

# Vermont Energy Enhances 'Green' Initiatives by Using ExaGrid for Backup

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Ryan Gauthier  
Network Administrator

## Key Benefits:

- Post-process deduplication gets data off VEIC's network quickly, providing better performance than the Data Domain system
- Backup window reduced from three days to under 24 hours
- ExaGrid works hand-in-hand with Veeam to back up VEIC's 100% virtualized environment
- 'Stellar' customer support

## Customer Overview

Vermont Energy Investment Corporation (VEIC) is a non-profit organization that specializes in reducing the economic and environmental costs of energy consumption. VEIC is internationally recognized for its cutting edge work helping federal, state, county, and municipal governments develop and achieve energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy goals and initiatives. The organization is headquartered in Burlington, Vermont.

## Long Backups Slowed Network Performance and Key Applications

VEIC's backup jobs were running into the workday and slowing down its network. When key applications like email and basic file access became affected, the organization's IT staff decided to look for a new solution capable of reducing backup times as well as their reliance on tape.

"We weren't meeting our backup windows, and it was clear to us that we needed a new approach. We decided to look at alternatives to tape due to its overall cost as well as its inherent reliability and data integrity issues," said Ryan Gauthier, network administrator at VEIC.

## ExaGrid Delivers Post-Process Data Deduplication, Proactive Customer Support and Faster Backups

After looking at several solutions, VEIC chose to evaluate ExaGrid's disk-based backup system with data deduplication in-house after carefully comparing it with an EMC Data Domain solution.

"We liked ExaGrid's post-process data deduplication approach better than EMC Data Domain's in-line method. We felt that the ExaGrid would give us better performance than the Data Domain system because it gets the data off the network as quickly as possible and then dedupes it afterwards," said Gauthier. "After evaluating the

system, we were confident that the ExaGrid would meet our performance requirements and data deduplication expectations, but it was ExaGrid's fantastic customer support that really sealed the deal. From the very beginning, the technical support we received from our dedicated ExaGrid engineer has been nothing less than stellar."

Gauthier reports that since installing the ExaGrid system, incremental backups now run for between two and three hours, down from over 15 hours with the company's old tape solution. Full backups are also running more efficiently, and backup times have been reduced from three days to less than 24 hours using the ExaGrid system.

## Powerful Combination of ExaGrid and Veeam Maximizes Amount of Data Stored

VEIC installed the ExaGrid system in a colocation center and uses it along with Veeam to back up and protect data from over 65 virtual servers.

"Our environment is 100 percent virtualized, so when we deployed the ExaGrid system, we decided to use Veeam as our backup application. The two products work hand-in-hand to reduce the amount of data stored on the system. Veeam first compresses the data and then sends it to the ExaGrid, and then the ExaGrid system deduplicates it and reduces it even more. It's impressive, considering that the data sent to the ExaGrid has already been compressed," he said.

**EXAGRID**<sup>™</sup>

ExaGrid combines last backup compression along with data deduplication, 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 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 Setup, Responsive Customer Support

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.

"I worked closely with our ExaGrid engineer to set the system up, and then he stayed with the project and helped me tweak things over the first couple of weeks to be sure that things were running optimally," he said. "Since the beginning, our engineer has been proactive, and he does a good job of staying in touch regarding things like upgrades. I can also call him at any time with a question or concern. ExaGrid's customer support has been nothing short of spectacular."

## GRID Architecture Ensures Seamless Scalability

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.

"We sized the system to handle anticipated data growth, but ExaGrid's GRID architecture will ensure that we'll be able to scale the system up if we need to by simply adding another appliance," said Gauthier.

## 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).

As an organization, VEIC strives to conserve energy wherever possible and reduce its own carbon footprint. Gauthier said that the ExaGrid system helps the firm achieve energy consumption goals in several ways.

"The ExaGrid system helps us reduce our carbon footprint because we don't have to order tapes, ship them around and store them. Also, ExaGrid's powerful data deduplication technology enables us to maximize our datacenter footprint and conserve energy," he said. "Not only has it helped solve our backup issues, but it helps us with our internal 'green' initiatives. We've been extremely pleased with the system."

## ExaGrid and Veeam

The combination of ExaGrid's and Veeam's industry-leading virtual server data protection solutions allows customers to utilize Veeam Backup & Replication in VMware, vSphere, and Microsoft Hyper-V virtual environments on ExaGrid's disk-based backup system. This combination provides fast backups and efficient data storage as well as replication to an offsite location for disaster recovery.

The ExaGrid system fully leverages Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in backup to disk capabilities and ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication for additional data reduction (and cost reduction) over standard disk solutions. Customers can use Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in source-side deduplication in concert with ExaGrid's disk-based backup system with zone-level deduplication to further shrink backups.

## About Veeam Software

Veeam® Software develops innovative solutions for VMware backup, Hyper-V backup, and virtualization management. Veeam Backup & Replication™ is the #1 VM backup solution. Veeam ONE™ is a single solution for real-time monitoring, resource optimization and management reporting for VMware and Hyper-V. The Veeam Management Pack™ (MP) and Smart Plug-in™ (SPI) extend enterprise monitoring to VMware through Microsoft System Center and HP Operations Manager. Veeam also provides free virtualization tools. Learn more by visiting <http://www.veeam.com/>.

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