

Aevenia Powers Up Data Retention/Storage and Speeds Backups with ExaGrid System

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Mike Cole
IT Manager
Aevenia, Inc.

Customer Overview

Aevenia, Inc. is the premier energy and electrical construction company in the Midwest. The company offers a wide range of services, including renewable energy, transmission and distribution, substations, fiber optics, underground construction, data communications, urban telecom and power and electrical contracting. Founded in 1967, Aevenia is headquartered in Moorhead, Minnesota and is an Otter Tail Company (OTTR).

Growing Data Volumes Hinder Retention Policy Compliance

The IT department at Aevenia had been backing up the company’s data to disk, but without data reduction, the amount of data held on disk was mushrooming out of control, and retention had become a big problem.

“We had 2TB of storage locally, but without data deduplication, we weren’t able to keep up with our retention policies,” said Mike Cole, IT manager at Aevenia. “We were at the point where we had to pick and choose how long we could store each set of data in order to keep the system from crashing under the burden.”

ExaGrid’s Data Deduplication Technology Maximizes Disk Space, Delivers Faster Backups

“When we began to evaluate the ExaGrid system, we were immediately impressed with its data deduplication technology,” said Cole. “We liked the fact that the data deduplication happened after the backup landed on the system. It helps keep backup times down, and it keeps the workload off the server.”

Aevenia backs up approximately 1TB of data to the ExaGrid system, including its SharePoint, SQL, Exchange and application servers. The ExaGrid system works with the company’s existing backup application, Symantec Backup Exec. Currently, the company keeps 30 days of retention and has an average 12:1 data deduplication ratio. “The ExaGrid system is very effective at

reducing our data. We’re able to maximize disk space and meet our retention goals,” said Cole. “We just set the retention periods for each data set and let the ExaGrid do its job. Because the ExaGrid performs the data deduplication after the data lands on the system, our backups really fly. Our full backup times have been cut in half and now take between seven and eight hours.”

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. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid’s byte-level data deduplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Fast and Easy Installation, Proactive Customer Support

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



According to Cole, "The installation was a breeze. The documentation was very good, and it detailed everything I needed to do. ExaGrid's customer support is wonderful. Right from the start, I was contacted by our ExaGrid support engineer even before I was able to dig into the install. We set up a WebEx session, he walked me through some of the settings and configurations, and gave a great overview of the product. Our support engineer is also very proactive. Just the other day he contacted me about an update. The support team is very knowledgeable and easy to deal with."

Scalability to Meet Increased Demand, Flexibility to Add Second System to Enhance Disaster Recovery

According to Cole, "One of our strategic initiatives this year is to standardize our backups and to come up with a cleaner way to replicate data offsite. Currently, we're writing data to disk offsite and then storing the disk, but we're expecting our data to grow so we're considering adding a second ExaGrid system for offsite data replication. Also, as our backup demands increase, we can easily scale the system to handle more data. It's great to have the flexibility to add an additional system for data replication or to add more capacity."

As Aevenia's backup demands increase, the ExaGrid system can easily scale to handle more 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 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 appliances is automatic.

"The ExaGrid system fit right into our existing environment, and it has enabled us to meet our retention policies while making our backups much faster," said Cole. "We're also happy that we can easily expand capacity of the current system or add a second site. It's a great solution."

About ExaGrid Systems, Inc.

Customers worldwide depend on ExaGrid Systems to solve their backup problems—effectively and permanently. ExaGrid's disk-based, scale-out GRID architecture adjusts to increasing backup demands due to constantly growing data volumes. It is the only solution that combines compute with capacity as well as a unique landing zone to permanently shorten backup windows and eliminate expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at www.exagrid.com.

ExaGrid and Symantec 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.

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 appliances can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.

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.

For more information about ExaGrid, please visit us at www.exagrid.com or call us at 1-800-868-6985.