

# First State Bank Gains Better Backups with ExaGrid

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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**Jeff Koch**  
Network Administrator  
First State Bank

## Customer Overview

First State Bank is a community bank with its headquarters in St. Clair Shores, Michigan. First State Bank employs over 180 employees and has 11 branch offices throughout southeastern Michigan. Established in 1917, the bank offers exceptional banking products and prides itself on using the most advanced technology and automated processes available in the industry. For more information, please visit [www.thefsb.com](http://www.thefsb.com) or call 866-372-1275.

## Effort to Streamline Backup Operations Led to ExaGrid

The IT staff at First State Bank had been backing up the financial institution's data to a variety of different devices and wanted to find a unified backup method to streamline its processes. With retention becoming an increasingly serious issue, the bank decided that the time was right to redesign its backup environment to make it more robust and to bring all its backup operations together into one system.

"We really needed to fix our backup problems and began to look at different solutions on the market. I had managed a large tape library at a prior job, and it was always problematic, so we immediately ruled out tape and decided to look at disk-based systems," said Jeff Koch, network administrator at First State Bank.

First State Bank chose to deploy a two-site ExaGrid system after looking at solutions from both ExaGrid and Data Domain. The ExaGrid system backs up data from the bank's main data center each night and replicates it to a second ExaGrid system installed in a co-location facility. The ExaGrid systems work along with the bank's existing backup application, Symantec Backup Exec, to back up virtual servers as well as SQL, Exchange and file servers.

"We carefully considered both the ExaGrid and Data Domain systems but in the end, we liked ExaGrid's scalability and data deduplication," said Koch. "The other thing we were impressed with was ExaGrid's

customer references. As part of our due diligence, we spoke with four ExaGrid customers. They had wonderful things to say about the product, and we were very impressed."

Tight Integration with Backup Exec and vRanger Koch said that ExaGrid's tight integration with Backup Exec and Quest's vRanger was extremely important to the bank and was another major factor in choosing the system.

"The ExaGrid fit nicely into our existing environment, and we really didn't have to change much to implement the system. It works extremely well with both Backup Exec and vRanger, which really helped with our learning curve," said Koch.

## Data Deduplication Maximizes Retention

"Our backup ratios vary depending upon the type of data that we're backing up, but we're pleased with our deduplication results," said Koch. "The data deduplication enables us to maximize retention because it saves so much disk space."

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.

## Faster Backup and Restore Times

Backup and restore times are two areas in which Koch said he's seen a big improvement. "Our backups are much more streamlined now that they're all going to one device. I usually run differentials at night, and they only take a few hours. On the weekends, I perform a full backup, and it takes 12 hours at most," said Koch. "Restores are also incredibly fast. I can't even compare it to tape."

## Modular Scalability for Easy Growth

Koch said that scalability was another reason that First State Bank chose the ExaGrid system.

"Our data grows quickly, so system scalability is incredibly important to us. The ExaGrid system is modularly scalable, so we can add units to increase capacity if we start to run out of space," said Koch.

ExaGrid's GRID architecture will enable the company to easily expand the system to accommodate more data. 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 100TB 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.

## Easy Management, Superior Customer Support

"Setup was fairly straightforward. We received the units, unboxed them, racked them up and called in to support. Our support engineer worked with us over the phone to get everything up and running, and it's been smooth sailing ever since," said Koch. "We were really surprised at how easy it was to set it up and get it configured. I occasionally go into the system to check out things like our deduplication, but for the most part, it's been 'set it and forget it.'"

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

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've had a wonderful experience with ExaGrid's customer support. We've worked with the same support engineer from the very beginning, and he's extremely knowledgeable about not only how the ExaGrid works but about Backup Exec as well," said Koch. "To be honest, administering backups isn't my favorite thing to do. However, I find the ExaGrid system very easy to manage. It's made my life easier because it allows me to focus on my other responsibilities."

## ExaGrid and Symantec Backup 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.

## 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](http://www.exagrid.com) or call us at 1-800-868-6985.**