



ExaGrid-Veeam Solution Provides CMMC with 'Huge' Storage Savings and Enhanced Backup Performance

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Paul Leclair
Senior Systems Engineer

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid supports all of CMMC's backup applications throughout evolution of environment
- Backup window of CMMC's largest server reduced by 60% with ExaGrid-Veeam solution
- Combined ExaGrid-Veeam deduplication provides 'huge' savings on storage space

Customer Overview

Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC), located in Lewiston, Maine, is a resource hospital for healthcare providers in Androscoggin, Franklin, Oxford counties and the surrounding region. Supported by the latest technologies, CMMC's skilled professionals provide outstanding care delivered with compassion, kindness, and understanding.

An Evolving Backup Environment

Central Maine Medical Center (CMMC) has been backing up its data to an ExaGrid system for many years, throughout the evolution of its backup environment. Prior to using ExaGrid, CMMC backed its data up to a FalconStor VTL system, using Veritas NetBackup. "We had outgrown our current backup system, and were open to trying a different approach. After looking at a few options such as Dell EMC Data Domain and a newer FalconStor VTL solution, we compared cost and functionality and chose ExaGrid especially for its data deduplication process," said Paul Leclair, senior systems engineer at Cerner Corporation, which is the company that manages the hospital's IT environment.

As CMMC's environment moved toward virtualization, Quest vRanger was added to back up the VMware, while NetBackup continued to back up the physical servers. Leclair found that both backup applications worked well with the ExaGrid system, and that the improvements in the backup environment led to "better backup performance and better deduplication ratios." The ExaGrid system works seamlessly with all of the most frequently used backup applications, so an organization can retain its investment in existing applications and processes.

After several years, it was time to look at improving the backup environment again, so new backup applications were considered. "Over the years, as our data grew, we found that we outgrew vRanger. We recently switched to Veeam, and ExaGrid has been incredibly helpful, and even loaned us an ExaGrid appliance for the migration of our



data from both vRanger and NetBackup to Veeam. Since the migration, nearly 99% of our data is now backed up by Veeam with the remaining 1% backed up by NetBackup," said Leclair.

ExaGrid-Veeam Solution Enhances Backup Performance

CMMC's data consists of SQL and Oracle databases, a large Microsoft Exchange server, as well as other application and file servers. Leclair backs up critical data in incrementals on a daily basis, and with a full backup of the environment on a weekly basis. In addition, full backups are copied to tape each month, for archiving.

Switching to the ExaGrid-Veeam solution has greatly reduced the backup windows, especially for one of CMMC's largest servers. "When we used NetBackup, it took up to five days to back up one of our larger servers that runs Microsoft Windows. We've enabled the Microsoft deduplication and it is great, because storing the server took up 6TB, but we found after rehydrating that server, that there is actually 11TB of data stored on that server, which we didn't realize until we used



Veeam. Using the ExaGrid-Veeam solution, the backup window for that server has been reduced from five days to two days," said Leclair. "A benefit to the ExaGrid-Veeam solution is how much better the backup performance is because of the synthetic backups and because data is backed up right to ExaGrid's Landing Zone. It takes all the load off our VMs, and our users don't feel anything," he added.

ExaGrid writes backups directly to a disk 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 while providing full system resources to the backups for the shortest backup window. 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.

Combined Deduplication Saves on Storage Space

Leclair has been impressed with the combined data deduplication that Veeam and ExaGrid provide. "The combined deduplication has saved a significant amount of storage space. My ExaGrid support engineer recently upgraded my firmware and the combined deduplication is even better! I showed others on my team and they couldn't believe how much space has been saved. It's huge!"

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 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.

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.

Well-Supported System Reduces Backup Administration

Over the years, Leclair has found that one of the most valuable benefits of using an ExaGrid system is working with an assigned ExaGrid support engineer. "The product has been rock solid, and my support engineer has been responsive to any questions I've had. I didn't expect him to be so knowledgeable about our backup applications or so attentive to our environment. My support engineer monitors our system and has let us know if we need any patches; I have never worked with a product that provides such proactive support!"

Leclair has found that ExaGrid provides reliable backups that are easy to manage, leaving time to focus on other projects. "Since using our ExaGrid system, I've hardly had to spend any time managing backups. I used to have to dedicate two hours per day for backup administration, and now it just takes a few minutes to look at the reports. One of my goals has been to transition from engineering and backup administration and to shift toward an architect role. Now that backups are so straightforward and reliable, I can worry less about backup and focus on systems architecting."

ExaGrid and Veeam

Leclair appreciates the integration between ExaGrid and Veeam and uses the solution's unique features, such as the ExaGrid-Veeam Accelerated Data Mover to enhance backup performance. "The marriage between the ExaGrid and Veeam is wonderful. It provides great features and the ability to optimize the backup environment."

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 as well as replication to an offsite location for disaster recovery. ExaGrid fully leverages Veeam's built-in backup-to-disk capabilities, and ExaGrid's zone-level 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 zone-level deduplication to further shrink backups.

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