

ExaGrid System Priced 60% Less than Data Domain for City of Coral Gables

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



"ExaGrid and other competitors were evaluated by the City in conjunction with Gartner and they recommended the ExaGrid systems based on cost and the City's requirements. The ExaGrid system was approximately 60% lower than the other systems reviewed by the City... [It's] been a great solution for us. It's really improved the speed and efficiency of our backups and restores, and it has the scalability we need for the future."

Ayanes Apolinar
IT Analyst
City of Coral Gables

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid systems fits right into existing infrastructure
- Post-process deduplication delivers faster backups than in-line
- Full backup on landing zone provides for fast restores – no need to rehydrate data

Customer Overview

The City of Coral Gables is located in Miami-Dade County, Florida, and is home to the University of Miami. Coral Gables has an approximate population of 42,800.

Cost Analysis Supports Need for Tape Replacement

Coral Gables had been backing up its data to tape but found restores difficult and the constant purchasing of tape expensive. Finally, after doing a cost analysis, and based on recommendations from the City Clerk and records management industry experts, the City's IT department decided to look for a cost-effective, disk-based solution capable of providing primary backup and disaster recovery.

"Our retention requirements had increased, and we were spending close to \$10,000 every 18 months on tape," said Ayanes Apolinar, IT analyst for the City of Coral Gables. "Also, restoring data from tape was a real ordeal, and our backup times were too long."

Price and Post-Process Deduplication Led to Purchase Over Data Domain

Apolinar said that the City looked at several solutions, including EMC Data Domain, before choosing the two-site ExaGrid system.

"Our colleagues in the IT department at the City of Miami Beach had recently installed an ExaGrid system. We spoke with them and they gave the system a glowing recommendation," he said. "It fit right into our existing infrastructure, and we liked that we didn't have to purchase any additional components or software. The ExaGrid system was approximately 60% lower than the Data Domain system."

ExaGrid's post-process data deduplication approach and its ability to automatically replicate data offsite also played a part in

the decision to install the ExaGrid system, Apolinar said.

"We were impressed with the way the ExaGrid system backs the data up first and then deduplicates it. We felt that approach would deliver faster backup times than an inline approach where the data is deduped as it's coming into the system," he said. "Also, when we were evaluating our backup needs, we identified faster restores as one of our goals. With the ExaGrid system, we can restore any file with just a few keystrokes because the information is available right there on the landing zone."

Incremental Backup Times Reduced from 16 to 1.5 Hours

Since implementing the ExaGrid system, backup times have been significantly reduced. Nightly differential backup times have dropped from 16 hours to 90 minutes, while weekly full backups are now completed in 50 hours, down from 72 hours.

ExaGrid combines standard compression along with zone-level 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 the changes from backup to backup, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

EXAGRID[™]

ExaGrid Works with Most Backup Apps, Reduces TCO

The City uses the ExaGrid system in conjunction with Veeam Backup & Recovery for its virtual machines, Symantec Backup Exec for its physical servers, and SQL dumps for its SQL databases. Data is sent to the ExaGrid using SQL dump, and then it is replicated offsite to a second ExaGrid system for disaster recovery.

“With the ExaGrid, we have the flexibility to use the best backup applications for our environment, and in our case, they were the same backup applications we had been using before. It really reduced the total cost of ownership and our learning curve,” he said.

Management Time Reduced from 8+ Hours per Week to Just Minutes

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

“The system is so easy to manage. We used to spend eight to ten hours per week managing backups, but now we just spend a few minutes a day,” he said.

Apolinar said that the ExaGrid customer support engineer assigned to the City’s account helped set up the system and familiarized him with it. “We racked the system up and cabled it, and then our ExaGrid support engineer came in remotely and helped us finish up the configuration. Our support engineer has been with us since the beginning and is always there when we have a question or concern,” he said.

GRID Architecture Offers Simple Scalability

As the City’s backup data increases, the ExaGrid system can easily expand to handle increased amounts of data. “With the ExaGrid, we can expand the system by simply purchasing another appliance, plugging it in, and making a couple of configuration changes,” Apolinar said.

ExaGrid uses a GRID-based configuration, where each appliance contains processing power, memory, bandwidth, and disk. When the system needs to expand, additional appliance nodes are attached to the GRID, bringing with them additional processing power, memory, bandwidth, and disk. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all the aspects of

performance as the amount of data grows, and you are only paying for the amount of processing power, memory and bandwidth as you need it. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliance nodes are added to the GRID, the ExaGrid automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the GRID.

“The ExaGrid system has been a great solution for us. It’s really improved the speed and efficiency of our backups and restores, and it has the scalability we need for the future,” said Apolinar.

ExaGrid and Veeam

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.

ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec

Symantec Backup Exec is the gold standard in Windows data recovery, providing 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. It also supports single-drive libraries, encryption, and disaster recovery. High-performance agents and options provide fast, flexible, granular protection and recovery, and scalable management of local and remote server backups.

Organizations using Symantec Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Symantec Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Symantec Backup Exec, 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.

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