NAPA Cuts Backup Window in Half with Veeam and ExaGrid

North American Partners in Anesthesia

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David Dettmann
Sr. Systems Engineer

Key Benefits:

- More backup data stored at lower cost using less storage
- Less time spent on restores, now done quickly from ExaGrid landing zone
- Replication provides path to sound DR strategy
- System implemented quickly with advice on best practices for NAPA's environment
- Reliable customer support 'far surpasses' that of other vendors

Customer Overview

Founded in 1986 by the anesthesia group from Long Island's North Shore University Hospital, North American Partners in Anesthesia (NAPA) is one of the leading specialty anesthesia and perioperative management companies in the United States. NAPA partners with hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, and physician offices to provide anesthesia services and perioperative leadership that enhance operating room performance, revenue, and patient and surgeon satisfaction. In addition to its anesthesia services, NAPA delivers specialized services to those suffering from chronic and acute pain, and its highly acclaimed medical practice management organization provides administrative, billing, collection, and a range of additional services to medical practices throughout the United States.

Tape Backups Expensive to Maintain and Tedious to Manage

North American Partners in Anesthesia (NAPA) had contracted with a third-party provider at a co-located facility to manage its backups. The "colo" backed up to tape and stored the tapes offsite, which proved to be very expensive. It was also difficult for NAPA IT staff to know whether there were any problems with their backups because the colo would first have to alert NAPA if there were issues to be addressed, and this became tedious and frustrating for NAPA staff.

Since NAPA had virtualized its environment, the IT team decided that they needed a better backup solution and brought ExaGrid in to do a POC.

NAPA Stores More Data More Efficiently in Less Space

"The way backups were working before ExaGrid was very inefficient," said David Dettmann, senior systems engineer at NAPA. "When we first installed Veeam, we were running backups to a local SAN that we had at the colo, but we needed a way to replicate off of our expensive SANs onto another solution that could reduce our data footprint and store data more efficiently. We like the fact that ExaGrid has that capability and because of that, we're able to store more information on the ExaGrid than on our SAN."

NAPA currently backs up all of its VMs to its primary ExaGrid system and replicates to another ExaGrid system located in Chicago.

Interoperability of ExaGrid and Veeam Delivers Unmatched Performance

From the outset, NAPA was impressed with how quickly ExaGrid is able to ingest Veeam backups, and Dettmann attributes this to ExaGrid's unique landing zone. "The Veeam data is sent to a landing space on the ExaGrid and is compressed and deduplicated afterwards, so the system resources are first spent on the actual backups. The other advantage of the landing space is that we can quickly do a restore from the most recent backups. That's a definite benefit with the ExaGrid. Doing restores from the colo was more time consuming, so we spend less time on restores now."

Because ExaGrid's ingest is so fast, Dettmann says that NAPA's backup window is much shorter with Veeam and ExaGrid than it was before. "It's probably half the time – if not less – to back up the same amount of servers than

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it was before we installed the ExaGrid system."

Reliable Backups Help with HIPAA Compliance

As a healthcare management company, NAPA performs back-office functions for its customers, including billing, payroll, and HR. Because NAPA stores medical records and other sensitive patient information, the company is required to comply with HIPAA when it comes to data storage.

"We store all of our data from the beginning of time. We keep everything forever, unfortunately. As far as our short-term retention, in the past, we liked to keep backups for three weeks. Now with ExaGrid, we're keeping backups twice as long – seven or eight weeks' worth," said Dettmann.

Next Step, Disaster Recovery

NAPA acquired an office a year ago and is in the process of putting more infrastructure in place at that location so that it can be used for offsite disaster recovery. NAPA is currently replicating to that site but because it lacks a VMware host, near-term restores are done from the ExaGrid landing zone. Restores of older data would need to be done from the colo site, which would be time consuming due to bandwidth limitations.

Simple Setup with Remote Support

NAPA has two EX13000E appliances at its colo site and two EX7000 appliances at its Illinois site for replication. Dettmann was pleasantly surprised at how quickly everything was set up and working.

"I worked with my ExaGrid customer support engineer on configuring all the network ports doing the initial seeding for our colo data center. He remoted in, walked us through it, and made the setup very easy to do. Once the setup was done, we shipped the appliances to the remote location and worked with the network administrator there. It was really fairly simple. Our engineer continued to monitor performance to ensure that everything continued to replicate correctly."

'Expert' and 'Thorough' Customer Support Provides Best Practices

"It's very beneficial to work with the same support engineer all the time – much better than calling into a support call center,

giving them a case number, waiting while they read the notes, etc. It takes half an hour before they even get up to speed on what's going on! Having an assigned engineer working on our ExaGrid system is a huge time saver," Dettmann said.

When NAPA added the appliances in Illinois for replication, Dettmann took the lead setting it up with his ExaGrid engineer answering questions and remoting in as needed. "I set the second system up as best I could, and when I needed him, my ExaGrid engineer worked with me and also gave me best practices and various suggestions, which was very beneficial. He didn't rush to get it set up and get off the phone but took his time to give me a thorough walk through with advice on how to get peak performance out of the ExaGrid system in my environment – really helpful."

Timely Resolution of Issues Enhances Confidence in Backups

NAPA recently had a problem with replication stopping at its DR site and figured out that it was a firewall issue due to a recent firewall update. NAPA's ExaGrid customer support engineer was able to immediately log into the NAPA system remotely and fix the problem. Dettmann was pleased with the fast response and quick resolution of the issue.

According to Dettmann, the customer support provided by other vendors is typically less than ideal. He describes an all-too-common arduous and frustrating process: "Getting support from other vendors can be time consuming. You first have to find the right engineer in the right department and once you find the right engineer in the right department, then you've got to look up your ticket and hope you can talk to the same engineer you talked to before, but a lot of times you can't. Sometimes it takes a while just to get to the right level of support because once you talk to one engineer, if they can't solve the problem, they escalate it to the next tier and so on."

Dettmann reports that the support he receives from ExaGrid far surpasses the support he's received from other vendors. "ExaGrid doesn't have support tiers; they're all experts in all levels of the product, and I think that's a big benefit. I feel very confident with my backups – I know that if I have a problem, there's somebody at ExaGrid who will do whatever needs to be done to get the issue resolved," he said.

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides backup storage with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone provides for the fastest backups, restores and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable GRID and provides for a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at **www.exagrid.com**.