

Chemung County Prefers ExaGrid Approach to Data Deduplication over Data Domain's

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Steven Morse
Information Technology
Specialist
Chemung County, NY

Customer Overview

With a population of approximately 90,000 and spanning over 400 square miles, Chemung County is located in the south central region of upstate New York. It is part of the Southern Tier as well as the Finger Lakes Region of New York State.

Dealing with Cumbersome Tape Took a Toll on IT Staff

Chemung County's IT department is responsible for backing up data for all of the various departments and offices in the county government, including the city of Elmira, several town law enforcement agencies, and other departments, including the health, social services, and the county's airport. The county's IT staff had been backing up to a 24-tape library and then storing the tapes in a safe across the street from its datacenter, but the manual nature of the backups, along with limited retention, led the county to look for a more automated system to streamline operations and increase retention.

"For us, tape was really inconvenient," said Steven Morse, information technology specialist for Chemung County, New York. "I used to spend a half an hour each day ejecting the tapes, carrying them over to the safe and inventorying them. It was a slow process. Using tape, our backups were taking way too long to complete, and we weren't confident that the data would actually be there if we needed it. We finally decided to look for a new solution to streamline the whole process and improve retention."

ExaGrid Works with Existing Backup Applications to Speed Backups, Data Deduplication Maximizes Disk Space

Chemung County selected ExaGrid's disk backup solution with data deduplication after also looking at systems from EMC Data Domain, Unitrends and Cybernetics.

"We really needed a product with strong data deduplication, so we narrowed down the field to the ExaGrid and EMC Data Domain solutions. In the end, we were more confident in the ExaGrid system," said Morse. "We liked ExaGrid's approach to data deduplication, and it's proven to be very effective at reducing our data."

ExaGrid combines last backup compression along with data deduplication, which stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. This unique approach reduces the disk space required by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, delivering unparalleled cost savings and performance. ExaGrid delivers extremely fast backup performance because data is written directly to disk, and data deduplication is performed post-process after the data is stored to reduce data. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Chemung County uses a combination of Backup Exec, Veeam and EMC NetWorker along with the ExaGrid system. Ninety percent of the county's servers are virtual and are backed up using Veeam; physical servers are backed up using Symantec Backup Exec and EMC NetWorker.

"The ExaGrid system works well with all three backup applications. In particular, we've been impressed with how seamlessly it works with Veeam. Each morning, I get an email report confirming that our backups ran properly overnight. I have a high degree of confidence that the data will be there and easily recoverable if we need it. With tape, that was always a big concern," said Morse.

EXAGRID™

The Result: Faster, More Efficient Backups and Restores

Morse said that installing the ExaGrid system has made the county's backup processes faster and more efficient.

"We were spending several hours a week taking tapes out, bringing them across the street to our safe, and bringing tapes back to the datacenter for restores. That's all been eliminated since we installed the ExaGrid system," said Morse. "Our backup jobs run faster and restores are a breeze. I can restore data with just a couple of mouse clicks."

Easy Setup with ExaGrid

"Setting up the ExaGrid system was simple," said Morse. "All the documentation was there and easy to understand and I was able to get the system up and running with Veeam, NetWorker and Backup Exec quickly. Our ExaGrid customer support engineer walked me through the system and it was all done in a morning. It's run flawlessly since the initial installation."

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 engineers who are dedicated to individual accounts. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

Scalability to Grow

ExaGrid's GRID computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, different sized configurations can be mixed and matched into a single GRID system with capacities of up to a 130TB full backup plus retention. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

"ExaGrid's easy scalability will enable us to grow the system as our data increases. Instead of purchasing an entire new system, we'll be able to extend the one we have when the time comes," said Morse. "The ExaGrid system has enabled us to significantly reduce our reliance on tape, and it frees us up to focus on other projects. We're also more confident in our backup data."

ExaGrid and Veeam / Symantec Backup Exec / EMC NetWorker

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.

The ExaGrid system fully leverages Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in backup to disk capabilities and ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication for additional data reduction (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.

Symantec Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high-performance, and certified disk-to-disk-to-tape backup and recovery – including continuous data protection for Microsoft Exchange, SQL, 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 NetWorker can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as NetWorker, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running NetWorker, 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 onsite backup to disk.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication technology stores only the changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies, reducing the amount of disk needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, resulting in a solution that is 25 to 30% the cost of standard SATA drives.

The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with popular backup applications, so organizations can retain their investment in existing applications and processes. ExaGrid servers can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery. ExaGrid servers can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.

For more information about ExaGrid, please visit us at www.exagrid.com or call us at 1-800-868-6985.