



# Military College Chooses ExaGrid over Dell EMC Data Domain for Scalability and Price



USA

## Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid's tight integration with Veeam delivers fastest backups and restores
- System is simple to use and manage
- Easy real-time reporting
- Flexible system will scale to keep pace with data growth

**"Dell EMC Data Domain was more expensive, but in our analysis, you don't get much more for the extra cost ... We chose ExaGrid because we were able to get the backup capabilities and performance we needed for a lot less money than Dell EMC Data Domain."**

**Mick Kirkwood**  
Senior Server Engineer

## Customer Overview

*Georgia Military College is a public, independent educational institution comprised of a junior college and a separate preparatory school for students in sixth through twelfth grade. The college provides its students with an associate's degree in liberal arts and prepares them for a four-year college or university. The school also provides selected college students with ROTC training and provides preparatory school students with a college preparatory curriculum that includes a military training component. Georgia Military College was founded in 1879 in Milledgeville, Georgia. The college has six campus locations and two extension centers spread throughout the state of Georgia.*

## Need for Replication and Deduplication Capabilities Leads to ExaGrid

Georgia Military College had been backing up all of its student and administrative data to disk but needed to upgrade its backup infrastructure to incorporate analytics, deduplication, and replication.

"We needed to step up our overall backup capabilities, but the major driving factor was replication," said Mick Kirkwood, senior server engineer at Georgia Military College. "After we looked at our requirements, we decided to search for a purpose-built solution designed for backup."

Georgia Military Academy chose the ExaGrid system after also looking at the Dell EMC Data Domain solution.

"Dell EMC Data Domain was more expensive, but in our analysis, you don't get much more for the extra cost," said Kirkwood. "Besides the lower price tag, the one thing that really stood out was the tight integration between ExaGrid and Veeam. We're 90% virtualized and use Veeam as our backup application. The two products work extremely well together to deliver fast restores and backup speeds as well as effective data deduplication."

Georgia Military College is backing up nearly 100 virtual machines to the ExaGrid system located in its main campus in Milledgeville, Georgia, and data is replicated automatically offsite each night to a second ExaGrid system located in another campus building. "We've been very happy with ExaGrid's deduplication capabilities, and the results are much better than I expected. Even though we're using Veeam's deduplication, the ExaGrid system still reduces the data by another 5:1, so we're saving even more disk space," said Kirkwood.

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise drives with zone-level data



deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to disk with deduplication or using backup software deduplication to disk. ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1, depending on the data types and retention periods, by storing only the unique objects across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups. As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it is also replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

## System is Easy to Use, 'Fantastic' Technical Support

Kirkwood said that since installing the ExaGrid system, backup jobs now run more consistently than before and are much more stable, saving him countless hours of management and administration each month. The system's management interface is also easy to use, he said.

"The management of the system is so easy – you pretty much turn it on and forget about it. Our support engineer has been very helpful in giving me some commands and shortcuts to help get real-time information. It's great because I can get a

graphical representation of how the backups are performing and then have the ability to change things if I need to," Kirkwood said.

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

"Our ExaGrid support engineer was a big help during the installation process. He walked us through how to install the ExaGrid system and performed all the updates and patches to ensure the system was optimized and ready to go," he said. "I can't say enough about support – it's been fantastic."

## ExaGrid System Passes the Durability 'Crash' Test

Kirkwood said he can personally attest to the durability and reliability of the ExaGrid system after a recent automobile accident. The ExaGrid system was being transported from one location to another when the van it was being driven in was involved in a 65 mph collision on a busy Georgia highway. No one was injured, but initially, things didn't look good for the ExaGrid.

"The ExaGrid was in the back seat of a van. When the collision happened, the machine flew off the back seat and slammed into the back of the passenger side seat, causing some of the hard drives to fall out. When we got it back to the main campus datacenter, we thought there was no way it would work again. We were pleasantly surprised when we set it up and turned it on, and it was working just fine," said Kirkwood.

## Painless Scalability Provides for Increase in Data

Kirkwood said that in the near future Georgia Military College may decide to back up data from its five satellite campuses and two extension locations to the ExaGrid.

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.

"The fact that the ExaGrid system will be able to scale to handle more data is just huge for us. We have a lot of flexibility with the system, and we're confident that it will be able to handle our needs well into the future," he said.

## 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.



## 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).