVERY FOR MICROSOFT OFFICE 365

Aside from the operational benefits of outsourcing an on-premises application, most organizations make the move to SaaS or Office 365 with the intention of introducing cost benefits. It is all too common for teams making the decision to assume their data is safe in the cloud, or to overlook how data backup is handled. Services that are taken for granted within a data center, such as backup and recovery, frequently escape notice in the shuffle of the decision, negotiation, and subsequent migration.

If data is still in the production system, it isn't a backup.

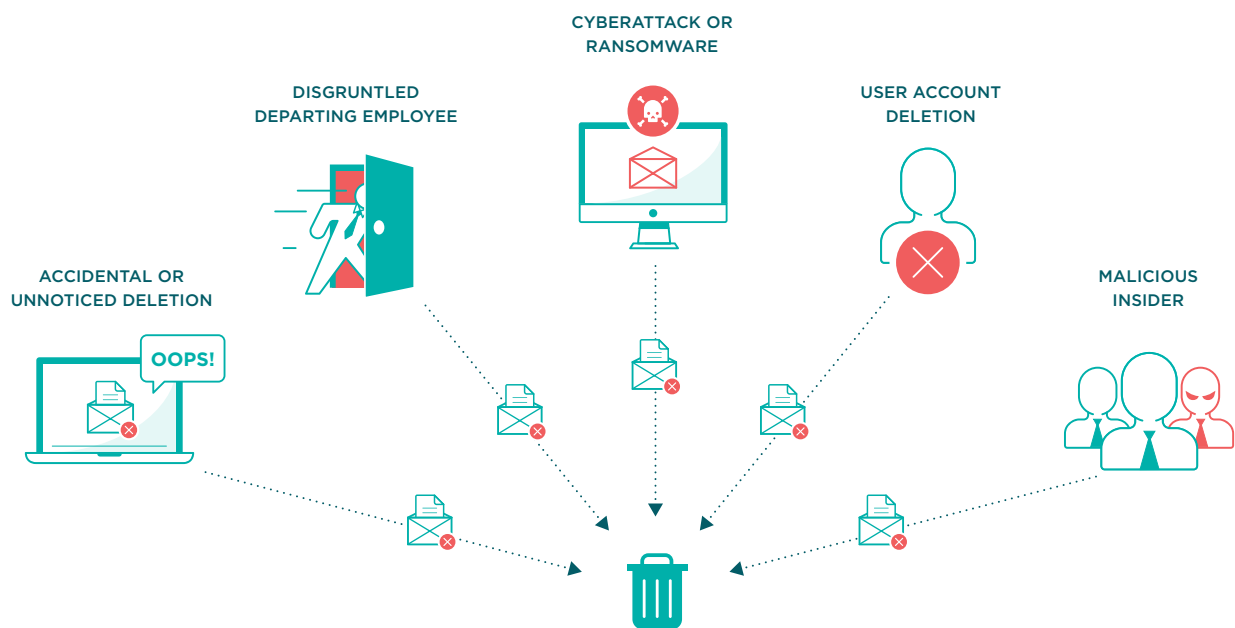
- Rarely do organizations investigate their Office 365 backup and recovery needs before moving.
- Upon discovery of the gaps, many organizations investigate whether the native features are good enough rather than beginning an immediate search for a backup product and more budget.
- O365 HA is good with 99.9% availability, but HA does not protect against accidental or malicious deletion or corruption.

The O365 infrastructure itself is indeed robust with multiple time offset replicas to secondary geographic locations. Microsoft also performs regular backups for their own use in case something goes wrong on their end. In terms of the actual infrastructure Microsoft has it covered; however, Microsoft clearly states that point-in-time restores are out of scope.

A LITTLE MORE USER-FRIENDLY PLEASE

As for the individual user's mailbox, folder, or email, if something is deleted either intentionally by a malicious insider, disgruntled departing employee, or purely by accident, the clock begins ticking. By default, Exchange online keeps items for 14 days with a 30 day maximum in the Recoverable Items folder before that item is permanently deleted. During this time, an end user can use the Recover Deleted Items feature in Outlook and Outlook on the web to get a view of items that are aging to permanent deletion. After scrolling to find the right email or emails, the restore action places the content back in the Recycle Bin. It then has to be moved again from the Recycle Bin since there is no directed restore or capability to move content to another mailbox. In addition, the end user can click to purge content from this interface which increases the risk from an insider.

