

CASE STUDY

Thekking Chooses Cohesity for Simplified and Scalable Secondary Data Storage

Introduction

Thekking is an Icelandic IT Service Provider offering a variety of managed services for local businesses. Founded in 1999, the name “Thekking” is the Icelandic word for “knowledge.” It signifies the goal of the company to have competent staff that can utilize and relay knowledge for the benefit of its customers. The company is consistently recognized for its intimate focus on the client, with exceptional quality and high service levels.

The company’s origin dates back to 1974 when the IT department of a local retail and wholesale company (KEA) was founded. Thekking later emerged from that department as a separate company owned by KEA and key employees. Today the company is one of the leading local players in the hosting and services segment of Iceland, employing around 70 motivated staff, based in two locations in the northern part of Iceland (Akureyri) and capital region (Kopavogur).

Challenges

As an independent company, Thekking has the flexibility to choose and recommend best of breed technology, both for its own hosting platform and on behalf of the customers they service. Its infrastructure consists of Cisco + NetApp FlexPod at both data center sites, supporting a large VMware environment as well as physical hosts. Clients may leverage one site, or should they require redundancy, utilize a dual site strategy.

Thekking Infrastructure Architect, Marteinn Sigurðsson, explains, “Many customers choose to deploy a distributed installation of their environments, ether by having one set of services in each site, or to use some form of replication or data redundancy between sites, either on the application layer, or in the infrastructure layer.”

Standardized on VMware for virtualization, implementing a robust solution for protecting virtual machines is critical for Thekking. Veeam software manages the backup of virtual machines to local storage, and a Veeam copy job ensures that data is secured offsite for disaster recovery purposes.

As a blogger, local VMUG leader and vExpert, Marteinn is always on the lookout for new technologies that can simplify his operations, improve his SLAs and Thekking’s competitive offering. Marteinn was introduced to Cohesity at VMworld and the timing was perfect as Thekking was due to refresh the backup storage at its secondary site in



INDUSTRY

IT Service Provider

USE CASE

Backup and Protection, Scale Out Storage

SOLUTION PARTNERS

Cisco, VMware

“When looking at alternative de-duplication appliances, we found a clear benefit of the simple scale out design of Cohesity, where compute power behind the deduplication process would scale linearly when adding new storage nodes. Having previous experience with other brands in this space such as Data Domain, knowing how the controller’s compute power did not scale with the added storage capacity, it was an obvious advantage for us that Cohesity architecture was based on hyperconverged nodes composed of both compute and storage.”

MARTEINN SIGURDSSON,

Infrastructure Architect,
Thekking

Akureyri. As its business grew, the storage requirements at both the main site of Kopavogur and the secondary site of Akureyri would have to scale accordingly. The challenge was to determine if the economics would be compelling enough to displace its current storage targets, and improve deduplication rates beyond what was provided by Veeam.

Thekking aimed for the following capabilities in a secondary storage solution:

- Simplified management and ease-of-use
- Superior global de-duplication for maximum efficiency
- Cost-effective solution with future scalability
- Seamless integration with existing IT infrastructure

Solution

A proof of concept (PoC) allowed Thekking to thoroughly vet the Cohesity technology. Ease of setup, system stability, and instant node expansion of the cluster were key operational requirements validated by Thekking. Technological criteria of setting up Veeam copy jobs to a NFS mount point were accomplished in a matter of minutes and within an hour, the first copy jobs were running. Finally, the de-duplication was monitored to ensure that the storage efficiency achieved would allow for a solid business case, which was critical for Thekking management.

The technology validation was a tremendous success. "Our conclusion after the POC was that it was a perfect fit for our needs and the investment was justified primarily on the de-duplication rate achieved" explained Marteinn. "After just a few copy jobs, the de-duplication went to 3x, and kept getting better and better. Since it was global de-duplication, it provided better storage efficiency than the Veeam software deduplication used at the main site."

Results

Thekking went into production immediately after the PoC, replacing two legacy storage systems in its Akureyri site. The additional IOPs and compute power of the Cohesity nodes further allowed Thekking to better utilize key Veeam features such as Instant VM Recovery and Virtual Lab.

When asked what Thekking would recommend to organizations considering secondary storage, Marteinn shared the following advice. "Perform a thorough total cost of ownership calculation, taking into account the footprint, cooling and power needs for the solutions. Estimate the break-even dedupe ratio needed to get to a better cost per GB than traditional storage. Perform a well-defined PoC, where goals are set to prove the value of the solution to business owners.

Conduct a detailed comparison based on rating the feature of the different solutions, scoring each feature."

Thekking gained the following benefits with Cohesity:

- Pay-as-you-grow model allows company to pass along efficiency and value to customers
- Superior global de-duplication rates
- Cost-effective solution for better cost per GB than traditional storage
- Hyperconverged model provides exceptional linear scalability

Recap

Cohesity is now the sole secondary storage provider at Thekking's Akureyri site. As the business grows Thekking administrators can easily expand the Cohesity cluster on demand, rather than having to pre-purchase storage ahead of time, with spare capacity sitting idle. Cohesity's global deduplication and pay-as-you-grow model delivers far greater efficiency and value to its business model.