

Honolulu Says 'Aloha' to Better, Faster Backups with ExaGrid System

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Tobin Hirota
Systems Analyst
City and County of Honolulu

Key Benefits:

- Timely backup completion results in maximum server and network performance
- 'Effortless' backups no longer require weekend management as was the case with tape backups
- Expansion is 'easy' and upgrades are 'painless'
- 'Top-notch' customer support when issues arise

Customer Overview

Honolulu County (officially known as the City and County of Honolulu) includes both the urban district of Honolulu and the rest of the island of O'ahu as well as several minor outlying islands. The population of Honolulu County is approximately 960,000, making it the tenth-largest municipality in the United States.

Need for Faster Backups Led to ExaGrid

Before installing the ExaGrid system, the IT staff at the City and County of Honolulu struggled with long weekly backups to tape that consistently ran into Monday mornings, causing server and network slowdowns for its nearly 8,000 users.

"When our backups began affecting server and network response times, we decided the time was right to look for a new system capable of reducing our backup windows and our reliance on tape," said Tobin Hirota, systems analyst for the City and County of Honolulu. "After researching various solutions, we decided to purchase the ExaGrid system because we liked its hardware-based approach and post-process data deduplication technology."

ExaGrid System Delivers Strong Data Deduplication, Reduces Backup Times

Honolulu installed a single-site ExaGrid disk-based backup system with data deduplication in its disaster recovery center located 25 miles outside of Honolulu. The ExaGrid system works along with Honolulu's existing backup application, CommVault Simpana.

"We work under a pretty tight budget, so in addition to acquisition cost, we also looked closely at ongoing cost projections. We didn't want to get into a situation where we were constantly purchasing additional storage capacity, so data deduplication

became a key factor in our evaluation," said Hirota. "We spent a lot of time comparing ExaGrid's deduplication process to the competition, and we found significant advantages to its hardware-based, post-process approach. ExaGrid's deduplication technology is extremely effective at reducing data, and because the backups are completed after the data lands on the system, the jobs run as quickly as possible."

Hirota said that today, the ExaGrid system delivers an overall deduplication ratio of 6.5:1, with some data reducing as high as 100:1, depending upon the type of data stored.

The ExaGrid system 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.

The system 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.

Since installing the ExaGrid system, backup jobs are completed well within Honolulu's defined backup windows and are always completed by Monday mornings, so its servers and network run as efficiently as possible.

EXAGRID™

Fast Setup, Top-Notch 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.

"Setting up the ExaGrid system was fast and easy. It's a pretty straightforward process, but I had some guidance from our support engineer, who made sure that everything was done correctly," said Hirota. "ExaGrid's customer support team has been simply top notch. We've had the system installed for several years now and have always had consistently great support. The support staff is knowledgeable and easy to get in touch with if we have a question or concern."

Scalability for Future Growth

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.

"We expanded the ExaGrid system to handle more data, and it was as easy as plugging another unit into the switch," said Hirota. "I used to spend weekends managing backups, but now they run effortlessly each and every night. The system is easy to use and manage, upgrades are painless, and it's backed by some of the best customer support in the industry. We've been very happy with the ExaGrid system."

ExaGrid and CommVault Simpana

CommVault Simpana Backup and Recovery software contains extensive capabilities to simplify the management of backup media resources. Simpana software writes backup data to a

broad collection of storage devices, including disk as a media target. This ability to write to magnetic disk as a functional equal of all other media types while exploiting the random access nature of the disk media sets Simpana software apart.

Organizations using CommVault Simpana can look to the ExaGrid system as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Simpana, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Simpana, 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 disk drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to straight disk. 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 backing up to straight disk.

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.

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