



City of St. Petersburg, FL Selects ExaGrid/Veeam Backup Solution, Reduces Backup Window by 85%



USA

Key Benefits:

- 50% time savings administering backup jobs
- Backup window reduced by 85%, from 80 to 11 hours
- Leveraged backup compatibility with partner site using ExaGrid
- Deduplication ratio demonstrates 11:1 result

“ExaGrid is extremely reliable which is what we strive for in backup storage. ExaGrid has made my life so much easier.”

Rock Mitich

Senior Server Analyst

Customer Overview

The City of St. Petersburg, Florida is where the sun shines on all who come to live, work, and play. The City attracts over 10 million tourists annually who enjoy a variety of sporting events from yacht races to baseball; visit an array of museums, galleries, and marine institutes; enjoy the City's festivals, historic neighborhoods, and much more. As the first “Green City” in Florida, tradition and innovation come together to create a vibrant sense of community.

Too Many Gigabytes to Back Up in a Day

Prior to ExaGrid, the City of St. Petersburg backed up to tape using Veritas NetBackup. As the City migrated its environment from physical to virtual, tape was no longer viable. According to Rock Mitich, senior server analyst at the City, there was simply too much data to back up in a day, and the limited number of tape drives made backup even more difficult. When the City replaced its server storage with a new storage array, they leveraged the old storage as the backup destination, which proved that the City could do disk backups faster, more frequently, and more reliably than when it relied solely on tape.

“The fact that we could do multiple jobs all at the same time, was great, but as things progressed, Veritas NetBackup just wasn’t working – there were too many failures – so we decided that we’d migrate over to Veeam,” said Mitich. “That wasn’t an easy transition because we had done a lot of manipulation. During this process, we realized we needed help to minimize our footprint and gain efficiency. We had to look at compression and deduplication because we were wasting space with duplicate data. We didn’t have enough disk space to back everything up, so we started looking at a dedupe solution. We tested several major storage/deduplication vendors and selected ExaGrid due to its cost effectiveness, completeness of solutions, and ease of use.”

Today, the City of St. Petersburg backs up over 400TB of data across two sites. In addition, the City continues to replicate that data to tape, but its long-term goal is to remove tape from its backup process.

Flexibility and No Forklift Upgrades

Mitich said that the City’s decision to install ExaGrid was partly due to its flexibility. “The fact that we could split nodes across different physical locations – as well as upgrade from different sized



nodes and integrate new ones while keeping the older ones running without a forklift upgrade – was a huge win.”

Another major factor in St. Petersburg’s decision to select ExaGrid was that Pinellas County Government, also where St. Pete is located, was already using ExaGrid.

Data Deduplication Reduces Amount of Data Stored

St. Petersburg’s retention policy is 90 days, so it keeps full and daily backups for that period. St. Petersburg’s environment is 95% virtualized, but it still has a handful of physical Windows machines being backed up using Veritas NetBackup.

“ExaGrid reporting proved we had a lot of redundancy, which is exactly what we were hoping for because a lot of the redundancy is due to operating system files from over 200 virtual machines. Our environment is super efficient now with ExaGrid, and we’re getting average dedupe of 11:1,” said Mitich.

Drastic Backup Window Reduction

“I don’t have to keep adding tapes and managing this process. In the last 90 days I don’t think I’ve really added any tapes to the library because we

are so efficient. I save at least 50% of my time managing backup. I now spend 15 to 30 minutes each day monitoring the ExaGrid dashboard and reviewing email alerts compared to one to two hours per day prior to this implementation," said Mitich.

Mitich stated that the City had physical servers that had about 8TB of total data and took almost 80 hours to back up using Veritas NetBackup. When he converted it to a virtual server, the backup window dropped to 46 hours, and now that he's backing it up using Veeam and ExaGrid combined, it's taking just under 11 hours to complete.

Simplified Daily Management

"My goal was to have a simple backup solution, and we're there. I check in to make sure everything is on track, but my day is no longer consumed with fear that backups didn't complete," said Mitich.

ExaGrid's award-winning scale-out architecture provides customers with a fixed-length backup window regardless of data growth. Its unique disk-cache Landing Zone allows for the fastest backups and retains the most recent backup in its full unduplicated form, enabling the fastest restores.

ExaGrid's appliance models can be mixed and matched into a single scale-out system allowing a full backup of up to 2.7PB with a combined ingest rate of 488TB/hr, in a single system. The appliances automatically join the scale-out system. Each appliance includes the appropriate amount of processor, memory, disk, and bandwidth for the data size. By adding compute with capacity, the backup window remains fixed in length as the data grows. Automatic load balancing across all repositories allows for full utilization of all appliances. Data is deduplicated into an offline repository, and additionally, data is globally deduplicated across all repositories.

This combination of capabilities in a turnkey appliance makes the ExaGrid system easy to install, manage, and scale. ExaGrid's architecture provides lifetime value and investment protection that no other architecture can match.

Flawless Installation and Support

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.

"The installation was flawless, and our assigned customer support engineer is awesome. ExaGrid is extremely reliable, which is what everyone strives for in backup storage; it's made life so much easier. We spend much less time dealing with backups than we did before, and our time can now be invested in other areas of IT," said Mitich.

Veeam-ExaGrid Dedupe

Veeam's backup solutions and ExaGrid's Tiered Backup Storage combine for the industry's fastest backups, fastest restores, a scale-out storage system as data grows, and a strong ransomware recovery story – all at the lowest cost.

Veeam uses changed block tracking to perform a level of data deduplication. ExaGrid allows Veeam deduplication and Veeam dedupe-friendly compression to stay on. ExaGrid will increase Veeam's deduplication by a factor of about 7:1 to a total combined deduplication ratio of 14:1, reducing the storage required and saving on storage costs up front and over time.

Scale-out Architecture Provides Superior Scalability

"We don't grow that fast in terms of data, but it's important to know we can easily add an ExaGrid appliance to our system," said Mitich.

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.

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.

