EXAGRID®

Gemeente Hengelo Gains Easier, Faster, and More Secure Backups after Switch to ExaGrid

Gemeente Hengelo

🏴 THE NETHERLANDS

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid provides fast backup and restore performance

- ExaGrid and Veeam "fit like a glove"

- IT Team sleeps better at night thanks to comprehensive security

- ExaGrid-Veeam solution eliminates custom scripts, which brings relief to IT team

"We wanted to find a system that could ensure our data would not be erased. ExaGrid's Retention Time-Lock feature with immutability had just been released, so it was perfect timing. Our neighboring municipality had a big problem, but we could sleep well knowing that our data was safe and ready for recovery if needed."

René Oogink
Senior Technical Specialist

Customer Overview

Home to 81,000 residents, Hengelo is a city in the heart of Twente that feels like a village. Due to its population and numerous amenities, Hengelo is a pleasant residential city nestled within an attractive, green environment. Gemeente Hengelo, a municipality in the Netherlands, is the fourth largest city in Overijssel, after Enschede, Zwolle and Deventer.

Secure ExaGrid System Allows Team to Sleep Better at Night

René Oogink, senior technical specialist, has been working at Gemeente Hengelo for over 14 years. Prior to ExaGrid, the municipality had used a NetApp system that was scripted to make snapshots with an advanced scheduling principle. It was designed to do the backups writing to disk, and then it was synchronized to another data center as a secondary DR location.

"We not only needed a new storage system, but I also wanted to introduce a new way of performing backups. I didn't want to use the advanced custom scripting because it was unmanageable. I wanted to use a standard backup solution with standard hardware. I introduced the tech team to Veeam and ExaGrid. We demoed some other vendors, including IBM TSM and Commvault, but in the end, our vendor advised us to use Veeam in combination with ExaGrid. This resulted in us having the best solution currently in the market," he said.

At the time when Gemeente Hengelo installed ExaGrid, many other municipalities had faced malicious attacks from hackers. "We wanted to find a system that could ensure our data would not be erased. ExaGrid's Retention Time-Lock feature with immutability had just been released, so it was perfect timing. Our neighboring municipality had a big problem, but we could sleep well knowing that our data was safe and ready for recovery if needed."

ExaGrid appliances have a network-facing disk-cache Landing Zone where the most recent backups are stored in an undeduplicated format for fast backup and restore performance. Data is deduplicated into a non-network-facing tier called the Repository Tier, where recent and retention deduplicated data is stored for longer-term retention. The combination of a non-network facing tier (tiered air gap) plus delayed deletes and immutable data objects guards against the backup data being deleted or encrypted. ExaGrid's offline tier is ready for recovery in the event of an attack.

Installation Was Faster Than Unboxing Appliance

"Installation was very, very easy and fast! It was working within half a day. It took more time to unbox it than to install it," said Oogink.

The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with the industry's leading backup applications so that an organization can retain its investment in its existing backup applications and processes. In addition, ExaGrid appliances can replicate to a second ExaGrid appliance at a second site or to the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

Fast Backups on Time, Every Time

The municipality's data is backed up in daily incrementals and weekly fulls, and kept for retention. "The majority of our environment is virtual, using VMware. We back up 300 VMs and 6 physical servers. Most of them are Microsoft Windows-based. We're currently backing up approximately 60 TB, and it's all kinds of user data: Oracle databases, SQL databases, and all of the application servers that are part of our environment. All of our backups are completed before the workday begins the next morning," he said.

ExaGrid writes backups directly to a disk-cache Landing Zone, avoiding inline processing and ensuring the highest possible backup

performance, which results in the shortest backup window. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups for a strong recovery point (RPO). As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it can also be replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for DR.

Fast Restore Performance

"Restores are super fast and easy using the ExaGrid-Veeam solution. A short while ago, we had to restore our Microsoft Exchange environment. It is simple to restore user mail, a folder, or a complete mailbox. The combination of Veeam and ExaGrid is very user-friendly, so we can do backups easily and very fast. We also restored some databases, and that was also very fast. ExaGrid has a very high throughput, and I really like the performance and the speed of the system."

ExaGrid and Veeam can instantly recover a file or VMware virtual machine by running it directly from the ExaGrid appliance in the event that the file is lost, corrupted or encrypted or the primary storage VM becomes unavailable. This instant recovery is possible because of ExaGrid's Landing Zone – a high-speed disk cache on the ExaGrid appliance that retains the most recent backups in their complete form. Once the primary storage environment has been brought back to a working state, the VM backed up on the ExaGrid appliance can then be migrated to primary storage for continued operation.

Scale-out Architecture Allows for Easy Expansion

"We have added ExaGrid appliances over the past couple of years and currently have six appliances in our system. We love the scale-out architecture. We're going to do offsite backup, along with our internet provider, for efficient DR. Each data center has three ExaGrid appliances, and they communicate with one another. It's a good feeling that we have a solid technical product in the data centers, which is supported by multiple vendors."

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.

ExaGrid Support is "Reachable and Responsive"

Oogink likes ExaGrid's support model of working with an assigned customer support engineer who is located in the local time zone and speaks the local language (Dutch). "I really like the service we get from the support team. They are always reachable and responsive. We recently upgraded our environment to the latest firmware version and also added a third appliance to our data center. We made some technical changes to the IP addresses, some network cards, and other various technical items. It's very convenient that ExaGrid can directly connect to our back end, so they can proactively look at problems and fix things for us."

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. Customers never have to repeat themselves to various support staff, and issues get resolved quickly.

ExaGrid and Veeam "Fit Like a Glove"

"ExaGrid and Veeam are very good together. They fit like a glove. Because Veeam software is standard, a lot of people and vendors know how Veeam and ExaGrid work together, so I do not depend on the two guys who wrote our scripts anymore. I now have a whole capable team, even myself. The best part is there is hardly any management required."

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.

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**.