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Veeva Vault Basics vs. Full Vault: A Guide for Biotechs

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By Adrien Laurent, CEO at IntuitionLabs • 12/28/2025 • 40 min read

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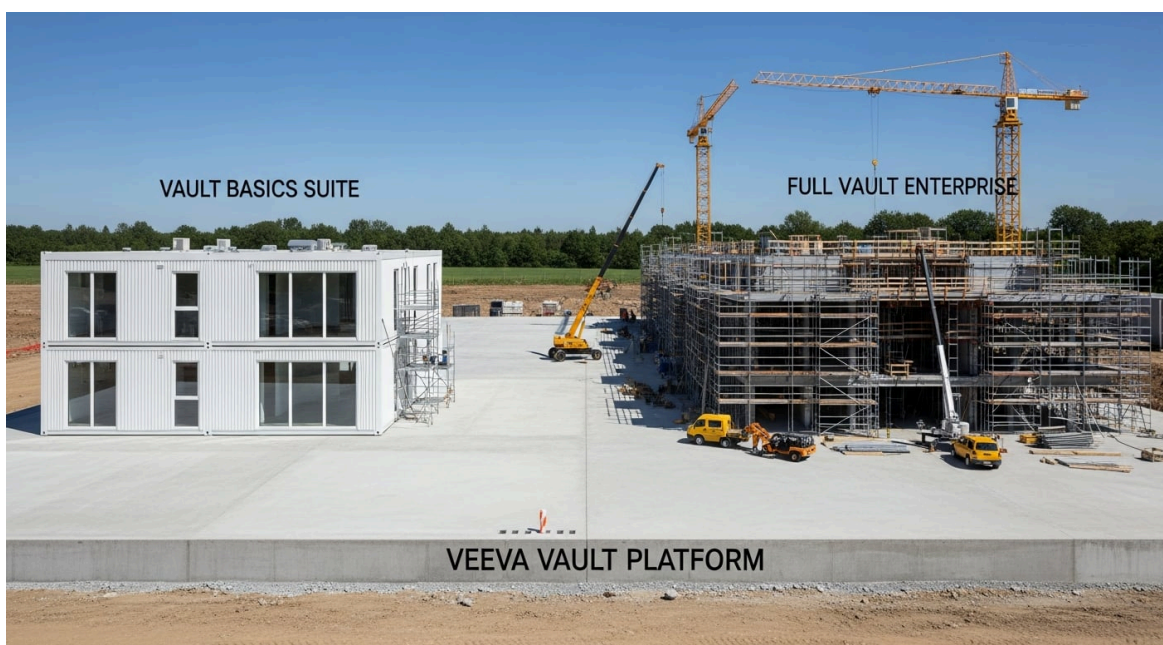
Executive Summary

Emerging biotechnology companies face intense pressure to innovate rapidly while rigorously complying with complex regulatory requirements. Integral to this challenge is choosing an appropriate digital platform for managing critical content and processes (quality documents, training, clinical trial records, regulatory submissions, etc.). Veeva Systems – the market leader in life sciences cloud software – offers two distinct approaches to meet these needs: **Veeva Vault Basics**, a pre-configured, turnkey suite of core applications for small biotechs, and **Full Veeva Vault**, the standard highly-customizable Vault platform used by large pharma and biotech companies. This report provides a comprehensive comparison of Vault Basics versus Full Vault from the perspective of an emerging biotech. It outlines each option's features, costs, implementation timelines, and use cases, and proposes a decision framework to guide biotech leaders in selecting the right solution.

Key findings include:

- **Vault Basics** is designed for lean startups. It bundles essential Vault applications (e.g. Vault eTMF Basics, QualityDocs Basics, Training Basics, Submissions Basics, and more) in a **pre-validated, pre-configured** package with **zero implementation or maintenance costs** ([1] www.veeva.com) ([2] veevabasics.veeva.com). Biotechs can be "live in weeks, not months," as Veeva handles setup, validation, updates (3× per year), and training ([3] veevabasics.veeva.com) ([4] veevabasics.veeva.com). This accelerates compliance readiness and frees teams to focus on science and product development. Vault Basics is fully aligned with regulations (21 CFR Part 11, EU Annex 11, etc.) ([5] clarkstonconsulting.com) and scales on the same Vault platform, allowing a seamless "graduate to Full Vault" when needed ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com). Notably, over 100 emerging biotechs had adopted Vault Basics by late 2025 ([7] www.veeva.com), reflecting its strong market reception.

- **Full Veeva Vault** is the enterprise-grade Vault platform that supports dozens of life sciences applications across clinical, regulatory, quality, safety, and commercial functions. It is a *highly flexible* and *open* cloud system with robust compliance features (audit trails, electronic signatures, validated releases) ([8] www.veeva.com) ([9] www.veeva.com). Full Vault can be tailored to an organization's exact needs, from complex global R&D processes to extensive regulatory and promotional content management. However, this flexibility comes with significantly higher **upfront costs and complexity**. Deploying Full Vault typically requires a multi-month implementation project by Veeva or qualified partners, extensive configuration and validation work, and greater resource commitment from the biotech.

- **Comparison and Decision Criteria:** The choice between Vault Basics and Full Vault hinges on several factors: company stage, budget, regulatory exposure, process complexity, timing, and growth plans. Biotechs with **limited budgets and simple immediate needs** may find Vault Basics more cost-effective and faster to implement ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com) ([11] veevabasics.veeva.com). In contrast, companies with **sophisticated processes or very large pipelines** might prefer Full Vault's full feature set and customization. We develop a decision framework based on criteria such as cost/ROI, speed of deployment, functional requirements, and scalability. For example, Vault Basics eliminates implementation fees and is live within ~60 days ([3] veevabasics.veeva.com) ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com), whereas Full Vault may take 6–12 months and incur six-figure implementation costs. Both options reside on the same platform, so companies can start with Basics and later "graduate" to Full Vault without data migration when ready ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com).

