



ALL Family of Companies Constructs Cost-Effective, Faster Backup Solution with ExaGrid



USA

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid solution was extremely cost effective
- Restoring data from the ExaGrid is faster and more convenient
- High level customer support
- Met goal to replicate data for disaster recovery plan

“The ExaGrid was extremely cost-effective, and when we realized we could recover our investment in a little over a year, it was a no-brainer.”

Patrick Rehmer
Systems Engineer

Customer Overview

The ALL Family of Companies is the largest privately-owned crane rental and sales enterprise in North America, with 33 branches operating under the ALL, Central, Dawes, Jeffers, and ALT names. Since 1964, the ALL Family has been a leader in the heavy lift industry, offering rental, sales, parts, and unparalleled service to customers.

Costly Backups with Managed Service Provider

The IT department at the ALL Family of Companies decided to look for an in-house backup solution to help alleviate the high cost of backing up data to its managed service provider (MSP). The company had been in the process of combining servers from 28 of its divisions into one domain, but as the amount of data grew, so did the cost of backing up and managing it remotely.

“As we went further and further into the process of bringing our various servers together, it became apparent that not only would it be extremely expensive to back everything up remotely, but it would be inconvenient as well,” said Patrick Rehmer, systems engineer, ALL Family of Companies.

After looking at various backup approaches, the company decided to purchase a Tiered Backup Storage system from ExaGrid. The ExaGrid system works in conjunction with the company’s existing backup application, Veritas Backup Exec.

“I knew from experience that tape would be too slow, so we immediately began looking at disk-based solutions. We liked ExaGrid’s deduplication technology, its scalability, and the fact that we could replicate data for disaster recovery,” said Rehmer. “The ExaGrid appliance was extremely cost-effective, and when we projected we could recover our investment in a little over a year, it was a no-brainer.”

Faster, More Convenient Backups and Restores

Rehmer said that backing data up to the ExaGrid system is considerably faster than the backups that its MSP had provided. The company currently performs a full backup every weekend. Typically, backups to the ExaGrid kick off on Friday nights and run until early Monday morning.



“Backups to the ExaGrid system are definitely a lot faster,” said Rehmer. “It’s also wonderful to have so much data at our fingertips in case we need to restore a file. When our data was offsite, we couldn’t always restore a single file or just a mailbox. Oftentimes, we had to restore all of our Exchange data just to get at a file. Restoring data from the ExaGrid is so much faster and more convenient. We can easily restore the data we want with a touch of a button.”

Data Deduplication Maximizes Disk Space

ExaGrid’s built-in data deduplication technology ensures that the company can maximize retention. Currently, the company is seeing data deduplication ratios of up to 24:1.

“ExaGrid’s data deduplication technology does a fantastic job at reducing our data. We looked carefully at different deduplication approaches, and ExaGrid’s adaptive deduplication method makes a lot of sense. Since the data is deduped after it hits the Landing Zone, our backups run as fast as possible,” said Rehmer.

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 so that an RTO and RPO can be easily met. Available system cycles are utilized to perform deduplication and offsite replication for an optimal recovery point at the disaster recovery site. Once complete, the onsite data is protected and immediately available in its full unduplicated form for fast restores, VM Instant Recoveries, and tape copies while the offsite data is ready for disaster recovery.

Easy Installation, Superior Customer Support

Rehmer said that he worked with an ExaGrid support engineer to install the system and he found the process easy and straightforward.

“Our ExaGrid customer support engineer has been fantastic from the start,” said Rehmer. “He coached me through the install and has consistently provided an extremely high level of support, even when my question isn’t necessarily related to the ExaGrid product. We’ve been thrilled with 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 level 2 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.



Tiered Backup Storage Architecture Provides Scalability to Meet Future Needs

Because the ALL Family of Companies has experienced rapid data growth, scalability was a critical factor in choosing a backup system. The ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate data growth. ExaGrid’s computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, appliances of any size or age can be mixed and matched in a single system with capacities of up to a 2.7PB full backup plus retention and an ingest rate of up to 488TB per hour. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

“Our data just keeps growing and growing, but we’re confident that the ExaGrid will be able to scale to meet our needs far into the future,” said Rehmer. “The ExaGrid system was a great choice for our organization.”

ExaGrid and Veritas Backup Exec

Veritas Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high-performance, and certified disk-to-disk-to-tape 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 as an alternative to tape 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 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 backup to disk.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid’s turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise SATA/SAS 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 fastest backups and, therefore, the shortest backup window. As data grows, only ExaGrid avoids expanding backup windows by adding full appliances in a system. ExaGrid’s unique Landing Zone keeps a full copy of the most recent backup on disk, delivering the fastest restores, VM boots in seconds to minutes, “Instant DR,” and fast tape copy. Over time, ExaGrid saves up to 50% in total system costs compared to competitive solutions by avoiding costly “forklift” upgrades.

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.