



Dycom's Use of Veeam with ExaGrid Triples Retention, Deduplication Maximizes Storage



USA

Customer Overview

Dycom Industries Inc. (Dycom) is a leading provider of engineering, construction, program and project Management, material provisioning, subscriber installations, maintenance, and underground facility locating services to the telecommunications and utility industries. Comprised of over 39 operating companies operating in 49 states. Headquartered in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida, Dycom was established in 1969 and became publicly owned and traded in 1970. They are traded on the New York Stock Exchange as "DY".

Key Benefits:

- Largest backup job that used to take up to seven days to finish now completes in just an hour
- Due to tripled retention with ExaGrid over tape, 90% of Dycom's restores can now be done directly from the ExaGrid
- Scalability will enable Dycom to meet its goal of having ExaGrid systems in all 700 of its locations
- ExaGrid customer support compared to that of other vendors is 'night and day'

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Systems Engineer

Perpetual Backups Necessitate Search for Better Solution

Dycom's backup pain hit an all-time high when some of its backup jobs were taking as long as seven days to complete – essentially running perpetually – and the resulting bandwidth reduction was having an impact on the company's users. Dycom sought to migrate from its Unitrends solution and Veritas Backup Exec to one that better suited its backup needs.

Veeam and ExaGrid 'Amazing' Together

Once Dycom decided to virtualize, they selected Veeam as their backup application, and Veeam is now installed across 80% of the company's 700+ locations. It was through Veeam that Dycom learned about ExaGrid and how well integrated the two products are.

"Veeam told us about the great partnership that they have with ExaGrid, and once we saw the deduplication numbers, we were just blown away," said William Santana, systems engineer at Dycom. "When we looked at ExaGrid's pricing as compared to the other solutions, it was an easy decision."

Santana has found Veeam's assertions about how complementary ExaGrid and Veeam are to be completely correct. "It amazes me how well ExaGrid works with Veeam."

Scalability Provides for a Staged Rollout

Besides ExaGrid's interoperability with Veeam, a big factor in Dycom's selection of ExaGrid was how easy it is to expand.

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.

"It's simply a matter of getting a new appliance, adding it to the system, and it all ties together. Actually, we moved one of our locations, and it was really straightforward. We bought an extra ExaGrid and we moved a whole site through it. We installed V Center, migrated everything to the ExaGrid, and then shipped the system to the new location. When the ExaGrid was delivered, it came right on, and we migrated everything to the new location – it was all really pretty simple," Santana said.

Dycom's ultimate goal is to have ExaGrid appliances in each of its 700 locations. According to Santana, for the locations that have good Internet access, Dycom is backing up to its Atlanta

location by creating jobs and pushing them to the ExaGrid. For the remaining locations, they'll continue to use local storage for now and send everything to Amazon Web Services (AWS) for long-term archival. Dycom is required to keep archived data for seven years.

Once Dycom has ExaGrid appliances in place in its various locations, Santana hopes to cross-replicate for disaster recovery protection. Currently, Dycom is storing 400TB on its existing ExaGrid systems.

Backup Window Reduced, Deduplication Maximizes Storage

Santana is very pleased with how short his backup window is now. His largest backup job used to take up to seven days to complete; it now finishes in just an hour. The data deduplication ratio that Dycom is seeing with Veeam and ExaGrid combined Santana calls "unbelievable"; the deduplication of the Synology NAS that they've been using "doesn't come close."

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).

Fast Restores and Backup Management Are Critical Time Savers

When Dycom was backing up to tape, Santana reports that restores could take days. The logistics of getting the correct tape, mounting it, locating the data, and restoring the data was cumbersome and time consuming. He found that using Veeam with ExaGrid, restores are typically done in just a few minutes. The overall process of managing backup is now "much easier," freeing up valuable time that the Dycom IT team can dedicate to other IT projects and priorities.

'Fantastic' Customer Support

Like all ExaGrid customers, Dycom works with an assigned ExaGrid level 2 support engineer to provide unmatched expertise and support continuity. "Every time I call our engineer, it's a terrific experience. He's always on par and willing to help, even in the beginning when we were having issues deploying. We had a guy come onsite from our reseller to deploy Veeam for us, and he was confusing. I contacted our ExaGrid engineer, and he helped us through the whole process – it was great! I could spend hours just talking about how amazing our ExaGrid engineer is! I kid you not – he's just fantastic!

"When it comes to ExaGrid's support, there's no comparison to other vendors. For example, the other day I was calling a vendor and, seriously, it was close to an hour before I got somebody on the phone. When I call or email ExaGrid, I reach my engineer and get help right away. The difference is night and day," Santana said.

Retention Tripled

When Dycom was backing up to tape, Santana was only able to keep 14 days' retention in-house. He reports that Dycom's retention has more than tripled and is now 48 days. Because of the increased retention, Santana can quickly do restores directly from the ExaGrid system 90% of the time.

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.

