The Chronicle of Higher Education Reduces Tape, Improves Backups and Restores with ExaGrid

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

"ExaGrid's customer support is top-notch. The engineers are always accessible and they really know their way around the product. It's rare to get such a responsive, knowledgeable support team."

Jun Alcanites
Network Administrator
The Chronicle of Higher Education

Customer Overview

The Chronicle of Higher Education is the No. 1 source of news, information, and jobs for college and university faculty members and administrators. Based in Washington, D.C., *The Chronicle* has more than 70 writers, editors, and international correspondents. Online, *The Chronicle* is published every weekday and is the top destination for news, advice, and jobs for people in academe. *The Chronicle's* Web site features the complete contents of the latest issue; daily news and advice columns; thousands of current job listings; an archive of previously published content; vibrant discussion forums; and career-building tools such as online CV management, salary databases, and more.

Frustration with Tape Led to Search for a New Solution

The Chronicle's IT department had grown tired of backing up data to tape. Nightly backups were routinely pushing up against the company's nine hour backup window and the staff was having a difficult time keeping up with tape rotation because the company's data was growing so quickly.

"We were using approximately 20 tapes a week and it was time consuming to load and unload the magazines over and over and over again. We clearly needed to get away from tape, and after considering some alternatives, we decided to go with a disk-based backup system. We chose the ExaGrid system after looking at several different products on the market. It was a good choice because it worked with our existing backup application and it fit seamlessly into our network," said Jun Alcanites, network administrator at *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

ExaGrid System Integrates Seamlessly into Existing Infrastructure to Provide Faster, Tape-free Backups

The Chronicle purchased an ExaGrid disk-based backup system with data deduplication and installed it in its Washington, D.C. datacenter. The ExaGrid system works along with Symantec's Backup Exec to protect Windows, Exchange and SQL data from its nearly 220 users.

"The ExaGrid system works beautifully with Backup Exec and it's been reliable since day one," said Alcanites. "The best part is that we've been able to reduce our tape usage. We currently back the ExaGrid system up to tape once a week but we only use one or two tapes now. It saves me a lot of time because our backups are automated and I don't have to fool around with tape every night."

Easy Installation and Management, Knowledgeable Customer Support

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.

"Installation was painless and took no time at all and the system itself is very easy to manage," Alcanites said. "Also, ExaGrid's customer support is top-notch. The support engineers are always accessible and they really know their way around the product. It's rare to get such a responsive, knowledgeable support team."

EXAGRID

Data Deduplication Maximizes Disk Space

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 byte-level data deduplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

"ExaGrid's data deduplication technology does a great job at reducing our data and it enables us to maximize the amount of data we're able to keep on the system in case we need to do a restore," said Alcanites. "I've had to perform quite a few restores already and it really is easy. I save a lot of time because I don't have to deal with tape. Restores are nearly instantaneous with the ExaGrid system."

Scalability to Handle Increased Demand

As The Chronicle's data grows, the ExaGrid system can be easily expanded to handle increased backup demands. 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 100TB 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.

"Our data is growing quickly so it's nice to know that the ExaGrid can easily scale to meet our needs in the future. We can simply add additional units to the system and they'll act as one big system," said Alcanites. "We've been very happy with the ExaGrid. Using the system has been a big time saver for us and we're confident that our backups are completed each and every night without fail."

ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec

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.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with byte-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's byte-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 is the leader in cost-effective disk-based backup solutions. A highly scalable system that works with existing backup applications, the ExaGrid system is ideal for companies looking to quickly eliminate the hassles of tape backup while reducing their existing backup windows. ExaGrid's innovative approach minimizes the amount of data to be stored by providing standard data compression for the most recent backups along with byte-level data deduplication technology for all previous backups. Customers can deploy ExaGrid at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories or for disaster recovery.

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

About ExaGrid Systems, Inc.

Customers worldwide depend on ExaGrid Systems to solve their backup problems–effectively and permanently. ExaGrid's disk-based, scale-out GRID architecture adjusts to increasing backup demands due to constantly growing data volumes. It is the only solution that combines compute with capacity as well as a unique landing zone to permanently shorten backup windows and eliminate expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at **www.exagrid.com**.

ExaGrid Systems, Inc. | 2000 West Park Drive | Westborough, MA 01581 | 800.868.6985 | www.exagrid.com

ExaGrid reserves the right to change specifications or other product information without notice.
ExaGrid and the ExaGrid logo are trademarks of ExaGrid Systems, Inc.
All other trademarks are the property of their respective holders.
© 2011 ExaGrid Systems, Inc. All rights reserved.