- If relying on the Recoverable Items folder, then someone has to know something has been deleted and notice it before the retention expires or that content is lost forever.



To avoid the unnoticed deletion event, with both E3 and E5 licensing tiers, some organizations may elect to place some or all users on “Litigation Hold.” Organizations using E1 or à la carte will have to pay extra for Litigation Hold. Litigation Hold is not really a backup; it is intended to freeze content and avoid deletions and modifications for eDiscovery purposes. The challenge here is that using Litigation Hold places all included mailboxes in the discoverable group, which dramatically increases potentially responsive content during a real legal discovery. When the admin uses the search in EAC, that action automatically places the mailbox on Hold. Afterwards, someone must then make a decision on how long the Hold should stay in place. Lifting the hold will then return control to the defined retention policy and purge content from the Recoverable Items folder.

- Placing all mailboxes on Hold complicates legitimate legal discovery activities.
- If an organization has a defensible email deletion policy, then the “Litigation Hold” route is probably not an option at all.
- A privileged user with sufficient rights to view it must manually retrieve items for the user via the EAC, and export is only in PST format.

Fishing items out of the Recoverable Items folder or even the relatively extreme move of placing the whole organization on Litigation Hold fails to meet the true standard of backup since all content remains in the production system: Exchange. An error, misconfiguration, or intentional action could wipe out data, and that should be cause enough for decision makers to seek a third party backup solution.

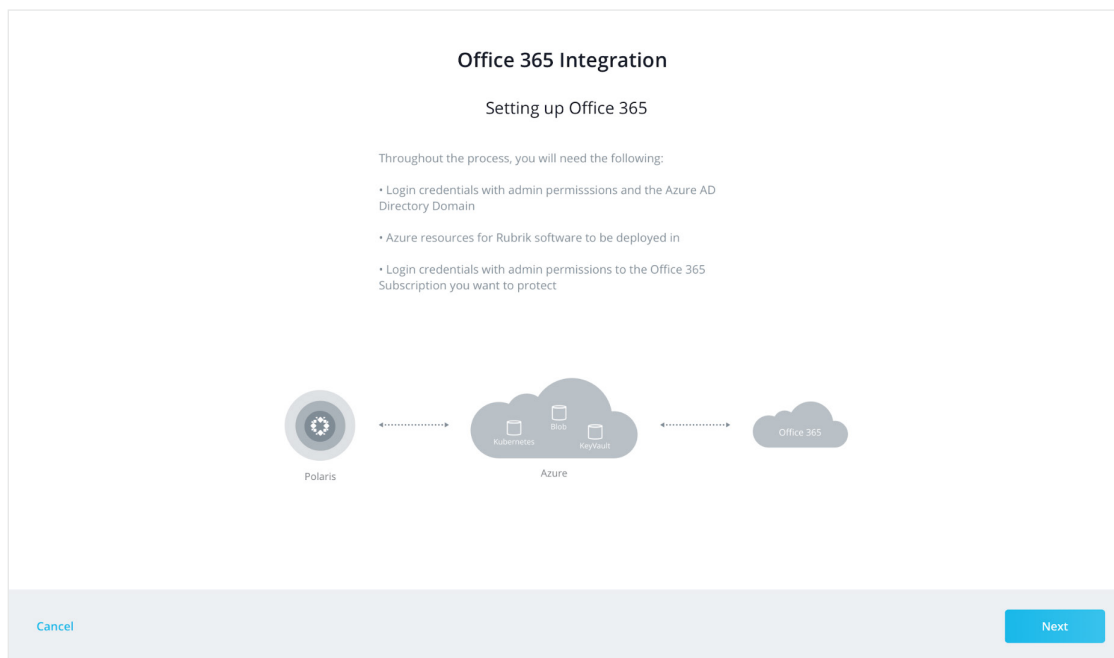
Fishing items out of the Recoverable Items folder or expecting Admins to export to PST is error prone, time consuming, and unnecessarily complex.

