Community Credit Union Shortens Backup Window, Increases Retention with ExaGrid

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>
> **Linda Ryan**
> **Systems Administrtor**
> **Community Credit Union**

Customer Overview

Community Credit Union is a member-owned financial cooperative that serves a six-county area of Central Florida with a focus on community and educators. CCU has been serving members since 1953 and has seven branch locations.

Time Consuming Tape Backups Strained Limited IT Resources

Community Credit Union had been backing up data to tape, but long backup times, difficult restores and the burden of managing cumbersome tape weighed heavily on its IT staff.

"We were backing up all our information to tape in our primary datacenter and mirroring it to a tape library located at our branch in Palm Bay, but the whole process was difficult and time consuming," said Linda Ryan, systems administrator at CCU. "We finally got the budget to upgrade our backup system and decided to research disk-based systems in the hope that we could improve reliability and reduce management and administration."

Scalable ExaGrid System Works with Backup Exec to Speed Deployment, Reduce Learning Curve

After looking at several different solutions, CCU decided to purchase a disk-based backup solution with data deduplication from ExaGrid. The ExaGrid system works along the institution's existing backup application, Symantec Backup Exec.

"The ExaGrid system was the easiest solution to implement, and it's scalable so it can grow along with our backup needs," said Ryan. "It's also tightly integrated with Backup Exec. The two products work seamlessly together."

CCU is currently using three ExaGrid systems to back up its data. The ExaGrid system located in the credit union's main datacenter in Rockledge acts as a spoke, and systems located in a branch in Palm Bay and at a disaster recovery center in Atlanta act as hubs.

ExaGrid's support of Backup Exec's OpenStorage Technology

(OST) enables both onsite and offsite backups from the ExaGrid to be managed from within the Backup Exec console. The backup catalog is also kept up to date for the replicated offsite backups through OST, making it easier for users to monitor the status of onsite and offsite backups. Additionally, backup data can be easily recovered from off-site ExaGrid systems via the Backup Exec console ensuring fast disaster recovery.

"Tight integration with Backup Exec was critical for us. ExaGrid's support for OST enables us to manage the solution through Backup Exec, a product we've used for a long time and we're comfortable with," said Ryan.

Data Deduplication Reduces Amount of Data Stored

ExaGrid's data deduplication technology helps to maximize the amount of data stored on the ExaGrid system.

"We have a lot of redundant data, and ExaGrid's data deduplication technology does a fantastic job at reducing it. We're able to keep far more data on hand and accessible for restores," Ryan said.

EXAGRID™

ExaGrid 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.

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 changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Faster Backups and Restores

Ryan said that since installing the ExaGrid system, backup times have been cut in half, and restores are faster and more efficient.

"Our backups run smoothly now. With tape, we'd occasionally have nightly backup jobs that didn't finish before the start of business. Now, we're able to get all our backups completed in three hours or less," said Ryan. "Restores are far faster with the ExaGrid, too. We can basically restore data with the touch of a button."

Easy Installation, Knowledgeable Customer Support

Ryan said that she worked with the dedicated customer support engineer assigned to the credit union to install the ExaGrid system.

"Our customer support engineer is excellent. When we got the ExaGrid, she helped to install it and spent a lot of time walking me through the system and explaining how things worked," Ryan said. "I like the fact that we have a dedicated support person. Our support engineer knows us and she's familiar with our installation. She's experienced and she's always available to us if we have a question or issue. It saves a lot of time."

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.

Smooth Scalability with GRID Architecture

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 really appreciate the scalability of the ExaGrid system. We were able add another unit to give us additional disk space and it was a simple, straightforward process. It's a very flexible system and its ability to scale quickly and easily gives us peace of mind," said Ryan. "I'm a lot more confident in our backups now, and I don't have to spend as much time managing tape or backup processes. Having the ExaGrid system in place makes my job easier."

ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec

Symantec Backup Exec provides 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. High-performance agents and options provide fast, flexible, granular protection 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.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. 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 standard SATA drives.

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.