

Gardner Trucking Drives Backup Window Down with ExaGrid

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Gary Larson
CIO
Gardner Trucking

Customer Overview

Based in Chino, California, Gardner Trucking operates a fleet of trucks throughout eleven western states. Gardner Trucking offers a full range of services including line haul, dedicated and full-service logistics, and its large fleet of trailing equipment includes dry vans, roller vans, curtain vans, flatbeds and double flatbeds. Gardner Trucking has a second terminal in Tracy, California a third in Washington and operates 42 dedicated fleets on-site at various customer locations.

13 Hour Backups Affected Day-to-Day Operations

Gardner Trucking relies heavily on technology to manage its business data and the data associated with its 1100 trucks and 1900 trailers on the road. The firm's backup requirements had grown quickly, and its IT staff was struggling to keep up with nightly backups that stretched over 13 hours.

"Our backups began at 8:00 p.m. and ran until 9:30 a.m., but our users begin their day at 4:30 a.m. If someone came in and started working on a database that hadn't been backed up, it wouldn't be protected," said Gary Larson, CIO of Gardner Trucking. "Backing up to tape was severely impacting our capability to begin each day productively and with complete backups."

The IT staff also grappled with data restores. For Gardner Trucking, restoring data from tape meant searching through the tape for up to seven hours to find the correct file.

"Because of the amount of time it took to search for the file to restore, we basically had one shot in a day to restore a file for that particular operation," said Larson. "It was extremely time consuming and frustrating."

Scalability, Data De-duplication, and Price Key to Choosing ExaGrid

After enduring months of problems with tape backups, Larson and his team researched and considered several different

backup approaches and ultimately chose ExaGrid's disk-based backup system to work in conjunction with its existing backup application, Symantec's Backup Exec.

"We were impressed at ExaGrid's approach to data de-duplication, and we liked the fact that the system was scalable so that we could expand it as our data grew," said Larson. "With ExaGrid, the speed of our backups has been amazing. We are now able to complete full backups in less than two hours instead of the 13 it took with tape."

ExaGrid's disk-based backup system is highly scalable, with a virtualized GRID architecture that enables organizations to start with an appropriate initial capacity and add additional capacity in 1TB to 5TB increments as needed.

ExaGrid's byte-level data de-duplication technology stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. This unique approach reduces the disk space required by 10 to 50:1 or more, delivering unparalleled cost savings and performance. ExaGrid delivers fast backup performance because data is written directly to disk, and data de-duplication is performed post-process after the data is stored to reduce data.

"Price was also another major consideration in choosing ExaGrid," said Larson. "The ExaGrid system offered significantly better price/performance than the other solutions. Some of the other solutions appeared less expensive on the surface, but when we

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added in ExaGrid's data de-duplication technology and the fact that it results in us using less disk space, the ExaGrid came in at approximately 25 percent the cost of competitive solutions."

ExaGrid "Pays for Itself" with Major Database Restore

Two days after installing the ExaGrid system, it was tested when Gardner Trucking lost its database and needed to immediately restore it to keep the business moving.

"With the new ExaGrid system, it took only 25 minutes to restore the data and we were back up and running again. It would have been a disaster if we had lost our database and had to restore it using tape," said Larson.

"If the tape didn't have any errors in it, the whole process would have taken six to eight hours just to restore the file, and the whole process would have left our system down for a full 16 hours."

Larson estimates that Gardner Trucking's systems would have been affected for two days if the database had to be restored from tape. The system couldn't be worked on while the file was restoring, and then the IT staff would have had to go through a process of re-indexing all of the files. All in all the entire process would have taken 24 hours.

"We estimate that we would have lost approximately \$200,000 in business and productivity if we had to restore our database from tape," said Larson. "The ExaGrid system more than paid for itself in the first two days."

After experiencing the database loss, Larson says that ExaGrid's speed and fast restores have given him a comfort level he didn't have with tape backups. "It's tremendous to have such a comfort level with our backups. Just knowing that our backups are completed correctly every night and our files can be restored quickly is invaluable to our business," he said.

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.

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.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with 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 by 10 to 50:1, or more, 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.