- **Case Studies and Evidence:** Early adopters attest to Vault Basics' benefits. For instance, Longboard Pharmaceuticals (a growing biotech) reported that Vault Basics gave them a "complete, pre-validated solution" to scale efficiently, reducing compliance risk and accelerating time to market ([12] www.veeva.com). Structure Therapeutics and Scancell similarly noted rapid deployment of industry-standard workflows and inspection-ready processes upon using Vault Basics ([13] www.veeva.com) ([14] ir.veeva.com). As adoption has grown, Veeva expanded the Basics portfolio (adding CTMS Basics, LIMS Basics, PromoMats Basics, etc. by 2026) ([15] www.veeva.com) ([16] ir.veeva.com), further empowering startups.

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- **Future Directions:** The trend toward standardized cloud solutions for biotech is accelerating. Veeva's Vault Platform continues to evolve (including vision for AI-enabled assistants ([17] www.veeva.com)), and Vault Basics lowers the bar for small companies to implement best practices. As emerging biotechs mature, they will need to re-assess their systems; thankfully, migrating from Basics to Full Vault is designed to be seamless ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com). The overall implication is that small biotechs no longer have to rely on insecure spreadsheets or fragmented tools (which regulators often flag as compliance risks ([18] www.chromatographyonline.com)). Instead they can adopt proven enterprise software at a fraction of the typical time and cost, which may improve efficiency, inspection readiness, and ultimately their ability to bring therapies to market.

This report analyzes Vault Basics and Full Vault in depth, with data and expert commentary on both solutions. It is structured as follows: an introduction to the biotech industry context; an overview of the Vault Platform; detailed breakdowns of Vault Basics and Full Vault; a side-by-side comparison (including a summary table); decision-making criteria; illustrative case studies; discussion of business and regulatory implications; and concluding recommendations. All assertions are documented with citations from Veeva publications, industry analyses, and other credible sources.

Introduction and Background

Emerging biotech companies are innovators at the cutting edge of medicine, but they also operate under tight budgets and intense regulatory oversight. Unlike large pharmaceutical firms, startups often lack extensive infrastructure, large IT staffs, or in-house regulatory affairs teams. Nevertheless, they must **comply with GxP regulations** (e.g. FDA 21 CFR Part 11 for electronic records) from day one. This typically involves creating and managing an electronic trial master file (eTMF), a quality management system (QMS) for SOPs and CAPAs, and submitting filings to health authorities – all while advancing R&D. The COVID-19 pandemic and rapid advances in biotech have only heightened the need to "move swiftly" on digital technologies ([19] www.pharmatechoutlook.com).

Cloud-based software is now essential for small biotechs.A survey of industry experts notes that biotechs have accelerated digital transformation in recent years, shifting from manual processes to cloud tools for efficiency and remote collaboration ([19] www.pharmatechoutlook.com) (entrepreneurhandbook.co.uk). For example, specialized clinical trial software (e.g. EDC and CTMS platforms) can automate data capture and workflow management, drastically reducing administrative workload and errors (entrepreneurhandbook.co.uk). Importantly, software with built-in audit trails and data integrity controls helps startups pass regulatory inspections: one industry article warned that unvalidated spreadsheets are a "fast track to regulatory non-compliance," as demonstrated by FDA warning letters citing unchecked Excel calculations ([18] www.chromatographyonline.com). In short, decentralized or ad-hoc document management carries high compliance risk for biotechs.

Veeva Systems is the leading cloud software provider for the life sciences industry. Its flagship **Vault** platform delivers content and data management across R&D, quality, regulatory, and commercialization. Vault has been widely adopted by large pharma and biotechs (over 1,500 customers globally ([20] www.veeva.com) ([21] ir.veeva.com)), covering functions from clinical operations (eTMF, CTMS, EDC, etc.) to quality management (QualityDocs, QMS) and beyond. The Vault Platform is explicitly built for life sciences: it is fully **validated** (with every release IQ/OQ tested and delivered with a validation package), secure (enterprise-grade access controls, encryption), and compliant (21 CFR Part 11, EU Annex 11 and other standards are inherently supported) ([9] www.veeva.com). This means that Vault serves as a one-stop framework where companies can configure workflows, define lifecycles, and manage electronic signatures under strict change control ([9] www.veeva.com) ([22] www.veeva.com).

However, until 2024, Vault implementations were usually lengthy and complex undertakings, making them less practical for very small biotechs. Recognizing this gap, Veeva launched **Vault Basics** in May 2024. Vault Basics

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is a *special offering tailored for emerging biotechs* that aims to deliver the core Vault functionality out-of-the-box, with minimal effort and cost. This concept of "accelerated deployment" for startups is a major shift in the industry: as Veeva itself explains, Vault Basics provides **"industry-leading Vault applications in a turnkey solution with no implementation costs for simple adoption"** ([23] www.veeva.com).

The central question for an emerging biotech is thus: *Should we choose Vault Basics or invest in a Full Vault implementation?* As we will explore, this choice affects the company's operations, budgets, and ability to scale. Vault Basics offers speed and standardization, while Full Vault offers customization and extensibility. This report will unpack both options and lay out a decision framework, so that biotech leaders can align their system choice with their strategic priorities.

The Veeva Vault Platform (Overview)

Before comparing Vault Basics and Full Vault, it is important to understand the **core Vault platform** on which both are built. The Veeva Vault Platform is a unified cloud infrastructure for life sciences that unites data, documents, and processes. Veeva markets it as "the platform for life sciences" ([24] www.veeva.com). Key characteristics include:

- **Proven, Validated Cloud Platform:** Vault is an enterprise-grade, cloud-native system supporting *50+ applications* across R&D and commercial domains ([8] www.veeva.com). Its architecture is high-performance and inherently compliant. Each Vault release undergoes Installation Qualification (IQ) and Operational Qualification (OQ) testing, with comprehensive validation packages provided to customers ([9] www.veeva.com). This radically reduces validation workload for customers, since Veeva delivers a tested, documented baseline at each update.

