



Municipality Designs New Storage Strategy and Eliminates Tape, Chooses ExaGrid for Its Integration with Veeam



THE NETHERLANDS

Key Benefits:

- Disk-based storage eliminates the manual maintenance of tape
- ExaGrid customer support helps optimize backup process
- Integration of ExaGrid with Veeam is straightforward and easy-to-use
- Scalability of ExaGrid system helps Gemeente Lingewaard reach final backup design goal

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Marc de Ruiter
System Engineer

Customer Overview

Gemeente Lingewaard is a municipality in the eastern Netherlands made up of eight villages, including Angeren, Bemmelen, Doornenburg, Gendt, Haalderen, Huissen, Loo, and Ressen. Lingewaard lies within the Gelderse Poort National Landscape, a popular area for hiking and cycling known for its beautiful river scenery, and is well known for its greenhouse horticulture district.

Lengthy Wait Time with Tape

Marc de Ruiter, the system engineer at Gemeente Lingewaard, had been backing up user data (which has longer retention requirements) to tape disk-to-disk-to-tape (D2D2T) strategy using NetApp NDMP. He was frustrated with the overall maintenance involved with tape, as well as the amount of time the tape library was in use for backup. Sometimes, it took more than three days to comply with a restore request. “I had to wait until the backup to tape had run. Then, finally, I could make the restore to satisfy the customer,” remarked de Ruiter.

In Search of the Right Solution

Switching from NetApp to Atlantis USX as a storage solution proved cost effective. But since Atlantis USX didn’t support NDMP, another protocol was needed to stream small user files to backup. de Ruiter tried the existing D2D2T backup strategy with Veeam, which he had already been using for other VMs. Ultimately, de Ruiter found that while backing up to tape with Veeam was possible, it was not the best solution, as it was even more time-consuming, and there was still the issue of finding time to do a restore.

At this point, de Ruiter began looking into other options. After finding Dell EMC Data Domain to be too expensive, he reached out to a vendor who recommended ExaGrid, which he decided to purchase and use with Atlantis USX and Veeam.

A Change in Plans Leads to Better Deduplication

While preparing for the installation of the new ExaGrid appliance, de Ruiter designed a storage strategy to put the various devices and software to use. ExaGrid’s customer support staff reviewed the strategy and recommended a change that



seemed counterintuitive in the beginning but led to better deduplication rates in the long run.

“I had backups to file, and I wanted to make a backup with the Backup Copy Job function in Veeam and write it to ExaGrid from there.

When the ExaGrid customer support engineer arrived for installation, he was quite helpful, but he didn’t know if this was going to work like we intended, so we tested out my idea and scheduled a Copy Job to the ExaGrid share and found that the deduplication was really not spectacular,” said de Ruiter.

“So I copied this backup cycle to tape, and then we started from scratch. We targeted the first backup of Veeam to ExaGrid, and then we copied it to an extra copy. The deduplication was way better than I experienced with the former scenario. That was the implementation, and it was proven to me that this was the right way to do it. As with the implementation of any new technology, one must be flexible and open minded with respect to the original design and planning.”

'Proactive' Customer Support

"I like that ExaGrid's customer support is so proactive and quite concerned about the well-being of the system. My assigned customer support engineer has a high level of knowledge about my system and environment, so when I speak to him, he doesn't act as if I am speaking in riddles, which I have experienced with other vendors," remarked de Ruiter.

Along with ExaGrid's proactive customer support, de Ruiter finds the easy-to-use ExaGrid GUI a great way to monitor the health and activity of his system.

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.



The New System Saves Time

Not having to manage the tape process saves de Ruiter time. "One of the advantages of the new system is that I can do everything from my desk, and I don't have to go over and fetch the tapes from another location, put them in the machine, see if they finish, and then bring them back to the other location. That kind of work is all gone."

ExaGrid is Part of Long-Term Plan

ExaGrid's scalability was a major selling point for de Ruiter, as he plans to add more appliances to his GRID and migrate all backups there. Noted de Ruiter, "Our final design goal is to implement a uniform way of backing up, with all existing backups migrating to ExaGrid as a backup platform."

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 Integration with Veeam

When searching for the best backup storage solution for Gemeente Lingewaard, it was important to de Ruiter that the solution he chose worked well with Veeam. He commented, "I like Veeam as a product because it offers backup in a very simple, transparent way. It's very straightforward, as is its integration with ExaGrid."

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-Veeam Combined Dedupe

Veeam uses changed block tracking to perform a level of data deduplication. ExaGrid allows Veeam deduplication and Veeam dedupe-friendly compression to stay on. ExaGrid will increase Veeam's deduplication by a factor of about 7:1 to a total combined deduplication ratio of 14:1, reducing the storage required and saving on storage costs up front and over time.

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.