CenterState Bank of Florida Chooses ExaGrid over DD for Price/Performance

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>
> **Jamie Orth**
> **Vice President of IT**
> **CenterState Bank of Florida**

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid works seamlessly with bank's existing backup applications, Veeam Backup & Recovery and Symantec Backup Exec with OST – a 'big plus'
- Data reduction maximized using Veeam's source-side deduplication together with ExaGrid
- System has easily scaled as bank's backup intake has grown while still maintaining backup windows

Customer Overview

CenterState Bank is a Florida-based community bank providing online banking, commercial lending, residential mortgages, and investment services from 56 branches throughout the state as well as a correspondent division that services over 600 relationships in 26 states.

Bank Revamps Backup Infrastructure to Improve Backup Windows and Restores

CenterState Bank had been backing up to tape and was continually outside their backup window. In addition, response time for data restore requests wasn't what the bank needed it to be.

"We had a whole host of issues with our tape backups. Our backup jobs were running way too long and they often failed due to missed windows or the unreliability of tape. Also, we needed to improve our response time for restores," said Jamie Orth, vice president of information technology at CenterState Bank of Florida. "After taking a hard look at our whole infrastructure, we decided to completely rebuild our backup architecture to incorporate disk-based backup and software capable of effectively backing up our virtualized environment."

The bank decided to purchase the ExaGrid system after also looking at an EMC Data Domain solution. Orth said that ExaGrid's lower price point, post-process data deduplication and superior scalability factored into the decision. The bank also chose Veeam Backup & Replication software for virtual machine backups and continues to use Symantec Backup Exec for physical servers.

"To begin with, the ExaGrid system had a far better price point, and we liked that we could use Veeam for our virtual servers and Backup Exec for our physical servers along with its OST plug in. Also, we have other backups that we could run using SQL dump, and having the integration of all those at the application level was a big plus," Orth said.

Post-Process Data Deduplication Speeds Backups

Orth said that after comparing the two, ExaGrid's post-process data deduplication technology came out on top of EMC Data Domain's inline approach.

"We carefully researched each product's data deduplication approach, and we felt that ExaGrid's post-process data deduplication would deliver faster backup times than an inline process," he said. "Efficiency and data reduction are further enhanced because we use the ExaGrid together with Veeam's built-in source-side deduplication, which further shrinks the data."

ExaGrid combines standard compression along with zone-level 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 zone-level data deduplication technology moves only the changes from backup to backup, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Faster Backups, Expandability to Grow Along with Backup Requirements

CenterState Bank installed one ExaGrid system in its primary datacenter and a

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second in its disaster recovery site. Since installing the system, the bank has expanded the system and now has a total of five units. Backup times have significantly decreased and are now fully completed well within the bank's backup windows.

"Our backups are now completed flawlessly each and every night. Even if we have a backup failure due to a network communication issue, for instance, we're still able to reset the job in plenty of time for it to finish well within our backup window," said Orth. "As our backup intake has grown, we've been able to easily scale our ExaGrid system while still maintaining our backup windows."

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.

Tight Integration with Veeam Delivers Faster Restores in Virtualized Environment

Orth said that restores are faster and more reliable as well.

"We're using Veeam's one-click restore feature, and we've given the ability to restore files right to our help desk so they don't even have to escalate a ticket up to our engineering team. For more complex virtual restores, we use a combination of Veeam and ExaGrid," he said. "For example, we recently changed out our SAN infrastructure and encountered some issues. We made a business continuity decision to restore the virtual machine and run it from the ExaGrid landing space. We were able to do the restore and provide our users with an available server in less than five minutes."

Orth said that ExaGrid's streamlined interface and ease of use helps to minimize administration time. Originally, the bank hired a fulltime engineer to manage backups, but managing the ExaGrid system takes only about ten percent of his time.

"With the ExaGrid system, we don't have to constantly replenish tapes or manage backups like we did before. One of the big value-adds is that we've been able to redeploy an engineer we originally hired to do backups," he said.

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.

"We're an in-house shop in almost everything we do, and we with most of the products in our datacenter, we try to figure out how to resolve an issue ourselves before we call into support. That's not the case with ExaGrid. We've had a great experience with ExaGrid's support; our engineer is easy to reach and is always prepared to answer any question we have," said Orth. "We've been extremely pleased with the whole experience of owning the ExaGrid system, from performance to support, and highly recommend it."

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.

ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec

Symantec Backup Exec is the gold standard in Windows data recovery, providing 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. It also supports single-drive libraries, encryption, and disaster recovery. High-performance agents and options provide fast, flexible, granular protection and recovery, 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. Backup jobs are sent directly from the backup application to the ExaGrid for onsite backup to disk.

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

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