- **Integrated Content and Data Management:** Vault manages documents, data, and workflows in one platform ([25] www.veeva.com) ([26] www.veeva.com). It includes robust capabilities like version control, audit trails, lifecycles (document state transitions), e-signatures, annotations, and templates ([26] www.veeva.com). A configurable metadata framework (Vault Object Framework) lets admins define custom objects and fields for structured data ([26] www.veeva.com). This means everything from regulatory documents to QC lab data can reside within Vault, linked by relationships. Studies are often conducted entirely on Vault (e.g. using Vault EDC or CTMS modules) and related documents automatically flow into the controlled content management system.

- **Platform Openness and Integration:** The Vault Platform exposes APIs for data and system integration ([8] www.veeva.com), and a Java SDK for extending capabilities ([8] www.veeva.com). For example, Vault can integrate with commercial CRMs, ERP, lab systems, or analysis tools via the Veeva Direct Data API. Out-of-the-box, Veeva also maintains "Vault Connections" – pre-built data bridges for synchronizing data with other Veeva applications (like CRM or CDMS) ([27] www.veeva.com). The open architecture allows customers to build custom interfaces or add new modules on top of Vault as needed.

- **Compliance and Security:** Vault is designed to meet stringent regulatory requirements. Built-in compliance features include system-level audit trails, configurable electronic signature processes, and role-based access controls ([9] www.veeva.com). Business logic (workflows, notifications, escalations) is managed in a strict change-control environment, so even custom configurations remain traceable ([9] www.veeva.com). With any Vault application, the platform ensures compliance with GxP requirements (FDA, EMA, etc.) out of the box.

- **Continuous Innovation:** Veeva continually enhances Vault. For example, a recent innovation is the integration of AI agents ("Veeva AI") on the Vault Platform ([28] www.veeva.com). These agents leverage industry-specific prompts and secure data access to automate tasks across Vault applications. While still emerging, such AI capabilities point to Vault's role as a forward-looking foundation for digital transformation.

Because of these features, Full Vault implementations (i.e. using the Vault Platform in a standard way) are very powerful but also involved. Enterprises leverage Vault's flexibility to digitize end-to-end processes (from clinical trial execution to regulatory submission publishing to global quality), but this often requires significant

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configuration and time. In contrast, Vault Basics builds upon this same platform but targets new biotech users with a **maximal "out-of-the-box" experience**.

Vault Basics: Features and Benefits

Vault Basics is Veeva's packaged solution for emerging biotechs. Officially launched in May 2024 ([23] www.veeva.com), Vault Basics delivers a **pre-configured, pre-validated suite of Vault applications** that together cover core clinical, quality, and regulatory functions. The initial offering included:

- **Vault eTMF Basics** – ensures quality, timeliness, and completeness of the clinical trial master file ([29] www.veeva.com).

- **QualityDocs Basics** – GxP document management solution (for SOPs, batch records, etc.), with best-practice content templates.

- **Training Management (Veeva Learn)** – a training module ("Training Basics") built on Vault to manage employee training and curricula.

- **Submissions Management** – includes *Submissions Basics* for preparing regulatory submissions and *Submissions Archive Basics* for storing and viewing them ([29] www.veeva.com).

Since launch, Veeva has added more modules under the Basics umbrella. By mid-2025, **CTMS Basics** (for planning and tracking clinical trial activities) and **Submissions Publishing Basics** were introduced ([30] ir.veeva.com). Announcements in late 2025 added **LIMS Basics** (for managing lab QC data and CMO oversight) and **PromoMats Basics** (for marketing content) to the roadmap ([15] www.veeva.com). All are built on the same Vault platform, with shared UI and security.

Vault Basics is characterized by the following key traits:

- **Turnkey, Rapid Deployment:** Vault Basics is "live in weeks, not months" ([3] veevabasics.veeva.com). Veeva provides standardized configuration and handles the implementation at *no charge*. The Vault Basics website advertises "zero implementation [or] maintenance costs" ([11] veevabasics.veeva.com). According to Veeva, the system can be operational for business users within roughly 30–60 days ([3] veevabasics.veeva.com). This is possible because Vault Basics uses fixed, pre-built workflows and settings. Emerging biotechs simply subscribe to the service and Veeva removes any guesswork in setup.

- **Pre-Validated and Always Current:** Every Vault Basics application comes pre-validated. Veeva publishes a complete **validation package** for each release, which customers can use to self-audit or support their audit trail ([4] veevabasics.veeva.com). Updates are managed by Veeva *three times per year*, automatically delivering new features and compliance enhancements ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com). This ensures startups are always on the latest version without manual patchwork; Veeva calls this being "Always Current." The combination of pre-validation and auto-updates greatly reduces internal IT and quality burden.

- **Built-in Compliance:** Even though Vault Basics is streamlined, it retains full compliance capabilities of the Vault platform. Everything is designed for GxP regulation out-of-the-box. As one analyst explains, Vault Basics "is fully aligned with regulatory standards such as 21 CFR Part 11 and EU Annex 11" ([5] clarkstonconsulting.com). Audit trails, role-based access, and secure cloud hosting are all provided. Thus a biotech immediately adopts validated processes with all the required audit history, electronic signatures, and change control.

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- **Cost Efficiency:** Vault Basics is explicitly aimed at companies with limited resources. Clarkston Consulting notes that by being pre-configured and pre-validated, it "significantly reduces implementation and maintenance costs" ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com). Since Veeva handles the deployment, there are no professional services fees (which for full Vault projects can easily reach 6–7 figures). The cloud subscription covers software, hosting, support, and training. In practice, Veeva is offering Vault Basics as a flat-fee bundle (rather than charging separately for each module), which simplifies budgeting. Per multiple customer testimonials, this "turnkey" model lets biotechs "see a faster return on investment" and reallocate resources from IT to core science ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com) ([12] www.veeva.com).

