



# For Over a Decade, City Finds ExaGrid and Commvault to be a 'Solid' Backup Solution



USA

## Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid performed best in evaluations, chosen by the city to work with Commvault
- Deduplication frees up space so that the city can retain more data
- ExaGrid is a 'solid system' with 'excellent support'

**"We've had a great experience with ExaGrid – and we have invested a lot in this technology. Considering the current investment, and the fact that ExaGrid is performing at a level that meets our requirements, the city has not felt compelled to search for alternatives. It's been a very solid product for us."**

**Patrick Lord**  
Network Operations Manager

## Customer Overview

*On the shores of Bellingham Bay with Mount Baker as its backdrop, Bellingham is the last major city before the Washington coastline meets the Canadian border. The City of Bellingham, which serves as the county seat of Whatcom County, is at the center of a uniquely picturesque area offering a rich variety of recreational, cultural, educational, and economic activities.*

## ExaGrid Chosen for Commvault Backups

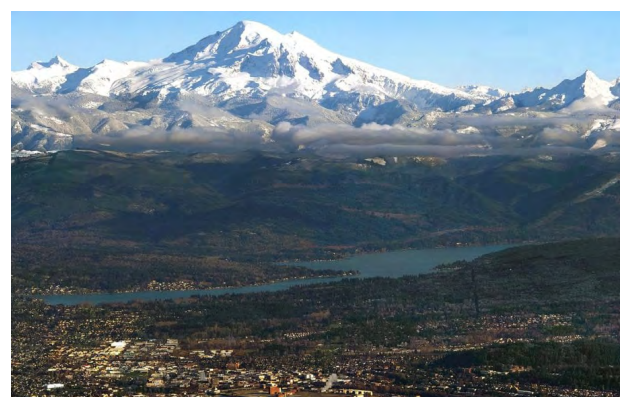
The IT staff at the City of Bellingham has been backing up its data using Commvault for 25 years, originally using DLT tape as a backup storage target. As the tape technology aged, the IT staff decided to investigate a new backup storage solution.

"We wanted to find a solution that was more efficient than tape, and one that provided data deduplication," said Patrick Lord, network operations manager for the City of Bellingham. "We evaluated some of the major backup storage brands, and ExaGrid actually reached out to us, so we added them to our evaluations, and ExaGrid was by far the superior product in terms of administration, ease of use, and cost."

The city installed an ExaGrid system at its primary site that replicates data to a disaster recovery (DR) site. The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with all of the most frequently used backup applications, so an organization can retain its investment in existing applications and processes. In addition, ExaGrid appliances can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for DR.

## Investment in Infrastructure Results in Faster Backup Jobs

The city has 50TB of data that Lord backs up regularly to ensure data protection. "We back up almost all of our systems on daily basis. Then we rotate between full, incremental, and differential, so there are backup jobs going on constantly," he said. In addition to installing ExaGrid, the city also made other infrastructure enhancements, such as faster networking speed, the combination of which Lord credits for making backup jobs much faster.



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).

## ExaGrid Provides Greater Deduplication, Saving on Storage

As a city government, there are mandated policies that the city must follow in terms of long-term retention for certain types of data. Long-term retention can cause strain on storage capacity, but Lord finds that ExaGrid's deduplication helps keep storage manageable. "Deduplication has helped significantly by freeing up space that we would otherwise have to accommodate. We're able to retain data longer than we would normally be able to," he said.

Commvault deduplicated data can be sent to ExaGrid appliances for further deduplication. ExaGrid takes the average 6:1 Commvault deduplication ratio up to 20:1 which reduces the storage footprint by 300%. This greatly reduces the

cost of the backup storage while allowing no change to the current Commvault configuration. ExaGrid can replicate the 20:1 deduplicated data to a second site for offsite long-term retention and DR. The additional deduplication saves WAN bandwidth in addition to saving storage at both sites.

## 'Straightforward' Scalability

The city has been using ExaGrid for nearly a decade and has taken advantage of ExaGrid's trade-in program to refresh its system on several occasions with newer, larger models as the city's data has grown. "Every few years, we refresh our backup storage and it's a very straightforward process. It's as simple as installing the newer ExaGrid appliances, pointing them as the new targets, and letting the older ones age out," said Lord.

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.

## 'Solid' System with 'Excellent' Support

Lord credits ExaGrid's ease of use and high-quality customer support as the reasons the city continues to use an ExaGrid system for over a decade. "We've had a great experience with ExaGrid – and we have invested a lot in this technology. Considering the current investment, and the fact that ExaGrid is performing at a level that meets our requirements, the city has not felt compelled to search for alternatives. It's been a very solid product for us," he said.

"From an administrative perspective, ExaGrid is incredibly easy to use. It's been extremely stable, so we've had very few reasons to call ExaGrid customer support. Our calls with them usually involve firmware upgrades, as opposed to something being wrong with the hardware. Ever since we first installed the system years ago, we've received excellent support. Our ExaGrid support engineer has been great to work with, and it's easy to work with him in a remote session over Webex," he said.

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.

## ExaGrid and Commvault

The Commvault backup application has a level of data deduplication. ExaGrid can ingest Commvault deduplicated data and increase the level of data deduplication by 3X providing a combined deduplication ratio of 15:1, significantly reducing the amount and cost of storage up front and over time. Instead of performing data at rest encryption in Commvault ExaGrid, performs this function in the disk drives in nanoseconds. This approach provides an increase of 20% to 30% for Commvault environments while greatly reducing storage costs.



## 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](http://www.exagrid.com).