

# Jackson County Intermediate School District Gives ExaGrid's Disk-Based Backup and Deduplication System an A+

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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**Greg Wade**  
Network Engineer  
Jackson County ISD

## Customer Overview

The Jackson County Intermediate School District (JCISD) is an educational service agency chartered by the State of Michigan to work in collaboration with local public school districts and charter schools. The IT department of the JCISD supports the technology needs of the local school districts serviced, providing the technology expertise, infrastructure, and services to help administrators, educators, and students.

## Rapidly Expanding Data and Shrinking Data Retention Compel Search for Alternatives

Jackson County ISD's IT department has experienced massive growth over the past few years. As more and more of the county's school districts have become unable to handle growing IT requirements, JCISD's IT department has evolved into a consortium currently servicing nine of the county's 12 school districts. Each school district has its own high schools, middle schools, elementary schools, dedicated administration, and related services.

"As our data retention needs have continued to grow, we realized that we could no longer back up as we had been," said Greg Wade, network engineer at Jackson County ISD.

Prior to implementing ExaGrid, JCISD had been backing up to their SAN. Its backup capacity was maximized at 9TB, so its retention was severely limited to just 14 days of retention at most. In addition, Jackson County ISD's backups were running from Friday evening well into Monday morning. "We were really hurting, and we had nothing to fall back on," said Wade. "We knew that at the rate we were growing that we simply couldn't do traditional backups any longer."

JCISD began its evaluation of its options and compared various solutions. JCISD chose ExaGrid, in part because it works

seamlessly with their existing backup application, Symantec Backup Exec. "It was important to us to utilize Backup Exec," said Wade. "It's a product we know inside-out. Some of the other solutions we looked at required that we learn a whole new method and interface. That's not the case with ExaGrid." In addition, not only was ExaGrid aggressively priced, but knowing JCISD will continue to grow, the ability to easily scale the system up to accommodate its increasing storage requirements was also of critical importance.

## Backup Window Reduced from Days to Hours, 46TB of Data Dedupes Down to 3TB of Storage

Since moving its backups to the ExaGrid, the IT team at JCISD has been pleased that backups now take hours instead of days. They're able to store their 49TB of data as 3TB, and the 9TB that they previously used for backups on their SAN is now available for general use. "The deduplication is just phenomenal," said Wade. "We couldn't have done that any other way."

After installing the ExaGrid, Jackson County ISD has been able to increase its retention from the limited 14-day window to quarterly. JCISD's go-forward intent is to retain for a full year. JCISD does restores regularly, and they are impressed with how quick and easy this is to do with ExaGrid.

**EXAGRID**<sup>™</sup>

## Quick and Simple Installation, Terrific Customer Support

"When we added the ExaGrid, we didn't change how we were doing things," said Wade. "We simply changed the target. It's been flawless! We basically set it and forget it."

Wade was impressed with how simple the ExaGrid was to install. "Our customer support engineer remoted in and helped us set everything up, and we were off and running."

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.

## 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 deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's byte-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. ExaGrid servers can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.

**For more information about ExaGrid, please visit us at [www.exagrid.com](http://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](http://www.exagrid.com).