



# ExaGrid System Scales with College's Growing Data, Offsite System Added for DR



USA

## Key Benefits:

- GCC now able to back up 5X more data in the same backup window
- Retention increased from 5 to 12 weeks
- ExaGrid supports both of GCC's preferred backup applications
- Restoring data took days using tape; now takes minutes from the ExaGrid Landing Zone
- ExaGrid customer support assists with configuration of DR site

**"I feel more secure now that we have established a DR site. I'm confident that if we had a disaster, we could recover critical machines. Knowing that Veeam would be able to back up an entire virtual machine and bring it back in a form that we could start up on another host gives me a feeling of security that I didn't have before."**

**Jim Cody**  
Director of User Services

## Customer Overview

*Genesee Community College (GCC) is located just outside the City of Batavia in upstate New York, centered between the greater metropolitan areas of Buffalo and Rochester. In addition to its main campus, it also has six Campus Centers located in Livingston, Orleans, and Wyoming counties. With seven campus locations in four counties and more than 5,000 students, GCC is an important part of the prestigious State University of New York (SUNY) education system.*

## Cost-Effective Scalable System Chosen to Replace Tape

Genesee Community College (GCC) first installed ExaGrid in 2010 to replace tape-based backup, which had proved costly and difficult to manage, especially when it came to restoring data. "Not only were we paying for offsite tape storage, which is pretty expensive, but recovery took time. We had tape deliveries once a week, so there was lag time to do a restore. If it was a critical restore, we'd request a special delivery at a premium cost," said Jim Cody, GCC's director of user services.

GCC has experienced significant data growth since installing its first ExaGrid system in 2010, and ExaGrid's scalability has helped to keep the growth manageable. "It's easy to add more appliances. We have seven of them now and we started out with two. We've had a great experience," said Cody. "It's a very simple process: we speak with our account manager, they recommend what is needed, and then we purchase it. Our support engineer helps us get each appliance running on the network and shows us the best way to configure it to work in our environment."

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.



## Flexibility of Different Backup Apps Supported by One System

One of the deciding factors in choosing a new storage solution was that it worked well with the backup application that Cody had been using, Veritas Backup Exec. "This was really important to me," said Cody. He liked ExaGrid's seamless integration with Backup Exec and the fact that it was so easy to set up the shares and point the server to the ExaGrid without changing anything. "The simpler something is to use, the better," added Cody.

GCC has since virtualized its environment and has added Veeam to manage virtual backups. The college now has 150 virtual servers and 20 physical servers. The physical servers are at six of the campus centers, which are spread out across the county, and Cody still uses Backup Exec to manage those servers. ExaGrid works with the most frequently used backup applications, including Veeam and Backup Exec, among others.

## Backup Window Reduced by 50%, Restores Reduced from Days to Minutes

After moving its backups to ExaGrid, the IT team at GCC saw a 50% reduction of the backup window. Using tape, full backups had needed to

be staggered at times, but since installing ExaGrid, the college can now run multiple jobs at the same time, including weekly fulls and nightly differentials. Prior to installing ExaGrid, GCC was keeping approximately five weeks of retention. Using the ExaGrid system, the college was able to increase that to 12 weeks of retention. "Since moving to the ExaGrid system, we are backing up five times as much data as we used to with tape, and in the same backup window," Cody said.

Switching to ExaGrid also improved the process for restoring data. Restore requests used to take significant time, especially if the tapes were offsite, the entire process could take days. Now using ExaGrid, restore requests are handled in minutes and without the associated retrieval costs.

## ExaGrid Support Helps GCC Configure DR Site

GCC recently set up a remote site for disaster recovery, using ExaGrid with Veeam. "We're in the process of building a disaster recovery center. We bought a new ExaGrid appliance and took it down to the site, turned it on, and my ExaGrid support engineer took care of the configuration. I'm not an expert in configuring the system, so he made sure it was done right, and then showed me how to get Veeam to work with it," said Cody. "At this point, we're backing up 10 of our extremely critical servers each night to our ExaGrid system at the DR site, which is 42 miles away. So far, we haven't had to restore any data, but I've tried some test restores and it works really well.

"I feel more secure now that we've established a DR site. I'm confident that if we had a disaster, we could recover critical machines. Knowing that Veeam would be able to back up an entire virtual machine and bring it back in a form that we could start up on another host gives me a feeling of security that I didn't have before," said Cody.

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.

"ExaGrid's customer support team is excellent," said Cody. "As an IT person, I have so many systems that I manage, so I place high value on quality support; that's invaluable to me, and ExaGrid's support is the best I've seen."

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 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.

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

