



ExaGrid System with Data Encryption Helps Medical Center Adhere to HIPAA Mandate



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USA

Key Benefits:

- Encryption provides improved security for data at rest
- ExaGrid offers flexibility for future changes in backup software
- Unlike competitive solutions, fast backups and effective deduplication provide superior efficiency
- Phone installation with an ExaGrid support engineer is "very smooth"

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Steve Arnold
System Administrator

Customer Overview

CGH Medical Center is a progressive, acute care facility in northern Illinois. We receive high ratings for patient satisfaction. 1700 caring people strong (with 144 physicians in 35 areas of medicine) committed to providing healthcare leadership.

High Volume of Tape Consumption, Long Backup Jobs

CGH Medical Center had been using a 60-slot tape library and going through a high volume of tape to back up and protect its data, but day-to-day tape management was a growing challenge for its IT staff, and long backup times made keeping up with backup jobs difficult.

"We had to swap out all the tapes twice a week and send them offsite to a vault, and dealing with that much tape was a challenge," said Steve Arnold, system administrator for CGH Medical Center. "The whole process was time consuming, from day-to-day tape management to restoring data from tapes held offsite. We also needed to improve the speed of our backups because some jobs were running as long as 24 hours."

ExaGrid System with Encryption Helps with HIPAA Compliance, Eliminates Need for Offsite Tape Storage

After looking at several solutions on the market, CGH Medical Center decided to install a two-site ExaGrid system. The hospital placed one appliance in its main datacenter, and is in the process of deploying a second appliance in an offsite clinic for data replication. The offsite system, an ExaGrid EX21000E with encryption, offers improved data security through its enterprise-proven, industry-standard Self-Encrypting Drive (SED) technology. SEDs provide a high level of security for data at rest and can help reduce IT drive retirement costs in the data center. All data on the disk drive is encrypted automatically without any action required by users. Encryption and authentication keys are never accessible to outside systems where they can be stolen. Unlike software-based encryption methods, SEDs typically have a better throughput rate, particularly during extensive read operations.



"We wanted data between sites to be encrypted, and the offsite ExaGrid system will enable us to meet regulatory requirements and eliminate tape. Once it's fully deployed, we'll be completely tapeless and we won't have to deal with offsite tape storage in banks and vaults anymore," said Arnold. "Restores are easier now, too, because we don't have to deal with tape. All our information can be easily restored in minutes."

Flexibility, Superior Data Reduction, and Fast Backup Times

Today, CHG Medical Center uses the ExaGrid system in conjunction with Micro Focus Data Protector for the majority of its data and a SQL backup utility for SQL data. However, the system supports the most popular backup applications, so the facility can choose to implement different software if requirements change at any point in the future.

"Because the ExaGrid system is independent of the backup software, we can change backup solutions without touching our infrastructure. That gives us a lot of flexibility in the future to create an environment tailored specifically to our needs," Arnold said.

ExaGrid's data deduplication ensures efficient data reduction while delivering fast backup times.

"We looked at several different backup approaches, and we liked ExaGrid's approach to deduplication, which reduces the data and ensures that backup jobs run as quickly as possible," he said. "Some of the competitive products we looked at wouldn't have been as effective, either in terms of deduplication effectiveness or backup speed."

Easy Setup and Knowledgeable Customer Support

Arnold said that he racked the system up himself and then called into the customer support engineer assigned to CGH Medical Center's account to finish the installation.

"Installation was a very smooth process. The unit showed up and we mounted it in the rack. Then, our ExaGrid engineer guided me through the rest of the physical installation process, we went over the configuration, and the system was up and running," he said. "Having our support engineer by my side gave me a greater level of confidence."

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. Customer's never have to repeat themselves to various support staff, and issues get resolved quickly.

Scale-out Architecture Ensures Smooth Scalability

ExaGrid's award-winning scale-out architecture provides customers with a fixed-length backup window regardless of data growth. Its unique disk-cache Landing Zone allows for the fastest backups and retains the most recent backup in its full unduplicated form, enabling the fastest restores.

ExaGrid's appliance models can be mixed and matched into a single scale-out system allowing a full backup of up to 2.7PB with a combined ingest rate of 488TB/hr, in a single system. The appliances automatically join the scale-out system. Each appliance includes the appropriate amount of processor, memory, disk, and bandwidth for the data size. By adding compute with capacity, the backup window remains fixed in length as the data grows. Automatic load balancing across all repositories allows for full utilization of all appliances. Data is deduplicated into an offline repository, and additionally, data is globally deduplicated across all repositories.

This combination of capabilities in a turnkey appliance makes the ExaGrid system easy to install, manage, and scale. ExaGrid's architecture provides lifetime value and investment protection that no other architecture can match.

"We're confident that ExaGrid's scale-out architecture will enable us to handle increased backup demands in the future," said Arnold. "The ExaGrid system has made our backups more efficient, and its encryption feature will enable us securely replicate data between sites and eliminate tape – saving us a tremendous amount of time and the hassle of managing tape and performing restores."

ExaGrid and Micro Focus Data Protector

The ExaGrid system supports cost-effective and scalable disk-based backup using Micro Focus Data Protector backup software. ExaGrid also supports the ability to replicate Data Protector backups to a second site for offsite disaster recovery protection.

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to disk with deduplication or using backup software deduplication to disk. ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1, depending on the data types and retention periods, by storing only the unique objects across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups. As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it is also replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

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.

