

# ExaGrid Provides Reliable Backups and Disaster Recovery Protection to Midwest Bank

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Wendy Beske  
Information Security Officer  
Midwest Bank

## Customer Overview

Midwest Bank is a rapidly growing, locally owned, independent bank with offices located in West Central Minnesota with assets of \$258 million and 85 employees. The bank has seven branches serving a predominately agricultural community. Through its rapid growth, the bank has developed the financial and technological resources to meet the needs of its small and large customers alike. Being locally owned, the bank has a vested interest in seeing its local communities thrive, and being independent allows the bank to provide an atmosphere that its customers appreciate.

## Mandate to Virtualize Led to Search for Better Backup Strategy, DR

When Midwest Bank made its decision to overhaul its entire network and begin its migration to virtualization, the bank recognized the need to simultaneously evaluate its backup strategy as well as its ability to quickly and reliably recover business-critical data in the event of a disaster.

"The environment in banking has changed so much over the years," said Wendy Beske, information security officer at Midwest Bank. "We have to be even more vigilant than ever before about the security of our customers' information. Also important is safeguarding the work of my users and all the time and effort that they put into their daily work."

Beske sought a solution that would replace their unreliable tape-based backups. "It's just not wise from a security perspective to be moving tapes around and taking them offsite. There's also the human element where someone forgets to change a tape, drops a tape, or there's a media malfunction not to mention the unforeseen power outage or something going wrong somewhere." Also important was that the solution work seamlessly with the bank's existing backup application, Symantec Backup Exec.

## Bank Installs Two-Site ExaGrid, Shortens Backup Window and Maximizes Data Protection

The bank installed a two-site ExaGrid for backup at its primary site and replication to a second site for disaster recovery protection. The bank is currently backing up its Citrix network, file server, and email server and once they install a new core server, that will be backed up to the ExaGrid also. "We're still backing up the core server to tape, but we've budgeted for a new one. We want to get away from tape entirely as soon as possible," said Beske.

When making the decision to go with ExaGrid, Beske said that they felt very comfortable both with the high recommendation of ExaGrid by their vendor and the fact that ExaGrid is installed at many banks and financial institutions. "That made the difference," she said. "It's empowering to know that there are environments very similar to ours in banks all over the place that are having nothing but success with ExaGrid. It made me confident that we'd have that success also, and we have. Knowing that our data isn't leaving the walls of Midwest Bank makes me feel much better than before. I value that sense of security knowing that I'm keeping our customers' data safe, keeping our employees' work safe, and keeping their backups ready for them in the event they need files restored."



## ExaGrid Saves Management and Administration Time, Provides Reliability

As in many business environments, the bank's human resources are limited so an important consideration was to select and implement a solution that would be as hands-off and automated as possible. According to Beske, "Everyone wears so many different hats and time is limited. I didn't want to install yet another device that was going to require a lot of my time. I just couldn't add more to our workload."

Beske reports that the ExaGrid has performed as promised and as expected. "I've had situations over the years that stand out as bad experiences with other products and vendors. ExaGrid is not one of those. I hardly give the ExaGrid a second thought because it's never been even a blip on the map in terms of problems. It's always been very smooth and reliable. I don't worry about it in any way, shape, or form."

## Deduplication Reduces Storage Requirements

The ExaGrid system 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 post-process 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.

## Fast Installation, Helpful Customer Support

Beske said that installation was very simple as promised. 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 dedicated to individual accounts. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

## 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).

## Scalability to Meet Future Backup Demands

The ExaGrid system can easily be expanded to accommodate more data. 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 a 130TB full backup plus retention. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

## 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.

## 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.

**For more information about ExaGrid, please visit us at [www.exagrid.com](http://www.exagrid.com) or call us at 1-800-868-6985.**