



Arch Reinsurance Ltd. Replaces Tape Library, Cuts Backup Window in Half with ExaGrid



BERMUDA

Key Benefits:

- Superior pre- and post-sales support
- ExaGrid system offers high value for the price
- Easy to scale, no forklift upgrades required
- Backup window reduced by over 50%
- Simple installation and maintenance

“We looked at all the big players including Data Domain, Quantum, and ExaGrid. It was a long process because we wanted to make sure that we were making the right choice, and we’ve been pleased with our decision.”

Sheridan Smith

Information Technology Manager

Customer Overview

Arch is a leading global insurer with operations in more than a dozen countries. We write insurance, reinsurance and mortgage insurance on a worldwide basis, with corporate headquarters in Bermuda. Our customers value us as an innovative partner and dependable risk manager with decades of fresh ideas and solid results. Since our formation in 2001, Arch has grown organically, by building capacity in diverse lines of insurance, and through targeted acquisitions of businesses that enhance our offerings and fit our culture.

Expanding Backup Window and Tape Limitations Lead to Evaluation of Disk-Based Alternatives

Arch Reinsurance Ltd. had been backing up its data to tape and was becoming increasingly constrained by the limitations of tape media. Owing to the growing amount of data, it became increasingly difficult to write a full backup in the limited time Arch had for a backup window. According to Sheridan Smith, Information Technology Manager for Arch Reinsurance Ltd., not only was the backup window a problem, but the time it took to perform restores – especially if the required tape had already been moved offsite – was long and became an unacceptable limitation. Add to that the unreliability of the media itself, and Smith decided it was time to evaluate disk-based alternatives.

ExaGrid System of Choice for Arch

“We looked at all the big players including Data Domain, Quantum, and ExaGrid,” said Smith. “It was a long process because we wanted to make sure that we were making the right choice, and we’ve been pleased with our decision. Not only was ExaGrid’s post-sales support great, but the pre-sales support was as well. We’re very picky and we were impressed with how thorough the pre-sales team was; they were very willing to go the extra mile to satisfy our questions. We’ve had no regrets.”

Smith said that the main factors that contributed to Arch’s decision to install ExaGrid over the competition were value for the price, scalability, and support. “Scalability in particular is very important to us. We have an ExaGrid in each of two Bermudian data centers, and we’re currently cross-replicating with the intention of adding another system shortly for disaster recovery. In addition, we have a system in Dublin and one in Zurich that also cross replicate. We’ve already expanded our ExaGrid system. All I had to do



was add another appliance; we didn’t need to do a forklift upgrade,” he said. An added plus was the fact that ExaGrid works seamlessly with their existing backup application, Veritas Backup Exec.

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.

Backup Window Reduced by over 50% with ExaGrid

When Arch was backing up to tape, they had two drives and were limited to running just two backup jobs at a time. Now with the ExaGrid, they are running four to six at a time. With tape, Arch’s backup window was exceeding 11 hours. Now backing up to the ExaGrid, their backup window is just 5 hours.

ExaGrid System Offers Unique Deduplication Approach

According to Smith, ExaGrid's approach to deduplication was yet another critical component in Arch's decision-making process. Because ExaGrid lands a full backup before commencing the deduplication process, the data is safely backed up as quickly as possible, and the compute-intensive deduplication is done post process. Other systems deduplicate as the data is being backed up, resulting in an unnecessarily lengthy backup window.

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 undeduplicated form for fast restores, VM Instant Recoveries, and tape copies while the offsite data is ready for disaster recovery.

User-Friendly Installation

"We didn't have to bring anyone in to do the installation," said Smith. "It was very simple, and my staff picked it up very quickly." Smith is pleased with the customer support he's received. When Arch has had technical questions or issues, they get addressed and resolved in a timely fashion.

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.

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.