Europa Sports Improves Backup Times & Disaster Recovery with Two-site ExaGrid System

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>
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> **Network Engineer**
> **Europa Sports**

Customer Overview

Europa Sports Products is a national distributor of sports supplements. Europa is an authorized distributor for over 199 product lines and works with specialty retailers, Internet sites, health clubs, and other organizations including Gold's Gym, National Discount Nutrition, Smoothie King, GNC, and the US Marine Corps. The company is based in Charlotte, North Carolina and keeps an extensive inventory of all major product lines in over 311,000 sq. feet of warehouse space in Charlotte, NC, Mesquite, Texas, Fresno, California, Strongsville, Ohio, Windsor, Connecticut and Orlando, Florida.

Search for Improved Disaster Recovery Plan Leads to ExaGrid

With a corporate mandate to put together a business continuity plan, the IT staff at Europa Sports identified disaster recovery as a key area for improvement. Europa had been using tape to back up the data in its corporate datacenter and moved the tapes offsite each day for safekeeping, however backup times were long and data recovery would be difficult and time consuming in the event of a disaster.

Early on in the process, the IT staff realized that disk-based backup would provide improved backup times and better disaster recovery. After looking at disk-based backup solutions from ExaGrid and a competing solution, Europa chose a two-site system from ExaGrid, installing one system in its corporate datacenter in Charlotte and a second system in its Mesquite, Texas facility. The two sites are connected via T1 lines and data is replicated between the two ExaGrid systems. The ExaGrid systems work alongside Europa's existing backup application, Symantec's Backup Exec™, to backup and protect all the company's data, including its user files, Microsoft SQL and various other databases, Exchange, and its Citrix systems.

"We liked the fact that the ExaGrid system maintains the last full backup in its entirety so that data can be restored quickly and efficiently," said Jon White, network engineer for Europa Sports. "The ExaGrid was a very elegant solution and it easily fit into our environment to make our backups faster and to improve our disaster recovery capabilities. Our data is now automatically replicated between our Charlotte and Mesquite sites each and every night. We have a much higher level of comfort knowing that we could easily recover our data in the event of a disaster."

Faster Nightly Backups, Built-in Data Deduplication Reduces Data

Prior to installing the ExaGrid system, the IT staff at Europa had also had to deal with long backup times. For example, one of the company's data file servers took days to back up to tape. Since installing the ExaGrid system, the server can be backed up in approximately 12 hours.

"Our backups are now considerably faster with the ExaGrid system than they were with tape," said White. "The ExaGrid was also cost-effective to acquire. The system's built-in data deduplication does a tremendous job at reducing our data, which enabled us to purchase a smaller system than we otherwise would have. And because we've been able to minimize our reliance on tape, we now save a considerable amount of money on tape, transportation and storage costs," said White.

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 byte-level data deduplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Ability to Scale Capacity, Add Additional Sites

Europa Sports sized its ExaGrid system to handle its data now and into the future, but the system can easily be expanded should the need arise.

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 60TB 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.

"It's good to know that we can expand the capacity of the system at any time by adding additional ExaGrid units," said White. "We can also add another unit at another location to further improve our backup and recovery processes."

Easy Installation, Superior Customer Support
ExaGrid comes packaged as a turnkey appliance and was designed to be easy to deploy and manage and to deliver maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components. All components are fully supported by ExaGrid's trained, in-house engineers dedicated to individual accounts.

"We were able to install the system ourselves and it was an easy, straightforward process. ExaGrid's technical support engineers assisted us via phone and then they dialed into the system to provide us with an overview of the features," said White. "Quite frankly, ExaGrid's support is among the best in the industry. The support engineers are friendly and extremely knowledgeable about the ExaGrid product and about backups in general. They are also easy to reach by phone and the

longest we've ever had to wait was a minute or two. That's simply unheard of. The ExaGrid system has worked very well for us and has clearly helped us improve our backup times and disaster recovery efforts."

ExaGrid and Symantec Back up 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 byte-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's byte-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.

About ExaGrid Systems, Inc.

Customers worldwide depend on ExaGrid Systems to solve their backup problems–effectively and permanently. ExaGrid's disk-based, scale-out GRID architecture adjusts to increasing backup demands due to constantly growing data volumes. It is the only solution that combines compute with capacity as well as a unique landing zone to permanently shorten backup windows and eliminate expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at **www.exagrid.com**.