



Clayton State University Fed Up with Prior Backup System Installs Veeam and ExaGrid for the Win – Go Lakers!



USA

Key Benefits:

- Backups that were running 24 x 4 before ExaGrid are now done in under a day
- Not all data was backed up previously due to issues with tape; all data is now protected
- Combined Veeam-ExaGrid data deduplication averages 12:1
- NFS mounts allows CSU to back up its physical servers in addition to VMs

“In addition to ExaGrid, we looked at EMC Data Domain [...] Overall, ExaGrid was the best solution for us, mainly because of the expandability of the system.”

Roger Poore
Network Engineer

Customer Overview

Clayton State University (CSU) opened in 1969 as Clayton Junior College. Its status has been progressively elevated through the years, and its present name approved in 2005. The campus is located in Morrow, Georgia and spans 214 acres. CSU was ranked by US News and World Report as #8 of the top public regional colleges in the South. Clayton State is a part of the Division II NCAA sports in basketball, soccer, cross-country, tennis, golf and cheerleading programs.

IT Staff Decides, ‘Enough Is Enough!’

When data volumes were more manageable, all of CSU’s data fit on one DLT tape. However, the University’s data increased over the years to the point that even a large tape library could no longer accommodate it all.

Prior to ExaGrid, CSU had a homegrown solution that consisted of a large file server with a lot of storage connected to a Dell tape library. The data was dumped directly to that file server, and from the file server, it went to tape. The tapes were then taken offsite to a safe deposit box where CSU stored up to six months’ worth of backups.

“Our data grew to the point that it became unwieldy, and our backup window was unwieldy to match. A full backup took about 3-1/2 to 4 days, and we were basically running backups 24 hours over 4 days,” said Roger Poore, network engineer at CSU.

Not only was CSU’s backup window out of control, but retention and disaster recovery suffered as a result. Poore and his team decided, “Enough is enough,” and began to search out a viable alternative.

“In addition to ExaGrid, we looked at Dell EMC Data Domain. The Board of Regents in Georgia offers a backup solution so we looked at that as well, but that was pretty expensive and we wanted to host our own system instead of having somebody else do it for us. Overall, ExaGrid was the best solution for us, mainly because of the expandability of the system.”

System Features of Data Dedupe and Shortened Backup Window Reap Great Benefits

CSU purchased three ExaGrid appliances, two of which are set up as one system in its primary



data center, and the third appliance is at a remote location that the University replicates to.

“We installed Veeam when we switched to ExaGrid. Most of our systems now are virtualized, and Veeam backs up directly to the ExaGrid. We pretty much just set the jobs to run and it all just works. The data deduplication is fantastic – our Veeam dedupe averages 4:1 and the additional ExaGrid dedupe of about 3:1 gives us a total on average of 12:1.

“ExaGrid also allows direct NFS mounts. That allowed us to back up our physical servers since we don’t use Veeam on them.

“With the system we used before, sometimes there were kinks in the system, and things didn’t always get backed up. With tape, sometimes a tape drive would be dirty, and we’d have to pause backups in order to clean the tape drive.” CSU’s backups are now much more reliable and backups that used to take four days to run are now done in under a day.

The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with the industry’s leading backup applications so that an organization can retain its investment in its existing backup applications and processes.

In addition, ExaGrid appliances can replicate to a second ExaGrid appliance at a second site or to the public cloud for DR (disaster recovery).

Build-in Scalability Provides for Ease of System Expansion

CSU is currently storing around 45TB and will be adding more data when the University starts backing up its development and test environments. "We'll have to have to purchase some additional ExaGrid appliances to accommodate that, and it's nice that we can just add more appliances to the rack and not have to do a lot of configuration to make them work."

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.



Reliable System Backed by Stellar Customer Support

Poore's experience with ExaGrid customer has been very positive. "It doesn't matter when I contact my support engineer, he's typically available to help me right away – it seems as if he drops everything else to help me out – and he really knows what he's doing. The appliances themselves are great, but support is definitely a key factor in staying with ExaGrid."

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.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to disk with deduplication or using backup software deduplication to disk. ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1, depending on the data types and retention periods, by storing only the unique objects across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups. As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it is also replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

ExaGrid and Veeam

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.

ExaGrid-Veeam Combined Dedupe

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.

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.