

ExaGrid Helps Concur to Keep Pace with Backup Demands and Data Growth

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Sean Graver
Storage Architect

Key Benefits:

- Data restored faster, accessed immediately on landing zone
- Scalability of system fits Concur's data protection strategy
- System easy to install and maintain, daily emails provide updates on backup jobs
- ExaGrid's replication abilities key for plans to eliminate offsite tape vaults
- ExaGrid support engineers 'go the extra mile'

Customer Overview

Concur is the leading provider of integrated travel and expense management solutions. Concur's easy-to-use Web-based and mobile solutions help companies and their employees control costs and save time. Concur's systems adapt to individual employee preferences and scale to meet the needs of companies from small to large. The company is based in Redmond, Washington with offices across North America, Europe and Asia Pacific.

Long Backups and Restores Due to Maxed-Out Disk-Based Backup Device

Customers rely on Concur to house and protect critical travel and expense data. Concur's IT staff had been successfully using a disk-based backup device, but when the amount of backup data exceeded the system's capacity, the staff realized that the solution couldn't scale to meet the organization's needs, and backup speed and retention became major issues.

"We had been using a disk-based backup device with a single controller, but we couldn't add any more disk trays to the system," said Sean Graver, storage architect at Concur. "We liked the convenience of backing up to disk, but we had reached the point where we could only get three consecutive days of backups because the device would get bogged down doing deduplication and need another four days to catch up. We began reverting back to tape as a primary target but wanted another disk-based solution with the scalability, data deduplication, and speed to keep up with our demands."

ExaGrid's Data Deduplication Delivers Faster Backups and Restores

After looking at several other solutions on the market, Concur chose a disk-based backup system with data deduplication from ExaGrid. The ExaGrid system integrates well with Concur's existing backup application.

"One of the things that struck me immediately about the ExaGrid system was its data deduplication," said Graver. "The fact that



it backs up data to a landing zone that is partitioned off from other processes makes a huge difference for us. We perform many restores each day, and we pride ourselves on responding quickly. With our old system, our restores were often difficult because the data deduplication process took so long, and it slowed down the system. With the ExaGrid, we have immediate access to data on the landing zone. It doesn't have to be rehydrated like it does with other solutions, so restores can be processed as quickly as possible."

At one location, Concur stores over 1PB of data on the ExaGrid system in 80TB of disk space. 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 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 changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

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Option for Data Replication at a Later Date

To date, Concur has installed ExaGrid systems at multiple locations, and Graver said while tape is still used for offsite vaulting, future plans call for leveraging the built-in replication capabilities. "We liked that we could start backing up data locally and then move to replication at some point in the future," he said. "We're looking forward to the day when we can eliminate the movement of tapes offsite."

Easy Management and Administration, Superior Customer Support

Graver said that he finds managing and administering the ExaGrid system straightforward and uncomplicated. "There's really not much to do in terms of management. I get daily emails at 6:00 a.m. that provide me with a snapshot of how things ran overnight. The email tells me everything I need to know," he said. "Maintaining the system is easy, too. I recently had to replace a drive, and it took no time at all."

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.

"The ExaGrid was really easy to install. I set up the first system myself with some help from our reseller and have installed all the subsequent ones too. Our ExaGrid customer support engineer has been a tremendous help to us and is always available if we need assistance," said Graver. "With ExaGrid, support is second to none. We do business with many technology companies, and their support can't compare to what we get from ExaGrid. They go above and beyond to make sure we're happy."

Scalability to Handle Increased Demands without 'Forklift Upgrade'

The ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate more data as the company's data grows. ExaGrid's computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, different sized configurations can be mixed and matched into a single system with capacities of up to a 1PB full backup

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides hyper-converged secondary storage (HCSS) for backup with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone enables the fastest backups, restores, and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable system and ensures a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive and disruptive forklift upgrades. Learn more at www.exagrid.com.

plus retention. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

"One of the things that we like about the ExaGrid system is its scalability. For us, backups are the cornerstone of our data protection strategy, and it's critical that we can grow the system to meet the needs of our business," said Graver. "We've worked closely with ExaGrid on our backup infrastructure and have been extremely pleased with the product, customer support, and the company as a whole. The folks at ExaGrid go the extra mile, and we consider them to be a trusted partner."

ExaGrid and NetBackup

Veritas NetBackup delivers high performance data protection that scales to protect the largest UNIX, Windows, Linux, OS X and NetWare environments. With complete protection from remote office to center to vault, NetBackup offers a single console for all backup and recovery operations. Organizations using Veritas NetBackup can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications such as NetBackup, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running NetBackup, 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 zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's zone-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 servers can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.

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