**EXAGRID**®

# Cheektowaga Central School District Deploys ExaGrid, Speeds Backups, Increases Reliability

CHEEKTOWAGA CENTRAL
SCHOOL DISTRICT

USA

## Key Benefits:

- Backup Window reduces from 14 to 3 hours
- 75% less time spent on managing and administering backups
- Simple set-up and highly responsive support
- Highly flexible system to accommodate for growth

"The ExaGrid is incredibly reliable, and it performs consistently each and every night. The system is rock solid, and we very rarely experience issues. I probably spend 75 percent less time managing and administering backups."

**Colleen Eagen**
Micro Computer Technical Support Specialist, Erie 1 BOCES assigned to the Cheektowaga CSD

## Customer Overview

*The Cheektowaga Central School District serves the town of Cheektowaga, New York. Located east of Buffalo, the District combines the personal attention of a small district with the educational opportunities of a large, diversified school district, providing the best of both worlds to its students. The District serves over 2,300 students at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.*

## Long Backups with Tape Require Remedy

The Cheektowaga Central School District's IT staff began looking for an alternative to its tape backup system in an effort to remedy long backup times. On most nights, backups kicked off at 5:00 p.m. and ran all night and into the next morning, so there was no room for error.

"On a good day, our backups would run throughout the night and would be finished by the time we got in the next morning. However, the slightest hiccup would result in an incomplete backup because we would have to cancel the backup jobs before the school day began or the network would slow down significantly. The margin of error was incredibly thin," said Colleen Eagen, microcomputer technical support specialist for Erie1 BOCES assigned to the Cheektowaga Central School District. "I also spent a lot of time on the daily management of backups. We needed to find a solution that would enable us to get our backups successfully completed every night, and we needed to reduce the amount of time spent on management and troubleshooting."

## ExaGrid Reduces Backup Window from 14 to 3 Hours

After evaluating alternatives, the District purchased an ExaGrid system with data deduplication. "We really liked the fact that the ExaGrid fit easily into our existing network, and we could also continue to use Symantec Backup Exec," said Eagen.

The ExaGrid system protects all the District's data, including student and faculty home directories, Lotus Notes, financial and accounting systems. The ExaGrid system is backed up to tape monthly.

Since installing the ExaGrid system, the District has seen its backup window reduced from 14 hours to 3 hours. "Our backups run so much faster now, and we rest easy knowing that they will get

completed each and every night," said Eagen. "The ExaGrid is incredibly reliable, and it performs consistently each and every night. Now, instead of troubleshooting backups like I used to with tape, I just check the Symantec software to verify that all the backups were completed successfully. The ExaGrid is rock solid and we very rarely experience issues. I probably spend 75 percent less time than I used to managing and administering backups."

Eagen said that ExaGrid's post-process data deduplication dramatically reduces the amount of data that is backed up.

"The ExaGrid system does a great job at reducing the amount of data we back up and because it's all done in the background, I don't have to worry about it. The ExaGrid also has a much higher level of data integrity than tape. With tape, even if a backup was successful, it was possible that the data would be unavailable due to a corrupt tape. With the ExaGrid, I'm much more confident that the data will be there when and if I need it," said Eagen. "Also, restores are so much faster with the ExaGrid.

Restoring data from tape used to take hours. With the ExaGrid, restores take much less time."

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).

## Simple Setup, Responsive Support

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.

"Setting up the ExaGrid system was incredibly simple. I started the install, and then ExaGrid's customer support team remoted in and guided me through the rest of the setup. It really was easy," said Eagen. "We've had the need to call in to customer support on a few occasions, and the support engineers are always accessible and very knowledgeable."

## Expandable to Handle More Data

As the District's backup requirements grow, the ExaGrid system can easily expand to accommodate more data. The ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate data growth. ExaGrid's software makes the system highly scalable - appliances of any size or age can be mixed and matched in a single system. A single scale-out system can take in up to a 2.7PB full backup plus retention at an ingest rate of up to 488TB per hour.

ExaGrid appliances contain not just disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. When the system needs to expand, additional appliances are simply added to the existing system. The system scales linearly, maintaining a fixed-length backup window as data grows so customers only pay for what they need, when they need it.

Data is deduplicated into a non-network-facing repository tier with automatic load balancing and global deduplication across all repositories.

"It's nice to know that we can scale the ExaGrid to handle more data. It's a very flexible system," said Eagen. "For me, the addition of the ExaGrid system has freed me up to focus on other parts of my job. I have a high level of confidence in the system, and it has made my job easier."

## ExaGrid and Veritas Backup Exec

Veritas Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high-performance 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 Tiered Backup Storage 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 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 ExaGrid for backup to disk.

## Intelligent Data 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**.

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