- **User Experience and Collaboration:** Even though it is simplified, Vault Basics retains the intuitive Vault UI and key collaboration features. Users benefit from **real-time document editing (via Microsoft Office integration)**, version control, and transparent audit logs, no matter the module. Veeva emphasizes that Vault Basics enables "seamless collaboration across different departments and geographies" ([31] clarkstonconsulting.com). For instance, sharing a clinical protocol or SOP with the quality team can be done instantly with controlled access. This replaces error-prone email chains or shared drives. Training materials and SOPs are all centralized so new hires can access "learnomics" content right away.

- **Scalability and Growth Path:** Vault Basics is explicitly designed as a growth foundation. It uses the **same Vault platform** used by industry giants ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com). As Veeva's marketing highlights, companies can **"graduate to full Vault, no migration required"** ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com) when they outgrow the basics bundle. This means all data, workflows, and configurations from Basics carry over seamlessly. In practice, a biotech could start with the Basics suite and later enable additional Vault modules (e.g. advanced CTMS, Medical Info, or commercial apps) within the same instance. Until they upgrade, the Basics configuration simply provides needed features without throwing away prior work. In effect, Vault Basics acts as a "scalable platform": it keeps processes standard without limitation up to a point, and then can flex into full enterprise mode.

Table 1 below summarizes key features of Vault Basics:

Feature	Vault Basics (Emerging Biotech)
Deployment Time	Weeks (system ready in 30–60 days) ([3] veevabasics.veeva.com)
Implementation Cost	Zero (Veeva-managed implementation at no charge) ([11] veevabasics.veeva.com)
Licensing Model	Subscription bundle for multiple core apps (flat price)
Configuration	Pre-configured workflows; minimal customer changes needed ([32] clarkstonconsulting.com)
Updates / Validation	Veeva-managed updates 3×/year; full validation deliverables ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com)
Included Modules	eTMF Basics, QualityDocs Basics, Training Basics, Submissions Basics, (plus CTMS, LIMS, etc. as added) ([29] www.veeva.com) ([15] www.veeva.com)
Scalability	Same Vault platform; can upgrade modules later, no data migration ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com)
Support & Training	24×7 global support; on-demand training library included ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com)
Ideal For	Early-stage biotechs needing core compliance tools quickly and cost-effectively ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com) ([11] veevabasics.veeva.com)

Key advantages: Vault Basics enables lean teams to implement best-practice processes immediately. By adopting Vault Basics, a biotech replaces fragmented "siloed" tools with an integrated system that *automates workflows, reduces manual errors, and supports smart decision-making through unified reporting* ([33] clarkstonconsulting.com). Users gain a consistent standard operating environment (with templated SOPs, forms and workflows), which can significantly increase productivity. In Clarkston's words, it lets biotechs "do more with less, maximizing efficiency" while they grow ([33] clarkstonconsulting.com).

Empirical evidence of impact: Early adopters confirm the value. Longboard Pharmaceuticals (a U.S. clinical-stage biotech) stated that Vault Basics "delivers the complete, pre-validated solution" needed to scale quickly

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and efficiently ([12] www.veeva.com). They emphasized that easy deployment keeps the company nimble, reduces the risk of non-compliance, and improves data quality – all critical factors for accelerating time to market ([12] www.veeva.com). Other Vault Basics customers echo similar sentiments: Structure Therapeutics noted that having Vault Basics standardize processes and give "easy access to the Veeva Vault Platform as we grow" provided peace of mind for future requirements ([13] www.veeva.com). Terns Pharmaceuticals highlighted the "global support and training" in Vault Basics that yielded "significant time and resource savings" ([34] ir.veeva.com). As of late 2025, Veeva announced that **over 100 biotechs** had selected Vault Basics to streamline their operations ([7] www.veeva.com) – a strong indicator that the offering is resonating with the market.

Full Veeva Vault: Features and Considerations

Full Veeva Vault refers to the company's complete Vault Platform deployment – the same platform on which Vault Basics is built, but with full scope of configuration and modules. This is the standard offering that has long been used by larger life sciences firms. Full Vault can include any combination of Veeva's applications (e.g. Vault eTMF, CTMS, EDC, Labeling, RIM, Safety, QualityDocs, QMS, Medical Information, etc.) and is fully customizable to an organization's processes.

Key Characteristics

- **Comprehensive Functionality:** Full Vault provides access to *all* Vault applications. A biotech implementing Full Vault is not limited to core modules; it can roll out advanced functions like global submissions planning, interactive safety learning, deviant incident tracking, or even integrated CRM and commercial capabilities (PromoMats, CLM) if desired. In effect, Full Vault can become a unified platform for clinical, regulatory, quality, manufacturing, safety, and marketing. Veeva reports that Vault has been adopted by **over 1,000 life sciences companies** ranging from the world's largest pharma down to emerging biotechs ([21] ir.veeva.com) ([20] www.veeva.com). (It's notable that even after Vault Basics's introduction, many startups still implement Full Vault modules on their own.)

- **Customization and Configuration:** Customers can tailor Full Vault extensively. Vault includes a visual workflow builder and lifecycle designer, so administrators can model the company's exact processes (e.g. custom approval paths, bespoke metadata schemas) ([35] www.veeva.com). It is "open and extensible" – Veeva's Java SDK and partner ecosystem allow writing custom plug-ins or integrating new functionality ([8] www.veeva.com). For instance, a biotech with unique R&D pipelines could configure custom objects to track multi-step experiments, or integrate Vault with an ELN (electronic lab notebook) system via API. This level of customization is not available in the locked-down Basics offering.

