

Commonwealth of Massachusetts IT Division Optimizes Backups and Restores With ExaGrid's Disk Backup With Deduplication System

Customer Overview

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Information Technology Division (ITD) enables agencies to deliver high quality, efficient and effective services to their customers by providing a range of centralized IT services; overseeing IT policies, standards and architecture; and promoting cross-agency collaboration and adoption of shared services.

Fast Growing Data Puts Strain on Tape System, Causes Unreliable Backups and Restores

As data requirements for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Information Technology Division grew, the department found it more and more difficult to keep up with the organization's backup demands using tape. Long backup times and failed backups and restores put a strain on the department.

Daily backups, which were done as differentials, were manageable but full backups and restores were taking much too long according to Senior Network Administrator Paul Keplin.

"Restoring files was also problematic as we had to constantly bring tapes back on site. It took forever to restore files. Not to mention we had the added cost of storing those tapes off site," said Keplin.

According to Keplin the group finally came to a crossroads and decided that a change needed to be made.

"We decided to look for a new solution that could reduce our backup and restore times and give us the ability to increase the amount of data we kept onsite," said Keplin. "Our tape system did not have the capacity or speed to handle the amount of load we had."

Cost-effective and Scalable Solution from ExaGrid Works With Existing Backup Application

After looking at several solutions, Keplin and his team selected ExaGrid's disk-based backup with data deduplication solution. The system works alongside the organization's existing backup application, EMC NetWorker.

"The ExaGrid system gave us what we were looking for and enabled us to retain our investment in NetWorker," said Keplin. "The two systems work so smoothly together that there was virtually no learning curve for us."

Keplin also said that ExaGrid's ability to easily scale for future data and company growth was a key factor in the final decision to make the switch to ExaGrid.

Data Deduplication Maximizes Disk Space, Slashes Backup Times, Speeds Up Restores

ExaGrid's data deduplication technology reduces the amount of data stored on the system and helps increase data retention.

"We were blown away with ExaGrid's built-in data deduplication technology. The system allows us to optimize our disk space so that we can maximize the amount of data we retain."

Since installing the ExaGrid system, the center has significantly increased the speed and reliability of its restores. Full data backups, which contain more data than they did before with the division's tape system, have been reduced and restores have become much faster and reliable.

"Our backups and restores are a thousand times better now with the ExaGrid," said Keplin. "Now, I can fully restore a file in just a couple of minutes as compared to hours or days."

Scalability to Meet Growing Data Requirements

The ExaGrid system can easily be scaled to meet increased demand. ExaGrid's GRID computing software makes the system highly scalable, and

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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.

Top-Notch Technical Support

ExaGrid's industry-leading customer support team is staffed by trained, in-house engineers who are dedicated to individual accounts. The ExaGrid system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

"ExaGrid's technical support team is great. I have a great relationship with our dedicated support rep. He truly understands the system and the ins and outs of our IT environment," said Keplin. "I also find it comforting that the ExaGrid system itself sends out system updates or failure notifications directly to me so that I'm aware of any issue that may arise. It gives me total peace of mind."

ExaGrid and EMC NetWorker

The EMC NetWorker family provides fast and flexible backup and recovery, with an intuitive user interface and policy-based backup engine that helps automate and simplify the entire backup and recovery process. NetWorker's powerful snapshot management provides instant data protection and rapid recovery by giving you complete control of third-party snapshot tools.

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

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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