EXAGRID®

FORMA Therapeutics Chooses ExaGrid over the Competition for Fastest Possible Backups

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USA

Key Benefits:

- Dedupe rates as high as 70:1
- Faster backup times
- Less time spent on management & administration
- Knowledgeable & proactive customer support
- Scalability ensures easy path for growth

"We looked at a few other solutions from major players in the space, and the number one reason we chose the ExaGrid system was its data deduplication capabilities. The ExaGrid backs up the data to a landing zone so that backup jobs run as quickly as possible, and we get instant access to the most recent backup without having to decompress it."

Paul Kelly
Director of IT

Customer Overview

Founded in 2008, FORMA Therapeutics has made significant progress in targeting essential targets and pathways relevant to cancer, developing a unique and aggressive approach to drug discovery. FORMA has assembled a formidable team of drug hunters who are driven to create transformative cancer therapies. The company's success has been validated over its short history by multiple partnerships with leading pharmaceutical companies that wish to leverage FORMA's capabilities, capacities and innovation. FORMA was acquired by Novo Nordisk in September 1, 2022.

ExaGrid System Remedies Insufficient Disaster Recovery, Long Backup Times

FORMA is performing groundbreaking cancer research that could change lives, so backing up and protecting data is a critical task for the company's IT staff. FORMA had been backing up data to tape but decided to look for a new approach to improve backup times and the company's ability to recover from a disaster.

"As a research organization, we need to ensure that we can recover quickly from a disaster, and we were concerned about our ability to do that with tape," said Paul Kelly, director of IT at FORMA Therapeutics. "We also needed to reduce our backup times. Our weekend backup jobs were spilling into Monday mornings, and we were beginning to see network slowdowns as a result. We decided to look around for alternative backup methods and quickly realized that disk-based backup was the way to go."

After looking at solutions from several vendors, FORMA decided to purchase a two-site disk-based backup solution from ExaGrid. The company installed one system in its Watertown, Massachusetts datacenter and another in its Branford, Connecticut site for disaster recovery. The ExaGrid system work along with Veeam and Veritas Backup Exec to back up both virtual and physical servers, including administrative and financial data as well as research information.

Data Deduplication Delivers Fast Replication, Dedupe Rates as High as 70:1

"We looked at a few other solutions from major players in the space, and the number one reason we chose the ExaGrid system was its data deduplication capabilities. The ExaGrid backs up data to a landing zone so that backup jobs run as quickly as possible, and we get instant access to the most recent backup without having to decompress it," said Kelly. "Also, the ExaGrid system only replicates changed data between the sites, so we can easily push large amounts of data over the WAN."

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.

"ExaGrid's data deduplication technology is extremely effective. We're getting 70:1 dedupe ratios for our Oracle data, which is simply amazing, and our other data dedupes effectively as well," said Kelly.

Faster Backup Times, Less Time Spent on Management and Administration

According to Kelly, since installing the ExaGrid system, FORMA's backup windows have been significantly reduced. "Our backups start on Friday nights at 10:00 p.m. and they used to run into Monday morning. Now, they still start off at the same time, but they're totally completed by Saturday morning at 7:00 am. That's a huge change for us," he said. "We don't have to worry about our backup windows anymore."

Kelly said he spends far less time managing and administering backups with the ExaGrid system.

"The ExaGrid system is so easy to manage. I like the Web interface because it's intuitive and it gives me all the information and reporting I need. I used to spend hours managing tape. Having the ExaGrid system in place probably saves me a half a day or more of administration time alone each week," he said.

The ExaGrid system was designed to be easy to set up and operate. ExaGrid's industry-leading level 2 senior support engineers are assigned to individual customers, ensuring they always work with the same engineer. Customer's never have to repeat themselves to various support staff, and issues get resolved quickly.

"ExaGrid's customer support has been fantastic. If you're having a backup issue, the last thing you need to do is send an email a message and wonder if it's going to be read or sit in a queue to wait to talk with someone. Our support engineer is knowledgeable and easy to reach," said Kelly. "I know if I'm having any sort of issue, I can call into ExaGrid and get an experienced engineer on the phone right away."

Easily Scalable to Meet Future Needs

FORMA started with a pair of ExaGrid systems for primary backup and disaster recovery and scaled the system up to add capacity.

"We were able to easily add capacity and performance by simply plugging in additional units. In just a couple of hours, we were able to retarget the jobs and then the two units were automatically balancing data," said Kelly. "Once we scaled the systems up, we increased the throughput, and our backup times were reduced even further. The replication between sites was more effective, too. It's wonderful to have that option without having to undergo a forklift upgrade."

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.

"We're easily meeting our backup windows now, and I have a high level of comfort in our disaster recovery plan," said Kelly. "In the event of a disaster, I can quickly spin up the second system and restore the company to an up-and-running status in a lot less time than if I had to recall tapes, spin them up, run the catalogs, etc. Having the ExaGrid system in place gives me peace of mind."

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 and Veritas Backup Exec

Veritas Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high-performance 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 Tiered Backup Storage 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 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 ExaGrid for backup to disk.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to disk with deduplication or using backup software deduplication to disk. ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1, depending on the data types and retention periods, by storing only the unique objects across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups. As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it is also replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

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**.

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