- **Implementation Effort:** A Full Vault deployment is usually a significant project. It typically involves requirements gathering, process documentation, system configuration (often in development and QA sandboxes), user acceptance testing, and formal validation activities. Companies often engage Veeva Professional Services or certified implementation partners, and the timeline can be anywhere from a few months to over a year, depending on scope. While exact figures vary, one industry rule of thumb is that Vault implementations can take **6–12 months** and hundreds of man-days of consulting for global vault suites. The effort includes not just software configuration, but staff training and process change management. In contrast to Vault Basics's turnkey 60-day rollout, Full Vault requires substantial internal project plans and budgets.

- **Cost:** Full Vault deployments incur higher cost. Licensing fees are on a per-application or per-module basis, and the implementation consulting carries additional professional services fees. Although Veeva does not publicly separate pricing tiers, it is generally understood that a Full Vault solution (with custom validation and support agreements) can be five to ten times more expensive upfront than Vault Basics. On the maintenance side, Full Vault customers share in the ongoing upgrade effort: while Veeva does provide validated releases, customers must coordinate testing and training for each upgrade cycle internally (or with their services partner). Essentially, Full Vault shifts more effort and cost from Veeva to the customer.

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- **Scalability and Control:** Because Full Vault is fully configurable, it can grow infinitely with the enterprise. A biotech planning large-scale operations (e.g. global Phase 3 trials, multiple product submissions, international quality standards) may prefer Full Vault for its ability to accommodate complexity and varied business needs. Full Vault provides *maximum control* over how documents and data are organized and who can do what, which can be critical in highly regulated environments. Some companies have strict data residency, multi-region privacy laws, or bespoke regulatory strategies that require fine-grained system design – scenarios where Full Vault shines.

- **Best Practices vs. Custom Needs:** One trade-off is that Full Vault does *not* enforce a one-size-fits-all configuration. While this flexibility is powerful, it also means the customer bears responsibility for designing best practices. Without an expert team, there is risk of over-customization or building process "silos" within Vault. In practice, large companies may have spent years perfecting their Vault instance – whereas startups may not have the luxury of extensive configuration time. Conversely, Full Vault can embrace non-standard workflows only with effort, whereas Vault Basics simply provides Veeva's proven model from the start.

In summary, Full Vault offers the *full breadth* of Vault Platform features, but demands more investment and governance. It is best suited for biotechs that have:

- A mature operating environment (funding, personnel, and processes largely in place).
- Complex or atypical requirements that cannot be met by a generic configuration.
- Time to manage a multi-phase rollout and validation program.
- A strategic mandate to own their system design instead of relying on pre-built templates.

Because Vault Basics and Full Vault are built on the same platform, it's helpful to note: **graduating is seamless**. A company can begin with Vault Basics, using pre-built workflows, and later "unlock" additional capabilities without migrating data ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com). This path is sometimes called the "land-and-expand" strategy: start small to get compliance-critical features online, then expand the system's scope as resources allow.

Comparing Vault Basics vs Full Vault

The table below contrasts Vault Basics and Full Vault across multiple dimensions. It is intended as a high-level comparison; individual needs may vary.

Dimension	Vault Basics (Emerging Biotech)	Full Veeva Vault (Standard Enterprise)
Target Users	Early-stage companies with limited IT/QA budgets	Mid-size to large companies with complex needs
Time to Deploy	Fast: weeks (ready in ~30–60 days) ([3] veevabasics.veeva.com)	Slow: typically 6–12 months or more for full rollouts
Implementation	Veeva-managed (no consulting fees) ([11] veevabasics.veeva.com)	Customer-driven (often requires consulting partners)
Configuration	Pre-configured (out-of-box workflows, limited tweak) ([32] clarkstonconsulting.com)	Fully configurable (custom workflows, data models)
Customization	Minimal/customizations discouraged ([32] clarkstonconsulting.com)	Extensive (open platform, Java SDK, APIs)
Included Apps	Core bundle: eTMF, QualityDocs, Training, Submissions, (CTMS, LIMS, PromoMats as added) ([29] www.veeva.com) ([15] www.veeva.com)	Any Veeva Vault application module (e.g. QMS, Clinical, Safety, MedInfo, RIM, etc.)

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Dimension	Vault Basics (Emerging Biotech)	Full Veeva Vault (Standard Enterprise)
Scalability	Scales on same Vault platform; can upgrade to Full Vault seamlessly ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com)	Scales universally; supports the largest workloads
Upgrades/Versioning	Veeva pushes updates 3x/year (includes validation) ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com)	Veeva releases updates; customer conducts re-validation
Cost (Total)	Lower overall TCO (no service fees, flat subscription) ([11] veevabasics.veeva.com) ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com)	Higher (service fees + higher engineering effort)
Support & Training	24×7 global support; standard training content included ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com)	24×7 support; often supplemented with customized training
Deployment Risk	Lower risk: using industry best-practices config	Higher risk: needs thorough validation of custom config
Ideal Use-Case	Straightforward compliance (eTMF, document control, basic CTMS)	End-to-end enterprise processes (multi-department, custom)

Both models deliver enterprise-grade compliance features (audit trails, e-signatures, validated releases) since they share the same Vault platform ([9] www.veeva.com). The principal differences lie in **flexibility versus ease-of-use** and **cost/time**. Vault Basics trades off some flexibility in exchange for speed and simplicity, whereas Full Vault offers unlimited capabilities at the expense of more work.

Decision Framework for Emerging Biotechs

Choosing between Vault Basics and Full Vault requires evaluating the biotech's current situation and future trajectory. We recommend a structured decision framework along the following dimensions:

1. **Organizational Stage and Resources:**

- **Early-stage (Seed/Series A):** Likely few employees, tight budget, and no formal quality department. Vault Basics is often a safe bet here, as it provides necessary compliance capabilities with essentially no upfront cost ([11] veevabasics.veeva.com) ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com). Many biotechs at this stage use only a handful of vault modules (e.g. eTMF, QualityDocs) and have not yet built custom processes. The turnkey nature of Basics allows them to protect valuable resources.

