

ExaGrid Delivers on Its Promises to Vista Hill

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Bob Miller
Director, Information Services
Vista Hill Foundation

Customer Overview

Vista Hill Foundation was formed in 1957 as an organization committed to providing the then much-needed psychiatric services to the people of San Diego, CA. Over 50 years later, Vista Hill has over a dozen locations throughout San Diego County and employs 400 people whose focus remains to serve the community by offering a diverse array of programs, all revolving around the effects and impact of mental illness, substance abuse and developmental disabilities.

Outdated Backup System Drives Need for Change

After years of lengthy backups, it wasn't until the move to a new email server in 2013 that Bob Miller, who has worked for Vista Hill for over 15 years, decided to move from his former backup system to ExaGrid.

"I would set up our backups for 7PM and they would run until 6AM; this was in addition to having a VPN between two datacenters where the data is circulating back and forth," said Miller. "As Vista Hill moved on in technology, our former backup system didn't follow; it was outdated and it was clear we had to move to something different."

Vista Hill currently backs up its data each night to its primary site ExaGrid and replicates to a second-site system for disaster recovery. The organization's environment is nearly 100 percent physical, and it backs up all of its data, including patient information, financial, billing and HR business systems, as well as their email server to the ExaGrid system.

"We were also moving to a new email server, and that was yet another thing our former backup system didn't support, so we knew we definitely had to move to something different," Miller explained.

Flexibility to Support Most Popular Backup Apps

Although very happy with their ExaGrid system, Miller unfortunately can't say the same about his backup application. "We are looking into a new

backup application," said Miller. Fortunately, the ExaGrid system supports the most commonly used backup applications and database dump utilities, so when Vista Hill decides on which backup application it wants to move forward with, Miller knows that ExaGrid will support it. He won't have to swap out hardware or go through a complex migration as would be the case with other solutions.

Customer Support that Goes the Extra Mile

"I liked the idea of having the ExaGrid system notify me in the event of a hardware problem. I just contact my customer support engineer, and the next morning I have a replacement disk in my hand. I simply hot swap it, and I'm done," said Miller.

The ExaGrid system works the way it's supposed to work, Miller said, and the ExaGrid customer support engineer assigned to Vista Hill's account goes the extra mile, even when it pertains to outside software.

"When I've called other vendors for support in the past, a typical response is, 'Here's a document – look it up.'" When Miller was struggling with his backup software and received a similar response from their customer support, he contacted his ExaGrid support engineer for help. "He immediately identified and solved the problem. It was something that wasn't expected from a hardware person – to deal with software issues – but he did. He went the extra mile for us when he didn't really have to."

Key Benefits:

- System 'works the way it's supposed to work'
- Customer support engineer 'goes the extra mile' and is knowledgeable about other software
- When Vista Hill converts to another leading backup app, the ExaGrid system will support it
- GRID-based configuration ensures easy future expansion to keep backup window short

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 assigned to individual accounts. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

"Every time I call ExaGrid, they're always friendly and know exactly what they're doing. There's no guesswork; they know exactly what's wrong and get us back up and running in no time," said Miller.

GRID Architecture Enables Scalability for Future Growth

Miller states that another one of the key selling points during his initial presentation with ExaGrid was the promise of not having to replace appliances every few years, "I was impressed that I wouldn't have to replace a box every so many years because it's outdated or not large enough. I like ExaGrid's scalability." As Vista Hill's data continues to grow, ExaGrid's scalability will continue to make it easy to accommodate more data by expanding the existing system.

ExaGrid uses a GRID-based configuration, so when the system needs to expand, additional appliances are attached to the GRID, bringing with them not only additional disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all the aspects of performance as the amount of data grows. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliances

are added to the GRID, the ExaGrid automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the GRID.

So far, Miller is pleased with the results of switching to ExaGrid, "Sometimes, what salespeople tell you and what technical people tell you are two different things, but you never know until it's too late. Everything that ExaGrid explained to me on the day of the initial presentation ended up being true."

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality disk drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to straight disk. ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 by storing only the unique bytes across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups while providing full system resources to the backups for the shortest backup window. Adaptive deduplication delivers the fastest backups, and as data grows, only ExaGrid avoids expanding backup windows by adding full appliances in a GRID. ExaGrid's unique landing zone keeps a full copy of the most recent backup on disk, delivering the fastest restores, instant VM recovery, "Instant DR," and fast tape copy. And, as data grows, ExaGrid saves up to 50% in total system costs compared to competitive solutions by avoiding costly "forklift" upgrades.

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.

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