



RECOVERY IN HOURS OR MINUTES, NOT DAYS OR WEEKS

Prior to implementing VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery, Merrick used a complex web of components to serve as protection from disaster.

BEFORE—RENTED DATA CENTER

Costly space was rented in a data center and backup equipment was moved in.

Scripts and procedures were created to allow critical systems to run in the remote location.

Cost-cutting measures led to closing the unproductive data center space.

NEXT—USE BRANCH OFFICES

Merrick used equipment in branch offices to provide redundancy and protection. Manual scripts and a lack of reliable testing capability drove IT to continue searching for a solution.

NOW—CLOUD-BASED DR

Now Merrick uses VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery for ransomware and disaster protection, which integrates with existing VMware infrastructure, and uses the cloud as a failover target.



Explore how to make your organization “ransomware resilient” [here](#).

Merrick Protects Digital Assets from Ransomware

Merrick and Company is using VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery to leverage the cloud to protect business-critical workloads from ransomware. “The key driver for choosing VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery is that it solved for ransomware—a targeted disaster—while providing the additional benefit of protecting us from any other type of disaster,” said Merrick Vice President of ITS Shawn Holton. Holton continued, “We heard from several other companies in our industry who had been hit by ransomware. Our goal for the last year was to figure out a way to make our company more ‘ransomware resilient.’” This search led Merrick—a Colorado-based multi-disciplinary engineering firm—to select **VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery**.

According to Brian Whiting, a longtime member of the Merrick IT organization, the company is protecting business critical workloads such as license servers. Without these servers, high-value engineering software won’t work. Merrick is also protecting IT infrastructure systems. “It’s just a few clicks on the VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery console to enable protection for additional virtual machines. I can modify the schedules so that we control when protection takes place, for example weekly, daily, or even every few hours.”¹

Ransomware Protection

Holton continued, “At Merrick, if we aren’t delivering to our clients, we aren’t staying in business.” Thus, if the deliverable digital assets are held for ransom, the impact to Merrick could be very harmful.

To address this threat the Merrick business continuity committee implemented a variety of disaster recovery (DR) systems. These systems used a combination of backup-centric DR capabilities in a Merrick data center and later in Merrick branch offices. The expense of maintaining idle hardware combined with the unsatisfactory experience of using these complex and often manual systems (see “Recovery in Hours or Minutes” sidebar, left) was the basis of the Merrick decision to pursue a cloud-based, purpose-built DR solution.

Holton said, “Our hybrid on-premises and cloud strategy has been evolving over the last several years. We are moving as many workloads as possible to the cloud so the

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GREG MORRISSEY, IT MANAGER, MERRICK AND COMPANY

AT A GLANCE

- Industry—Engineering
- Size—750+ employees in 4 countries
- Location—United States
- Workloads protected—Business critical workloads, engineering license and infrastructure servers

BUSINESS NEEDS

- Ransomware protection
- Cloud-based
- Integration with existing VMware infrastructure

WHY CHOOSE VMWARE

- Trusted partner
- Anticipated lower operational costs
- Deployment expertise

VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery is a ransomware and disaster recovery solution. For product information, including how to subscribe, click [HERE](#)

IT staff can focus on high-value projects and less on the hardware sitting in our data center.” As a cloud-based service, VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery (in this case utilizing VMware Cloud on AWS), was especially appealing to Merrick.

Among other advantages, Merrick no longer needs to maintain a secondary DR site. In the case that Merrick must go into DR mode they will use virtual machine snapshots that were previously stored in a cloud-based, secure file system.ⁱ This allows Merrick to save on costs by only consuming compute, memory, and primary storage during the DR event. As well, VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery keeps VMs in a VMware-native environment on the cloud DR site. Whiting called out the ability to use familiar VMware tools and management systems as an advantage particularly in the case of an emergency such as a ransomware attack.

Now that VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery is in place, Greg Morrissey, also on the Merrick IT staff said, “VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery just works. I don’t lose sleep over our ransomware recovery capability. My inbox lights up about other issues, but not about this. It’s nice to not be too concerned about workload protection anymore.”

Comprehensive Protection—Easy Operations

According to Whiting, the Merrick IT team could have implemented the VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery solution using just the documentation and standard product training. “We could have definitely gotten through it on our own. But the VMware deployment team has been nothing but helpful. They’ve been very good at educating the Merrick team. Everything that I needed to know as far as planning and preparation, as well as day-to-day operations has been excellent.”

While the hope is that Merrick will never need to use VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery to survive a ransomware attack or other type of disaster, having the solution in place makes it very likely that if such an event were to occur, the company will continue meeting the needs of its customers.



DR to/from the cloud



RPO as low as 30-minutes



Ransomware protection

About Merrick and Company

Merrick and Company lives by our purpose: Solving. Growing. Living. We find the right solutions for our clients, our communities, and our world. Merrick is an employee-owned engineering, architecture, surveying, and geospatial firm headquartered in Greenwood Village, CO. We serve domestic and international clients in the energy & chemicals, national security, life sciences, and sustainable infrastructure markets.

ⁱ VMware Cloud Disaster Recovery is a SaaS offering that is constantly improving. After this interview, the RPO (Recovery Point Objective) referred to in this statement dropped from four hours to just 30 minutes. Merrick and all other customers can immediately use this improved RPO with no infrastructure or subscription changes.

ⁱⁱ See [Rapid Ransomware Recovery Needs a New Type of Filesystem](#) for an overview