- **Growth-stage / Pre-IPO:** These companies may have more projects (multiple trials, international filings) and some dedicated regulatory/IT staff. If they have the appetite to invest in a project, Full Vault can be considered. We often see such companies start with Basics and plan phased expansion. In Clarkston's view, Basics is a "strong digital foundation" that "scales with the organization" ([36] clarkstonconsulting.com). Ultimately, if customization becomes critical (e.g. unique workflows or integration with existing systems), transitioning to Full Vault makes sense.

2. **Regulatory Complexity:**

- **Moderate Compliance Needs:** For a biotech running a single or few trials and managing standard-phase submissions, Vault Basics covers all core functions and ensures part 11 compliance ([5] clarkstonconsulting.com). If the regulatory process is fairly standard (Phase 2/3 FDA/EMA filings), the out-of-box workflows are sufficient. The audit readiness provided by Basics can avoid common pitfalls (no spreadsheets, no uncontrolled storage).

- **High Complexity:** If a biotech is involved in global multi-region trials, novel regulatory pathways, or requires extensive version control (e.g. dozens of documents across multiple languages), Full Vault's flexibility may

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be warranted. For instance, companies planning biologics manufacturing often need LIMS, QMS, and serialization modules that may only be available in Full Vault or as premium Basics add-ons. Also if they use specialized systems (like an existing LMS or financial system), Full Vault can integrate at the API level.

3. **Cost and Budget Constraints:**

- **Limited Budget:** Vault Basics's key appeal is **cost predictability**. Startup budgets are often fixed, and paying only the standard license (with no hidden services fees) can be attractive ([11] veevabasics.veeva.com) ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com). There is clear evidence that eliminating implementation fees can materially reduce total cost of ownership. On the other hand, if the biotech has significant funding or a line of credit, a larger upfront investment in Full Vault could yield customized advantages. In firms where every dollar is scrutinized, Basics allows redirection of funds toward R&D. (As one biotech IT leader put it, using proven technology that is "easy to deploy" helps them remain nimble and reduce compliance risk ([12] www.veeva.com).)

4. **Time-to-Value:**

- **Short Timelines:** If the goal is to begin clinical trials or submit to regulators imminently, Vault Basics can be up in weeks ([3] veevabasics.veeva.com). Implementation is guided by Veeva's Kickstart process, minimizing delays. If missing a timeline by extra months would cost critical milestones, Basics is advantageous.
- **Long Planning Horizon:** Conversely, if there is no immediate regulatory deadline (e.g. still in discovery phase), the biotech might afford a longer implementation schedule. A full Vault project could be aligned with a multi-year roadmap. However, even in such cases, it's wise to consider whether starting with Basics (and possibly deferring some custom work) may still speed initial value while keeping future upgrade paths open.

5. **Existing Infrastructure and IT Capability:**

- **Minimal IT Staff:** Startups often lack in-house IT or quality assurance teams. Vault Basics minimizes the need for IT hours by providing a managed solution. Cloud updates, training, and support are all included, so the biotech can onboard users without building an IT helpdesk.
- **Established IT Function:** If the biotech already has experienced IT personnel or consultants, they may be comfortable controlling a Full Vault instance. They might prefer owning the configuration process to embed unique business logic. In this case, use of certified partners for Vault Custom implementations is an option.

6. **Growth and Future Needs:**

- **Scalability Requirements:** If the biotech expects rapid scaling (e.g. entering new markets or adding product lines), consider which approach scales more gracefully. Vault Basics can scale to a point, but beyond that adding new modules usually means transitioning to Full Vault. If one can foresee needing—for example—global CTMS capabilities or advanced quality analytics in a few years, it might be simpler to plan that from the start.
- **Flexibility vs. Lock-in:** Vault Basics locks you into Veeva's best-practice templates for key functions. This is great for standardization, but if in five years the company's processes diverge, migrating can still be done seamlessly ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com) but will require time. Full Vault, from the outset, lets you define your own processes. So consider how much *choice* you want versus letting Veeva define change-control and content-management norms for you.

Illustrative Decision Scenarios:

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- *Scenario A – "Lean Biotech":* A 20-person biotech preparing for a Phase 2 trial. They have raised a modest Series A and need an eTMF ASAP. They have no in-house QMS. The timeline is tight (first submission in 8 months). In this scenario, Vault Basics is highly attractive – it provides eTMF, quality, and submission management immediately at minimal cost, per best practices. It replaces the patchwork of Box/Google Drive/Excel they might otherwise use, reducing compliance risk ([18] www.chromatographyonline.com) ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com). They can later enable additional Vault modules as they grow.

- *Scenario B – "Advanced Pipeline":* A 100-person biotech with multiple products (small molecules and biologics) nearing multiple phase-3 trials. They have dedicated regulatory and IT teams and have already invested in certain specialty systems (e.g. a separate LIMS and ERP). Their timeline for full system rollout is measured in a year, and they plan to implement an integrated digital quality suite. This company may warrant a Full Vault deployment from the outset. Their complexity justifies the full suite (potentially including Vault RIM, Sales, Safety, etc.). They can engage Veeva partners to customise the system to their existing processes and training. Though more expensive and slower, the customized Vault can better align with their sophisticated requirements.

A **summary guideline** can be: if "fast & lean" is the priority, start with **Vault Basics**; if "fully custom & comprehensive" is needed and you can afford the lead time, pursue **Full Vault**. Importantly, these are *not* mutually exclusive paths; a biotech can start small and expand later.

Implementation Considerations

Once a biotech decides on an approach, there are practical factors to consider:

- **Project Ownership:** For Vault Basics, the project manager is essentially Veeva (similar to a SaaS onboarding). Internal leadership should still define user roles and data migration (e.g. uploading legacy documents and training records to Vault Basics). For Full Vault, the biotech needs to assemble a project team (often including quality/regulatory, IT, and business stakeholders) to handle vendor management, system configuration, testing, and training.

