

# FLIR Selects ExaGrid Target-Side Appliances for Global Backup Storage Reliability

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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**Carl Chipman**  
Mgr. of Servers and Storage

## Customer Overview

FLIR designs, develops, manufactures, markets, and distributes technologies that enhance perception and awareness. Established in 1978 to pioneer the development of infrared imaging systems for airborne applications, FLIR today brings innovative sensing solutions into daily life through thermal imaging systems, visible-light imaging systems, locator systems, measurement and diagnostic systems, and advanced threat detection systems. Its products improve the way people interact with the world around them, enhance public safety and well-being, increase energy efficiency, and enable healthy and entertained communities.

## Mixed Storage Targets Make for Inefficient Backup

When Carl Chipman, Manager of Servers and Storage, came to FLIR as part of an acquisition, there was a mixed bag of storage targets – tapes, disk arrays, managed applications, and software – with no clear storage strategy.

"When I came to FLIR, my boss tasked me with implementing a consistent backup standard across the enterprise. We had a couple of sites already using ExaGrid, but they weren't integrated; they were just standalone storage boxes. So we set out to create a hierarchical storage base around the globe through our hub, our main data centers, and all the sites that attached to them, based on geographic location," said Chipman.

"ExaGrid had more features and was the densest storage for a rackmount system. We matched up our inventory of backup-to-disk options, and the ExaGrid systems actually had a much better form factor and performance. We standardized on ExaGrid, and I'm now responsible for over 800TB of data worldwide."

## Always Pushing for Greater Efficiency

"Every time we acquire a new ExaGrid system, my guys find servers that had not been backing up sufficiently – so they add them into the backup infrastructure. We're constantly increasing the efficiency and



reliability of our backups, and with ExaGrid, our backup window stays the same. I'd say that our data growth rate has probably increased from 30% to 90%, and we're still within the same backup window. Our backup window hasn't shrunk, but we're getting much more efficiency. I spent my first two years at FLIR terrified about data loss. I never felt that we had sufficient or good enough backup, or that I could recover data. I don't feel that way now with ExaGrid," Chipman said.

FLIR has been able to remove tapes from the backup mix, reducing Iron Mountain costs and administration time for its IT team. In terms of data deduplication, FLIR gets a consistent deduplication ratio of 20:1. The FLIR team works hard to keep the right balance of automation and cost control while managing their backup plan.

## Disaster Recovery Now in Place

"Our best DR scenario is in Europe, which – combined with Veritas Backup Exec – is where our central archive server is housed.

## Key Benefits:

- Proportion of data being backed up increased from 30% to 90%; backup window remained the same
- Data being deduplicated at a ratio of 20:1
- Flexibility of disk usage for landing zone/repository saves \$100K+ over 2 years
- Backups for 20+ global sites administered with ease

We have it set up so that the server in Sweden triggers the backup in the United Kingdom; it backs up to the ExaGrid in the UK, replicates over to Sweden, and then in Sweden, it sends a copy to tape," said Chipman.

## Seamless Installation and Product Flexibility

According to Chipman, installing a new ExaGrid system is fairly simple. "Plug it in, set the IP address, and download the agent onto the servers that talk directly to the storage systems – done! Getting support from other vendors can often be a long process, but we've been consistently impressed with the level of support we receive from ExaGrid. I know that I can always call my ExaGrid engineer and resolve any issue quickly."

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 assigned to individual accounts. The system is fully supported, and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

Chipman has found the single most beneficial feature of the ExaGrid system to be the dial-up/down adjustment between the landing zone and deduplication storage. "I like the flexibility to tweak things so I know I have more than enough storage. In terms of disk space, it's probably saved me about \$100K. I'm able to go in and adjust the trip points or set points, and that enabled me to get better backup performance and save a lot of money. Over the past few years of getting our backup in place, I appreciated that the most. ExaGrid gives me the reliability I need, which results in confidence in my work. I used to wake up in the morning afraid to check my email for my first two years in this role," said Chipman.

FLIR has over 20 backup sites; 16 are virtualized. FLIR also deals with mergers and acquisitions, so there is always movement with backup infrastructure.

## Architecture Provides Superior Scalability

ExaGrid's computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, appliances of any size or age can be mixed and matched in a single system with capacities of up to a 1PB full backup plus retention and an ingest rate of up to 200TB per hour. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

## ExaGrid and Veritas Backup Exec

Veritas Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high-performance, and certified disk-to-disk-to-tape backup and recovery – including continuous data protection for Microsoft Exchange servers, Microsoft SQL servers, 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 Veritas Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Veritas Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Veritas 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 backup to disk.

## 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](http://www.exagrid.com).

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