

ExaGrid and Veeam are the Perfect Combination for Virtualized Environment

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

CTPartners

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Ed Jarold
Senior Systems Engineer

Key Benefits:

- Backup window reduced by as much as 50%
- Restoring an entire VM is as easy as 'point and click'
- GRID architecture can be easily leveraged to expand the existing system or add one or more offsite systems for disaster recovery
- Assigned customer support engineer means CTPartners speaks with the same engineer who is knowledgeable about their specific environment

Customer Overview

CTPartners is a leading performance-driven executive search firm serving clients across the globe. Committed to a philosophy of partnering with its clients, CTPartners offers a proven record in C-suite, senior executive, and board searches, as well as expertise serving private equity and venture capital firms. Headquartered in New York, CTPartners has 27 offices in 17 countries.

Move to Virtualization Led to Need for a New Backup Solution

CTPartners had been backing up its datacenter to a combination of tape and disk using a legacy backup application designed for physical environments, but when the organization virtualized its infrastructure, the company's IT staff determined that the time was right to look for a new backup solution.

"Our data was growing quickly and our backup times were spiraling out of control," said Ed Jarold, senior systems engineer for CTPartners. "We really needed a new solution tailored for virtualized environments with top-notch deduplication and the ability to deliver faster backups and restores."

System Provides Fast Backups, Instant VM Recoveries

The company began the process by selecting Veeam Backup & Recovery as its new backup application and then set out to find the perfect target. After briefly looking at a solution from EMC Data Domain, CTPartners decided to choose the ExaGrid system.

"We looked at the EMC Data Domain solution but were turned off by its cost. When the Veeam folks recommended we look at the ExaGrid system, we were immediately intrigued by its post-process data deduplication technology and the way it backs data up to a landing zone before deduplication begins, enabling instant VM recovery," Jarold said.

With ExaGrid and Veeam, CTPartners has the ability to run a VM directly from the ExaGrid in the event of a primary storage outage or other issue that causes the primary storage to become unavailable. Data is backed up to ExaGrid's landing zone, a high-speed cache that retains the most recent backups in complete form. Then, using Veeam's Instant VM Recovery, a VM can be run directly from the backup on the ExaGrid appliance. Once the primary storage environment has been brought back to a working state, the VM running on the ExaGrid system can then be restored to primary storage for continued operation.

"We're more confident in our ability to recover from a disaster, and we like that we have 'point and click' access to restore entire VMs," said Jarold. "And because the ExaGrid backs up the data to a landing zone, our backup times are extremely fast. For example, our Exchange backups have been reduced from 13 hours to less than 6 hours. It's made a tremendous difference."

Data Deduplication Reduces Amount of Data Stored

Jarold said that since installing the ExaGrid system, CTPartners is experiencing data deduplication ratios as high as 4.86:1, which helps to maximize retention.

"We are currently storing 25TB of data on the ExaGrid system and it's only consuming 8TB of disk space," he said. "Our users like to keep data forever, and now, we don't have

any issues with retention because the ExaGrid is so effective at reducing it.”

ExaGrid combines standard compression along with zone-level data deduplication, which stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. 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 zone-level data deduplication technology moves only the changes from backup to backup, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Flexibility to Grow

CTPartners currently backs up data from its 26 offices in 17 different countries to its Cleveland, Ohio datacenter via Microsoft’s DFS-R and then backs up the root VM to the ExaGrid via Veeam. The company is considering installing a second ExaGrid system in its Pittsburgh datacenter and replicating data between the two sites for disaster recovery.

“One of the nice things about the ExaGrid system is that we can choose to deploy a second system offsite for disaster recovery at any point in time and we can also easily leverage its GRID architecture to expand the system to handle more backup data if the need arises in the future,” said Jarold.

ExaGrid uses a GRID-based configuration, where each appliance contains processing power, memory, bandwidth, and disk. When the system needs to expand, additional appliance nodes are attached to the GRID, bringing with them additional processing power, memory, bandwidth, and disk. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all the aspects of performance as the amount of data grows, and you are only paying for the amount of processing power, memory and bandwidth as you need it. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliance nodes are added to the GRID, the ExaGrid automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the GRID.

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.

Knowledgeable 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 assigned to individual accounts. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

“ExaGrid’s customer support engineers are pretty sharp. I like that when I call into support, I don’t have to go into a big, tiered call system with different layers. I talk with the same ExaGrid engineer every time,” said Jarold.

Jarold said that he would recommend the ExaGrid system to other organizations transitioning from physical to virtual environments.

“The combination of ExaGrid and Veeam is ideal for companies with virtualized environments,” he said. “We’ve been extremely pleased with the solution.”

ExaGrid and Veeam

The combination of ExaGrid’s and Veeam’s industry-leading virtual server data protection solutions allows customers to utilize Veeam Backup & Replication in VMware, vSphere, and Microsoft Hyper-V virtual environments on ExaGrid’s disk-based backup system. This combination provides fast backups and efficient data storage as well as replication to an offsite location for disaster recovery.



The ExaGrid system fully leverages Veeam Backup & Replication’s built-in backup to disk capabilities and ExaGrid’s zone-level data deduplication for additional data reduction (and cost reduction) over standard disk solutions. Customers can use Veeam Backup & Replication’s built-in source-side deduplication in concert with ExaGrid’s disk-based backup system with zone-level deduplication to further shrink backups.