



HCC Life Insurance Company Speeds Backups, Reduces Reliance on Tape with ExaGrid



USA

Key Benefits:

- Nightly backups are 6X faster and weekly fulls over 3X faster
- ExaGrid system chosen for its unique deduplication approach and its scalable architecture
- Automated backups save time spent on backup management
- ExaGrid customer support is a 'wonderful resource' and working with a single engineer is a 'fantastic experience'

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Aziz Jiwani
Systems Engineer

Customer Overview

For more than 30 years, HCC Life Insurance Company (HCC Life), a subsidiary of HCC Insurance Holdings, Inc., has been one of the nation's leading specialty insurance carriers of medical stop loss, group term life, HMO reinsurance, provider excess and medical excess insurance to self-funded employers. In addition to its extensive suite of products and exceptionally fast claims turnaround times, HCC Life was acquired by Tokio Marine HCC in 2015. Tokio Marine HCC is a leading specialty insurance group with offices in the United States, Mexico, the United Kingdom and continental Europe, transacting business in approximately 180 countries and underwriting more than 100 classes of specialty insurance.

Long Backup Times, High Cost of Tape Led to Search for a New Backup Solution

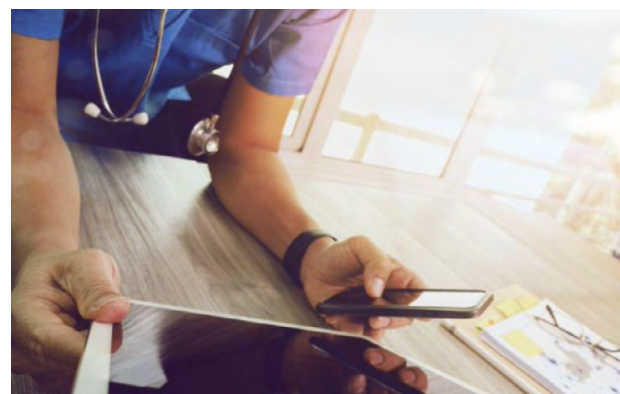
HCC Life had been backing up its data to tape for years. When long nightly tape backups began stretching into the workday and affecting system performance, the company's IT staff decided to look for a new approach in an effort to shorten backup times and reduce the company's reliance on tape.

"Our nightly backups were taking over 12 hours and weekly full backups were stretching past the 40-hour mark. We were also burning through lots of tape and it was becoming time consuming and expensive," said Aziz Jiwani, systems engineer at HCC Life. "We decided to look at disk-based solutions and selected ExaGrid based on its strong data deduplication technology and its scalable architecture."

Two-site ExaGrid System Provides Primary Backup and Automatic Data Replication

HCC Life chose a two-site ExaGrid system with data deduplication. Data is backed up each night to an ExaGrid system in the company's primary data center and is then automatically replicated to a second system located in its disaster recovery site. The two systems work with the company's existing backup application, Veritas Backup Exec.

"We liked ExaGrid's approach to data deduplication because it dedupes the data as it lands on the system so that the backup is performed at full speed. Some of the other products we looked at deduped the data as the backup was running. We felt that the ExaGrid system would deliver faster performance," said Jiwani.



ExaGrid writes backups directly to a disk-cache Landing Zone, avoiding inline processing and ensuring the highest possible backup performance, which results in the shortest backup window. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups for a strong recovery point (RPO). As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it can also be replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

Easy Setup, Proactive, Knowledgeable Customer Support

Jiwani said that he was able to install the ExaGrid system quickly with assistance from the ExaGrid customer support engineer assigned to HCC Life. The ExaGrid system was designed to be easy to set up and operate. ExaGrid's industry-leading level 2 senior support engineers are assigned to individual customers, ensuring they always work with the same engineer. Customers never have to repeat themselves to various support staff, and issues get resolved quickly.

"We have had a fantastic experience with ExaGrid's customer support. They were a big help during the system setup, and they have continued to be a wonderful resource for us," said Jiwani. "I love the

fact that we have an assigned support engineer. It's so convenient to be able to contact the same person each and every time we have a question about the system or about our backup processes. We don't have to explain things over and over to new people every time we call ExaGrid support. Our support engineer is obviously very well versed in the ExaGrid product, but he's made it his business to become familiar with our environment. It's very unusual in the industry to have such wonderful support."

Nightly Backups Reduced from 12 Hours to 2 Hours

Since installing the ExaGrid system, Jiwani reports that the company's nightly backup windows have been reduced from 12 hours to 2 hours. Weekly full backups have been reduced from 40 hours to 12 hours.

"With tape, we could only run one backup job at a time. The ExaGrid enables us to run multiple jobs at the same time so our backups run significantly faster," said Jiwani.

Easy Scalability

According to Jiwani, another major factor in selecting the ExaGrid system was its easy scalability. As HCC Life's backup requirements increase, ExaGrid's architecture will enable the company to easily expand the system to accommodate more data. ExaGrid's appliance models can be mixed and matched into a single scale-out system allowing a full backup of up to 2.7PB with a combined ingest rate of 488TB/hr, in a single system. The appliances automatically join the scale-out system. Each appliance includes the appropriate amount of processor, memory, disk, and bandwidth for the data size. By adding compute with capacity, the backup window remains fixed in length as the data grows. Automatic load balancing across all repositories allows for full utilization of all appliances. Data is deduplicated into an offline repository, and additionally, data is globally deduplicated across all repositories.

"The ExaGrid system will be easy to scale as our data grows," said Jiwani. "We've gained a lot with the ExaGrid. We've been able to decrease our backup times so that we no longer experience system slowdowns during the day, and we are saving on tape costs. Also, we've been able to automate many of our backup processes and have reduced the amount of staff time we spend managing backups. The system has worked as advertised and it's backed by a tremendous customer support team."

ExaGrid and Veritas Backup Exec

Veritas Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high-performance backup and recovery – including continuous data protection for Microsoft Exchange servers, Microsoft SQL servers, file servers, and workstations. High-performance agents and options provide fast, flexible, granular protection and scalable management of local and remote server backups.

Organizations using Veritas Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid Tiered Backup Storage for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Veritas Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Veritas Backup Exec, using ExaGrid is as easy as pointing existing backup jobs at a NAS share on the ExaGrid system. Backup jobs are sent directly from the backup application to ExaGrid for backup to disk.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to disk with deduplication or using backup software deduplication to disk. ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1, depending on the data types and retention periods, by storing only the unique objects across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups. As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it is also replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides Tiered Backup Storage with a unique disk-cache Landing Zone that enables fastest backups and restores, a Repository Tier that offers the lowest cost for long-term retention and enables ransomware recovery, and scale-out architecture which includes full appliances with up to 2.7PB full backup in a single system.

Learn more at www.exagrid.com.

