EDENS Upgrades Infrastructure, Chooses ExaGrid after Comparison to Dell EMC Data Domain

EDENS

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>
> **Robert McCown**
> **Director of Technology**
> **Infrastructure**

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid selected due to stand-out features and integration with Veeam
- Scalability helps EDENS to restructure its environment over time
- System reliability restores confidence in backups following a data loss with prior solution

Customer Overview

EDENS develops, owns, and operates community shopping centers in primary markets across the country. The company has built an institutional-quality portfolio of more than 120 retail centers. EDENS has regional headquarters in Boston, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Miami, Houston, and Columbia, S.C.

ExaGrid Deemed to be the 'Right Fit' Compared to Data Domain

EDENS has regional headquarters and satellite offices throughout the country and needed to find a solution that could easily manage backups at its numerous locations. When Robert McCown started as EDENS' Director of Technology Infrastructure, he made a priority of updating the company's infrastructure, especially in terms of cyber security. He started by virtualizing the entire environment and implementing Veeam as a backup application.

"Before updating our environment, we were only able to do local backups using NetApp in our main data center, which was synced with NetApp at our DR site. It was cumbersome because it resulted in a flat file. We were using Robocopy for backup at that point, which left us vulnerable. At our remote locations, we used NETGEAR devices, which weren't enterprise-level storage devices," said McCown.

McCown began looking into backup storage solutions to ensure that secure backups were available from each location. "I initially looked at Dell EMC appliances. I asked for a POC on a Dell EMC device, and I was just not impressed. I didn't really like what I was seeing. I reached out to some peers and they recommended ExaGrid. The more I heard about the ExaGrid system, the more I liked what I heard. After a presentation by the ExaGrid team, I realized it would be the right fit. Both Dell EMC and ExaGrid had promoted their data deduplication and replication, but ExaGrid's features really stood out. Plus, ExaGrid's integration with Veeam made the decision a no-brainer.

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Scale-Out System is Easy to Install

EDENS backs up its data in daily incrementals and replicates the backups each week to its DR site. EDENS installed ExaGrid appliances at its remote offices for local backups, which replicate to the main data center. McCown was pleased with the quick installation. "We brought all of the appliances to the main office and configured them with the help of ExaGrid customer support, and then shipped them to the remote offices, so all that was left to do at those locations was rack and stack."

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 seamlessly retain its investment in existing applications and processes. In addition, ExaGrid appliances can be used at primary and secondary

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sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.

EDENS still uses Dell EMC NAS boxes as repositories but McCown is looking to expand the ExaGrid system further to replace the boxes as they do not integrate with Veeam well enough to optimize the backup application's features.

All of ExaGrid's appliances contain not just disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. When the system needs to expand, additional appliances are simply attached to the existing system. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all aspects of performance as the amount of data grows, with customers paying for what they need when they need it. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliances are added to the existing system, ExaGrid automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the system.

Confidence in a Secure Solution

Prior to using ExaGrid and Veeam, McCown had used shadow copies as a way to restore data. This process could be complicated and time-consuming. "It was cumbersome to restore a file—I had to try to find it in the shadow copies and if I couldn't find it there, then I had to look in the local robocopies. We were hit with a CryptoLocker ransomware attack when I first started at EDENS, and that was part of the driving force in updating our backup system. We lost a lot of files that we couldn't restore, and from that time on were looking for other options."

McCown feels secure using ExaGrid, assured that data is ready to be restored when needed. "I have peace of mind now, and that's what

I have gained the most by using ExaGrid. With my last solution, I never felt 100% confident that my backups were even adequate; I do now. I can go to the executive team and be confident that we have the backups in place that we promised them."

ExaGrid writes backups directly to a disk 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 while providing full system resources to the backups for the shortest backup window. Available system cycles are utilized to perform deduplication and offsite replication for an optimal recovery point at the disaster recovery site. Once complete, the onsite data is protected and immediately available in its full undeduplicated form for fast restores, VM Instant Recoveries, and tape copies while the offsite data is ready for disaster recovery.

ExaGrid and Veeam

The combination of ExaGrid's and Veeam's industry-leading virtual server data protection solutions allows customers to utilize Veeam Backup & Replication in VMware, vSphere, and Microsoft Hyper-V virtual environments on ExaGrid's disk-based backup system. This combination provides fast backups and efficient data storage as well as replication to an offsite location for disaster recovery. The ExaGrid system fully leverages Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in backup-to-disk capabilities and ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication for additional data reduction (and cost reduction) over standard disk solutions. Customers can use Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in source-side deduplication in concert with ExaGrid's disk-based backup system with zone-level deduplication to further shrink backups.

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides hyper-converged secondary storage (HCSS) for backup with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone enables the fastest backups, restores, and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable system and ensures a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive and disruptive forklift upgrades. Learn more at **www.exagrid.com**.

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