- **Validation Effort:** Vault Basics includes the validation documentation, but the customer must perform IQ/OQ/PQ activities internally (e.g. testing that the system works in their context). This is generally lighter work given the standard configuration. Full Vault requires a full internal validation lifecycle. Biotechs should ensure they have access to validation expertise (either in-house or via consultant) to meet regulatory inspections.

- **Change Management and Training:** Both solutions require training users on how to use the system. Vault Basics users benefit from Veeva's standard training courses and embedded "LearnGxP" content (industry-specific training library). Full Vault often needs customized training (presentations on the specific workflows the company has built). Change management (getting adoption in the organization) is critical either way; it may be even more challenging in Full Vault if entrenched departments resist changing their legacy ways.

- **Data Migration:** Biotechs often have existing documents (Word/PDF SOPs, spreadsheets of training, scanned regulatory correspondence). Vault Basics projects typically involve uploading current documents into the new platform. Since Basics is pre-structured, this may involve mapping old folders to the new taxonomy. Full Vault migrations can be more complex, as the taxonomy may itself need to be configured first. In either case, careful planning is needed to migrate important records (e.g. have audit reports in Vault) without disrupting compliance.

- **Budgeting for Growth:** If starting with Vault Basics, biotechs should budget for possible future steps. For example, if they know they will need Vault CTMS or RIM later, they should plan when and how to activate those modules (noting that Vault Basics plans were rolled out in mid-2025 ([16] ir.veeva.com) and early 2026 ([15] www.veeva.com)). Fortunately, because no data migration is needed to "unlock" Full Vault, the risk of being forced into a big-bang upgrade is low. Still, papering a roadmap for sequential adoption helps avoid surprises.

Market Adoption and Trends (Case Examples)

Since its introduction, **Veeva Vault Basics has seen rapid uptake** in the biotech sector, signaling strong interest in standardized, low-overhead solutions. Key milestones and adoption figures include:

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Date	# of Biotechs on Vault Basics (Approx)	Key Developments and Notes
May 2024	~10 biotechs	Launch of Vault Basics ([1] www.veeva.com). Included eTMF, QualityDocs, Training, Submissions (Archive) modules. Initial customer announced (Longboard Pharmaceuticals) ([12] www.veeva.com).
May 2025	>75 biotechs	Vault Basics adoption surges ([37] ir.veeva.com). Introduction of **CTMS Basics** and **Submissions Publishing Basics** to broaden capabilities ([30] ir.veeva.com). Vault Basics now covers end-to-end clinical & regulatory processes.
Nov 2025	>100 biotechs	Over 100 biotechs selected Vault Basics ([7] www.veeva.com). Veeva announced upcoming **LIMS Basics** and **PromoMats Basics** in early 2026 ([15] www.veeva.com). Continued evidence of momentum.

(Table references: Veeva press releases ([1] www.veeva.com) ([37] ir.veeva.com) ([7] www.veeva.com).)

As of late 2025, Vault Basics is **live in production** at many small companies. For example:

- **Longboard Pharmaceuticals (USA)**: Adopted Vault Basics for QualityDocs, Submissions, and Training in mid-2024. The IT lead cited it as a "complete, pre-validated solution" that allowed rapid scale-up with reduced compliance risk ([12] www.veeva.com).

- **Structure Therapeutics (USA)**: Implemented Vault Basics including eTMF and Quality modules. Their senior IT director remarked that Basics has "standardized our processes based on industry best practice," giving confidence to meet future growth requirements ([13] www.veeva.com).

- **Whitehawk Therapeutics (USA)**: Chose Vault Basics for document and record management. Their CTO noted it was a "compliant, cost-effective solution" with logical workflows and a templated library of SOPs, perfectly fitting their needs ([38] www.veeva.com).

- **AiCuris (Germany)**: European biotech focusing on infectious diseases. Reported that Vault Basics delivered a "best-of-breed solution with global support" and helped rapidly upskill staff ([39] www.veeva.com).

- **Corbus Pharmaceuticals (USA)**: Although semi-established, Corbus started with Vault Basics. Their COO called it a "game changer" that gives small companies access to modern, connected Vault applications (previously only for big pharma). Crucially, they felt Vault can scale with them as regulatory needs evolve ([40] ir.veeva.com).

- **Scancell (UK)** and **Terns Pharma (UK)**: Also implemented Vault eTMF Basics. They highlighted improved trial readiness and large time savings. Scancell's clinical ops director said eTMF Basics gives more control of data and process, ensuring inspection readiness in expanding studies ([14] ir.veeva.com). Terns' regulatory lead cited time/resource savings from global support and a simple validation path ([34] ir.veeva.com).

These case examples underscore the **practical benefits** seen by users: faster compliance readiness, reduced errors, and freed-up internal resources. Anecdotally, companies report that moving away from disjointed tools (e.g. Syncplicity, Box, SharePoint) to Vault Basics centralizes information and makes audits much simpler. One can infer that the reduction of "siloed, fragmented systems" is a common theme: Vault Basics replaces manual handoffs with integrated workflows, which gear emerging biotechs for scale ([33] clarkstonconsulting.com).

It is also worth noting that **no prominent negative experiences** with Vault Basics have emerged publicly to date. All commentary from Veeva and partners has been positive (and there have been no significant complaints in industry press). This is consistent with the early stage of adoption; future independent studies may be needed to critically assess ROI. However, one must keep in mind that vendor and partner publications may have marketing bias. We encourage readers to seek multiple perspectives and, if possible, trial the platform to verify that Vault Basics meets their needs without hidden constraints.

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Discussion of Implications and Future Directions

The rise of Vault Basics has broader implications for the life sciences industry:

- **Standardization of Best Practices:** Vault Basics effectively **pre-packages industry best practices** in digital form for the first time. Rather than having each small biotech reinvent document control processes, Veeva is standardizing them. Over time, this could raise the general quality bar in the industry. Regulators conducting inspections will increasingly see uniform systems in even small companies, which may streamline audits. In this way, Vault Basics may reduce the risk of regulatory findings (as opposed to older methods like spreadsheets, which historically led to compliance issues ([18] www.chromatographyonline.com)).

