ExaGrid Reduces Backup Window by 94% and Saves Bluewater Power IT Staff on Time and Storage

BLUEWATER POWER

> "I used to spend all of my time managing backups and since we've installed ExaGrid, I spend 75% less time on backup and am able to focus on other projects. Using ExaGrid has eased my mind, because I can count on our backups to be reliable and I know our data can be quickly restored when necessary."
>
> **Peter Faasse**
> **Senior Technical Analyst**

CANADA

Key Benefits:

- Bluewater Power updates IT environment with disk-based solution — ExaGrid and Veeam

- Nightly backups reduced from 8 hours to 30 minutes after switch to ExaGrid and Veeam

- IT staff time on backup management reduced by 75% due to ExaGrid's reliability and ease-of-use

Customer Overview

For more than 100 years, Bluewater Power has provided power to the people of the Sarnia-Lambton area of Ontario, Canada. Today, the company has grown to provide electrical distribution and related services to over 35,000 households across six municipalities in the region. Bluewater Power prides itself with providing the people of its communities with power they can rely on.

Updating to a Disk-based Backup Solution

The IT team at Bluewater Power had been backing up its virtualized environment to a tape system, using IBM Tivoli Storage Manager (IBM TSM). The IT team decided to look into a disk-based backup system after constantly struggling with the lengthy tape backups that would often exceed the desired backup windows.

Bluewater Power decided to install ExaGrid and Veeam as its new backup solution. Peter Faasse, senior technical analyst at the power company, has been pleased with the replacement. "Veeam is great to use for our virtual environment, and ExaGrid is a natural fit to work with it; the integration between the two is awesome!" he said.

The combination of ExaGrid's and Veeam's industry-leading virtual server data protection solutions allows customers to utilize Veeam Backup & Replication in VMware, vSphere, and Microsoft Hyper-V virtual environments on ExaGrid's disk-based backup system. This combination provides fast backups and efficient data storage. ExaGrid fully leverages Veeam's built-in backup-to-disk capabilities, and ExaGrid's adaptive data deduplication provides additional data and cost reduction over standard disk solutions.

Customers can use Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in source-side deduplication in concert with ExaGrid's disk-based backup system with Adaptive Deduplication to further shrink backups.

Drastic Reduction of Backup Window by 94%

Bluewater Power has a variety of data to back up, including Microsoft Exchange, Windows files, and SQL databases. Faasse backs up the data in daily incrementals and weekly synthetic fulls, as well as monthly backups. He starts the incrementals at the same time each night, and has been impressed with how much shorter these backups became after switching to the ExaGrid-Veeam solution, which backs up the data 94% faster.

"Our nightly backups used to take eight hours, and now the same backups take just half an hour!" said Faasse. In addition, he has found that he is able to restore data in minutes, which "can't even compare" with restoring data from tape. "Now that we use ExaGrid and Veeam, we are able to restore and back up data during business hours without any impact on our IT environment," he added.

ExaGrid writes backups directly to a disk Landing Zone, avoiding inline processing

EXAGRID®

and ensuring the highest possible backup performance, which results in the shortest backup window. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups while providing full system resources to the backups for the shortest backup window. ExaGrid has integrated the Veeam Data Mover so that backups are written Veeam-to-Veeam versus Veeam-to-CIFS, which provides a 30% increase in backup performance. ExaGrid is the only product on the market that offers this performance enhancement. Because ExaGrid has integrated the Veeam Data Mover, Veeam synthetic fulls can be created at a rate that is six times faster than any other solution.

ExaGrid and Veeam can instantly recover a VMware virtual machine by running it directly from the ExaGrid appliance in the event that the primary storage VM becomes unavailable. Once the primary storage environment has been brought back to a working state, the VM running on the ExaGrid appliance can then be migrated to primary storage for continued operation.

Data Deduplication Maximizes Storage Capacity

Prior to using the ExaGrid-Veeam solution, Bluewater Power had no way to deduplicate its data. Faasse is pleased with amount of storage savings that data deduplication provides. "We're getting great deduplication and that leaves plenty of room on our ExaGrid system. I like that ExaGrid's storage system is divided between the Landing Zone and retention area, and that we can set or change the size of either section easily," said Faasse.

Veeam uses the information from VMware and Hyper-V and provides deduplication on a "per-job" basis, finding the matching areas of all the virtual disks within a backup job and using metadata to reduce the overall footprint of the backup data. Veeam also has a "dedupe friendly" compression setting which further reduces the size of the Veeam backups in a way that allows the ExaGrid system to achieve further deduplication. This approach typically achieves a 2:1 deduplication ratio.

ExaGrid is architected from the ground up to protect virtualized environments and provide deduplication as backups are taken. ExaGrid will achieve up to 5:1 additional deduplication rate. The net result is a combined Veeam and ExaGrid deduplication rate of upwards to 10:1, which greatly reduces the amount of disk storage required.

Simplified Backup Management and 'Exceptional' Customer Support

Since switching to the ExaGrid system, Faasse has found that he spends much less time on backup management. "I used to spend all of my time managing backups and since we've installed ExaGrid, I spend 75% less time on backup and am able to focus on other projects. Using ExaGrid has eased my mind, because I can count on our backups to be reliable and I know our data can be quickly restored when necessary."

Faasse also appreciates that his assigned ExaGrid customer support engineer is only a phone call away. "The customer support has been exceptional! I haven't needed to call very often, but I always receive great service when I do. My support engineer is very responsive and helpful," he said.

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.

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides intelligent hyperconverged storage for backup with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone enables the fastest backups, restores, and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable system and ensures a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive and disruptive forklift upgrades. Learn more at **www.exagrid.com**.