

Unlock insights on any data

Customer Solution Case Study



Customer: Saab

Website: www.saabgroup.com/en/

Customer Size: 14,000 employees

Country or Region: Sweden

Industry: Professional services—IT services

Customer Profile

Saab, based in Sweden, offers security management solutions to a range of government and corporate customers throughout the world.

Software and Services

- Microsoft Azure platform
 - Microsoft Azure
 - Microsoft Azure Cloud Services
 - Microsoft SQL Server Backup to Azure Tool

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Global Security Company Backs Up Data in Minutes, Saves Time and Money with Cloud Solution

"We know that if we lost our database, we would have it back up and running in a few minutes at most with SQL Server Backup to Azure. That is very compelling for our business."

Fredrik Elmqvist, IT Systems Architect, Security and Defense Solutions, Saab

SAFE is a security management platform for customers worldwide provided by the security and defense company Saab. The organization wanted to use SAFE for event security, and needed technology that could be quickly deployed and used to back up and restore customer data. SAFE was implemented on Microsoft Azure, using the Microsoft SQL Server Backup to Azure Tool, in order to back up critical data in minutes. It also offers fast deployment, eliminating the need for additional hardware, and scales to support thousands of users.

Business Needs

Founded in 1937, Saab is a global aerospace and defense company that delivers a range of military and civil security solutions to governments, authorities, and corporations worldwide. Saab Security and Defense Solutions, a division of Saab, has developed the SAFE platform, a security management system designed to help customers protect critical infrastructure and support emergency response. For example, the system automatically controls surveillance cameras, monitors facility alarms, and dispatches alarms to guards at prisons and airports in Sweden.

SAFE is also an attractive solution for security organizations at large global events, including the Nordic World Ski Championships in Falun, Sweden, in early 2015. Saab needed to ensure SAFE would be quickly and cost-effectively deployed, as it would only be used for the 12 days of the event. "Because of the short timeframe, it's important that we have the ability to get the system up and running fast, without spending a lot of money on expensive new hardware," says Fredrik Elmqvist, IT Systems Architect, Security and Defense Solutions, Saab.

Having a strategy for backing up critical SAFE data at the event was also essential.

"The skiing events are highly dependent on the weather, and if there are weather-related delays, all the scheduling and security data in the system changes," says Elmqvist. "But if systems go down and that data is lost, then participants, volunteers, and judges wouldn't have access to the new schedule information, and security would be at risk. The whole event could collapse." Because Saab relied primarily on traditional tape backup of its data, it sought a more reliable and flexible backup method. "When the big event arrives, I don't want to be worrying about tape or disk size," Elmqvist states. "I just need to know for sure the data is being backed up."

In addition, SAFE has to operate without interruptions and scale easily to support the hundreds of thousands of users that would access the system during the event.

Solution

Because SAFE is based on the Microsoft .NET 4.5 Framework and uses Microsoft SQL Server 2012 R2 software, Saab wanted to stick with Microsoft technologies for the new version. The organization decided on the Microsoft Azure cloud platform. "We felt like Microsoft Azure would give us the fast deployment, scalability, flexibility, and resiliency we were looking for," says Elmqvist. With Azure, infrastructure management is eliminated because Microsoft Azure Cloud Services manages the hardware and offers geo-replication of data for redundancy and resiliency.

Saab took advantage of the Microsoft SQL Server Backup to Azure Tool, which backs up SQL Server data to Microsoft Azure Blob Storage and encrypts and compresses SQL Server backups in the cloud. Saab realized that by storing backups through Microsoft Azure it could use Azure as a highly available and reliable backup and archiving solution. Saab therefore tested SAFE running on Microsoft Azure at a smaller-scale skiing event to gauge the solution's deployment, scalability, and overall effectiveness. Impressed with the results,

Saab decided to use the solution for the Nordic World Ski Championships. "We're also evaluating the idea of using Microsoft Azure to host the SAFE platform at other future large events," Elmqvist says.

Saab is also interested in utilizing the In-Memory OLTP feature in SQL Server, which helps boost performance of OLTP workloads. "We believe we'll gain a lot of performance improvements from that technology, and we hope to put it into production in the coming year," says Elmqvist.

Benefits

Saab is using Microsoft Azure to back up and restore customer data in minutes in order to deploy its own security management solution quickly and cost-effectively. The company can also scale the system in the cloud to support hundreds of thousands of users.

Backup and Restoration of Critical Data Within Minutes

By hosting the SAFE platform on Microsoft Azure and using the SQL Server Backup to Azure Tool, Saab can quickly back up and restore critical data within minutes should this become necessary. "We know that if we lost our database, we would have it back up and running in only a few minutes at most with SQL Server Backup to Azure," says Elmqvist. "That is very compelling for our business. We could withstand almost any disaster during one of the large events our customers are providing security for."

Saab is also confident in the overall reliability of Microsoft Azure. "With Azure, we know we're getting high availability at all times," says Elmqvist. "We can rely on Microsoft Azure to deliver and help us reduce our risk."

Fast Deployment and Cost Savings

Saab will be able to quickly deploy the SAFE platform during the Nordic World Ski Championships. "For ourselves and our customers, it's important to get the

platform up and running fast because of the short timeframe of the event," says Elmqvist. "With Microsoft Azure, we can deploy the platform in 20 minutes. That was a real driving factor in our decision to use Azure, because it saves us so much time. And we don't have to worry about hardware issues, which can often delay implementation."

Because the SAFE platform can be run in the hosted Azure environment, Saab does not need to invest in hardware. The company's only IT cost is for the infrastructure needed during the 12-day ski event. "I was blown away when I realized how much time and money we would save by relying on Microsoft Azure for backups," says Elmqvist. "Without Azure, we would have needed to buy backup servers and backup software and do a lot of cumbersome configurations of the hardware, just for a two-week event. With SAFE running on Azure, we eliminate the need for all of that."

Scalability to Support Thousands of Users

When Saab tested SAFE running on Azure at an earlier ski event, the solution proved it could easily scale to support thousands of system users. "We know that having the SAFE platform on Microsoft Azure will give us the ability to scale the system to support thousands of people during the two weeks of the Nordic World Ski Championships," says Elmqvist. "In general, Azure is a faster, better, more secure solution for us to provide for our customers. We gain a lot of competitive advantages with this technology."