

Apple American Serves Better Backups with ExaGrid's Disk-based Backup with Data Deduplication Solution

Customer Overview

Apple American Group LLC owns and operates approximately 205 Applebee's Neighborhood Grill and Bar restaurants in Ohio, Indiana, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Washington State, California and Nevada. With \$440 million in 2008 sales and directly employing over 12,000 people, Apple American is the largest Applebee's franchise, and is one of the 10 largest franchises of any concept in the world. Founded in 1998 by Chairman and CEO Greg Flynn, Apple American is committed to growth. It is the top franchise developer in the Applebee's system, opening & acquiring over 50 new restaurants in the last 24 months.

Fast Data Growth Taxed Tape Libraries

The IT staff at Apple American is responsible for backing up data for its corporate offices as well as its 205 Applebee's restaurants across the country. With their data constantly growing, they were exceeding their backup windows, which were running well into the next work day. "Our tape library was maxed out and we were going through a ton of tapes. Not only that, but it was taking an extremely long time to restore files because our tapes were being stored off site," said Leslie McMasters, Network Administrator for Apple American. "We needed a scalable solution that could reduce our reliance on tape."

Cost-Effective ExaGrid System Reduces Reliance on Tape, Built-in Data Deduplication Maximizes Use of Disk Space

After considering solutions from several other vendors, Apple American chose a disk-based backup system with data deduplication from ExaGrid. The ExaGrid systems work along with Symantec Backup Exec™, Apple American's existing backup application.

"There was a lot more flexibility in the ExaGrid product than in the other systems we looked at. The ExaGrid was cost effective and its built-in data deduplication technology will enable us to really maximize disk space," said McMasters. "We were particularly interested in ExaGrid's post-process deduplication approach to backups. It made much more sense than the in-line approach we looked at," she said.

ExaGrid's post-process data deduplication processes data after it has landed on the system, ensuring the fastest backup times possible. ExaGrid combines last backup compression along with data deduplication, which stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. This unique approach reduces the disk space required by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, delivering unparalleled cost savings and performance. ExaGrid delivers extremely fast backup performance because data is written directly to disk, and data deduplication is performed post-process after the data is stored to reduce storage consumption.

Since installing the ExaGrid system, the company has reduced its reliance on tape and has reduced its nightly backup times by 50 percent. The company has also been able to save a considerable amount of money on tape and on labor costs.

"Since installing the ExaGrid, our backup times have been cut by 50 percent. Additionally, restoring data is much more streamlined and our restore times are unbelievably quick," said McMasters

Responsive Customer Support

ExaGrid comes packaged as a turnkey appliance and was designed to be easy to deploy and manage and to deliver maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components. All components are fully supported by ExaGrid's trained, in-house engineers dedicated to individual accounts.

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Leslie McMasters
Network Administrator
Apple American



"We've been able to significantly reduce our backup times and our jobs are now completed well within our backup window. We've been extremely pleased with our ExaGrid support team. They have worked closely with us to make our backups faster and more efficient. The support team has also been incredibly responsive. They use their expertise to get to the root of a problem so that things get resolved quickly. Not only are they knowledgeable about the ExaGrid, but also our backup application," said McMasters.

Scalability to Accommodate Data Growth

ExaGrid's GRID computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, different sized configurations can be mixed and matched into a single GRID system with capacities of up to a 100TB full backup plus retention. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

"The ExaGrid system has taken the headaches out of our daily backup processes. I monitor the system each and every day, but I don't have to worry anymore about our backups. The ExaGrid system enables us to work more effectively because we can now spend the time we used to spend on backups on higher priority things," said McMasters.

ExaGrid and Backup Exec

Symantec Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high-performance, and certified disk-to-disk-to-tape backup and recovery – including continuous data protection for Microsoft Exchange, SQL, file servers, and workstations. High-performance agents and options provide fast, flexible, granular protection and scalable management of local and remote server backups.

Organizations using Symantec Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Symantec Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Symantec Backup Exec, using ExaGrid in place of a tape backup system is as easy as pointing existing backup jobs at a NAS share on the ExaGrid system. Backup jobs are sent directly from the backup application to the ExaGrid for onsite backup to disk.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with byte-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's byte-level data deduplication technology stores only the changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies, reducing the amount of disk needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, resulting in a solution that is 25 to 30% the cost of standard SATA drives.

The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with popular backup applications, so organizations can retain their investment in existing applications and processes. ExaGrid servers can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery. For more information about ExaGrid, please visit our website www.ExaGrid.com or call us at 1-800-868-6985.

ABOUT EXAGRID

ExaGrid is the leader in cost-effective disk-based backup solutions. A highly scalable system that works with existing backup applications, the ExaGrid system is ideal for companies looking to quickly eliminate the hassles of tape backup while reducing their existing backup windows. ExaGrid's innovative approach minimizes the amount of data to be stored by providing standard data compression for the most recent backups along with byte-level data deduplication technology for all previous backups. Customers can deploy ExaGrid at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories or for disaster recovery.

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