City of Ft. Lauderdale Cuts Backup Times in Half with ExaGrid

Customer Overview

The City of Fort Lauderdale is situated on the southeast coast of Florida, centrally located between Miami and Palm Beach. Encompassing more than 33 square miles with a population of nearly 180,000, Fort Lauderdale is the largest of Broward County's 30 municipalities and the seventh largest city in Florida. Embraced by the Atlantic Ocean, New River and a myriad of scenic inland waterways, Fort Lauderdale truly lives up to its designation as the "Venice of America."

Legacy Tape Drive, Outdated Backup Software Resulted in Long Backup Times

As the Manager of Technical Services for the City of Ft. Lauderdale, Jay Stacy is responsible for ensuring that the city's data is properly backed up each and every night. However their outdated tape drive used to protect the city's data was making it difficult to finish the backup jobs before the over 1200 city employees arrived at work each morning.

"Our backup jobs were not completing on time and were affecting our ability to properly protect our data. We don't begin our incremental backups until 10pm each night and with the growing amount of data it became impossible to complete the backup job before the start of business the next day," said Stacy. "Towards the end, we would just stop the backup jobs if they didn't succeed during the allotted backup window because our network would slow down to a crawl."

ExaGrid Significantly Reduces Backup and Restore Times

Stacy and the rest of the IT team decided to look for a new disk based solution that utilized data deduplication. The city eventually chose a two-site ExaGrid disk-based backup system with data deduplication and along with Symantec's Veritas NetBackup ™ software.

"We are required by our procurement department to issue a request for proposal (RFP) when we need to purchase new systems. When the RFP's came back in and we had a chance to review them, it became clear that there wasn't another solution on the market that compared to the ExaGrid in price, performance or scalability," said Stacy.

"The ExaGrid system was the only solution that offered hardware deduplication, and we felt that its post-process approach would give us the fastest and most efficient backups," he said.

Since installing the ExaGrid system, the City of Ft. Lauderdale has been able to reduce its nightly backup times by half. Full backups, which had been taking nearly 48 hours to complete, are now finished within 12 hours.

Speedy Backups and Restores, Ability to Scale for Future Growth

"We're amazed at the speed of our backups. Our backups run so quickly and smoothly that we're able to complete them all without affecting system performance the next morning," said Stacy. "In addition to that, restoring files is much simpler. Before installing the ExaGrid, we would have to send someone off site to find the tape and bring it back – which could take hours. Now, we can restore files in just minutes."

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 data.

> "We're amazed at how much our backup times have been reduced and how quickly we're able to restore files. Since installing the ExaGrid, our backup times have been cut in half and we're able to restore some files almost instantaneously."
>
> Jay Stacy
> Manager, Technical Services
> City of Ft. Lauderdale

EXAGRID SYSTEMS

Superior Management and Customer Support, Scalability for the Future

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.

As the city's data grows, the ExaGrid can easily be expanded to handle additional data. 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 100TB. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

"We like to plan ahead, and the ExaGrid system will enable us to incrementally expand the system as our data grows," said Stacy. "The ExaGrid system was cost-effective to acquire, and the fact that we can scale up our existing unit to handle more data will make it an even better value in the long run. I really can't say enough about the system. It has made our backups much more reliable and efficient and we're spending far less time troubleshooting. The ExaGrid was the best choice for our environment."

ExaGrid and Symantec's Veritas NetBackup

Symantec's Veritas NetBackup delivers high performance data protection that scales to protect the largest UNIX, Windows, Linux and NetWare environments. With complete protection from remote office to data center to vault, NetBackup offers a single console for all backup and recovery operations.

Organizations using Veritas NetBackup can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as NetBackup, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running NetBackup, 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 de-duplication 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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