

# ABC Companies Opt for ExaGrid over Data Domain for Price, Manageability, & Features

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Matt Horn  
Senior Network Administrator  
ABC Companies

## Customer Overview

ABC Companies is a leading provider to the transportation industry with diverse product and service offerings that cover a full spectrum of operational needs. In addition, ABC provides an after-sale service network, and financing and leasing through the company's financial services group, which is one of the largest in the industry. ABC Companies is headquartered in Faribault, Minnesota.

## New ERP Implementation Led to Decision to Improve Backup Solution

When ABC Companies installed a new Oracle ERP system, the organization's IT staff decided the time was right to look for a more reliable backup solution. The company had been backing up its data to a tape library and then transporting tape offsite but wanted a more robust solution with data deduplication to reduce the amount of data stored and the ability to replicate data offsite for better disaster recovery.

"Having the right backup solution in place is a very important consideration that often gets overlooked," said Matt Horn, senior network administrator at ABC Companies. "When we implemented our new ERP system, we wanted to make sure that we had a solid backup solution that could provide fast, efficient backups along with replication to improve disaster recovery and reduce our reliance on tape."

## Cost-Effective ExaGrid System Works with Existing Backup Application to Deliver Faster Backups and Restores

After looking at solutions from ExaGrid, EMC and Data Domain, Horn said that ABC Companies decided on ExaGrid's disk-based backup solution with data deduplication based on cost, manageability and feature set. "The ExaGrid system did all the things the competitive products did for a fraction of the cost," said Horn. "The ExaGrid also seemed to be the easiest solution to manage. It really is 'set it and forget it.'"

ABC Companies installed an ExaGrid system in its Florida datacenter along with a unit in California. The ExaGrid systems work along with the company's existing backup applications, Symantec Backup Exec, Quest vRanger and Oracle RMAN. Data is automatically replicated between the sites for disaster recovery.

"One of the nice things about the ExaGrid system is that it works with all the popular backup applications. We were able to quickly and easily integrate the ExaGrid into our existing infrastructure," said Horn.

Horn said that ABC Companies has saved a considerable amount of time and money by installing the ExaGrid system.

"Before, I was spending a lot of time swapping out and rotating tapes and then packing them up and shipping them offsite. We were also spending a lot of money on transportation costs. Now, all that hassle is gone because our data is automatically replicated offsite," said Horn. "It's not only a time saver, but we have a higher level of confidence in our disaster recovery plan."

Restoring data is also a much faster process, according to Horn. "We've performed several restores from the ExaGrid system, and they've all run perfectly. It's so nice because I don't have to go through a whole process like I did with tape. I can restore files with the touch of a button, and the restore speeds are so much faster with disk. I can restore an entire server to its exact working condition within an hour," he said.



## Effective Data Deduplication Reduces Amount of Data Stored

"Data deduplication was a critical factor in selecting the ExaGrid system," said Horn. "All the servers we're backing up run the same core operating system, so we have lots of duplicate data. Effective data deduplication translates into big savings, especially when you consider replication. ExaGrid's data deduplication does a fantastic job at reducing our data, and it enabled us to purchase a smaller system, shorten backup times and improve disaster recovery."

## Smooth Setup, Exceptional Support

Horn said that installing the ExaGrid system was simple and straightforward.

"The ExaGrid system was very easy to install. I racked it myself, plugged it in and called into ExaGrid support. Our support engineer initiated a WebEx session to complete the configuration process, and he walked me through the system," Horn said. "It couldn't have been easier."

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.

"One of the things that has impressed me the most about ExaGrid is the support. It's not often that we work with a vendor with such a proactive support program. For example, with most vendors, we randomly find out about product updates, and then we have to find the time to install them. With ExaGrid, our engineer contacts us to let us know about updates, and he installs them for us, too. He's experienced, knowledgeable and easy to reach when we have a question or issue," said Horn. "As a company, ExaGrid bends over backwards to make sure that the system works up to its potential."

## Scalability to Grow

The ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate more data as the company's data grows. 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.

"Looking ahead, it's great to know that the ExaGrid system can scale up to meet our needs in the future," said Horn. "I juggle many different responsibilities, and having the ExaGrid in place makes my life easier because I don't have to worry about our backups anymore. Our backups are completed correctly each and every night and automatically replicated. It's really a painless process."

## ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec, Quest vRanger

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

Quest vRanger is the recognized industry-standard backup and restore solution for virtualized environments. Administrators can schedule regular image-level backups of virtual or physical machines – while the machine is still running. Images can be stored locally in the SAN or sent as compressed files over a WAN to remote locations to support disaster recovery strategies.

Organizations can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. Using ExaGrid in place of a tape backup system 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 the ExaGrid for onsite backup to disk.

## ExaGrid and Oracle Recovery Manager (RMAN)

Oracle Recovery Manager (RMAN), a command-line and Enterprise Manager-based tool, is a common method for efficiently backing up and recovering Oracle databases. Customers can simply send Oracle backups via the RMAN utility set directly to an ExaGrid disk-based backup system, bypassing the use of a backup agent. ExaGrid delivers a 10 to 50:1 deduplication ratio, can replicate the deduplicated data to a disaster recovery location, and can report deduplication ratios by the individual RMAN backup jobs.

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