



# Switch to Secure ExaGrid System Improves Data Protection for Ajuntament de Girona



SPAIN

## Key Benefits:

- Ajuntament de Girona consolidates backups with ExaGrid for better efficiency
- ExaGrid's Retention Time-Lock for Ransomware Recovery provides peace of mind
- ExaGrid improves on Commvault deduplication for greater storage savings, allowing for longer retention

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**Paco Berta**  
CTO

## Customer Overview

*Girona is a city in northeastern Catalonia (Spain) with a population of 100,000. It is located 100 kilometers from Barcelona and 70 kilometers from the French border. It is situated at the confluence of four rivers and a large part of the surrounding area is classified as a protected area of natural beauty. Girona is endowed with the services of a major city and the charm of a small town. Ajuntament de Girona, the city council, supports its citizens with a full complement of civic services and programs.*

## ExaGrid Streamlines Backups for Greater Efficiency

Ajuntament de Girona's CTO, Paco Berta, was seeking to optimize the council's storage and backup environment while simultaneously wanting to gain efficiencies in space usage and deduplication to support backup, retention, and restore capabilities for the council's data. The backup process had become complicated due to the IT team maintaining multiple storage systems behind Commvault, "We were not using the space efficiently and the deduplication was not optimized because we had different repositories and different deduplication databases," he said.

In addition, the backup storage was reaching its end of life. "Our previous backup storage system was no longer on maintenance, and it was time to make a change. We also wanted to increase the security of the backup system, especially with ransomware attacks on the rise," said Berta. The project to update the backup environment was partially financed by the NextGenerationEU Recovery, Transformation and Resiliency Program (PRTR), established by the European Commission after the health crisis caused by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic.

The council's IT services provider presented ExaGrid Tiered Backup Storage as the answer to their requirement for a new backup storage solution that delivered the efficiency the IT team needed.

As a government agency, Ajuntament de Girona is required to follow a process when procuring new equipment. "We are a public administration, so the process for buying materials requires us to make a public tender." As part of the evaluation process, Berta and his team looked at products from different vendors, along with ExaGrid which was ultimately the manufacturer who won the public tender. "The Landing Zone and Repository Tier were very attractive to us, and we think ExaGrid has a very good approach," he said.



## Adding a DR Site for Improved Data Protection

Berta was impressed with how quickly the new ExaGrid system was up and running. "ExaGrid was very easy to deploy. The longest part of the deployment was discussing how we would do it, and once that was decided, it was really fast," he said.

"We are increasing the security of our systems, including adding a disaster recovery site. We purchased two ExaGrid systems; one is installed here at the city council and the second one is installed at a remote location for disaster recovery."

The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with the industry's leading backup applications so that an organization can retain its investment in its existing backup applications and processes. In addition, ExaGrid appliances can replicate to a second ExaGrid appliance at a second site or to the public cloud for DR (disaster recovery).

## Storage Savings from ExaGrid Allows for Longer Retention

Retention was also important to Berta and his team. With the previous backup storage, they were forced to keep a shorter retention, but after switching to ExaGrid, it has been extended to

better fit their internal policies. “We keep our monthly backups for a retention of one year, which was not possible using our previous systems,” said Berta.

The council’s backup environment is mostly virtualized, with a few remaining physical database servers. The IT team is in the process of migrating from virtualization to a hyper-converged solution. The IT team backs up the council’s 50TB on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

Berta is pleased with the improved deduplication ExaGrid provides with Commvault, leading to significant storage savings. “We have seen good gains with ExaGrid, because Commvault makes deduplication efficiency of 5:1, and the efficiency of the ExaGrid system was 6.6, so 6.6 and 5 is about 30:1 gain. That’s about what was promised previously and I was skeptical—I thought that would be a bit of magic—but it works.”

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).



## Security and Peace of Mind in the Face of Potential Ransomware Attacks

Berta likes that ExaGrid’s Retention Time-Lock feature that includes a delayed delete policy. “We needed to increase the security of our backup systems. The threat of ransomware attacks is increasing, everyone should expect to come under attack at some time and be prepared ahead of time. With the ExaGrid appliance and ExaGrid’s ransomware recovery feature, we have a greater sense of security and feel like we have a strong line of defense,” says Berta.

ExaGrid appliances have a network-facing disk-cache Landing Zone where the most recent backups are stored in an unduplicated format for fast backup and restore performance. Data is deduplicated into a non-network-facing tier called the Repository Tier, for longer-term retention. ExaGrid’s unique architecture and features provide comprehensive security including Retention Time-Lock for Ransomware Recovery (RTL), and through the combination of a non-network-facing tier (tiered air gap), a delayed delete policy, and immutable data objects, backup data is protected from being deleted or encrypted. ExaGrid’s offline tier is ready for recovery in the event of an attack.

## Excellent ExaGrid Support

Berta appreciates ExaGrid’s unique customer support model. “The concept of having one engineer assigned directly to our account is a perfect solution—a person who always knows what we have and who takes care of our installation and upgrades, it’s a very good approach. Support is very important to us.”

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.

## ExaGrid and Commvault

ExaGrid provides a cost-effective backup solution that scales to meet the needs of demanding enterprise environments. ExaGrid improves the storage economics of Commvault environments by working with Commvault compression and deduplication enabled to provide up to 15:1 reduction in storage consumption – a 3X storage savings over using Commvault deduplication alone. This combination dramatically lowers the cost of onsite and offsite backup storage.

## 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 6PB full backup in a single system.

Learn more at [www.exagrid.com](http://www.exagrid.com).