INTRODUCING SIMPLE, FASTER RECOVERIES FOR MICROSOFT OFFICE 365

In the first release of Rubrik Polaris for O365 backup, Microsoft Office 365 email and calendar items are supported. Our SaaS approach and cloud-native architecture allow for rapid iteration and product enhancements without our customers having to redeploy, upgrade, or bother with anything other than use the service.

STRAIGHTFORWARD SETUP

Rubrik Polaris offers straightforward setup to backup O365. Administrators do not have to make design decisions. Simply fill in the details for the Azure account, storage, and compute and you are ready to begin taking the first snapshot. Polaris takes care of all the rest.



The required cloud infrastructure is automatically provisioned only when it is needed for processing behind the scenes. Automatic provisioning frees administrators from any complex design decisions such as how many proxies are required for the number of users. Life with Polaris is easy too. Because the infrastructure scales itself as needed, there is no need to worry about tuning or adjusting to remove bottlenecks down the road.

POLICY-BASED SIMPLICITY

Administrators leverage Rubrik's hallmark SLA policy engine to automate backup policies aligned to business SLAs rather than setting up backup jobs and target storage. Administrators may select either the entire O365 Subscription and apply a blanket SLA or apply a granular policy on an individual basis for users (i.e. longer retention). If the SLA is applied to the entire subscription, then newly created users are detected and automatically protected. It is that easy. Polaris automatically begins orchestrating and executing the defined SLA, and administrators can focus on higher value tasks than day to day operations.

SCALE-OUT CLOUD-NATIVE ARCHITECTURE

Support for O365 is built on an elastic, cloud-native architecture that dynamically scales Kubernetes container compute instances up and down depending on load. This elastic approach simply manages growth without intervention and eliminates cost inefficiencies associated with persistent cloud compute instances. This design advantage frees customers from painful, wasteful, and error prone manual adjustment of the underlying infrastructure and simplifies both daily operation and eliminates storage silos when it is time to retrieve protected content.

COST-EFFICIENT DESIGN

Rubrik delivers dynamic scaling capability to manage increases and decreases in processing requirements with superior IaaS cost efficiency. Rather than rely on legacy models, we embraced cloud-native architectural possibilities. This is simple economics. Elastic architecture provides performance, scalability, and growth advantages that translate into cost savings.

SECURE DESIGN

One of the design objectives was to instill data security confidence. For this reason Rubrik chose a “born in the cloud, stays in the cloud” approach. During setup, customers enter the details for their Azure and O365 subscription, but no critical data ever leaves it. Polaris acts as a control plane to orchestrate the Azure IaaS Kubernetes containers to execute the jobs as needed. Snapshots and index metadata for email and calendar items never leave the customer’s own Azure subscription. This allows customers to have complete control over their own data.

GLOBAL SEARCH

Rubrik provides administrators global search capability without first researching where an end user’s data may be. By design, we eliminated any 1:1 silo relationship of index and proxy to storage and consolidated all email and calendar items into a single search interface. Search criteria includes date range, subject keyword, sender or recipient, and ability to explore point in time via a specific snapshot.

Search for email

Search Filip Verloy's emails

Subject

Email To From

Created between [Clear](#)

October 2018							November 2018						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	

FAST DATA RECOVERY

When data loss happens, efficiency counts. Administrators can browse hourly snapshots to recover individual specific emails or calendar items, whole folders, or whole mailboxes to a point in time. It is even possible to retrieve content from deleted AD users, a common retrieval scenario for the disgruntled departing employee. Snapshots of entire folders or individual items may be restored to either the original location or another user's mailbox or calendar. The straightforward interface eliminates specialized training requirement, and allow users to focus on productivity.



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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. As organizations of all sizes adopt cloud-first policies, they rely on Rubrik's Polaris SaaS platform to unify data for security, governance, and compliance. For more information, visit www.rubrik.com and follow [@rubrikinc](https://twitter.com/rubrikinc) on Twitter.

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