

Charles County Sheriff Enforces Improved Data Backup and Recovery Plan with ExaGrid

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Eric Halvorsen
Deputy Director of MIS
Charles County Sheriff's Office

Customer Overview

The Charles County Sheriff's Office in Charles County, Maryland provides police services, court security and security and operations for its county prison system. By combining traditional police work with innovative techniques and the most state-of-the-art technology implementation, the Charles County Sheriff's Office provides the highest levels of law enforcement services in the state of Maryland.

Unreliable Restores and Lengthy Backup Windows Lead to Frustration with Tape

The IT department at the Charles County Sheriff's Office is responsible for a wide range of technologies, from the computer aided dispatch software used for emergency 911 services to fire, EMS and police communication and tracking systems, police records management, laptops and video cameras in its police cruisers, its document imaging system, as well as its mug shot system, website and intranet.

The IT staff at the Charles County Sheriff's Office struggled to complete backups with its 21-tape Dell tape library system.

"Backups had become a huge problem for us because of the mechanics of dealing with tape," said Eric Halvorsen, deputy director of MIS for the Charles County Sheriff's Office. "We would run the jobs overnight, and the next day we'd come in and realize that they hadn't been completed. The system was simply not reliable, and we would often try to do a restore and then realize that the backup hadn't been completed properly. It was a real hassle."

ExaGrid's Data Deduplication Dramatically Reduces the Amount of Data Stored, Speeds Backups and Restore Times

"We realized that we needed to do improve both the reliability of our backups and

reduce our backup window, said Halvorsen. "We considered backing up to straight SATA, but we would have had to purchase a huge system."

"It was clear to us that we had to move to disk-based backup. We chose ExaGrid in part because of the way the system handles data compression, and we have been thrilled with the results," said Halvorsen.

ExaGrid's unique byte-level data de-duplication technology stores only the changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies, reducing the amount of disk space required.

"We have been very impressed with ExaGrid's approach to data compression," said Halvorsen. "If only a small amount of data is changed in a document, our incremental backup would have saved the entire file all over again. The ExaGrid only saves the changes, and it's made a huge difference in the size and speed of our backups."

After installing ExaGrid's disk-based backup system, the IT staff has seen the nightly backups reduced from nearly eight hours to under two hours. Additionally, the weekly backup of its document imaging system has been reduced from over 19 hours to six.

"Our document imaging system alone used to take 19 hours to backup. It was frustrating because some of the other backup jobs would just crawl along, even though we had gigabit connectivity through the network to the tape machine," said Halvorsen. "Now, the

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document imaging system takes only six hours to backup. The ExaGrid system has made a huge difference.”

Faster Restores with ExaGrid

In addition to fast backups, restores times have also been faster. “Restores have been unbelievably fast. We recently had to perform a restore of a 3.5 GB directory from our CAD system and it was flawless,” said Halvorsen. “It was like night and day compared to fighting with our old tape backup system.” “The ExaGrid system is working extremely well, and it works seamlessly with our existing Symantec Backup Exec software™,” Halvorsen said. “We now have a backup solution that’s reliable and we don’t have to worry about tape failures.”

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.

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. In a network running Symantec Backup Exec, 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.

“We have a massive technology implementation here, and one of the things we always worried about was backups,” said Halvorsen. “We were always fighting with our old tape backup system to get backups performed correctly. Now, our backups work perfectly every time.”

Cost Effective and Scalable Data Protection

ExaGrid’s turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with compression and byte-level data de-duplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid’s byte-level data de-duplication technology stores only the changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies, reducing the amount of disk space needed to at least 20 to 1, and resulting in a solution that is 25 to 30% the cost of standard SATA drives.

ExaGrid is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with popular backup applications, so organizations can retain their investment in existing applications.

ExaGrid can be used at a primary site and at a second site to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with a live data repository or for disaster recovery. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid’s byte-level data de-duplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

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

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.