

Northeast Bank Selects ExaGrid and Veeam for Long-Term Backup Solution

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



"The product has delivered a worry-free experience, it provides simplicity yet still allows for powerful, granular control. It can be managed through a friendly web interface with robust reporting and detailed metrics."

Justin Kim
Senior System Engineer

Key Benefits:

- 50% time savings 'babysitting' backup
- Easy interface, robust reporting 'invaluable'
- Tangible results from load balancing 'impressive'
- ExaGrid success stories provide validation, key in buying decision

Customer Overview

Northeast Bank is a full-service community bank serving Western, Central, and Southern Maine, as well as Seacoast New Hampshire. Since 1872, it has been serving its local communities with innovative financial products, charitable donations, and volunteer support. Northeast Bank has been helping Mainers build homes, get their businesses off the ground, and save for retirement for over 140 years.

Tape Backups Unreliable and Time Consuming

Northeast Bank performed all of its backup storage straight to tape, but long backup times, unreliability, and infrastructure management issues made it difficult to consistently complete regular backups. The bank's pain point reached a new level with physical backups and tape storage. It was taking far too much time to restore backup data from long-term storage, and the process to retrieve data on demand was broken.

In addition to less than bearable speeds, having to maintain backup media, storage facilities, maintenance contracts, and hardware recycling were all difficulties facing traditional backup strategies. Being a financial institution, the bank often needs to retrieve historical data, and if the data wasn't within the retention period of readily accessible backup data, the retrieval process was painful. There was no question the bank had to move to a disk-based backup solution that would provide more flexibility and reliability.

"In addition to challenges with traditional backups, our IT team had to acquire and provision physical storage media for backups while maintaining hardware and planning for degradation of physical hardware, ensuring we had the right environment necessary to reliably restore data and maximize storage life," said Justin Kim, senior systems engineer at Northeast Bank.

"These are all tough issues for us as a financial institution because we are in a heavily regulated industry. We have a variety of policies regarding data retention, and everything else is archived and must be made available on demand," said Kim.

With ExaGrid, Northeast Bank has been able to reduce its dependence on magnetic tape technologies, saving time and money. The bank has also found it much easier to perform restores from its ExaGrid system.

"With ExaGrid, we no longer need to spend valuable time and resources locating and changing physical media. Our team can better focus on our production environment," said Kim.

The Power of Customer Success Stories

Before making its backup storage purchasing decision, Northeast Bank researched how other companies used ExaGrid to meet their goals.

"It really helps to get a picture of what ExaGrid looks like in practice. That's one of the processes that I use when I'm validating a new product or service – I try to find other shops that are using the platform, and that carries a lot of weight in our decision-making process. Real-world experiences are what I want to hear about, and ExaGrid's extensive library of customer success stories was very valuable," said Kim.

The Shift to Veeam and Virtualization

According to Kim, Northeast Bank is currently 95% virtualized with Veeam handling the virtualized regular backups and ExaGrid repository replication for all servers. The bank continues to use Veritas Backup Exec for its physical servers.

"Migrating everything over to a fully virtual infrastructure had been a step-by-step process that has taken us a number of years to complete fully. The combination of ExaGrid and Veeam



has made our disk backup storage vision a reality. We've also been impressed with the interoperability of ExaGrid and Veritas Backup Exec – cross-platform performance has been surprisingly effective. ExaGrid's ability to seamlessly support all major backup apps has been a serious advantage for us," said Kim.

Northeast Bank has a regular schedule of full backups that go straight to the ExaGrid system as well as scheduled offsite replication. Continuous incremental backups occur daily, with full infrastructure backups taking place regularly. "It's been awesome! ExaGrid has been hassle-free, and I no longer have to worry about all the maintenance tasks that come with traditional physical backup media," he said.

Simplicity and Performance

Kim has found hardware swaps or relocations to be extremely easy with ExaGrid. "With tape storage, I'd spend almost 30% of my time managing just our physical backup infrastructure, but now with ExaGrid, we're saving 25% of the day not having to babysit backup jobs, plan tape rotations, find storage space for tape media, and maintain costly third-party contracts for backup infrastructure needs. ExaGrid, in a nutshell, is peace of mind. The product has delivered a worry-free experience and provides simplicity yet still allows for powerful, granular control. It can be managed through a friendly web interface with robust reporting and detailed metrics. Those features are invaluable because I can view my backups 'at a glance' as needed. Having the option to choose between restoring full servers or file-level backups has been a real game-changer!"

A typical weekly full backup for the bank would previously have taken an entire weekend, having to staff employees to monitor, restore, and validate data. However, using ExaGrid, the same amount of data can be backed up in a fraction of the time, depending on network speed, with very little, if any, user interaction needed.

Hardware Dependency and Load Balancing

The health of the ExaGrid hardware itself has impressed Kim. "Since I've been here, I've only had two failed disks – and that's really saying something. The way the ExaGrid storage arrays are programmed, how the back-end deduplication algorithms work, and how the disks are pooled together are extremely efficient and optimized for its purpose. Honestly, I'm used to having to replace disk drives fairly frequently with other storage solutions, but with ExaGrid, that has not been the case," he said.

The load balancing among the ExaGrid appliances is one of Kim's favorite features. "This is the first time that I've seen a tangible

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.

result coming from load balancing data. The back-end process that levels the data out among all of our devices helps to avoid potential risk and data corruption. Not only are the disks in each appliance pooled together, but our appliances are as well. That's very impressive.

"ExaGrid helped us scale our needs while also solving our disaster recovery problem in the event that anything catastrophic were to happen with our production environment. The amount of data reduction that we get with ExaGrid is out of this world, so we really maximize storage space, while minimizing our footprint. With our DR environment, our need for tons of extra storage and extra VMware hosts has gone away, just like that," said Kim.

ExaGrid Teams Up for Success

Working with ExaGrid has been one of the best support experiences that Kim has had with any managed system, internally or externally. "Our ExaGrid engineer's response time and level of knowledge are more than excellent. Not only do we have a support engineer of this caliber, but we also have all of his resources behind him. That makes me very confident to face any challenges with our ExaGrid infrastructure," said Kim.

"When our support engineer goes on vacation, the ExaGrid team picks up right where he leaves off and shares support notes, so they already know what to do. Their knowledge of the back-end infrastructure of the ExaGrid appliances, the operating system, and command line interface is always impressive to see. I've yet to run into a problem that they have not been able to remedy. The ExaGrid development team and support teams have been awesome," he said.

GRID Architecture Provides Superior Scalability

"I love knowing that we have a reliable storage platform that can scale, since we have had tremendous data growth in the past year alone. I am confident that scalability needs will be met in the future as well. So far, ExaGrid has been a perfect fit for us," said Kim.

ExaGrid uses a GRID-based configuration, where each appliance contains not just disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. When the system needs to expand, additional appliances are simply attached to the GRID, in a modular fashion. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all the aspects of performance as the amount of data grows, and you only pay for what you need when you need it. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliances are added to the GRID, the system automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the GRID.

United States: 2000 West Park Drive | Westborough, MA 01581 | (800) 868-6985

United Kingdom: 200 Brook Drive | Green Park, Reading, Berkshire RG2 6UB | +44 (0) 1189 497 051

Singapore: 1 Raffles Place, #20-61 | One Raffles Place Tower 2 | 048616 | +65 6285 0302



www.exagrid.com