



Melmark Installs ExaGrid System for 'Flawless' Backups, Virtualizes with Veeam



USA

Customer Overview

Melmark is a not-for-profit organization providing clinically-sophisticated evidence-based special education, residential, vocational, and therapeutic services for children and adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders, developmental and intellectual disabilities, acquired brain injuries, medical complexities, and other neurological and genetic disorders. Melmark offers programs at service divisions in PA, MA and NC.

Melmark Chooses ExaGrid to Replace Problematic "All-in-One" Backup Device

Melmark was backing up to disk and when the problems with the backup unit persisted, Melmark sought out alternate solutions that were more suited to their needs and expectations.

"We originally installed an 'all-in-one' disk-based backup device to replace tape but suffered through 15 months of constant problems with the unit. It was an absolute nightmare, and we finally decided to look for a new solution," said Greg Dion, IT manager for Melmark. "After doing a lot of due diligence on several different backup solutions, we decided to purchase the ExaGrid system." ExaGrid's adaptive data deduplication technology, easy management, scalability, and customer support model all played into the decision, Dion said.

"The ExaGrid system offered all the features we were looking for, along with a solid hardware platform," he said. "From the outset, we had a great deal of confidence in the system. It's worked flawlessly since the beginning."

Melmark installed a two-site ExaGrid system to provide both primary backup and disaster recovery. One unit was installed in its datacenter in Andover, Massachusetts and a second in its Berwyn, Pennsylvania location. Data is replicated between the two systems in real-time over a 100Mbps symmetrical fiber circuit.

After selecting the ExaGrid system, Melmark set out to buy a new backup application and purchased Veeam after looking at several other software solutions.

"One of the nice things about the ExaGrid system is that it supports all the popular backup applications, so we had the freedom to choose the right product for our environment. We finally chose Veeam and have been very happy with the high level of integration between the two products," Dion said. "We're currently backing up

Key Benefits:

- Easy scalability in the face of impending data increase
- 'Phenomenal' level of customer support
- Seamless integration with Veeam
- Data deduplication as high as 83:1
- Retention increased to 8-12 weeks

"The transmission speed between sites is fast and efficient because we only send changed data over the network. It's so fast that we don't even notice that the systems are synchronizing anymore."

Greg Dion
IT Manager



using a combination of Veeam and SQL dumps, and our backups run efficiently."

Adaptive Deduplication Speeds Backups and Replication Between Sites

ExaGrid's adaptive data deduplication technology helps to maximize the amount of data stored on the system while ensuring that backups run as quickly as possible. "ExaGrid's data deduplication technology is one of the best features of the system. We're currently seeing dedupe ratios as high as 83:1, so we're able to retain 8-12 weeks of data based on our retention policies," Dion said. "Because the data is deduplicated after it hits the landing zone, the backup jobs run as quickly as possible."

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).

"Since we only send changed data over the network, the transmission speed between sites is fast and efficient. In fact, it's so fast that we don't even notice that the systems are synchronizing anymore," he said.

Easy Installation, Proactive Customer Support

Dion said that he installed the ExaGrid system into Melmark's datacenter himself, then powered it on, and called the ExaGrid's customer support engineer assigned to the organization's account to finish the configuration.

"The installation process really couldn't have been easier, and it was nice to have our support engineer remote into the system and complete the configuration for us. That alone gave us an extra measure of confidence in the system," he said. "Since the very beginning, our support engineer has been extremely attentive, and the level of support we receive is phenomenal. He will proactively call us to check in, and he's spent the time to tailor and configure the system to meet the specific needs of our environment."

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.



Smooth Scalability to Handle Increased Backup Requirements

Dion said that Melmark is planning on purchasing another ExaGrid system to handle increased backup requirements.

"We have some initiatives coming up that will add new databases and will cause an increase in the amount of data we need to back up. Thankfully, the ExaGrid can be easily scaled to accommodate more data by just adding units," he said.

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.

This combination of capabilities in a turnkey appliance makes the ExaGrid system easy to install, manage, and scale. ExaGrid's architecture provides lifetime value and investment protection that no other architecture can match.

"Frankly, we were a little battle-worn from our last experience when we decided to install the ExaGrid system. However, the ExaGrid system has lived up to our expectations and more. Not only are our backups completed successfully, but we have the comfort of knowing that our data is replicated automatically offsite and is easily accessible in case of a disaster," Dion said. "We highly recommend the ExaGrid system."

ExaGrid and Veeam

Veeam's backup solutions and ExaGrid's Tiered Backup Storage combine for the industry's fastest backups, fastest restores, a scale-out storage system as data grows, and a strong ransomware recovery story – all at the lowest cost.

ExaGrid-Veeam Combined Dedupe

Veeam uses changed block tracking to perform a level of data deduplication. ExaGrid allows Veeam deduplication and Veeam dedupe-friendly compression to stay on. ExaGrid will increase Veeam's deduplication by a factor of about 7:1 to a total combined deduplication ratio of 14:1, reducing the storage required and saving on storage costs up front and over time.

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.