

Kingston Improves Retention and Restores with ExaGrid

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



"At Kingston, we're actively working to reduce our energy consumption and are very sensitive to power and cooling issues. The ExaGrid unit is compact and efficient and its data de-duplication technology enables us to pack more data onto our system. It's helping us to maximize our datacenter space to reduce our power consumption."

Tran Phan
Senior Network Administrator
Kingston Technology

Customer Overview

Kingston Technology Company, Inc. is the world's independent memory leader. Founded in 1987 with a single product offering, Kingston® now offers more than 2,000 memory products that support nearly every device that uses memory, from computers, servers and printers to MP3 players, digital cameras and cell phones. In 2007, the company's sales exceeded \$4.5 billion.

With global headquarters in Fountain Valley, California, Kingston employs more than 4,500 people worldwide. The company serves an international network of distributors, resellers, retailers and OEM customers on six continents. The company also provides contract manufacturing and supply chain management services for semiconductor manufacturers and system OEMs.

New Retention Policy Led to Search for a New Solution

Kingston's IT department had been charged with improving the company's ability to backup, store and retrieve email data. The company had been backing up its email data to SATA drives but was having difficulty keeping more than a few weeks of information on-site. Additionally, the IT staff was grappling with limited space in its datacenter and had concerns about power and cooling additional equipment.

"Ninety percent of our restore requests are email-related, so it made sense to make the data more easily available and accessible," said Tran Phan, senior network administrator at Kingston. "Unfortunately, we found ourselves in a position where we could only hold a few weeks of data on disk before it had to be archived to tape."

Post Process Data De-duplication Reduces Data, Makes Backing up to Tape Faster

In an effort to meet a new internal mandate to retain email data on disk for a year, Kingston's IT department began looking at disk-based backup systems with data de-duplication. After exploring several different solutions, Kingston chose ExaGrid based on scalability, price and its post-process data de-duplication technology.

The ExaGrid system is located in Kingston's datacenter in Fountain Valley and works with the company's existing backup application, Symantec's Backup Exec™. "We compared the ExaGrid system to products by Network Appliance and Data Domain and we found that the ExaGrid system was more cost-effective and scalable," said Phan.

"In comparing the different products, we also looked at data de-duplication.

We liked ExaGrid's post-process approach over the inline approach used by other vendors."

ExaGrid combines last backup compression along with data de-duplication, 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 de-duplication is performed post-process after the data is stored.

For disaster recovery purposes, the ExaGrid system is backed up to tape and the tapes are sent offsite for safekeeping. Phan estimates that backing the ExaGrid up to tape is twenty percent faster than backing up from SATA drives because the data is compressed using ExaGrid's data de-duplication technology.

EXAGRID™

GRID Architecture Provides Modular Scalability

Scalability was an important factor in selecting the ExaGrid system because Kingston's email data has historically grown rapidly.

"The ExaGrid system is modular and can scale easily to meet our needs in the future. We were especially impressed with the fact that when we add shelves we can gain more processing power, more memory and more network ports," said Phan.

ExaGrid's GRID computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, different sized configurations can be mixed and matched into a single GRID system with capacities of up to 60TB. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

Smaller Footprint, Data De-duplication Helps Maximize Datacenter Space and Reduce Power and Cooling Requirements

Prior to installing the ExaGrid system, Kingston had been backing up its email data to SATA drives but struggled with limited datacenter space and had concerns about energy usage for power and cooling. Each SATA chassis took up 4U and had two power supplies. Phan expects to decommission as many as three chassis with one 3U ExaGrid system.

"It got to the point where we couldn't purchase more shelves because we had limited space available in our datacenter," said Phan. "We're working to reduce our energy consumption and are very sensitive to power and cooling issues. The ExaGrid unit is compact and efficient and its data de-duplication technology enables us to pack more data onto our system. It's helping us to maximize our datacenter space and helping us by reducing our power consumption."

Fast Restores Save Time

Phan said that he and his team have been able to significantly reduce the amount of time spent on restores. "In addition to having 12 months of data at our fingertips, the whole restore process has been simplified. We no longer have to pull tapes from archive, wait for them to be delivered, put them in the library, inventory them and search for files. That whole process is eliminated. Now, we simply point and click to restore files. It's been a tremendous time saver," said Phan.

Proactive Customer Support

ExaGrid's industry-leading customer support team is staffed by trained, in-house engineers who are dedicated to individual accounts. The ExaGrid system is fully supported and was

designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

"We had the ExaGrid system up and running with Backup Exec in about ten minutes," said Phan. "We've also had a fantastic experience with ExaGrid's customer support. We love the fact that we have a dedicated support engineer who proactively calls us to see how things are going and to let us know about upgrades and other things that can help us improve our backup performance. All in all, we've had a terrific experience."

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