

Scalable ExaGrid System Easily Supports Continued Data Growth for Telecommunications Provider

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Jamie Mouzon
Technical Services Coordinator
Farmers Telephone
Cooperative

Key Benefits:

- Veeam and ExaGrid uniquely handle increased data load due to FTC virtualization
- Easy expansion has enabled FTC to scale the system to back up and protect growing data
- Simple interface provides fast access to all needed information to manage and monitor the system
- Customer support is "top notch"

Customer Overview

Founded in 1951, Farmers Telephone Cooperative, Inc. is a state-of-the-art telecommunications company that offers phone, digital TV, Internet, security, and wireless services. FTC is headquartered in Kingstree, South Carolina and serves more than 60,000 customers within a coverage area of 3,000 square miles.

Virtualization Increases Data Volume, Requires New Backup Solution

When FTC virtualized its environment, the company's IT staff decided the time was right to upgrade its backup infrastructure in hopes of improving speed and eliminating tape.

"We went from a physical to a virtual environment, and our backup data grew significantly. We simply couldn't back up everything because our backup jobs were running as long as 24 hours, and tape management was taking up more and more of our day," said Jamie Mouzon, technical services coordinator at Farmers Telephone Cooperative.

Mouzon said that the first step in overhauling FTC's backup infrastructure was to replace its legacy backup application with Veeam Backup & Recovery. After Veeam was up and running, it was time to look for a disk-based backup system capable of handling the increased data load.

"We were really attracted to the level of integration between ExaGrid and Veeam," he said. "The two products work hand-in-hand to deliver fast backups and restores, and when it comes to deduplication and replication, there's no device on the market any better than ExaGrid."

Scalability to Grow

FTC purchased a two-site ExaGrid solution and installed one system in its main datacenter and a second offsite for disaster recovery. Over time, the company has

scaled the system to handle more data and now has a total of six systems, three in each datacenter.

"We started out with two appliances to back up a limited number servers and then expanded the GRID with a third system to handle more data because it was working so well. Since then, we've transitioned even more systems to the ExaGrid for backup and have added three more appliances to handle the load. We're looking at sending at least another 20TB of backup data to the ExaGrid and will eventually eliminate tape," Mouzon said.

ExaGrid uses a GRID-based configuration, where each appliance contains processing power, memory, bandwidth, and disk. When the system needs to expand, additional appliance nodes are attached to the GRID, bringing with them additional processing resources in addition to disk for storage. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all the aspects of performance as the amount of data grows. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliances are added to the GRID, the ExaGrid system automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the GRID.

12:1 Deduplication Helps to Minimize Data Footprint

Mouzon reports that ExaGrid's data deduplication technology helps to reduce the amount of data stored on the system.

"ExaGrid's data deduplication reduces our



data by 12:1, so we're able to store much more information than we ever thought we could. It's really unbelievable," he said.

ExaGrid combines standard compression along with zone-level data deduplication, which stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. 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. 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. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication technology moves only the changes from backup to backup, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Fast Installation, Intuitive to Use, Top-notch Customer Support

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

"We were able to get the system up and running and working with Veeam in no time at all. We've also found it very easy to use and to maintain. The interface is simple to work with and it provides fast access to all the information we need to manage and monitor the system," Mouzon said. "Also, ExaGrid's customer support is the best in the field. Our support engineer monitors our system remotely and knows about any potential issue even before we do. When we first purchased the ExaGrid system, we were assigned a support engineer, and he has worked with us from day one. If I have any questions, I can reach out to him at anytime. I deal directly with my assigned engineer, which means that I don't need to waste time explaining our device layout every time I need support. My engineer has actually notified me of a problem on our ExaGrid even before I was made aware of the issue. I would recommend ExaGrid to anyone based solely on the top notch support we receive," said Mouzon.

About ExaGrid Systems, Inc.

ExaGrid provides backup storage with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone provides for the fastest backups, restores and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable GRID and provides for a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at www.exagrid.com.

Mouzon said that he'd recommend the ExaGrid system to other organizations seeking to reduce backup times and eliminate tape.

"The ExaGrid system has been a fantastic solution for us. We've been able to achieve our original goals of improving backup speed and reducing the amount of time spent on backups – and we've also eliminated tape. We're confident that we'll be able to grow the system seamlessly as our needs increase."

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.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality disk drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to straight disk. ExaGrid's zone-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 backing up to straight disk. 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.