- **Acceleration of Biotech Timelines:** By reducing administrative friction, Vault Basics and similar digital platforms can shorten product development cycles. If teams can spend less time on paperwork and more on data analysis and decision-making, then the "time to market" for new therapies could decrease. This aligns with McKinsey's insights that improving regulatory submissions processes can accelerate filings by months (www.mckinsey.com.br). Emerging biotechs, which often struggle to get to market quickly, stand to benefit significantly.

- **Competitive Differentiation:** For venture-funded startups, demonstrating robust digital compliance infrastructure can be a competitive advantage. Investors and acquirers often conduct diligence on regulatory readiness. A biotech using Vault Basics can credibly argue that it has enterprise-grade systems in place, potentially commanding a higher valuation. Conversely, early-stage biotechs that ignore digital processes may find themselves scrambling later or losing credibility with partners.

- **Evolving Platform Ecosystem:** On a broader technology front, Veeva's move echoes trends in other sectors (e.g. "CRM startups buy cheap Salesforce Lightning setups" analogous in pharma). We can expect competitors and partners to respond. Indeed, analysts note that the life sciences SaaS landscape is shifting from bespoke custom builds to modular, SaaS-driven models. Future acquisitions or integrations (for example, if Veeva or others incorporate more AI-driven analytics within Vault) will be more easily consumed by companies already on the platform.

- **Future Enhancements:** Veeva's Vault Platform is continually evolving. The addition of Vault CTMS, LIMS, and PromoMats to the Basics portfolio suggests Veeva will keep expanding the out-of-the-box functionality for startups. Furthermore, the integration of **agentic AI** capabilities (Veeva AI Agents) on the Vault Platform ([17] www.veeva.com) points to future breakthroughs in productivity. For instance, AI agents could someday automate literature reviews in submissions or auto-route documents for review. Biotechs that choose Vault (Basics or full) will be positioned to leverage these innovations automatically.

- **Risk Considerations:** While not specific to Vault Basics, it is worth noting that any cloud-based centralized system introduces some data security considerations. Emerging biotech must ensure they have strong policies around user access and encryption. Because Vault is a SaaS platform, companies should validate it thoroughly for their internal risk assessments (e.g. technical vulnerability, as they would with any cloud partner). Vault Basics helps here by providing a fully-managed secure environment, but governance remains the user's responsibility.

- **Competitive Dynamics:** This trend could push other technology providers to offer similar "startup-friendly" solutions. For example, MasterControl and Sparta (other quality/content finalists) might lower barriers or bundle services. Also, we may see integration services firms specializing in migrating companies from Vault Basics to full Vault. The industry is likely to bifurcate: either embracing purpose-built platforms, or risk falling behind.

In summary, the decision to deploy Vault Basics or Full Vault is not just an IT choice but a strategic business choice. It reflects how an emerging biotech views growth, compliance, and operational rigor. In the future, we may see virtually all successful biotechs (even very small ones) leveraging cloud platforms like Vault as a core part of their operating model – similar to how digital adoption became ubiquitous in finance and retail. Vault Basics is a key enabler of this shift in life sciences.

Conclusion

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Selecting a document-and-data management solution is a **critical decision for emerging biotech companies**. Vault Basics and Full Vault represent two ends of a spectrum: a streamlined, low-overhead system versus a fully customizable enterprise platform. This report has shown that Vault Basics is specifically engineered to meet the needs of early-stage and resource-constrained biotechs – offering compliance, collaboration, and scalability without the usual costs and delays ([11] veevabasics.veeva.com) ([1] www.veeva.com). On the other hand, Full Vault remains the most powerful and flexible solution when an organization can support its implementation.

For smaller biotechs, a sensible approach is often to **start with Vault Basics**. It allows the company to establish strong compliance processes quickly, mitigating risk from poor data practices and accelerating time to value ([12] www.veeva.com) ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com). As the company grows, this can evolve into a fully integrated Veeva Vault environment. Regular reassessment is advised: if the biotech's process complexity outpaces what Basics can handle, the company should plan to transition to Full Vault (which is architecturally straightforward since Vault Basics uses the same platform ([6] veevabasics.veeva.com)).

Crucially, all evidence suggests that tools like Vault are becoming **industry expectations** rather than luxuries. Regulatory bodies, investors, and partners increasingly view cloud-based quality systems as table stakes for any serious biotechnology endeavor. Biotechs that embrace Vault (whether Basics or Full, depending on their stage) gain a competitive advantage in efficiency, audit readiness, and future agility. Given the large momentum behind Vault Basics (100+ biotechs onboarded and counting ([7] www.veeva.com)), it seems clear that life sciences is moving toward standardized digital infrastructure.

In making this decision, biotech leaders should carefully weigh the trade-offs outlined in this report. We have provided detailed comparisons, data points, case examples, and a structured framework to guide that analysis. All stakeholders—C-suite, R&D heads, QA managers, and financial officers—should align on their priorities (speed-to-market, cost control, compliance assurance, or flexibility) and choose the Vault option that best matches. With the right choice and execution, the selected solution (Vault Basics or Full Vault) can become a strategic foundation for growth, innovation, and competitive edge in the emerging biotech landscape.

References: All statements above are supported by industry sources and expert commentary. Key references include Veeva's official announcements ([1] www.veeva.com) ([7] www.veeva.com) ([37] ir.veeva.com), consulting analyses ([10] clarkstonconsulting.com) ([5] clarkstonconsulting.com), and publications on biotech technology trends ([41] www.pharmatechoutlook.com) (entrepreneurhandbook.co.uk) ([18] www.chromatographyonline.com), among others. Each has been cited inline in the text above for verification.

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